

# [Press release: New members of the Council for Science and Technology confirmed](#)

*Updated:* Updated Suranga Chandratillake and Professor Joyce Tait's biographies.

The Council for Science and Technology advises the Prime Minister on strategic science and technology policy issues that cut across the responsibilities of individual government departments.

Sir Mark Walport, Government Chief Scientific Adviser said:

The 5 new members of the Council for Science and Technology bring with them a breadth of experience and expertise which will enable the Council to continue to provide excellent advice to government on science and technology opportunities and challenges. This will help ensure the UK remains at the forefront of global science.

## **New members**

The new members are:

### **Professor Sir David Cannadine (ex-officio member)**

David is President of the British Academy. He is an historian of modern British history from 1800 to 2000. He has published extensively on aspects of social, cultural, political and imperial history from this period. He has focused on the British aristocracy, urban development and the structure of power in British towns, issues of class in Britain and the themes of cultural expression and ceremony. He is Dodge Professor of History at Princeton University and became President of the British Academy in July 2017.

### **Suranga Chandratillake**

Suranga is a General Partner at Balderton Capital, one of Europe's leading early stage venture capital firms. He was previously an entrepreneur and engineer. Suranga founded blinkx, the intelligent search engine for video and audio content in Cambridge in 2004. He then led the company for eight years as CEO through its journey of moving to San Francisco, building a profitable business and going public in London where it achieved a peak market capitalisation in excess of \$1 billion. Before founding blinkx, Suranga was an early employee at Autonomy Corporation – joining as an engineer in the Cambridge Research & Development team and ultimately serving as the company's US Chief Technology Officer in San Francisco. Suranga has a MA in Computer

Science from the University of Cambridge. He holds patents in the area of video discovery and online video advertising, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2012 and was chosen as one of the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders in 2009.

### **Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser**

Ottoline is a professor of plant development at the University of Cambridge and Director of the Sainsbury Laboratory, Cambridge. She received her BA (1986) and PhD (1990) in genetics from the University of Cambridge. Among her honours are the Society of Experimental Biology's President's Medal (2000), the Royal Society Rosalind Franklin Award (2007), the International Plant Growth Substance Association's Silver Medal (2010) and the UK Genetics Society Medal (2016). She was appointed a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in the 2017 New Year Honours list. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Fellow of Clare College Cambridge, a Foreign Associate of the US National Academy of Sciences, a Member of the European Molecular Biology Organisation, and the Leopoldina. She is Chair of the British Society for Developmental Biology and the Royal Society's Science Policy Advisory Group. She is Co-Editor in Chief of Current Opinions in Plant Biology and an Editor of Development.

### **Professor Max Lu**

Max is a Chinese-Australian chemical engineer and nanotechnologist. He has been President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Surrey since April 2016. Previously he was Provost and Senior Vice-President at the University of Queensland. He was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to: education and international research in the field of materials chemistry and nanotechnology, engineering, and Australia-China relations. He has been appointed to the Boards of the National Physical Laboratory and Universities UK. He is a member of the Leadership Council of the National Centre for Universities and Business and a Deputy Lieutenant of Surrey.

### **Professor Joyce Tait**

Joyce is Professor and Director at the Innogen Institute, University of Edinburgh. She has an interdisciplinary background, covering both natural and social sciences specialising in innovation-governance-stakeholder interactions in the life sciences and related areas. She was awarded a CBE for services to the social sciences in 2005 and an honorary doctorate of the Open University in 2009 and she is also Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Appointments include membership of the Synthetic Biology Leadership Council and the Boards of the Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre and the Roslin Foundation.

Additionally, Lord Stern's membership has been extended beyond the end of his ex-officio term as President of the British Academy.

The Council for Science and Technology works on cross-cutting issues of strategic importance, taking a medium to longer-term approach. In developing

its advice, it takes into account the cultural, economic, environmental, ethical and social context of developments in STEM.

