

UK Research and Innovation

Paper No. 2019-B16

Approved by UKRI Board: 25th February 2019

Author: UKRI Secretariat

Minutes of the UKRI Board Meeting of 22nd January 2019

Members present	
Sir John Kingman (Chair)	Professor Dame Sally Davies
Professor Sir Mark Walport	Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Ian Kenyon	Fiona Driscoll
Sir Peter Bazalgette	Professor Sir Harpal Kumar
Professor Julia Black	Professor Max Lu
Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz	Mustafa Suleyman
Lord Browne	Lord Willetts
Executive Committee members	
Professor Andrew Thompson (<i>from item 13</i>)	Ian Campbell (<i>from item 13</i>)
Professor Melanie Welham (<i>from item 13</i>)	Professor Fiona Watt (<i>from item 13</i>)
Professor Jennifer Rubin (<i>from item 13</i>)	Professor Duncan Wingham (<i>from item 13</i>)
Professor Lynn Gladden (<i>from item 13</i>)	David Sweeney (<i>item 8 and from item 13</i>)
BEIS Attendees	
Gareth Davies (<i>items 1-11 and 17</i>)	
UKRI Attendees	
Rebecca Endean	Tom Saunders (<i>item 14</i>)
Alex Marsh	Jo Peacock (<i>item 15</i>)
Katrina Nevin-Ridley (<i>item 14</i>)	
Secretariat	
Chris Chudziak	Linsey Urquhart
Nawaz Shaikh	
Apologies	
Professor Alice Gast	

Time: 13:00- 15:45

Location: 58 Victoria Embankment, London.

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the first Board meeting at UKRI's new London office.
- 1.2 No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes of 21st November 2018 Board meeting and action log

- 2.1 Members approved the minutes.
- 2.2 Members noted progress against actions and agreed those recommended for closure.
- 2.3 On the open actions:
 - The Board discussed the quality of available data on UK R&D investment, and how it should be used.

Action (B2019.1): Rebecca Endean to circulate a note to members on plans for improving how UK R&D investment is measured, including consideration of whether this should be dealt with as a research priority

3. CEO Report

3.1 The Chief Executive provided a report on progress since the last Board meeting, including recent engagements with the new Science Minister, Chris Skidmore. Mark provided an update on progress with transformation, flagging a delay to the appointment of a Transformation Director; and on progress with cross-cutting funds

Action (B2019.2): Executive to provide reassurance on how the Board's earlier feedback on SIPF bids and public engagement is fed back to bidders.

4. CFO Report

4.1 The Chief Financial Officer provided an update on corporate services activity. On recruitment, the Chair stressed the importance of the upcoming recruitment for Innovate UK Executive Chair, encouraging Board members to publicise this through their own networks.

5. Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF): Wave 2 Decisions

5.1 Rebecca Endean presented the SPF panel's recommendations, commenting that the panel was encouraged by the strength of all bids, and how useful the engagement with Government Departments had been.

5.2 There was discussion of how UKRI would deal with non-successful bids. Feedback will point bidders towards other UKRI sources of funding; and where something has been clearly

marked as a priority, but not funded, UKRI will continue to work on developing the strength of the proposals as part of Spending Review preparation.

Decision: The Board approved the SPF Panel's recommendations.

Decision: The Board agreed to delegate responsibility for approving final profiles to the CEO.

6. Draft 2.4% Interim Publication

6.1 Alex Marsh presented drafts of the opening chapters of the proposed 2.4% document. Members were happy with how the document was progressing, feeding back that later chapters on business investment should focus on the UK offer to business which would attract them to invest. The document would also need to be clear on the scale of change required in terms of pounds invested as well as percentage increase, focusing on those international comparators which were of a similar scale. There was discussion of the tone and proposed audience for the document, and the Executive were asked to consider how the document would be used.

Action (B2019.3): Alex Marsh to work with comms on audience and tone of the 2.4% document ahead of next draft, and on how the document would be used.

7. Response to Secretary of State on UKRI Priorities

7.1 The Board discussed its response to a letter received from the Secretary of State following the last Board meeting. This set out a number of areas it would be helpful for UKRI and BEIS to continue working on together, including emphasising how UKRI is investing in place.

8. Augar Review

8.1 David Sweeney and Rebecca Endean provided a verbal update on progress of the Augar review, likely recommendations and how they might impact on universities. It was recognised that alongside EU exit and the situation with the Universities Superannuation Scheme, this could have a significant financial impact on universities. UKRI would need to take a strong interest in how this is managed by OfS, and any impact on the cross-subsidy of research.

Action (B2019.4): Secretariat to circulate UKRI's analysis submitted to the Augar review.

Action (B2019.5): David Sweeney to reflect the various current pressures on universities in the Research England Strategic Delivery Plan (SDP).

