



**Meeting of the Innovate UK Council  
Wednesday 22nd April 2020  
Summary of meeting**

**Closed Council Session**

A short closed session for Council members only was held.

**Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Council members to the meeting, which was held via Zoom. The Council was deemed quorate. Updates to members' Declaration of Interests were taken.

**Executive Chair Overview**

During the COVID-19 pandemic Innovate UK has proven effective at operating remotely. Innovate UK's fast response competition (de minimis) received 8,620 applications to support businesses to develop innovative and ambitious ideas to significantly address the needs of society or industry resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The competition has driven development and simplification of the operations process at speed whilst maintaining the principles of quality and value for money. As a result of this fast response competition the organisation has delayed the introduction of new competitions and the closing of all competitions by a month. Focus has been on assisting innovative companies to survive during the next few months for growth after the crisis.

Innovate UK brought in support from the Formula 1 community and Catapults to address the need for ventilators. Staff have engaged with HMT and OLS to accelerate the build of the Vaccines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (VMIC); Innovate UK is also part of the diagnostic task force examining serology testing for COVID-19.

A recent staff survey launched under lockdown showed that communications with staff are strong and that people feel that they are supported whilst working from home during the pandemic. Wellbeing and staff morale are at the forefront of the organisation; further tools to support staff are being deployed.

At the end of the financial year the organisation had delivered to forecast. Council thanked the team for their achievements.

**Minutes of the Risk Committee on 02.04.2020**

A short review of the last Risk Committee meeting was presented.

### **Feedback from UKRI's Audit, Risk, Assurance and Performance Committee (ARAP-C)**

It was explained that the State Aid audit and GIAA recommendations have been largely closed. Council were pleased with progress.

### **Update from UKRI**

The 2020-2021 budget has not been announced. It is expected that UKRI will manage within a flat-real budget for this year.

### **Strategy 2021-2026**

The work to develop Innovate UK's strategy for 2021-2026 was introduced. Council were asked to engage at all stages of development. The need to be bold, ambitious and focus on the future, establishing new priorities to help businesses innovate and grow, was emphasised.

### **Innovate UK Proposed Corporate Objectives 2020-21**

Corporate objectives were discussed. A sub-group of the Council are to engage with EMT to ensure the right level of achievable objectives are set.

### **Comments on papers circulated**

The recent UKRI infrastructure committee meeting was discussed. The remit of the committee includes large-scale physical research facilities, equipment, knowledge-based resources and networks of technologies and e-infrastructures. This may present new opportunities in the future.

Due to the fast-moving nature of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was decided to have a short monthly briefing for Council to receive an update on progress.

### **Reforming our Business**

Progress on the UKRI wide Reforming our Business programme was reviewed.

### **AOB**

Council were keen to thank staff for their response and support during the COVID-19 pandemic, reiterating that wellbeing and safety of staff is paramount during these challenging circumstances.

**The formal minutes of this meeting will be approved at the next Innovate UK Council meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2020.**