



Science, Innovation
and Technology
Committee

Lord Vallance of Balham
Minister of State for Science
Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

By email only

20 February 2025

Subject: Follow-ups from 11 February evidence session

Dear Patrick,

On behalf of the committee, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to you and Alexandra Jones, Director General for Science, Innovation and Growth, for giving evidence on 11 February. The insights you provided were valuable, and we look forward to following the progress of your five priorities in this role.

As discussed during the session, I am writing to request further information from you and your department on the following matters:

1. We welcome your statement that "you cannot be a solver of problems if you do not have diversity." In light of this, we would be grateful if you could provide:
 - data on the diversity characteristics – such as gender, race and ethnicity, and socio-economic background – of DSIT's workforce, with a breakdown between those in science and engineering roles, and those in other roles.
 - data on the number of civil servants holding science and engineering roles in the department who have experience in the private sector.
2. In the session you said: "It is very clear that there is a relationship between innovation, particularly science and technology companies, and economic growth at national level". We would appreciate it if you could share any data your department holds that provides evidence of this link. You also told us that curiosity-driven research "brings no economic value in the next five years, but it is a thing people will be extremely grateful for in 20 or 30 years' time". Could you share with us your views on the role of curiosity-driven research in supporting the government's missions, as well as sharing more details on the link between long-term economic growth and curiosity-driven research, on both a regional and national level?



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3. Alexandra Jones said that the department was looking into how best to update the 'Innovation Clusters Map' – we would welcome details on your plans to update the tool, such as by integrating live data or adding aspects of co-creation with the innovation sector to make it more useful.
4. We were pleased to hear that Sir David Grant gave a positive assessment of UKRI's progress in implementing the recommendations from his 2021 UKRI independent review. We request that you share with us the full report.

Thank you again for speaking with us, and we look forward to hearing from you again in the future.

I would appreciate your response by 12 March 2025.

With best wishes,

Chi Onwurah MP
Chair – Science, Innovation and Technology Committee