PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Plasma Physics Laboratory **Office of the Director**

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Princeton, 08/18/2025

Dear Rektor Schütze,

I am writing to share some observations on the Wolfgang Pauli Institute (WPI) and its collaboration with your university. This past July–August, WPI hosted the 16th edition of the two-week *Kinetic Plasma Summer Workshop*. Having had the privilege of attending all 16 events, I can say without hesitation that this workshop is exceptional—both the highlight of my academic year and a vital contribution to research in plasma physics and the advancement of nuclear fusion energy. In fact, its impact now surpasses that of comparable programs at the Isaac Newton Institute in Cambridge and the Kavli Institute in Santa Barbara.

In his closing remarks to the participants—who came primarily from MIT, Oxford, Cambridge, and Princeton—WPI Director Norbert Mauser emphasized the vital support of the Austrian Ministry of Science and the Universität Wien. He also noted that three consecutive rectors have recognized and valued WPI. I am writing to you to underscore how the partnership between Universität Wien and WPI exemplifies a best-practice model of public–private collaboration in science.

With decades of experience leading major research institutions in the UK and the US, I can attest that WPI is unique by international standards. It is a place where interdisciplinary science flourishes at the highest levels of excellence and efficiency. The institute's well-designed structure and administration bring out the very best from its community: up to 24 international participants working side by side, their offices and seminar room alive with exchange and creativity.

The atmosphere at WPI is remarkable—free of self-promotion and "PR talks." Instead, researchers present their work with refreshing self-criticism, sparking open, rigorous, and productive discussions. Most participants cover their own travel and accommodation costs, grateful for the opportunity to be hosted at WPI without a conference fee and to enjoy such a constructive environment.

A special strength of the workshops is the inclusion of carefully chosen mathematicians who bridge modeling, numerics, machine learning, and plasma physics. These colleagues, often from France's strong tradition of "applied mathematics" and its Atomic Energy Commission (CEA),

are hand-picked by Norbert Mauser. WPI's close collaborations with France and CNRS, combined with its location in neutral Austria, make it the ideal venue for such high-impact gatherings that deliver exceptional value for public investment.

This year's workshop featured particularly deep discussions on the role of AI and machine learning in physics—an area where WPI is once again at the international forefront.

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to the possibility of speaking with you in person next summer.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Sir Steven Cowley, FRS, FREng. Director