



House of Commons
Science and Technology
Committee

Pre-appointment hearing for the Executive Chair of Research England

First Report of Session 2022–23

*Report, together with formal minutes relating
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 20 July 2022*

Science and Technology Committee

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Publication

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1 Pre-appointment hearing for the Chair of UK Research and Innovation

1. In June 2022, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy informed us that following the conclusion of an open recruitment campaign, the Government's preferred candidate for appointment as Executive Chair of Research England was Professor Dame Jessica Corner.

2. We decided in June 2022 that we would invite Dame Jessica to a pre-appointment hearing. This hearing took place on Wednesday 20 July. A transcript of the session is available on our website.¹ We have also published, as Appendices to this Report:

- a) Campaign information provided to us by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, including information on the number of candidates and diversity information;
- b) Dame Jessica's CV as submitted by her and declaration of interest; and
- c) Dame Jessica's responses to a set of written questions we sent her in advance of the hearing on 20 July.

3. The hearing and the written questions addressed Dame Jessica's motivation for applying for the role, her background and experience, and her understanding of the work of Research England. We also questioned Dame Jessica on her priorities for Research England and the challenges that the organisation was likely to face.

4. On the basis of the discussions during the pre-appointment hearing, of our consideration of her CV and the answers she provided to our questionnaire, we are satisfied that Professor Dame Jessica Corner has the professional competence and personal independence required for the role of Executive Chair of Research England. We are pleased to endorse her appointment and wish her well for her tenure as Executive Chair of Research England. We look forward to hearing from Dame Jessica, after her appointment, as part of our future work.

1 <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/135/science-and-technology-committee-commons>

Appendix One: Campaign information

BEIS provided the following information on the recruitment process and the candidates who applied for the role of Executive Chair of Research England:

Campaign Launch Date	11 November 2021
Campaign Closing Date	23 January 2022
Reason for any changes in timetable to that originally published	On the 14 January 2022, SpAds made the decision to extend the deadline of the advert by one week, meaning it was then closed on the 23 January 2022.
Advertising strategy	<p>Cabinet Office Newsletter</p> <p>Cabinet Office Public Appointments Twitter</p> <p>Cabinet Office Public Appointments Website</p> <p>Diversity Networks</p> <p>Russell Group, Universities UK, other HE professional bodies</p> <p>Research England networks and contacts; Research England Council members and their networks</p> <p>UKRI Board and board member contacts</p> <p>GO-Science</p> <p>UKRI advertised the role on their platforms and outreach was carried out by UKRI and BEIS.</p>
Advisory Assessment Panel	<p>Panel Chair—Jo Shanmugalingam, Director General, Science, Innovation & Growth (BEIS)</p> <p>Representative of Organisation—Dame Ottoline Leyser, CEO (UKRI)</p> <p>Independent Panel Member—Sir David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor (University of Birmingham)</p> <p>Independent Panel Member—Sir Douglas Flint, Former Chair (HSBC)</p>
Number of applicants	26
Number of candidates invited to interview	4
Number of candidates found appointable	2

Proposed terms of appointment and remuneration: The Research England Executive Chair will be appointed for a term of 4 years initially with an annual remuneration package of £120,000 and Performance Related Pay of up to 10% (with scope to negotiate up to £144,500 base salary for an exceptional candidate)

Diversity data

A: Gender

	Male	Female	Identify another way	Not declared
Applicants	18	8	0	0
Shortlist (applicants invited to interview)	2	2	0	0

B. Ethnicity

	White	Ethnic Minority	Not declared
Applicants	18	6	0
Shortlist (applicants invited to interview)	4	0	0

C. Disability

	Disabled	Non-disabled	Not declared
Applicants	2	24	0
Shortlist (applicants invited to interview)	0	4	0

Appendix Two: Professor Dame Jessica Corner CV, supporting statement and declaration of interest and candidate due diligence from BEIS

Dame Jessica submitted a supporting statement and CV as part of the recruitment process, which we have reproduced below.

Supporting statement

I am pleased to offer this statement relating to my application for the role of Executive Director for Research England.

