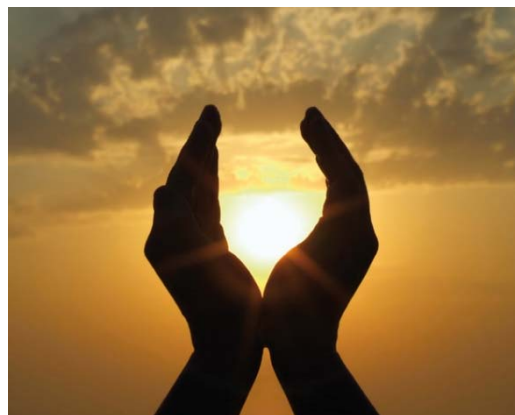


Introduction to the UK Research Councils

Tony McEnery

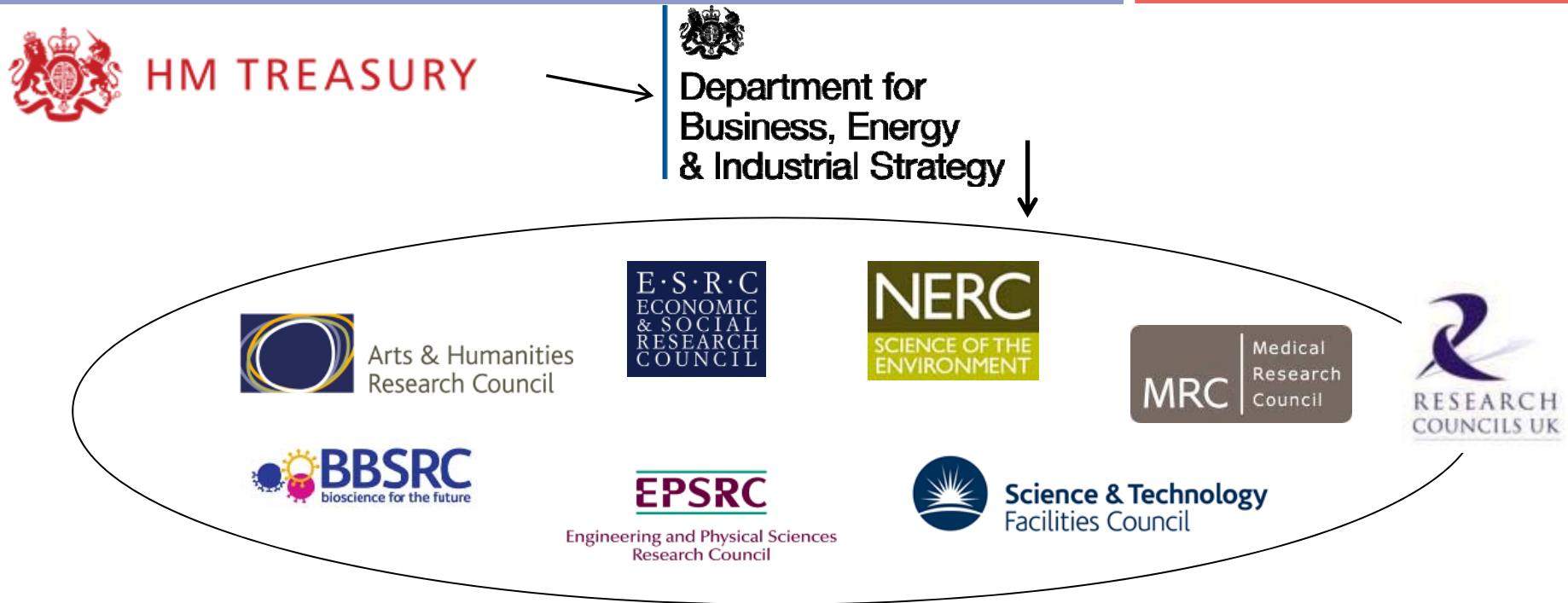
Interim Chief Executive and Director of
Research, Economic and Social
Research Council



The UK Research Councils

- Research Councils UK (RCUK) is the Strategic Partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils.
- Research Councils are Non-Department Public Bodies (NDPBs) established by Royal Charter and are independent legal bodies outside of Government, accountable to Parliament
- Majority of funding comes through the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) as part of the Science Budget.
- Research Council share of Science Budget is around £3 billion. Funding is allocated through the Government's Spending Review process.
- Support excellent research, as judged by peer review, that has an impact on the growth, prosperity and wellbeing of UK.

How is the research system financed?



