



# Science and Technology Committee

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From Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Chair

Amanda Solloway MP  
Minister for Science, Research and Innovation  
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
(By e-mail)

5 May 2021

Dear Amanda,

## **Government Response to the Committee's Report, *A new UK research funding agency***

I am writing to you in response to your letter detailing the Government Response to recommendations made by my Committee in respect of our inquiry into 'A new UK research funding agency'.

We are grateful with your engagement on a number of issues. However, we would be grateful if you could provide further clarity on a number of points:

- What is the Government looking for in ARIA's senior leadership? The Response simply stated that it was looking for the "right" leader without outlining any desirable qualities—or, indeed, a timeline for their appointment.
- When will the "forthcoming framework agreement between BEIS and ARIA"—regarding monitoring and oversight of ARIA—be published?
- My Committee would appreciate updates with respect to your attempts, with HMT, to circumvent normal Civil Service pay restrictions for ARIA's programme managers.
- Will the ARIA Bill explicitly provide for a relationship between ARIA and UKRI? It appears to us that your response provides more detail on this than the Bill making its way through Parliament.
- Will you commit to multi-year settlements for science and innovation as standard practice? We believe this would illustrate the Government's clear commitment to its ambitions of making the UK a 'science superpower' and provide much-needed certainty for a community that has played such a vital role in helping the country navigate the current crisis.
- Does the Government recognise the need for a review into the rationale for and impact of the constraints currently placed on UKRI, especially with respect to its capacity for 'novel' and 'contentious' research? The Response points to an ongoing review that is different in scope.

Given the importance that this Government places on science and research, and the value that ARIA could add to the UK's science and innovation landscape, I am sure you appreciate the need for transparency in respect of the above points.

I would be grateful if you could provide a response by Friday 14 May. As is usual with the Committee's correspondence, I will place this letter and your response in the public domain.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Clark', written in a cursive style.

**Rt Hon Greg Clark MP**  
*Chair*