

Item: 3a

Paper: 2021-B084

Approved by UKRI Board: 14th September 2021

Author: Hannah Berriman

Minutes of the Joint UKRI Board & Executive Committee Meeting of 13th July 2021

Date: Tuesday 13th July 2021
 Time: 13:00-17:00
 Location: 58 Victoria Embankment and via Zoom

Board Members and Observers	
Sir Andrew Mackenzie (Chair)	Fiona Driscoll
Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser (UKRI, CEO)	Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz
Siobhan Peters (UKRI, CFO)	Professor Dame Sally Davies (Item 1 & 2)
Professor Julia Black	Professor Ian Diamond
Sir Harpal Kumar	Dr John Fingleton
Lord Willetts	Jo Shanmugalingam, BEIS (For Item 1-4)
Executive Committee and Observers	
Christopher Smith (Exec Chair, AHRC)	David Sweeney (Exec Chair, RE)
Melanie Welham (Exec Chair, BBSRC)	Mark Thompson (Exec Chair, STFC)
Lynn Gladden (Exec Chair, EPSRC)	Isobel Stephen (UKRI, Exec Director)
Alison Park (Exec Chair, ESRC)	Tim Bianek (UKRI, COO)
Indro Mukerjee (CEO, Innovate UK)	Sue Donaldson (UKRI, CPO)
Duncan Wingham (Exec Chair, NERC)	
Attendees	
Daniel Shah (UKRI, Director of Investment Strategy and System Insight)	Steven Hill (UKRI, Interim Director of People and Culture) - for Item 4
Bryony Butland (UKRI, Deputy Director Research Sustainability and Infrastructure) - for Item 3	Linda Holliday (UKRI, Deputy Director for Global Mobility and Inclusion) - for Item 4

Alasdair Taylor (UKRI, Head of UKRI Research Sustainability Policies) - for Item 3	Paul Meller (AHRC, Head of Creative Arts and Digital Humanities) - for Item 5
Helen Cross (UKRI, Head of Research Sustainability, Engagement and Place) - for Item 3	Andrew Chitty (UKRI, Challenge Director) – for Item 5
Max Hastings (UKRI, Strategy Lead for Research Sustainability & Engagement) - for Item 3	
Secretariat	
Hannah Berriman	Tim Russell
Zena Davis	Samantha Richardson
Apologies	
Lord John Browne	Fiona Watt (Exec Chair, MRC)
Alexandra Jones, BEIS	Katrina Nevin-Ridley (UKRI, Comms)

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1. Sir Andrew Mackenzie introduced himself to Board and Executive Committee members and welcomed them to his first meeting.

2. Introduction to the new Board Chair and roundtable of introductions

- 2.1. Executive Chairs of the Research Councils, Research England and Innovate UK introduced themselves to Andrew and provided a brief overview of their Councils and key priorities.

3. Research System Sustainability

- 3.1. Isobel Stephen provided an update on the progress to date on establishing a programme of work to examine the financial sustainability of the research system, in particular looking at how incentives work and where there are vulnerabilities in the system.
- 3.2. Bryony Butland updated the Board with the provisional analysis of the latest data from HESA and TRAC; highlighting that this will need to be interrogated further. Bryony highlighted the close relationship UKRI has with the Office for Students and noted that while much of the data is initially England only, the team are working closely with the devolved funders.
- 3.1. Bryony noted that the team are looking into Full Economic Costs (FEC) and how that is functioning within the system, highlighting the variation on FEC across different funders. The Board noted that there was an opportunity to link this programme of work with the

Research Excellent Framework (REF) reform, noting the relationship between QR funding and FEC.

- 3.2. The Board asked how the UK's approach compared to international competitors and agreed it is important to improve understanding of additional costs of research over and above the direct costs. Ottoline highlighted the complicated landscape within the UK due to the dual support system, which can make comparisons difficult.
- 3.3. The Board highlighted the importance of UKRI's convening power in bringing together comprehensive data, good international comparisons and progressive solutions to the issue with sustainability. The Board noted this was a very challenging landscape and agreed with the priorities outlined by Bryony. The Board requested a comprehensive set of options to come back to Board for discussion once the work has been completed.

