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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
08h00 CET, 08 May 2014

‘The Next European Commission President Must be a Digital President’

European Union Digital Champions Issue Open Letter to Lead Contenders for European Commission President

**EU Digital Champions urge Commission presidential candidates to put forward
a digital strategy fit for the 21st century**

**Call on contenders to unite behind a four-point agenda to transform Europe
into a connected, wired and dynamic continent**

(BRUSSELS, Belgium) – The **European Digital Forum**, a think tank spearheaded by the Lisbon Council, a Brussels-based think tank, and Nesta, the UK’s innovation foundation, released an **Open Letter to the Contenders for European Commission President**, signed by European Union Digital Champions. These Ambassadors for the Digital Agenda of Europe who are appointed by their respective governments, encourage the lead Commission presidency candidates to include a bold and ambitious digital strategy in their electoral platforms and unite behind a four-point agenda.

[Download the Open Letter](#)

Prior to the public announcement, the Open Letter was sent to the main contenders, with a request to respond. Jean-Claude Juncker, candidate for European Commission President for the European People's Party (EPP), seized the opportunity, sending a letter in which he highlighted that the digital single market is one of his five top priorities. He writes: "I am convinced that the digital theme must move beyond the world of techies. Digital must become a priority of mainstream politics in Europe."

[Download Jean-Claude Juncker's response to the Open Letter](#)

The Open Letter will be formally presented by Gesche Joost, digital champion of Germany and design research professor at the Berlin University of the Arts, at a press conference held in the margins of the **European Business Summit** in Brussels on 15 May 2014. The Open Letter will also be circulated at the Brussels launch of the **European Digital Forum** on 22 May 2014, in the presence of European Commission President José Manuel Barroso and Vice-President Neelie Kroes.

About the European Digital Forum:

The European Digital Forum is a new think tank spearheaded by the Lisbon Council and Nesta, in collaboration with the Startup Europe Partnership and the European Commission. Founding partners include the European Investment Fund, Telefónica, Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria (BBVA) and Orange. Its website is www.europeandigitalforum.eu

About the Lisbon Council:

The Lisbon Council for Economic Competitiveness and Social Renewal asbl is a Brussels-based think tank and policy network. Established in 2003 in Belgium as a non-profit, non-partisan association, the group is dedicated to making a positive contribution through cutting-edge research and by engaging politicians and the public at large in a constructive exchange about the economic and social challenges of the 21st century. Its website is www.lisboncouncil.net.

About Nesta:

Nesta is the United Kingdom's innovation foundation. It helps people and organisations bring great ideas to life. It does this by providing investments and grants and mobilising research, networks and skills. It is an independent charity enabled by an endowment from the national lottery. Its website is www.nesta.org.uk.

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