

Professor Edmund T Rolls MA, DPhil, DSc, Hon DSc
University of Warwick, Department of Computer Science, Coventry CV4 7AL and
Oxford Centre for Computational Neuroscience, Oxford, UK
Edmund.Rolls@oxcns.org www.oxcns.org

Professor Simon Thorpe
CerCo, Université Toulouse 3, CNRS
CHU Purpan, Pavillon Baudot
31059Toulouse Cedex 9 - France

6 December 2016

Dear Simon,

I am writing to provide my strong support for the important new centre that is being applied for in Toulouse, the Toulouse Mind and Brain Institute (TMBI).

I have read your draft application, and believe that the proposal has great potential, by bringing together interdisciplinary expertise that in my experience can provide great added value, and is essential for major advances in understanding brain function and cognition.

Indeed, I have had considerable experience of this, for I acted as Associate Director of the Oxford Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience, which was funded by the UK Medical Research Council and the McDonnell-Pew Program for more than 12 years. We found that providing extra funds to facilitate collaboration between research groups (e.g. by providing key new labs and post-doctoral scientists), and to bring in some key scientists from elsewhere, had a major impact on how cognitive neuroscience developed at Oxford, and had an impact throughout Europe through the Oxford Autumn School in Cognitive Neuroscience, and by key new European and international projects. Particularly valuable was bringing together theoreticians and experimental scientists, as well as key posts to enable for example links with clinical work and with industry.

With the great strength and wide range of expertise available in Toulouse and brought together in this application, I believe that this could enable key advances to be made in this important area of research which has the potential to improve health, as well as to lead to new developments with industry now that rapid advances are being made in understanding the principles of operation of the brain.

I myself am committed to interdisciplinary collaboration, and would be delighted to be associated with the new Institute. I could bring to the new Centre my expertise in computational neuroscience, my access to 'big data' useful for understanding psychiatric disorders, and my interest in neuronal encoding in the brain.

As I feel that the new Institute will make a big contribution in this area of research, in this area of France, in France as a whole, and beyond France to Europe, I do provide you with my very strong support.

Yours sincerely,

Edmund T Rolls
Professor of Computational Neuroscience
University of Warwick, UK