ACTION: Bryony Butland to provide progress update to the Board in November 2021 and options for interventions to support sustainability within the research system in Spring 22.

4. People and Culture Strategy

- 4.1. Ottoline Leyser provided an update on the drafting of the BEIS People and Culture Strategy and how it aligns with UKRI ambitions and its onward implementation. All noted that the strategy is due to be published ahead of the House of Commons recess on 22 July 2021.
- 4.2. The Board noted the progress on supporting the development of the strategy with BEIS colleagues and highlighted the importance of ensuring interventions were ambitious and addressed key challenges that career pathways and incentives can lead to.
- 4.3. The Board encouraged ensuring that the Strategy is broad enough to include support for;
 - mid-career researchers as well as early career researchers, and
 - technicians and support staff.
- 4.4. The Board noted the Strategy underpinned all of UKRI activity, and implementation of interventions was key. All agreed it was important for UKRI to demonstrate best practice in this area and act as an exemplar to the rest of the research and innovation system.

5. Creative Industries Deep Dive

- 5.1. Professor Christopher Smith introduced the Creative Industries Deep Dive, which demonstrates the significance of UKRI's investment and role in convening and catalysing the Creative Industries as a highly successful economic sector. The Deep Dive maps the current UKRI portfolio of Creative Industries engaged projects and activities, highlighting the breadth of interaction with the sector across UKRI and the opportunity for further collaboration and impact.

5.2. Christopher highlighted the key recommendations that have resulted from the Deep Dive. The Board ratified the Creative Industries Deep Dive and the key recommendations that emerged.

DECISION: The UKRI Board ratified the Creative Industries document and the key recommendations.

Minutes of the UKRI Board Meeting of 14th July 2021

Date: Wednesday 14th July 2021
 Time: 09:30 – 16:00
 Location: 58 Victoria Embankment and via Zoom

Board Members and Observers	
Sir Andrew Mackenzie (Chair)	Lord David Willetts – for Item 1-4
Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser (UKRI, CEO)	Fiona Driscoll
Siobhan Peters (UKRI, CFO)	Sir Harpal Kumar
Lord John Browne	Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Professor Julia Black	Dr John Fingleton
Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz	
Attendees	
Isobel Stephen (UKRI, Exec Director of Strategy, Communications, Analysis and Governance)	Tim Bianek (UKRI, COO)
Daniel Shah (UKRI, Director of Investment Strategy and System Insight)	Duncan Wingham (Exec Chair, NERC) - for Item 3 & 9
David Sweeny (Exec Chair, Research England) - for Item 3	Rachel Bruce (UKRI, Head of Open Research) - for Item 3
David Rogers (UKRI, Deputy Director for Investment Strategy) - for Item 6 & 7	Tom Crawley (UKRI, Head of Strategy, Balance and Narrative) - for Item 6
Grazka Kazmierska (UKRI, Deputy Director of Financial Planning and Analysis) - for Item 6-8	Ruth Elliot (UKRI, Finance Director) - for Item 6 & 7
Joel Herzig (UKRI, Head of Council Business Partnering) - for Item 7	Paul Gemmill (UKRI, Reforming our Business Programme Director) - for Item 8
Anne Sofield (UKRI, Simpler and Better Funding Programme Director) - for Item 9	Alison Robinson (NERC, Deputy Executive Chair) - for Item 10
Secretariat	
Hannah Berriman	Tim Russell
Zena Davis	Samantha Richardson
Apologies	
Professor Dame Sally Davies	Sue Donaldson (UKRI, CPO)
Katrina Nevin-Ridley (UKRI, Comms)	

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1. Andrew Mackenzie welcomed Board members to the meeting.

2. a) Minutes of 29th April 2021, b) Minutes of 13th May 2021, c) Action Log and d) Forward Look

2.1. The Board approved the minutes of 29th April 2021 meeting, which was convened to discuss and approve the Spending Review Allocations for 2021-22. The Board approved the minutes for the 13th May 2021 meeting.