Currently Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange at the University of Nottingham, I have over the last six years worked in support of the full range of disciplines in a large Russell Group University with a unique global footprint. I have responsibility for a £700 million research portfolio and £127m annual income from knowledge exchange activities, business partnerships and commercialisation activities. I have a wide knowledge of the research and innovation landscape across higher education, industry, and beyond, and strong relationships across the higher education sector. I have strategic leadership experience of research and its translation at executive and board levels in different higher education and specialist research institutions, and with national and international committees and funding bodies

A strength of my leadership approach is my strategic vision. For example, following my appointment in Nottingham. I rapidly led the development of an ambitious research strategy. Most exciting, has been establishing mission driven, challenge led interdisciplinary research Beacons for the University following convergence principles. These set out to make major contributions to global challenges addressing UN Sustainability Goals. They are providing strategic focus for the University as a whole and have secured over £200m in external funding to date, as well as the development and use of technologies for low carbon aircraft, food sustainability, precision medicine, engineering biology, smart manufacturing, and addressing modern slavery. They are now providing a platform for a zero-carbon research and innovation cluster development focused on the University's Jubilee Campus, encompassing two UKRPIF developments - the Power Electronics and Machines Centre and award-winning Carbon Neutral Laboratory and our University Enterprise Zone. The development will have a transformative effect on the city and regional economy while driving the transition to a low carbon economy.

I have led strategic investment into research careers through a sector leading early career fellowship scheme appointing one hundred highly talented individuals from diverse backgrounds (50% female and 23% BAME) with generous time, funds and support to establish their research at the University. I have also had an instrumental role in offering sector leadership to recognise the contributions of the full range of team members in research for example the Midlands Innovation TALENT programme for technicians. I am committed to team science and model an inclusive leadership style. I led the University's work to achieve its Athena Swan Institutional Silver award.

I have led the University's commercialisation efforts through establishing Nottingham Technology Ventures and a university investment fund to support a rapidly growing portfolio of spinout companies and established a not-for-profit company in Italy working to support industry partnerships with the aerospace sector. Under my leadership the University was recognised as sector leading for working with business in the Knowledge Exchange Framework.

As a founding member of Research England's Council, I have had personal and direct involvement in its crucial role sustaining the research and innovation system. I have direct experience of the block grant funding mechanism through determining allocation formulas as a member of Council and through my role as Pro-Vice chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange. I regularly contribute to the development of national research policy and have been particularly active through the pandemic in assisting in the design of a variety of UKRI responses and mechanisms developed to stabilise the sector. As a participant and panel member for the Research Excellence Framework and its predecessors, I have a close working understanding of it and clear views as to how it should evolve through the Future Research Assessment Programme. I have participated in round table events and discussions for the programme and as a member of the Steering Group for the RAND Europe Real Time REF review.

As one of the UK's foremost academic nurse leaders I have a background that straddles both science and social science and in implementation of new technologies and approaches into complex systems. Appointed as one of the first female professors at the Institute of Cancer Research in London at the age of 35, early in my career I developed skills in leading multidisciplinary academic teams in a world-class centre. I have led major research centres at the Institute of Cancer Research and University of Southampton. I have held senior leadership roles in different contexts and organisations for example, in 2005 I took the opportunity to work as Executive Director of Macmillan Cancer Support. I had responsibility for all charitable expenditure and initiatives for people with cancer and the network of over 4,300 Macmillan professionals and services throughout the UK. I was commissioner for research funded by the charity. Between 2008 and 2016 I held a senior advisory role for the charity as its Chief Clinician. While Chief Clinician I played a key role in the development and use of PROMS and PREMS within the NHS with cancer survivors. I was chair of the DHSC Cancer Patient Experience Advisory Group for eight years overseeing the development and administration of the cancer patient experience survey in all NHS Trusts in England leading to the survey's adoption as one of four cancer indicators in the NHS Oversight Framework. Through my own research I have brought ideas, considered radical and unlikely, into widespread practice, working from first scientific principles through piloting of prototype interventions to full clinical trials and finally complex implementation programmes. In recognition of my contribution to healthcare research I was awarded a DBE in the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honours and in 2015 was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences; one of only 6 individuals from my discipline to be recognised by the Academy throughout its history.