9. Environmental Impact Report

9.1 Alison Robinson set out current reporting arrangements and initial data and assured the Board that UKRI is in a position to meet mandatory reporting requirements. Alison also set out a proposed approach to developing UKRI strategy to meet the ambition in UKRI's strategic prospectus, to be sustainable in all that UKRI does. Members stressed the importance of building credibility with partners through focusing first on UKRI's own operations, and then expanding a programme outwards to include those in our supply chain and then to those

receiving funding from UKRI. The Board signalled the need to introduce effective governance to support development of a strategy and implementation, and supported analysis of materiality and risk to allow prioritisation of effort. It was noted that growth in the amount of research envisioned in the Government's 2.4% ambition would have an inevitable impact on UKRI's environmental impact, so setting reporting in context and in documenting the impact of any sustainability measures, it would be important to determine a clear counterfactual.

9.2 It was recognised that issues such as single use plastics will be a real challenge for science, and not just in the UK – this would be a global problem. The Executive should consider how it can bring together international partners and suppliers to tackle this issue, including considering whether some focused research is needed in this space.

Action (B2019.6): Executive to develop an environmental sustainability strategy for UKRI in line with the ambition set by the Board.

Action (B2019.7): Executive to consider how it tackles the challenge of single use plastics in science, including how it engages suppliers and international partners, and where research on this topic may be required.

Decison: The Board agreed the parameters set out for developing UKRI strategy and policy for environmental sustainability.

10. Board Forward Look

10.1 The Chair noted that the Board forward look was in the process of being refreshed, asking members to contact the Secretariat with any suggestions for strategic questions they would like the Board to consider.

11. AOB

11.1 No further business was presented.

Joint UKRI Board and Executive Committee Meeting

Time: 15:45- 18:35

13. Welcome & introductions

13.1 Executive Chairs and John Arnott joined, with the Chair welcoming Lynn Gladden to her first joint Board and Executive Committee meeting.

14. UKRI Communications Plans, incl. Public Engagement

14.1 Katrina Nevin-Ridley and Tom Saunders presented Communications and Public Engagement plans. Members were asked to comment on the draft public engagement (PE) strategy. Members heard that in devising the PE strategy, the communications team had engaged with stakeholders and research communities to determine long term priorities.

14.2 Members commented on the draft PE strategy:

- UKRI needs to define its PE objectives and how UKRI will measure success, including metrics. Objectives could range from the literal aim of inspiring more people to follow careers in research, to encouraging a scientific approach to problem solving, such as thinking critically and using evidence.
- It is important to distinguish PE from Comms. Effective PE for UKRI would be about getting the public enthused about science and to feel its relevant to them. STEM subjects can learn from the arts and humanities, in how they engage the public, eg. in cultural events.
- There is a need to get children of secondary school age engaged and enthused about science. School education initiatives are doubly beneficial as children tend to get their guardians at home involved.
- Citizen Science competitions are excellent for involving the public, whilst ensuring they engage new sectors of society.
- There is a need to inform public debate particularly around ethical issues.
- UKRI need to evaluate how much expenditure on PE is sufficient to have an impact.

15. Strategic Delivery Plans

15.1 Alex Marsh provided a progress update on the drafting of councils' Strategic Delivery Plans (SDPs). SDPs are an important opportunity for Councils to set out their priorities, and a lot of work has already gone into these drafts. They are still work in progress, and there is more to do to bring them together into one family, particularly in terms of:

- refining drafting style (a copy editor will be working with Councils)
- ensuring near term deliverables are specific
- longer term priorities are engaging and ambitious

15.2 The plan is to publish the nine SDPs, with an overarching SDP document, alongside the 2.4% interim publication. Board members have each been assigned an individual SDP to review and will feedback comments to Executive Chairs.

15.3 Some initial thoughts about the SDPs were discussed:

- There is a need to reflect the cross-cutting, lateral themes in each SDP whilst retaining the individuality of each council.
- The SDPs should complement the Annual Report.
- The overarching SDP document should outline clear objectives for UKRI and how progress will be measured.
- There is a need to bring out UKRI's role in addressing related ethical questions more prominently in the SDPs.
- The SDPs need to be clear about the timescale they reflect.

Action (B2019.8): Board members to engage with Executive Chairs on their respective SDP.

16. UKRI Analysis & Evaluation

16.1 Jo Peacock updated members on UKRI's Analysis and Evaluation Plans and cross UKRI approach to data. Members heard that a lot of underpinning work has been done to procure the necessary tools and collate the data in one place, so that UKRI is now in a position to do the tracking and evaluation.

16.2 Board members discussed how some of the initial findings could be of use for communications purposes following quality assurance. For example, the new tools have enabled UKRI to track a cohort of grants from 2010 and their impact, including field-weighted citation impact, as well as compare this against other funders.

16.3 There was some discussion around the preparedness of the evaluation tools for the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund- this will be discussed at ARAPC later this month.

Action (B2019.9): Ian Campbell and Mark Walport to engage with Ian Diamond and Julia Black on ISCF evaluation.

17. EU Exit, Horizon 2020 & Horizon Europe

17.1 Andrew Thompson provided an update on preparation for EU-Exit, including contingency planning for the event of a no-deal exit.

Decision: Board agreed that the Executive should work with BEIS to agree some clear communications that provide what reassurance we can to our communities on the no-deal contingency planning we are putting in place for the remainder of Horizon 2020 period.

The next UKRI Board meeting will be held at Imperial White City, on Tuesday, 26th February.