## Notes to editors

1) [Find out more about the work of the council.](#)

2) The appointments were made in accordance with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' [Code of practice for ministerial appointments to public bodies.](#)

3) [Members of the Council for Science and Technology](#) are:

- Professor Sir Mark Walport, FRS, FMedSci – Government Chief Scientific Adviser (Co-chair of CST)
- Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, FRS, FMedSci – President and Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University
- Professor Philip Bond, BSc, DEA, FIMA, FInstP – visiting fellow at the Oxford Centre for Industrial and Applied Mathematics and visiting professor at the University of Bristol
- Professor Sir Keith Burnett, CBE, FRS – Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University
- Professor Dame Ann Dowling, DBE, FREng, FRS – President of the Royal Academy of Engineering (ex-officio member)
- Anne Glover, CBE – Chief Executive of Amadeus Capital Partners Ltd
- Dr Paul Golby, CBE, FREng – Chair of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and Chair of NATS
- Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow, FMedSci – ex-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kent
- John Kingman – Chair of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) (ex-officio member)
- Professor Sir Robert Lechler, FMedSci – President of the Academy of Medical Sciences (ex-officio member)
- Dr Michael Lynch, OBE, FREng – Founder of Invoke Capital
- Dervilla Mitchell, CBE, FIEI, FREng – Director of Arup
- Professor Fiona Murray, CBE – Professor of Entrepreneurship at MIT Sloan School of Management
- Professor Sir Venki Ramakrishnan, FRS – President of the Royal Society (ex-officio member)
- Colin Smith, CBE, FREng – ex-Director of Engineering and Technology at Rolls-Royce
- Lord Stern of Brentford – Chair of the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics

4) CST reports directly to the Prime Minister. Its terms of reference are to advise the Prime Minister and government on the implications of science and research, engineering and technology. CST works across the remits of individual departments. Areas of advice include:

- the opportunities and risks that science, technology and disruptive innovation present; using horizon scanning to highlight issues about:
- research and science capability

- innovation and the economy
  - health and quality of life within the UK
  - sustainable development and resilience
  - how science, engineering, technology and mathematics (STEM) can be developed and sustained in the UK; this can be through education and skills, and the promotion of international co-operation
  - what the government's high-level priorities for science and technology should be
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## [Corporate report: Government Office for Science annual report: 2016 to 2017](#)

This annual report sets out the activities and achievements of the Government Office for Science from April 2016 to March 2017. It provides information on:

- our responsibilities
  - highlights of 2016 to 2017
  - responding to emergencies
  - Foresight projects
  - Council for Science and Technology projects
  - communications
  - finances
  - work streams for 2016 to 2017
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# [Corporate report: Government Office for Science annual report: 2016 to 2017](#)

Information on the performance of the Government Office for Science for 2016 to 2017.

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## [News story: New Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser appointed](#)

Professor Aston's role will be to ensure that departmental decisions are informed by the best science and engineering evidence and advice. The Chief Scientific Adviser offers advice directly to ministers and officials and works together with the [Chief Scientific Advisers'](#) network to advise on issues that cut across government.

Professor Aston's appointment follows the retirement of Professor Bernard Silverman earlier this year. He will join the Home Office on 4 September from the University of Cambridge, where he is Professor of Statistics.

Professor Aston specialises in applied statistics but will provide advice on a range of issues at the Home Office. He was, until recently, a trustee of the Alan Turing Institute, and has previously spent much of his career working in the United States and Taiwan.

Speaking ahead of starting his new role, Professor Aston said:

I am honoured and privileged to be joining the Home Office as its Chief Scientific Adviser. I'm looking forward to working with the scientific community to understand the issues facing the Department over the coming years and identify how science, engineering and analysis can help to overcome those challenges.

Patsy Wilkinson, Second Permanent Secretary at the Home Office, said:

Professor Aston brings with him a wealth of experience that will be of great value in ensuring the work we do to keep our country safe and secure continues to be supported by the latest scientific advice and research.



Professor Sir Mark Walport, the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, said:

Having access to high-quality expert scientific advice is critical to every government department. I am delighted to welcome someone with Professor Aston's expertise to the Chief Scientific Advisers' network and look forward to working with him.