I regularly contribute to developing national policy and have roles that involve working with ministers and ministerial teams. For example, I was a member of Prime Minister David Cameron's Nursing Advisory Group. I was Chair of the Council of Deans for Health between 2014–2017, the body that represents 85 higher education institutions across the UK involved in training health professionals. In this role I worked closely with Downing Street,

Treasury, DHSC and HEFCE and later the OfS and Research England on the transition of healthcare students to fees and stipends and implementation of this major policy change. Until June this year I was chair of the UK Health Education Advisory Committee hosted by the OfS on behalf of England and the devolved administrations, providing strategic advice on the education of all health professions for the UK. Through these roles I gained experience of working with the devolved administrations, Parliamentary Groups and providing evidence to Parliamentary Committees.

I have other roles that the Appointment Board might note. I am Registrar for the Academy of Medical Sciences and, a member of the Strategic Advisory Board on Research in the NHS for the Chief Scientist's Office for Scotland. I work in the international context with research funding bodies, for example I chair the Movember Foundation's Global Prostate Cancer Outcomes Committee responsible for oversight of Movember's health outcomes improvement research and initiatives worldwide.

I am in my second term as Pro-Vice Chancellor and I am therefore flexible as to when I complete this strategic leadership role and have strong support from my Vice Chancellor in this application and for taking up appointment immediately.

CV: Professor Dame Jessica Corner DBE, FMed Sci, MAE, PhD, BSc Hons, RN, FHEA

Professor Dame Jessica Corner is Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange at the University of Nottingham.

Dame Jessica has for the last 6 years led a research and knowledge exchange portfolio worth over £700 million and strategically directs the research, commercialisation, and knowledge exchange efforts of close to 3,000 dedicated research colleagues at the University's campuses in the UK, China and Malaysia. With a global remit, research strengths in a broad range of areas, a rapidly growing spin-out portfolio, and ambitions to embed a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, Dame Jessica's vision has ensured investment into research excellence and impact, capability, and critical mass. At the heart of this vision is delivering research with impact to address today's global challenges, support United Nation Sustainable Development Goals while also developing the University's model for co-working with business.

Along with her role at Nottingham, Dame Jessica was a founding member of the Council for Research England, as well as holding key national roles: such as Chair of the UK Health Education Advisory Committee (UKHEAC) and the CSO Scotland Strategic Advisory Group on health research.

Dame Jessica was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire (DBE) in 2014 for services to health care research and education, elected a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 2015, and elected Fellow of the European Academy in 2019. In 2018, when the UK National Health Service turned 70, Dame Jessica was named as one of the most influential nurses in its history.

Previously, Dame Jessica was Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Southampton and Director of National Institute for Health Research Wessex

Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Research in Health Care (CLARHC), and has held academic positions at King's College London and at the Institute of Cancer Research, London, where she was the first nurse to be appointed to a chair at the Institute.

Dame Jessica is an internationally renowned and active academic widely published in the field of cancer and supportive care with over 200 publications. Her primary research interest is the long-term health outcomes following treatment for cancer, and supportive care interventions, as well as whole systems interventions in healthcare. She played a pivotal role in the development of patient reported outcomes and experience measures in cancer in the UK and used in every NHS Trust in England. Published some of the most highly cited papers for the discipline and led some of the first clinical trials in the world of nurse-led care interventions used in clinical guidelines nationally and internationally. As well as an influential monograph written for the 2000 Nuffield Trust's Queen Elisabeth the Queen Mother Fellowship.

She has held significant leadership roles in health and higher education serving on national and international committees and groups and senior leadership roles in higher education and the charity sector with Macmillan Cancer Support as well as the Institute of Cancer Research, London.