- UK's seven Research Councils working in partnership
- Public funding via the UK science and research budget
- Collective annual investment around £3 billion
- Accountable to Parliament via BEIS

Research Councils UK

- The RCUK mission is to optimise the ways that Research Councils work together to deliver their goals, to enhance the overall performance and impact of UK research, training and knowledge transfer and to be recognised by academia, business and government for excellence in research sponsorship.
- The overall aim of RCUK is for the Research Councils to be recognised as the benchmark around the world in terms of the impact they have and the ways they work.

RCUK: Excellence with Impact

Creating new knowledge

- Funding basic research excellence
- Responding to society's challenges
- Developing skills, leadership and infrastructure
- Leading the direction of UK research

Driving innovation

- Creating environments and brokering partnerships
- Co-delivering research and innovation with **2,500 businesses**
- Providing intelligence for policy making



Common objectives and activities across the Research Councils

- Support research – responsive and directed - that contributes to a productive economy, healthy society and a sustainable world
- Public Engagement with Research
- Support postgraduate training and capacity building/ Research Careers and Diversity
- Manage and develop large facilities
- Knowledge transfer and economic impact
- International.

Research Grants

- All proposals are peer reviewed with focus on research excellence as primary criteria
- We use responsive mode (open to wide areas of research) as well as calls for proposal (where topic or nature of research will be specified) to solicit proposals from research community
- Grants can range from months to 5 years and a few £k to several £M.

RCUK funded research covers the full spectrum of academic disciplines

£3 billion in research funding per year



Delivering Highly Skilled People

- Postgraduate Research, Research Staff, Fellowships and Grant Holders
- Equality and Diversity (across all career stages)
- Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

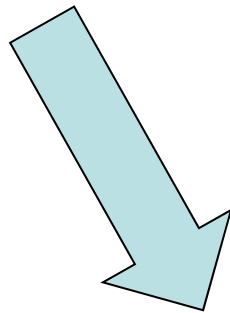
Approx. current

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • Postgraduate Research | ~17,500 |
| • Research Staff* | ~10,000 |
| • Fellowships | ~3,500 |
| • Grant holders: Principal Investigators | ~8,500 |

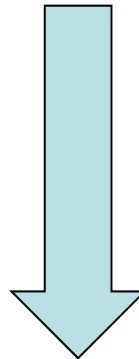
*Posts on research grants, typically post-doctoral

UKRI – 1 April 2018

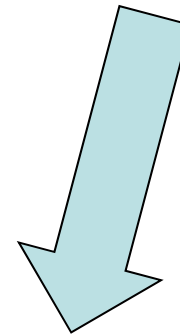
**Aspects of
Higher
Education
Funding Council
(HEFCE)**



