



Innovate UK Council Meeting

Date: 9th September 2024

Location: Business Design Centre, London N1 0QH

Council Members:

Indro Mukerjee (Chair), John Fingleton (Senior Independent Member), Chris Ganje, John Gibson, Julia Sutcliffe, Mark Treherne, Simon Weeks and Stella Peace

Others Attending:

Dave Wilkes, Dean Cook, Guy Woolley, Lisa Hazelden, Mike Biddle. Rob Shaw, Claire Pearce, Georgina Navalles, Alice Hills, Laura Carter (Minutes)

Apologies:

Annette Doherty, Isabel Fox, Jennifer Rubin, Jon Kingsbury, Tunde Olanrewaju

Welcome and introduction - Indro Mukerjee

The meeting was chaired by Indro Mukerjee, with Stella Peace due to be Chair for future Council meetings. Indro welcomed the Board attendees. It was noted it was John Fingleton's last Council meeting and Indro thanked him for his support.

Woman in Innovation

An update was provided on the issue, progress made and next steps. Council members commented it would be helpful for Council members to have an elevator pitch to help with any questions raised with them. It was suggested that the lessons learnt, and progress made should be reviewed periodically at future Council meetings. The meeting noted the Woman in Innovation funding is oversubscribed but there are other Innovate UK funding streams where woman are supported and funded. This programme will go into review to see how it can be improved going forward, working with communities to determine the best approach.

Strategy Update

The meeting received a strategy update, noting a 2-phase process for the Spending Review. Phase 1 focuses on resetting budgets while making early progress on mission delivery and phase 2 looks at longer term policy commitment, commission due to follow the Budget on 30th October. Innovate UK are working with DSIT and other government departments to help inform and influence. The Senior Leadership team talked through 5 different scenarios that have been discussed and explored within Innovate UK. The Council discussed what didn't make the top 5 and if funding is better within small/medium or large businesses.

The council commented it was good to see how we are working to plug into the new government's agenda and to get ahead of the game and to try and influence.

The leadership team commented there is a clear steer from ministers that the R&D Mission Programme is an aspirational bid into the split spending review cycle and there is a desire to make the case to Treasury for making a multi-year bid.

DSIT officials have asked the Mission boards for problem statements, some of which have been provided at a high level. DSIT is then going to look at turning these into Innovation Challenges. Innovate UK need to think about how UKRI step up to do this. There may be a call to action to this board to get community input. Innovate UK have been supporting DSIT where they can in writing the outline business case into Treasury.

Council members commented that Innovate UK has a brilliant interface with inventors in private sector businesses and it is important that those voices are heard.

Council commented that government bodies need to be reminded that the people we are trying to make heard are not the current business people and entrepreneurs but the next generation and they do not have a voice at the table. Innovate UK need to make this link through Treasury as we go through the spending review process.

Strengths to build on: Next steps

The Senior Leadership Team have been reflecting on Innovate UK strengths and what to build on. Key points discussed:

Strengths

- The 'Cube' approach to delivery is very strongly embedded and effectively creates the blocks to achieve a matrix approach as we move forward.
- With the Innovate UK broader eco system, the networks we have across Innovate UK, IUK Business Connect, IUK Business Growth and the Catapults: the approach we have taken in the multiyear Spending Review have brought these elements together.
- Managed programmes are across all of Innovate UK and we have good relationships cross government. Because of this Innovate UK has a good reputation as a strong delivery partner. This is based on Innovate UK's capabilities and the strong record of delivery.
- For Mission-led innovation, Innovate UK has experience of design and delivery of these programmes.
- The people/teams at Innovate UK show a high level of engagement in their work, engaged and driven. A recent people survey reflects this.

AOB

Indro thanked attendees and closed the meeting at 14:15.

14:15 Closed Council session