DECISION: The Board approved the minutes for 29th April 2021 and 13th May 2021.

2.2. The Board noted the action log and forward look. Members requested an item for a future Board on maximising the role of Councils' Councils. All agreed that members should be invited to attend Council meetings to build greater connection across UKRI. Secretariat to circulate a list of dates of upcoming Council meetings to members.

3. Announcement of the new UKRI Open Access Policy

3.1. Duncan Wingham introduced the item, noting that at the May 2021 meeting the Board agreed the UKRI Open Access Policy in principle subject to the Board receiving the narrative document explaining the policy choices that followed the public consultation, and assurances that all reasonable steps to minimise any legal risk had been completed.

3.2. The Board were asked to formally declare any relevant conflicts;

3.2.1. Julia Black – noted the London School of Economics and Political Science has an Open Access publishing platform, and the British Academy has a publishing arm.

3.2.2. Leszek Borysiewicz – noted he served on board of Cambridge University Press and has previously served on the Council of Royal Society (although demitted 12 months ago and does not feel conflicted).

3.2.3. David Willetts – noted he is Chancellor of University of Leicester and visiting professor at Kings College London

3.2.4. Ottoline Leyser – noted she stepped down from all her journal and relevant learned society roles when she took up the position of UKRI CEO.

3.2.5. Ian Diamond – noted he has published several population studies.

3.3. The Board noted that the UKRI policy aligns with the policy applied by the European Commission to Horizon Europe, and to policies applied to other international influential bodies.

3.4. The Board thanked Duncan Wingham, David Sweeney and team for their substantial work in this area. The Board noted the narrative document and legal assurances and formally approved the UKRI Open Access Policy.

DECISION: The Board approved the UKRI Open Access Policy.

DECISION: The Board agreed there was limited impact on seeking funding from other sources and approved the equality impact assessment.

3.5. The Board approved the announcement of the UKRI Open Access Policy.

3.6. The Board requested a progress report and update to come back to Board.

ACTION: Secretariat to add UKRI Open Access Policy Update to Forward Schedule for January 2022.

4. CEO Report to Board

4.1. Ottoline updated the Board on a number of live issues not covered on the agenda, including;

4.1.1. Senior Appointments;

4.1.1.1. The launch of the ESRC Executive Chair recruitment campaign has been approved. Ottoline noted we would be grateful of Board member support in identifying suitable candidates.

4.1.1.2. Fiona Watt, Executive Chair of MRC, will take up a new role at the end of her tenure and will not seek reappointment. The campaign for both the Exec Chair for MRC and Research England will be launched in September.

4.1.2. Government Strategies – Ottoline noted that a number of strategies are being developed across Government that are of interest to UKRI (including Innovation Strategy and People and Culture Strategy).

5. CFO Report

5.1. Siobhan Peters presented the Chief Finance Officer's Report, which covers the period from 21st April 2021 to 24th June 2021.

5.2. Siobhan noted that the Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) are due to be signed off shortly and that they reflect an extraordinary pandemic year. Fiona Driscoll, chair of Audit, Risk Assurance and Performance Committee thanked the team for the hard work that went in to pulling together the ARA.

5.3. Siobhan noted that we do not currently have the final allocations for this year's budget, but we should have final confirmation in by end of July 2021.

5.4. The Board noted that the civil service pay restrictions are potentially causing issues across UKRI, with concerns that staff and researchers could move to other organisations outside the restrictions. Jo Shanmugalingam to discuss offline with Siobhan Peters and Ottoline Leyser and bring back to Board in November for further discussion.

6. Upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review

- 6.1. Isobel Stephen introduced the item, noting that we are expecting the Spending Review to be launched by Treasury before the House of Commons Recess begins on 22nd July 2021, and will be due to conclude in the autumn.
- 6.2. Daniel Shah highlighted to Board what we expect the Spending Review to entail, including the need to be able to demonstrate that there remains a powerful case to increase government spending in R&D, that UKRI can play a central role in meeting the government priorities through harnessing the opportunities of our existing investments and our unique role in the system as an efficient and effective delivery partner for all of government.