**7 UK
Research
Councils**

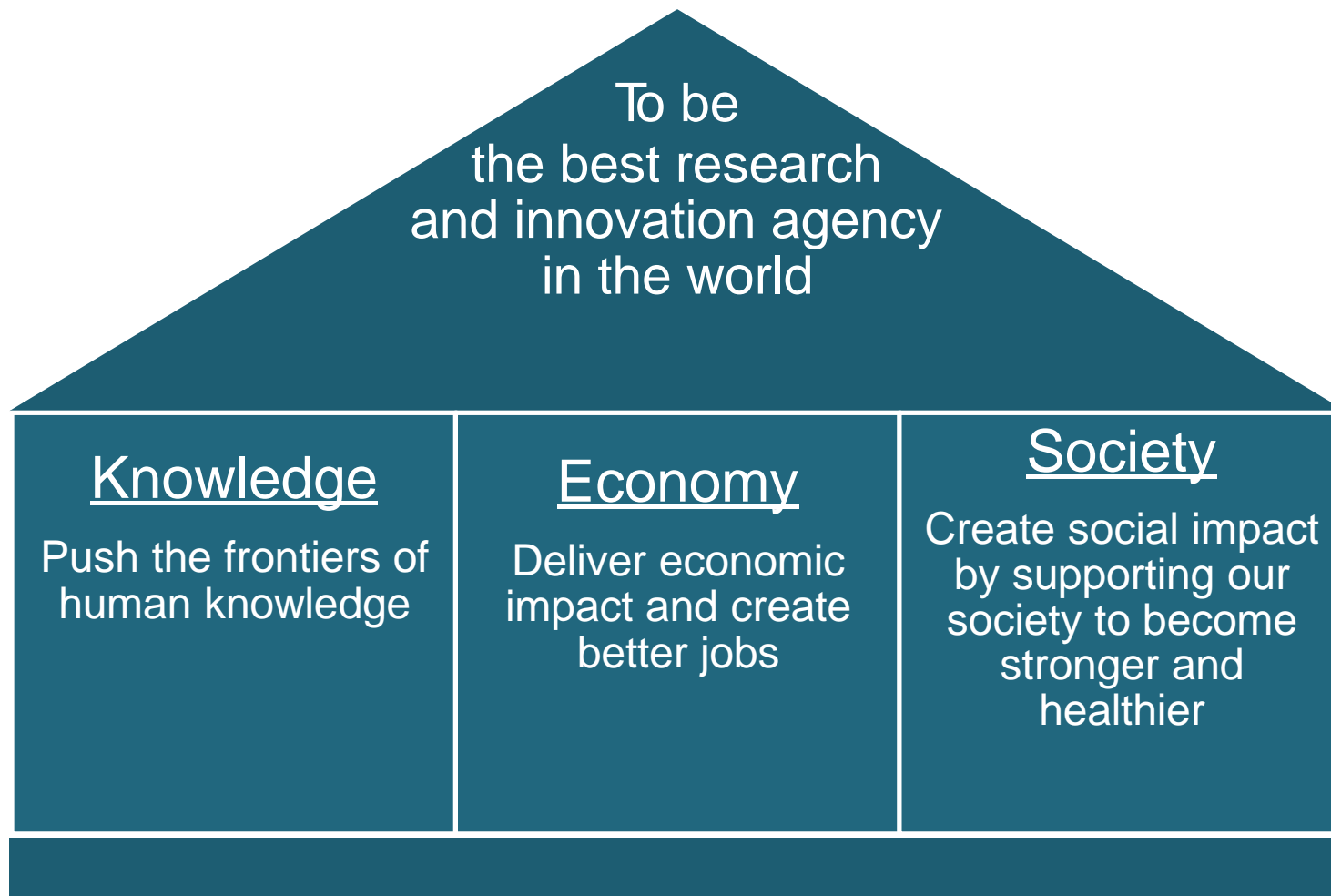


Innovate UK

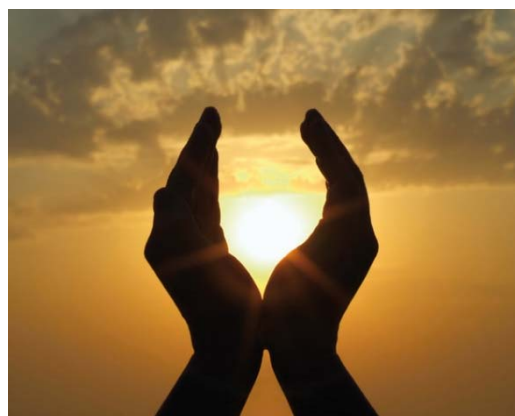


UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

The vision for UK Research and Innovation



RCUK and our international activities



International Vision

- Our ambition is that the UK remains the best place in the world to do research, to innovate and grow business.
- This can only happen if our researchers are able to engage with the brightest minds, and the best organisations and facilities wherever they are placed in the world.
- Research is crucial to tackling the challenges currently facing societies and economies - solutions increasingly require working across disciplines and national borders.



Why

- 1) **International collaboration:** to maintain excellence and impact of UK research through access to the best skills, knowledge and innovative ideas worldwide.
- 2) **Global challenges:** to provide the shared capability to tackle transnational, long-term challenges which impact on UK economic prosperity, security and societal well-being.
- 3) **Emerging economies:** to contribute to growing UK trade and inward investment through demonstrating our research and innovation strengths. To support UK's influence in international policy, negotiations and contested areas
- 4) **Official Development Assistance:** to promote economic development and welfare and build resilience worldwide
- 5) **World class infrastructure:** to achieve better value for money by pooling resources and facilities, leveraging additional resources, and avoiding duplication.
- 6) **Policy development:** to share best practice, support international collaboration and maintain excellence.



How we work internationally

- **Overseas offices:** RCUK Washington; India; China; Brussels
- **Partnering:** e.g. with European and international funding agencies, working with Science and Innovation Network, engagement with Science Europe, Secretariat of Global Research Council
- **Removing barriers to international collaboration.** For example, lead-agency agreements such as with NSF in USA.
- **Acting as the main delivery partner** for the Newton Fund, delivering £200m of research projects in partnership with other UK and overseas delivery partners.
- **Leadership** of the Global Challenge Research Fund to support excellent research that directly contributes to the development and welfare of people in developing countries.
- **Infrastructure:** Providing long-term investment in international infrastructure projects partnerships such as CERN, EMBL and the European Southern Observatory.

Looking forwards

RCUK / UKRI is looking its approach to international collaboration through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms in light of the changing global and policy landscapes. Some of the questions we are considering:

- What will collaboration with European partners look like post-Brexit?
- How will it change our relationships with non-EU partners?
- How can our international activity to contribute to broader UK policy goals, e.g. the Industrial Strategy?
- How do we ensure the UK remains a global partner and destination of choice for research?

Thank you

Any questions?

