

## Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:

### Next steps for UK research and innovation policy

Timing: Morning, Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025

\*\*\*Taking place online\*\*\*



WESTMINSTER  
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Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Assessing the UK's R&I landscape - current state of play**  
Senior academic  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **UK R&I strategy and priorities moving forward**  
*key priorities | defining success and measuring performance | accountability | fostering international competitiveness alongside domestic economic growth | assessing priorities for AI investment | implications of sectoral shifts in R&D focus | role of the Regulatory Innovation Office | next steps for UKRI and ARIA under 10-year funding commitments | implications for long-term research planning*  
Senior representative, university  
Senior representative, research  
Senior representative, business  
Senior representative, AI  
Senior representative, think tank  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 **Chair's closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.25 Break
- 10.35 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.40 **Investment in UK R&I and national funding goals**  
*public-private mix and relationships | options for regulatory and tax reform and priorities for the National Wealth Fund | foreign investment | the future for R&D in the health sector | options for expansion, including AI, energy, and defence | strategies for retaining and scaling innovative ventures in the UK*  
Senior representative, research  
Senior representative, investment  
Senior representative, charity  
Senior representative, energy  
Senior commentator  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 **Key priorities for the higher education sector in enhancing UK R&I**  
**Mehwaesh Islam**, Head, Research Policy, Universities UK  
**Greg Wade**, Head, Innovation Policy, Universities UK
- 11.45 **Developing a joined-up R&I ecosystem**  
*university funding and research sustainability | challenges posed by financial constraints on universities | impact of rising National Insurance costs | tuition fee adjustments and alternative funding models | strengthening links between HEIs and business | government and business roles in shaping R&I success | optimising policy levers to drive innovation | benchmarking UK policy against international competitors | strategic considerations for attracting and retaining foreign investment*  
**Chris Molloy**, CEO, Medicines Discovery Catapult  
Senior representative, business  
Senior representative, local authority  
Senior representative, international university  
Senior representative, charity
- 12.10 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Next steps for R&I policy in the UK**  
Senior representative, policy  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian  
**Sean Cudmore**, Westminster Higher Education Forum