

Table of strategic priorities of UK funding councils

Created using RCUK Strategic Priorities and Spending Plan 2016-2020 (March 2016)

AHRC	BBSRC	EPSRC	ESRC	MRC	NERC	STFC
Thematic research: - Stimulated by developing new 'Horizon Questions' across AHRC portfolio. - Will bring to fruition current 4 research themes (Care for the future; Digital transformations; Science in culture; Translating cultures) Priority areas: - The role of Design research - New international initiatives in Heritage - Open world Research Initiative (2016-2020) will open avenues of research in Modern Languages	BBSRC's priorities 2016-2020: - Driving bioscience discovery - Building a more resilient and secure future - Transforming and creating bio-based businesses - Growing and attracting talent - Strengthening the UK's position as a global partner of choice - Sustained support for investigator ideas-led research	2016-2020 strategy is for investments to explicitly support four inter-linked outcomes which collectively underpin UK prosperity: - Productivity - Connectedness - Resilience - Health	Invest in areas of national priority to address significant social and economic challenges Priority areas: - Productivity - Understanding the macro-economy - Mental health and wellbeing - Housing Ways of being in a digital age	Priority Challenges: - Infections - Brain health and dementia - Prevention - Regenerating damaged tissue	Priorities are to invest in research, skills and innovation that enables business, government and citizens to: - Use natural resources safely and securely to sustain life, prosperity and wellbeing - Build resilience to environmental hazards – saving lives and costs, protecting business and essential infrastructure - Predict, mitigate and adapt to man-made environmental and climate change	Three long term strategic programmes: - Frontier science – astronomy, particle physics, nuclear physics and space science through partnership programmes with UK universities and research institutes - Large-scale facilities and research infrastructures – creating and supporting access to a broad range of world-leading research facilities and infrastructures to underpin frontier and discovery research. - National Campuses – Harwell Oxford and Sci-Tech Daresbury National Science and Innovation Campuses
Open call research: - Larger, collaborative grants pursuing complex fields of enquiry beyond the scope of individual scholars Fellowships: - Transformative research and develop new approaches to knowledge exchange and interdisciplinary working Exploratory networks: Building future capacity	Protect: - Funding for excellent research to deliver new knowledge and high-impact discoveries, promoting creative, curiosity driven 'frontier bioscience' research as well as areas specifically identified to address strategic economic opportunities and societal challenges, for example: - Agriculture and food security - Industrial biotechnology and bioenergy - Bioscience for health.	The four priorities will over the period form the EPSRC 'top-down' strategic research programmes, constituting around 40% of the EPSRC portfolio. They will welcome initiatives from the academic and business communities to develop challenge-led programmes that contribute to the prosperity outcomes.	- Continue to support Transformative Research scheme - Protect funding for Standard Grants scheme - Extend investment in 'What works' network - Support opportunities for partnership-working and knowledge exchange - Develop opportunities to support Early Career Researchers - Increase investment with international partners - Take lead in expanding infrastructure for research focussed on large scale sources of data - Explore potential of new forms of data	Discovery for medicine: - MRC Institutes – continue to support - Experimental medicine – more medical research on advanced studies in humans - Targeted discovery for disease – create novel joint academic/industry programmes and technology platforms to speed up discovery and validation of new drug targets - Interdisciplinary discovery science – foster new opportunities at the interface with physical science, engineering and social science through seed funding, career	Investing in research, innovation and growth: - Resources – sustainable food production, renewable energy, valuing the UK's natural capital for use in policy and business decisions. Capital investment in new underground monitoring systems will pave way for safe regulation and extraction of shale gas and support the development of underground carbon storage - Resilience – with Met Office and EA, investment to improve UK flood forecasts for more precise, early warning.	- Continue to deliver programme in particle physics, nuclear physics and astronomy - Guaranteeing on-going access to international research facilities CERN, ESO, ESRF, ILL and FAIR - Supporting UK leadership in technical upgrades at CERN and in development of world's largest optical telescope E-ELT and the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope - New govt. commitments to next-generation European facilities ESS and XFEL. Establishing UK-headquartered Square Kilometre Array as the next big inspirational

				development, and partnerships with Research Councils and universities	With industry, provide evidence to mitigate environmental risks and impacts on essential UK transport and energy infrastructure	science project Operating Diamond, ISIS and Central Laser Facility
Multidisciplinary research: Investment in new approaches to problem-centred research and cross-council collaborations. Examples include: leadership of the conflict theme within the partnership on conflict, crime and security; and the Urban Living partnership between RCUK and Innovate UK.		Will maintain a programme of long-term research with emphasis on 'bottom-up' investigator-led ideas, including community-generated challenges (60% of portfolio).	Launch new Doctoral Training Network, including thematic Centres for Doctoral Training in New forms of Data and Biosocial	Transforming health research and innovation: - Informatics and computation - Stratified medicine - Stratified /global public health - Academic/industry relationships	Climate Change – with Met Office, invest in weather and climate prediction capability. Mobilise NERC research ships to find out how Southern Ocean absorbs and releases heat and carbon. With DFID, invest in climate models for sustainable resource use and resilience in Africa and Asia	- Develop opportunities to engage industry and other partners - Increasing innovation output including funded university programmes - Establish Higgs Centre for Innovation in Edinburgh
Partnerships and International Collaboration: - Enhance collaborations with Whitehall & devolved administrations, national agencies such as the HLF - Promote engagement with cultural organisations. - Support shaping of future direction of transnational research programmes - Co-development of overseas research initiatives.		Maximise the EPSRC contribution to research which supports Official Development Assistance, for example off-grid and low-carbon energy research to increase access, resilience and wealth-creation in developing nations.		Strong emphasis on training and career development		World class skills: - Skills programmes - Increase number of apprentices - Strong volume programme of public engagement in inspirational science