



HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

7 May 2021

Lord Patel, KT
Chair, Science and Technology Select Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear Lord Patel,

SCIENCE RESEARCH FUNDING

Thank you for your email on 25 March on science research funding.

Science will underpin our response to the greatest challenges ahead, from tackling climate change to delivering transformative economic growth following Covid-19 and achieving our levelling-up agenda. That is why in the Spending Review 2020 (SR20) the Government committed almost £15bn to Research & Development (R&D) for 2021/22. This follows four years of significant growth in spending in R&D, and a boost of more than £1.5bn in 2020/21 alone.

In addition, the Government has met a key ask of the science community – association to Horizon Europe – and announced in April that an additional £250m will be made available for R&D in 2021/22, to boost collaboration and protect ongoing research. This comes in addition to the £400m increase in UK core research budgets announced at SR20 for UKRI and National Academies in 2021/22. Combined, this means that UK researchers will have access to more public R&D funding than ever before. Moreover, taking into account both direct and indirect public funding for Business R&D, the UK is the third most generous amongst OECD nations. Government departments are now working to develop more detailed plans on their specific R&D allocations and will publish them as soon as possible.

In the context of unprecedented economic and fiscal circumstances, we also decided at SR20 that sticking rigidly to spending 0.7% of gross national income as Official Development Assistance (ODA) was not an appropriate prioritisation of resources. The subsequent review conducted by the Foreign Secretary ensured that UK ODA is focused on our strategic priorities, spent where it will have the maximum impact, has greater coherence and delivers most value for money. The Government remains committed to

international development and intends to return to the 0.7% target when the fiscal situation allows.

Medical research charities are an integral part of the United Kingdom's world-leading life sciences sector. The Government is continuing to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on research, including in the life sciences, and has provided a significant support package as part of the Covid-19 response which the sector is able to access to assist with business and workforce costs. Much of the funding announced at SR20, including the £1.3bn for R&D through DHSC, will support the life sciences sector and important medical research across the UK.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rishi Sunak', with a stylized flourish at the end.

RISHI SUNAK