Previous Appointments

Chair of the Council of Deans for Health 2014–2017

- Chair of the Council 2014–2017, the body that represents the 85 Universities involved in training of health professionals across the UK.
- Reset the vision and strategy for the Council, doubling the resources available in support of its work and set a more assertive and effective tone for the Council's activities. Worked closely with HEFCE, and OfS on the Government decision to transition all of nursing, midwifery and allied health professional training to the fees and funding regime from 2016.

Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southampton 2010–2015

- Executive Dean, served as a member of the University Executive Group for 5 years with a University wide leadership role.
- Led the creation of an internationally leading Health Sciences Faculty, ranked first in the UK REF 2014 Research Intensity (THE), Overall Quality (Research Fortnight) and joint first for Impact (Subpanel 3, Allied Health, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing).

Chief Clinician, Macmillan Cancer Support 2008 - 2016

Director, NIHR CLAHRC Wessex 2014–2016

Head of School of Health Sciences, University of Southampton 2008–2010

Executive Director for Improving Cancer Services, UK Charity Macmillan Cancer Support (secondment) 2005–2008

Professor of Cancer and Palliative Care, University of Southampton, 2002–2015

Director and Deputy Dean, Centre for Cancer and Palliative Care Studies, Institute of Cancer Research, London 1994 - 2002

Current Professional Appointments and responsibilities

- Registrar, Academy of Medical Sciences
- Chair, Movember Foundation Global Prostate Cancer Outcomes Committee
- Member, Strategic Advisory Board on Research in the NHS for the Chief Scientist’s Office for Scotland.
- Chair, University of Nottingham Italy S.C.A.R.L.
- Director, University of Nottingham Innovation Park
- Chair and Director, Nottingham Technology Ventures

Member REF 2021 Panel 3, Allied Health, Dentistry, Pharmacy and Nursing and for REF 2014

Department’s due diligence and candidate’s declaration of interests

The following information is a copy from BEIS of the due diligence it carried out:

Professor Dame Jessica Corner	
Completed on 02/03/2022	
Short Biography	Professor Dame Jessica Corner, Pro-Vice Chancellor Research and Knowledge Exchange, University of Nottingham. Previous roles: chair of the Council of the Council of Deans for Health 2014–2017, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences University of Southampton 2010–2015, Chief Clinician Macmillan Cancer Support 2008–2016, Head of School Health Sciences, University of Southampton, 2008–2010, Executive Director for Improving Cancer Services, Macmillan Cancer Support 2002–2005, Director and Deputy Dean, Centre for Cancer and Palliative Care Studies, Institute of Cancer Research, London 1994–2002, Senior Macmillan Lecturer Institute of Cancer Research and the Royal Marsden Hospital 1990–1996, Macmillan Lecturer King’s College, London 1990–1996. Board memberships: Registrar Academy of Medical Sciences - current, Member of Council Research England 2018–2021, CSO Scotland Strategic Advisory for Research in the NHS, Chair Board of Directors University of Nottingham Italy, Director University of Nottingham Innovation Park.

Professor Dame Jessica Corner	
Completed on 02/03/2022	
Due Diligence	<p>A social media search returned a Twitter account and a LinkedIn profile, neither of which shows any information of concern.</p> <p>An open google search discovered a Wikipedia page, a profile on the University of Nottingham site and a profile on the Academy of Medical Sciences site.</p> <p>A further search revealed various articles written by Jessica and research papers that she has been a contributor to. Nothing else of significant interest was found.</p>
Self-Declared Political Activities	None declared.
Political Donations Check	No matching returns.
Self-Declared Conflicts of Interest	None declared.
Companies House check	<p>UNIP Management Ltd (03416679)–Director, Active</p> <p>Nottingham Technology Ventures Ltd (04477457)–Director, Resigned</p> <p>Academy of Medical Sciences (03520281)–Director, Resigned</p> <p>National Cancer Alliance Ltd (03011753)–Director, Resigned</p> <p>Institute of Cancer Research (00534147)–Director, Resigned</p> <p>Macmillan Cancer Support (02400969)–Director, Resigned</p>
Bankruptcy & Insolvency Register Check	No matching returns.
Any previous Board roles	<p>Chair, Movember Foundation Global Prostate Cancer Outcomes Committee</p> <p>Member, Strategic Advisory Board on Research in the NHS for the Chief Scientist’s Office for Scotland.</p> <p>Chair, University of Nottingham Italy S.C.A.R.L.</p> <p>Director, University of Nottingham Innovation Park</p> <p>Chair and Director, Nottingham Technology Ventures</p> <p>Member REF 2021 Panel 3, Allied Health, Dentistry, Pharmacy and Nursing and for REF 2014</p>

