

# Press release: Innovate UK welcome appointment of UKRI Chief Executive designate

The Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Jo Johnson has confirmed Sir Mark's appointment as Chief Executive designate of UK Research and Innovation.

UKRI will, subject to legislation currently in Parliament, incorporate the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and the research funding and knowledge exchange parts of HEFCE. It is anticipated that UKRI will be formed in April 2018.

Dr Ruth McKernan, Chief Executive of Innovate UK said:

The creation of UK Research and Innovation is an unprecedented opportunity to fuse together world leading UK science with cutting edge innovation from British businesses. To make sure the new organisation delivers on that opportunity it will require the sort of strong leadership and expert knowledge that Sir Mark will bring to the role.

His substantial experience will set UKRI up for success and the whole team at Innovate UK look forward to continuing to work closely with him to make sure that UKRI is fully prepared to address the scientific, economic and social challenges of the future.

The appointment has also been welcomed by the other organisations that will eventually form part of UK Research and Innovation.

Professor Philip Nelson, Chair of Research Councils UK, said:

Mark is a fantastic choice as the first Chief Executive of UKRI. His career has taken him through active research, leadership of high profile organisations and into government. This experience and his knowledge of how the research and innovation base and policy making works is unrivalled. I am confident Mark will ensure UKRI delivers on the potential of a more coordinated and strategic research and innovation system, with a stronger and clearer voice. Together with my colleagues across the Research Councils I look forward to working with him over the next year to establish UKRI and set it on a successful course.

Professor Madeleine Atkins, HEFCE Chief Executive, said:

We look forward to working with Sir Mark over the coming months in the period of transition to the creation of UK Research and Innovation. The HEFCE Chief Executive, Directors and staff will work with the new Chief Executive to ensure a smooth and efficient process in developing the UKRI and for transferring the relevant staff from HEFCE.

Sir Mark has tremendous experience of research in the public, charity and university sectors. He will bring this to bear on the creation and operation of this very important new public body which will deliver Government policy for science and innovation in the future.

Go to [the announcement by Jo Johnson](#) to find out more information about the role of UK Research and Innovation, and to see the announcement of £15 million of funding through Innovate UK's latest Open competition.