



UK Research
and Innovation

2025–26

budget allocations
for UK Research
and Innovation



Budget summary

- In April 2025, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) confirmed an allocation for 2025-26 of £8,811 million¹ (Table 1).
- This allocation safeguards the core capacity and capability of the UK research and innovation ecosystem and enables investment that will improve citizens' lives and livelihoods and support the government's five missions, delivering growth across the UK.
- Total government investment in research and development will amount to £20.4 billion in 2025-26, protecting unprecedented levels of public investment in the sector. UKRI will collaborate across government to deliver other elements of public investment in research and innovation.
- UKRI is working with DSIT on the second phase of the spending review that will set multi-year budgets, to maximise the opportunities and benefits for the whole of the UK from public investment in research and innovation.

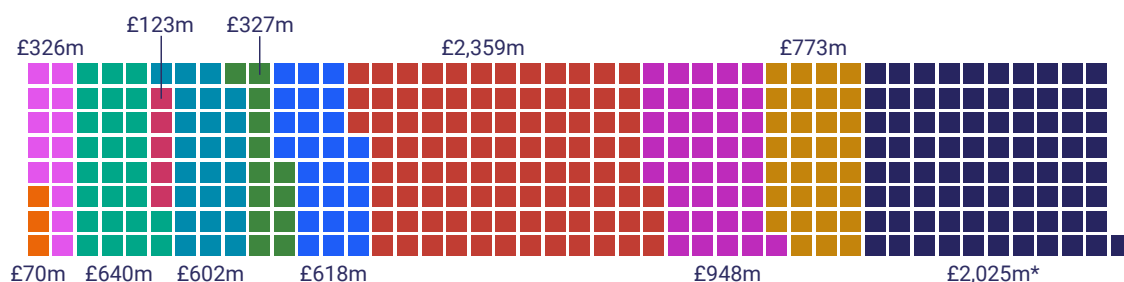
Table 1: UKRI budget trends²

	Total £m								
UKRI budgets	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total	6,768	6,842	6,957	8,188	7,785	7,904	8,373	8,874	8,811

1. Includes funding for the Research and Development Missions Programme (RDMP) and the AI Research Resource (AIRR), which is a DSIT-managed programme. Excludes Faraday Battery Challenge, and Zero Emission HGV and Infrastructure Demonstration. UKRI will receive funding for these programmes from the Department for Business and Trade and the Department for Transport respectively for year 2025-26.

2. All figures are presented in nominal terms. Please note, the 2025-26 budget includes AIRR and the 2022-23 – 2024-25 budget included the Department for Transport Zero Emission Programme. All other figures exclude funding for ODA, Financial Transactions, the Department for Education Strategic Priorities Grant and any other managed programmes on behalf of DSIT and other government departments.

Chart 1: UKRI 2025-26 budget^{3,4}



Key

Each square represents £25 million

- Core AHRC £70m
- Core BBSRC £326m
- Core EPSRC £640m
- Core ESRC £123m
- Core MRC £602m
- Core NERC £327m
- Core STFC £618m
- Core Research England £2,359m
- Core IUK £948m
- Collective Talent Funding £773m
- Cross-UKRI Funding* £2,025m

* Cross-UKRI funding is made of investments in Infrastructure, including our Infrastructure Fund and World Class Labs, and in new and legacy Strategic Programmes, including the Strategic Themes, the Technologies Mission Programme, and dual support for existing Strategic Programmes (previously National Productivity Investment Fund, NPIF), among other investments.

- In contrast to Spending Review 2021 (SR21), in 2025-26, responsibility for the Faraday Battery Challenge has moved to the Department for Business and Trade and responsibility for the Zero Emission HGV and Infrastructure Demonstration has moved to the Department for Transport. Funding for these programmes is not included in the 2025-26 budget allocated by DSIT to UKRI, as UKRI will receive funding for those programmes from the Department for Business and Trade and the Department for Transport respectively.
- In SR21, UKRI made use of over-profiling to mitigate the risk of underspend and slippages caused by the unparalleled global economic uncertainty and challenges from COVID-19. As we now operate in more stable conditions, the UKRI Board has decided not to use over-profiling for 2025-26 onwards.
- As a result of the exceptional use of this financial mechanism in SR21, the trends in UKRI budgets of 2022-23 – 2024-25 and 2025-26 do not lend themselves to direct comparison.

3. For the purposes of data visualisation, individual budget lines have been rounded to the nearest £25 million, with each square representing £25 million. Includes funding for the Research and Development Missions Programme (RDMP) and the AI Research Resource (AIRR), which is a DSIT managed programme.

4. Research England figures are for financial year 2025-26. Allocated budgets for academic year 2025-26 will vary and be announced separately. Allocations would hold the balance of dual support at 64p (this currently excludes ODA funding but includes dual support for new strategic programmes).

UKRI budget

Research and innovation typically require long investments to get the best value for money. For example, funding for institutes typically runs in five-year periods and in cycles that go beyond the duration of spending reviews. As a result of these forward commitments, at the start of a new financial year, nearly all of the budget for that year has already been legally committed, published in funding calls or opportunities, or announced by Ministers.

Our Corporate Plan and Councils' Strategic Delivery Plans will be published later in 2025 and will provide detail on allocations within Councils. We will also publish a further allocations explainer for the multi-year allocations once phase 2 of the Spending Review 2025 concludes.

How UKRI's budget is allocated

UKRI is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). Our budget is determined by the overall funding allocated to DSIT for innovation, research and development at Spending Review and Budgets, and by subsequent decisions by the Secretary of State as to how that funding should be allocated to UKRI and other partner bodies.

On the advice of the UKRI Board, the DSIT Secretary of State decides on how UKRI's overall budget should be allocated to Councils, key programmes and the balance of dual support⁵.

The decisions over which specific research projects to support are made independently from government, following the Haldane principle. This states that decisions on individual research proposals are best taken by researchers themselves through peer review. This involves evaluating the quality, excellence and likely impact of science and research programmes.

In providing its advice for the 2025-26 allocations, the UKRI Board considered our financial position, including our level of commitments, the financial sustainability of the research and innovation system and our priorities for the year.

5. The dual support system is made of the two complementary mechanisms by which universities can receive public funding for research and innovation: project-specific grants and strategic institutional funding. Further detail can be found in our [dual support explainer](#).



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