Appendix Three: Candidate questionnaire

Motivation

1. What motivated you to apply for this role, and what specific experiences would you bring to it?

My motivation for the role lies in a deep commitment to research and from the priority placed by government on science and innovation. As someone who has worked as a counterpart to Research England at the University of Nottingham it is a real opportunity to bring my skills and perspectives to this national role. A thriving research and innovation ecosystem is essential to our economy and for societal wellbeing. Universities comprise the largest and most significant infrastructure for research and knowledge exchange in the UK. Research England is the primary body within UKRI that acts as steward to this critical infrastructure, distributing £2bn annually in quality aligned funding. Research England, through the considerable levers at its disposal, has a major opportunity to drive world leading research and innovation. If confirmed in post, this would be a tremendous opportunity for me to bring my skills to bear and make a positive difference in England, and in partnership with the devolved administrations, to the UK rather than a single institution.

2. Please elaborate on any experience you have that will be relevant to the role. In which areas do you feel well-qualified to make a contribution; and in which will you have to acquire new skills, or knowledge?

As Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange at the University of Nottingham, I have worked to support the full range of disciplines in a large research intensive University. I have responsibility for a large portfolio of research and knowledge exchange activities, business partnerships and commercialisation activities. I have a wide knowledge of the research and innovation landscape across higher education, industry, and beyond, and strong relationships across the higher education sector. I have strategic leadership experience of research and its translation at executive and board levels in different higher education and specialist research institutions, and with national and international committees and funding bodies.

As a founding member of Research England's Council, I have had personal and direct involvement in its crucial role sustaining the research and innovation system. I have direct experience of the block grant funding mechanism through determining allocation formulas as a member of Council and through my role as Pro-Vice chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange. I regularly contribute to the development of national research policy and have been particularly active through the pandemic in assisting in the design of a variety UKRI responses and mechanisms developed to stabilise the sector. As a participant and panel member for the Research Excellence Framework and its predecessors, I have a close working understanding of national research assessment.

I have a deep understanding of the research system as both a research practitioner for some 35 years and as a senior strategic leader within several institutions. I am aware of how funds flow through the system to sustain it. I understand the importance of research culture and environment in fostering great science and innovation.

I am highly experienced with budget planning and financial controls in different organisations. I am committed to co-operative and inclusive leadership and bring this to the UKRI Executive Team.

I have not worked within a government department or regularly with Ministers however I am familiar with the Science and Innovation Directorate in BEIS and regularly engaged with Ministers in my previous role as Chair of the Council of Deans for Health. I also have strong working relationships with other UKRI executive chairs.

3. How were you recruited? Were you encouraged to apply, and if so, by whom?

I responded to the advertisement placed by the Cabinet Office Public Appointments Service.

Personal background

4. Do you have any business or financial connections which might give rise to a conflict of interest, or perception of conflict of interest, in carrying out your new duties as Chair of Research England? If so, how do you intend to resolve them?

I have no business or financial connections that could give rise to a conflict of interest or in carrying out the duties as Chair of Research England. I will be taking on the role of Executive Chair as an employee of UKRI rather than as a secondee from a university to ensure that there is no perception of conflict of interest.

5. If appointed what professional or voluntary work commitments will you continue to undertake, or do you intend to take on, alongside your new role? How will you ensure that this will not impinge on your responsibilities as Chair of Research England?

