

# Business Secretary selects Sir Andrew Mackenzie for new UKRI Chair

- Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng names Sir Andrew Mackenzie FRS as the preferred candidate for chair of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
- Sir Andrew will be tasked with driving forward the government's ambitious research and innovation agenda

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng has selected leading businessman and scientist Sir Andrew Mackenzie as the preferred candidate for chair of UKRI.

Sir Andrew has an impressive background in both science and business. Building upon a successful early career as an academic geochemist, he moved into industry and was Chief Executive of BHP, a world-leading mining company, from 2013 to 2020. He is now Company Chair of Shell.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Sir Andrew's impressive track record at the top tier of business will offer UKRI the strong, commercially-minded leadership it needs to cement our position as a global science superpower. I look forward to working closely with Sir Andrew as we unleash the firepower of UKRI to drive an innovation-led recovery across the United Kingdom.

I'd also like to thank the outgoing chair, Sir John Kingman, for leaving an excellent legacy to build upon as we move forward.

Sir Andrew MacKenzie said:

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored our dependence on research and innovation, and the exceptional contribution the UK has made to solutions the world can embrace. Meanwhile we continue to address the enormous challenge of climate change which will define our generation and the world we leave for our children.

I am honoured to be offered the opportunity to help guide the work of UKRI and steward the extraordinary talent available in our universities, research institutions, charities, business and governments across the UK.

Last year, Sir Andrew was knighted for his services to business, science, technology, and Anglo-Australian relations. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 2014.

Sir Andrew will be tasked with keeping the UK at the forefront of research

and innovation to tackle the biggest industrial and societal challenges facing the world today and to help create the successful British companies of the future.

Sir Andrew will also work with UKRI's Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, and councils to oversee the organisation's funding programmes and research infrastructure.

UKRI aims to create an outstanding research and innovation system that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute and benefit. It is the UK's primary public funding body for research and innovation, with a budget of £7.9 billion for the 2021 to 2022 financial year.

Sir Andrew is due to succeed the current UKRI Chair, Sir John Kingman, who announced his intention to step down in September last year. Sir Andrew is expected to take over this summer.

The post of UKRI chair could be subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee. The Committee will consider this in due course.