



Department for  
Science, Innovation  
& Technology

The Lord Vallance of Balham KCB  
Minister of State for Science, Research  
and Innovation  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor,  
100 Parliament Street  
London SW1A 2BQ  
E: Minister.Vallance@dsit.gov.uk

[www.gov.uk/dsit](http://www.gov.uk/dsit)

The Lord Mair CBE  
Chair, House of Lords Science and Technology Committee  
(By email)

16 April 2025

Dear Lord Mair,

I am writing to inform the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee of the publication of the government response to the recent Regulatory Horizons Council (RHC) report on the Governance of Engineering Biology (EB). The RHC report made several recommendations spanning regulations, standards, responsible innovation and biosecurity for engineering biology and we have addressed each of those recommendations in our response.

The response outlines the government's commitment and undertakings to improve the regulatory environment for engineering biology. We launched the Regulatory Innovation Office (RIO) in October 2024 to help position the UK as the best place in the world to innovate by ensuring safety and speeding up regulatory decisions. Engineering biology was identified as one of the RIO's four early priorities, given its disruptive potential to deliver growth across wide-ranging sectors of the economy. Through the RIO, the Government is supporting the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland to build capability and capacity to support development of innovative products such as precision fermented foods.

DSIT is also intervening directly to support this commitment. The Engineering Biology Sandbox Fund aims to accelerate pro-innovation regulatory reform and encourage business innovation. We will open applications for a second round of this fund in April 2025. To support information sharing, DSIT coordinates a dedicated Engineering Biology Regulators Network, with 12 regulators and agencies that brings the regulatory ecosystem together to encourage collaboration and knowledge exchange.

We also recognise the need to address safety and security concerns so that we can fully capitalise on the economic growth potential of engineering biology; accordingly, we published gene synthesis screening guidance in October 2024 to ensure that the UK can safely capitalise on the totality of benefit that advances in biosciences and biotechnologies brings.

I will place a copy of this letter and the government response in the libraries of the House.

Yours sincerely,

The Lord Vallance of Balham KCB  
**Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation**