I am Registrar to the Academy of Medical Sciences, which I carry out in a voluntary capacity. My role is to oversee the annual election of Fellows. As Registrar, I am also a Trustee of this charitable organisation and a senior officer with responsibility for the direction of the Academy. This is a significant time commitment; I will be considering whether I should continue this role while Chair of Research England. I hold two other voluntary positions in the international context; I am a member of the International Advisory Committee for the University of Tübingen and the Movember Foundation's Global Cancer Advisory Committee. Beyond the input I can provide, these activities also afford me insights into the international research context. I am fully aware of the responsibilities of the role of Executive Chair of Research England and will, of course, prioritise Research England over my other commitments.

6. Have you ever held any post or undertaken any activity that might cast doubt on your political impartiality? If so, how will you demonstrate your political impartiality in the role if appointed?

I have not held or undertaken any such activity.

7. Do you intend to serve your full term of office, and do you intend to apply for another once it has ended?

I intend to serve the full four years of office and would consider an extension to the term of office should this be considered appropriate or necessary.

Research England

8. If appointed what will be your main priorities, both short and long term, on taking up the role? What do you envisage as being the main challenges to these priorities?

For Research

An immediate priority will be to share insights on developing government directions with universities so that they can best direct Business QR and HEIF funding to deliver economic outcomes by partnering with business. In implementing the outcomes of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 (REF2021) through QR allocations I will encourage universities to support research directions which move forward our underpinning knowledge while also delivering social, economic and cultural benefits for all of our citizens.

Another immediate priority is to develop Research England's Strategic Delivery Plan in partnership with Research England's Council, and set the direction for the Council for the next three years.

Another priority is to continue to deliver the Future Research Assessment Programme drawing conclusions from the recent sector consultation. The programme must ensure the right rewards and incentives are in place to stimulate a diverse, open and productive research culture while also motivating high quality risk taking work that will contribute to economic and social impact while preserving the UK's reputation for world-leading research. The programme will need to give early direction to universities as to the form of research assessment in the next cycle.

As Research England funds research in England only, an ongoing priority will be regular liaison with the devolved administrations and also with UKRI and international partners to implement, for example, Open Access and Open Research, aligning future assessment with this and smoothing the process of implementation.

For research commercialisation and collaboration with business

An ongoing priority will be to use the resources Research England has at its disposal through business QR and HEIF to stimulate effective collaboration between universities and business. This includes addressing the Innovation Strategy priority on commercialisation, maintaining good partnerships between universities and investors, sharing good practice in IP management including internationally and strengthening innovation ecosystems.

Universities play a crucial role in supporting levelling Up, a priority will be to support UKRI across the broad Levelling up and Place agenda.

Over the spending review period, deliver a further round of the UK research Partnership Fund leveraging private co-investment into all schemes selected.

In the longer term develop the purpose of the Knowledge Exchange Framework and consider the relationship between the KEF assessment exercise and funding as well as addressing levelling up across the Research England Programme.

A further high priority will be to work collaboratively with partners such as the Office for Students, across government and with the devolved administrations to join up efforts and coordinate actions wherever feasible.

Challenges

A challenge will be to deliver the priorities identified while supporting the effective use of resources by universities to deliver an agile and innovative research system. Research England must avoid adding unnecessary bureaucracy into the system. A further challenge will be to support the effective deployment of digital technologies in support of the priorities identified and that are resilient.

9. What criteria should the Committee use to judge your performance over your term of office? Please explain why.

On the clarity of the strategic objectives that I set out for Research England developed through discussion and consensus with the sector and with government, and delivery against these. The research and innovation system is complex and dynamic; seemingly clear and sensible plans can have disproportionate and unintended consequences.

As a member of UKRI executive board on my leadership contribution to the development and success of UKRI as an evolving organisation and in the delivery of UKRI strategy.

On the insights into the research system that Research England can bring to visibility and in the solutions provided to address challenges and threats to the system.

On the contribution Research England makes to key objectives for UKRI such as building clusters of research and innovation excellence and in fostering diverse teams and smoother, less precarious career paths as these are central to government Innovation Strategy and People and Culture Strategy.

10. How will you protect and enhance your personal independence and the institutional independence of Research England from the Government/Ministers?

