

PRIME MINISTER'S COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Meeting summary: 14 and 15 June 2023

Attendees:

- Angela McLean (Chair)
- John Browne (Chair)
- Julia Black
- Muffy Calder
- Suranga Chandratillake (Day 1)
- Kata Escott
- Josh Fleming
- Jim Hall
- Anne Johnson
- Alexandra Jones
- Saul Klein
- Ottoline Leyser
- Max Lu
- Fiona Murray
- Carol Propper
- Keith Ridgway
- Brooke Rogers
- Adrian Smith (Day 1)
- Paul Stein
- Nick Stern

Apologies:

- Suranga Chandratillake (Day 2)
- Jim McDonald
- Paul Newman
- Adrian Smith (Day 2)
- Susannah Storey

Guests:

- Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP, Prime Minister
- Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Rt Hon Chloe Smith MP, Secretary of State for the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
- Philippa Davies, Engineering Director of Reaction Engines
- Mostafa ElSayed, CEO and co-founder of Automata
- Insaya Jafferjee, CEO and co-founder of Shellworks
- Dag Larsson, CEO and co-founder of Doccla
- Alex van Someren, Chief Scientific Adviser for National Security
- Professor Charlotte Watts, Chief Scientific Adviser for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- Professor Irene Tracey, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford
- Dr Andrew Williamson, Managing Partner at Cambridge Innovation Capital

Day 1:

1. Professor Dame Angela McLean provided an update on her priorities as Government Chief Scientific Adviser.
2. The Chancellor of the Exchequer updated members on government plans to boost economic growth in the UK. This includes encouraging investment and smarter regulation in five priority sectors: digital technologies, green industries, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and creative industries. Members offered advice on support for R&D in the creative industries, improving access to finance for scale up of innovative companies in the UK, and growth opportunities presented by AI and Net Zero.
3. The Secretary of State for the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) updated members on government's progress in delivering the Science and Technology framework. The Secretary of State welcomed CST support for the DSIT Expert Exchange scheme and in making DSIT the most innovative department in Whitehall.
4. The Prime Minister updated members on government plans to strengthen the science and technology system in the UK, including through improving skills and talent, and incentivising business investment in R&D. The Prime Minister highlighted the Global Summit on AI Safety to take place in the UK this autumn. The Prime Minister invited CST's continued involvement in the development and implementation of measures to improve the UK science and technology system.
5. Members heard from four emerging leaders in science and technology about their work and their perspectives on the UK's research and innovation environment. The discussion covered how regulation can support innovation, access to interdisciplinary skills and talent, public sector procurement, and access to data.

Day 2:

6. Members received an update from Professor Charlotte Watts, Chief Scientific Adviser for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Alex van Someren, Chief Scientific Adviser for National Security on current international and national security priorities. Members discussed the importance of multilateral collaboration to tackle global challenges, science advice and capability in government, and the adoption of new technologies and innovation in government.
7. Members heard from Dr Andrew Williamson, Cambridge Innovation Capital and Professor Irene Tracey, University of Oxford on the aims and emerging findings of the Independent Review of University Spin-outs¹. Members discussed international comparisons to identify best practice, incentives to support academics to spin out companies, and regional support through incubators, accelerators and innovation hubs.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terms-of-reference-for-the-independent-review-of-university-spin-outs>