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**MRC**

Laboratory of  
Molecular Biology

Monday, 31 July 2017

**Re: Millennium Nucleus for Fungal Integrative and Synthetic Biology**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the application by Prof. Luis Larrondo to fund the **Millennium Institute for Integrative Systems and Synthetic Biology (MISSB)** that he directs. Professor Larrondo has done some fantastic research over the last few years, published in the very highest tier of scientific journals, e.g., Larrondo *et al.*, *Science* 2015; Hevia *et al.* *PNAS* 2015). His group's work is very highly regarded in both the circadian and fungal biology research disciplines, and it seems clear that in large part this is due to the Millennium funding and associated infrastructure support that allowed him to establish the initiative.

In particular, my group and that of my colleague, Dr. Gerben van Ooijen (University of Edinburgh), have enjoyed a very fruitful collaboration with Prof. Larrondo's lab, which culminated last year in the publication of our novel findings on circadian magnesium oscillations in the journal *Nature* (Feeney *et al.*, 2016). I have no doubt that the Millennium funding was pivotal in allowing Prof. Larrondo the freedom to explore our evolutionary hypotheses of circadian clock evolution without being constrained by more traditional grants - which tend to support highly focused projects and rarely offer the prospect to pursue comparative research strategies.

I hope the committee will see fit to support the present application to establish a Millennium institute, in order that Professor Larrondo's groundbreaking work can continue to compete at the international level.

Yours Faithfully,



Dr. John S. O'Neill,  
MRC LMB