It is of critical importance that the status of arms-length bodies, as set out in the Higher Education and Research Act, is maintained very visibly. As such the formal interactions with government should be open and transparent, with immediate publication of correspondence and with that correspondence reinforcing principles set out in the Act which constrain ministerial powers in areas such as institutional funding. Following the path set by my predecessor I intend to be visible on public platforms and open, direct and honest in my views about research and knowledge exchange directions, though not engaging in political discussions.

I am committed to the Nolan Principles of public life and to good governance and would ensure that these are always followed in the day-to-day operation of Research England and in my own personal behaviour.

Research England has well-established practices for the award of funds in all programmes that involves robust peer review and expert panels that take decisions independently. Robust pre-determined algorithms determine the formula based funding schemes, QR HEIF funding stream allocations. These are scrutinised by Research England's Council and by UKRI Board. I will continue to make a strong case for QR and other funding

schemes within government so that the critical underpinning role they play is recognised. While there are statutory protections in the Higher Education Act for Research England, I prefer to protect its independence by showing how effective and efficient it is at delivering for the tax payer.

11. How do you assess the public profile and reputation of Research England?

In the four years since it was formed Research England has developed a considerable reputation and standing. Its role is to create and sustain the conditions for a healthy and dynamic research and knowledge exchange system in English universities. Offering balance through the dual support funding system to competitively awarded initiative and project specific funding from other bodies within and beyond UKRI. It thus provides a unique function, and it has exercised this role very effectively to date. Its future standing and reputation depends on strong relationships across the sector and with the wider UK research system and on the design of the mechanisms by which it fulfils its role. Also, on the intelligence and insights it brings to future science and innovation policy. Its reputation is also derived through dialogue and consensus building around the mechanisms it uses to fulfil its role in driving excellence, innovation, and system diversity.

12. What risks do you think Research England will face over your term of office? How do you intend to manage them?

Failing to maintain the case for the dual support funding mechanism for research. Failing to build consensus on the form of the Future Research Assessment Programme is a risk best managed through very active and ongoing engagement with the sector. Ensuring that there is clarity and evidence revealing the outcomes delivered through the dual support system and bringing these to full visibility to stakeholders and government will be a priority. Maintaining strong relationships with colleagues from across the devolved administrations and the Office for Students is essential.

13. How do you assess the role of Research England in working alongside the other Research Councils and more broadly UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)? What role do you see for the Chair of Research England in these relationships?

Research England sits alongside the 7 Research Councils and Innovate UK, distributing over 25% of the UKRI budget to provide crucial long-term stability to the university system which is otherwise supported by episodic project and theme-directed activity. In support of the UK role of UKRI Research England also works together, where appropriate, with the devolved funding bodies in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In order to take wise decisions on long-term funding Research England is involved in discussions about the full range of UKRI activity and works closely, with staff on part-time secondment, with the UKRI central on cross-cutting work including research culture and trusted research. The Executive Chair undertakes various cross-cutting responsibilities, often jointly with other executive chairs. Currently these are Commercialisation, Place and Open Science but I would expect to discuss those falling to me with Dame Ottoline Leyser as Chief Executive if I am confirmed in post.

Formal minutes

Wednesday 20 July 2022

Members present:

Aaron Bell, in the Chair

Tracey Crouch

Chris Clarkson

Rebecca Long Bailey

Graham Stringer

Draft Report (*Pre-appointment hearing for the Executive Chair of Research England*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 4 read and agreed to.

Three Papers were appended to the Report as Appendices 1–3.

Resolved, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

Adjourned till Wednesday 7 September at 9.20am

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Wednesday 20 July 2022

Professor Dame Jessica Corner, Government's preferred candidate for the role of Executive Chair, Research England

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the publications page of the Committee's website.

Session 2021–22

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Direct-to-consumer genomic testing	HC 94
2nd	Pre-appointment hearing for the Chair of UK Research and Innovation	HC 358
3rd	Coronavirus: lessons learned to date	HC 92

Session 2019–21

Number	Title	Reference
1st	The UK response to covid-19: use of scientific advice	HC 136
2nd	5G market diversification and wider lessons for critical and emerging technologies	HC 450
3rd	A new UK research funding agency	HC 778