



United Kingdom – National Embedment

1. RI definition

In which points does the National Roadmap deviate from the ESFRI Roadmap?

Categories	National Roadmap
Funding	x
Categorisation of RI	
Access to RI	
Organisation within national procedure	

The types of facility that fall into this class are typically those that are large and very expensive; have long useful lifetimes, e.g. 10-20 years; have multiple users both national and international; are interdisciplinary; offer unique capabilities within the UK, or more widely; and are potentially jointly funded or suitable subjects for international collaboration, in some cases distributed across a number of different countries.

ESFRI-based: Research infrastructures are facilities, resources and services that a research community uses to conduct research and promote innovation in its field. Where relevant, the infrastructure can also be used for other purposes than research, for example education or public services. Among other things, it concerns important scientific equipment or collections of instruments; knowledge-based resources such as collections of natural specimens, archives and collections of scientific data; e-infrastructure such as (interlinked) data files and computer systems and communication networks and any other unique infrastructure that is critically important for achieving excellence in research and innovation. This could refer to infrastructures situated in a single location, or virtual or distributed infrastructures (in the UK or abroad).

Source: Data derived from InRoad Consultation on RI (2017).

2. RI players in the national R&I system

National relevance of RI

According to James Fothergill, Head of Education & Skills, Confederation of British Industries, the investment in research capital is essential to ensure that the UK has the best available resources to stimulate growth and support the wellbeing of the nation. Industry benefits greatly from capital investment through access to advanced facilities as well as access to world-leading scientific and technical expertise. Ensuring that such capital investment is maintained in order to fund new, cutting edge facilities and attract the best expertise to work with business and industry is vital to the future growth and competitiveness of UK business and Industry as well as to the UK as a whole (Research Councils UK, 2012, p. 4). This was reflected in the recently published UK Government Industrial Strategy in November 2017. ([link](#) [Last access: 07/2017])

Embedding of RI in the national R&I system

The UK is viewed as an example of good practice in terms of its policies towards the accessibility of RI. The UK Government is continuing to work through ESFRI and directly with the Commission to further realise the opportunities that could arise for the strategic planning and operation of such facilities, including access for non-national researchers, both within and outside Europe. In 2012, the UK Research Councils, as a leading institution in the RI system of the UK, published a capital investment framework. To build on this, the Government carried out a consultation with the research community and other stakeholders to identify priorities for investment to 2021. The consultation included both institutional and regional based infrastructures but also where the UK could collaborate on an international basis, either as a host or part funding a facility based elsewhere. (Cunningham 2016, p. 53)

The next national Roadmap is currently under preparation, to be published in spring 2019, and is



wider in scope looking at RIs funded from sources other than RCUK.

3. RI in the National R&I System

The UK research system is largely centralised. The Devolved Administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have responsibility for aspects of health and education funding. Block funding for higher education institutes is provided by separate higher education funding councils (or similar bodies) in each country, although the bulk of research funding across the UK is provided via the Research Councils. The Research Councils UK (RCUK) is a Non-Departmental Public Body with the responsibility to administer the cooperation between the seven individual research councils for coordination and funding of research in the arts, humanities, science and engineering. The councils are expected to work together more effectively to enhance the overall impact and effectiveness of their research, training and innovation. The governing bodies of the research councils are appointed by the Secretary for Innovation, Universities and Skills. The councils, therefore, receive public funds from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). From April 2018, **UK Research and Innovation** will bring together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England. Research England will work closely with its partner organisations in the devolved administrations.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills plays the lead executive role in research issues, and is the home of the Government Office for Science (GO-Science), headed by the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA). GO-Science plays the lead role in improving the quality of science in the UK. The CSA also chairs the principal high-level national policy making and coordination body, the Council for Science and Technology (CST), further, committees in the upper and lower houses of Parliament are integrated in the process. Besides the Research Council United Kingdom, Higher Education Funding Council, Innovate UK and academies, as the Royal Society receive funds from the DBIS.

At the regional level in England, responsibility for innovation support has been assumed by Innovate UK (formerly the Technology Strategy Board). At the local level in England, some innovation policy and related activities are coordinated by Local Economic Partnerships. (Cunningham 2016, p. 14)

4. Major national strategies for international cooperation in R&I and strategic integration of RI

The next national Roadmap is currently under preparation, to be published in spring 2019. The Roadmap will be wider in scope looking at RI funded from sources other than RCUK, and will cover areas of international cooperation.

References

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