

Realising our ambition through science

A new joint report from the Government Office for Science with HM Treasury sets out a series of recommendations to put science and engineering at the heart of government policy.

Science is crucial for the success of the country and plays a vital role in government, providing the evidence and support we need to achieve impact in policy-making and operations. It ensures government is resilient against shocks and emergencies, and equips us to capitalise on the emerging opportunities that technology provides.

The review [Realising our ambition through science](#) assesses government's current science and engineering capabilities and recommends how best to use these to meet future challenges.

Sir Patrick Vallance, government Chief Scientific Adviser said:

There is an opportunity to recharge and redefine science capability in government to improve the evidence base for decisions and create opportunities for innovation and growth.

We need to drive the changes that are required for us to realise our ambitions as a government by creating an expert, efficient and leading S&T system.

Key recommendations include:

- every department should have a clearly defined science system, set out in a single document which incorporates the entire range of that department's science activity
- all departments should publish annual Areas of Research Interest documents to encourage collaboration and commissioning of R&D
- the government should make greater use of Public Laboratories as leaders in directed R&D programmes
- departmental submissions to HM Treasury as part of Spending Reviews should include a statement of research and development need together with costed plans for meeting those needs
- for important cross-government areas of science, shared governance models should be established to improve co-ordination and to maximise funding opportunities
- plans should be developed to ensure the Civil Service has the scientific skills it needs and the mechanisms to deploy them effectively including remedies for any skills shortages

To realise all the benefits science and engineering can bring across government, the review highlights that as well as practical changes to science in government, we also need a big cultural shift, to put science at the forefront of thinking.

[Read the full review.](#)