7. Allocations Update

- 7.1. Siobhan Peters introduced the item, noting that in April the Board agreed UKRI's allocations advice for the 2021/22 financial year and that as part of Spending Review 2020, core science R&D was awarded a multiyear settlement. Siobhan noted that BEIS have requested UKRI provide allocations advice for an indicative core science settlement of <withheld from publication> Capital Department Expenditure Limits (CDEL) R&D in 2022/23.
- 7.2. The Board agreed with the recommendations outlined but noted the need to do a strategic review of our funding to inform future allocation cycles. The Board agreed that despite uncertainty around funding, we cannot delay making strategic decisions about future funding.

DECISION: The Board agreed the provisional planning assumption of <withheld from publication> CDEL R&D core science R&D settlement for financial year 2022/23.

ACTION: UKRI to undertake a ground up strategic review of our funding to inform future allocation cycles.

8. Operational Efficiency and Service Improvements

- 8.1. Tim Bianek introduced the item outlining our approach to operational efficiency, including the use of Operating Expenditure, identifying opportunities for improvement and a proposed approach to delivering organisational change through the development of an overall UKRI Operating Model. Tim noted that we will continue to drive organisational change through the Reforming our Business (RoB) programme.
- 8.2. Tim highlighted the importance of creating an organisation that is appropriately integrated and as efficient as possible, noting the importance of engaging with COOs and senior leads from across UKRI. The Board thanked Tim and team for the work that has been undertaken and expressed enthusiasm for the proposals outlined and for the general direction of travel.

- 8.3. Members requested a progress report to come back to Board in January 2022, noting the need to discuss a firm plan, outline a multi-year strategy for efficiencies and to highlight success measures.

ACTION: Tim Bianek to provide a progress report to Board for the January 2022 meeting.

9. Simpler and Better Funding Programme Update

- 9.1. Duncan Wingham and Anne Sofield, Programme Director, provided an update on the Simpler and Better Funding (SBF) Programme scope, objectives, benefits and risks. In particular noting that the SBF programme was created to replace UKRI's legacy funding platforms with a single digital service by December 2023 (for the seven Councils, with Innovate UK and Research England following after) and to align funding operating models across UKRI.
- 9.2. Anne noted the enthusiasm for the new platform from the community and highlighted the reputational risk if we are not able meet expectations. Anne highlighted that the funding service had been launched with AHRC's New Generation Thinkers scheme and that early feedback had been positive. Anne noted that both internal user testing and external user feedback would be ongoing as part of continuous improvement of the system and service.
- 9.3. The Board were supportive of the programme and encouraged by the progress made. The Board recommended keeping bespoke requests from Councils to a minimum in order to keep the system as simple as possible.

10. COP 26 Update

- 10.1. Alison Robinson, Deputy Executive Chair for Natural Environment Research Council provided an update on the UKRI COP 26 Programme, noting that good progress has been made on shaping a programme of activity for The United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to demonstrate the contribution to climate action by our funded community and the importance of research and innovation to achieve the aims of COP26. COP26 will be held on 1-12 November 2021 in Glasgow.
- 10.2. The Board agreed that COP 26 was a great opportunity to showcase UKRI and encouraged the public engagement teams to consider meaningful and exciting ways to engage with the public. The Board also highlighted the importance of ensuring all of the devolved nations are included in the programme, noting that this also needed to fit with the international nature of COP26
- 10.3. Alison noted that the COP 26 programme is not yet final and discussions with BEIS and Chief Science Advisors are ongoing. She also highlighted the opportunity of the pre-COP events, including the RRS Sir David Attenborough in London. Alison requested, where possible, that Board members advocate for the UKRI role at COP26

and be available, subject to COVID restrictions, to attend events such as the ship in London.

11. AOB

11.1. No AOB was raised.

11.2. The Board noted the following;

11.2.1. UKRI Health and Safety Report (Q4 FY 20/21)

11.2.2. Nominations and Remuneration Committee Annual Report to Board (2021)

11.2.3. UKRI Quarterly Performance Pack (Q4 20/21)

12. Non-Executive Session