

Overview

- i. Cardiff University is an ambitious and innovative university with a bold and strategic vision. We provide an educationally outstanding experience for our students. Driven by creativity and curiosity, we strive to fulfil our social, cultural, and economic obligations to Cardiff, Wales, the UK, and wider world.
- ii. Given the remit of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, we are recommending priorities that relate to research and innovation. We believe the Committee should examine the:
 - Funding for research and innovation, with a focus on the unfulfilled recommendations of the Diamond and Reid reviews.^{1 2}
 - Future of regional development funding in Wales, with particular attention to the replacements for EU schemes.
 - Opportunities for Wales in the wider research and innovation landscape, in particular Wales's access to and relationship with the Advanced Research and Invention Agency.
- iii. The Committee should note that research and innovation are closely aligned with other matters in higher education (HE). The University will also be suggesting that the Children, Young People and Education Committee consider England's reforms of HE and that the Health and Social Care Committee examine the expansion of medical education. We would be happy to provide those submissions as supplementary evidence to this committee. Cross-committee collaboration on these matters or on a wider inquiry could be a sensible step forward.
- iv. We would also strongly recommend that the Committee seeks the views of the Centre for Innovation Policy Research.³ In particular, the expertise of Professor Gillian Bristow on economic resilience and crises would be of benefit to Wales as it continues to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- v. Similarly, the University's recently agreed partnership with the National Institute of Economic and Social Research will be vital source of insights for the Committee and Wales during the pandemic and recovery.⁴ The partnership will see University researchers apply the Institute's modelling and forecasting capacity to the Welsh economy, with a quarterly report focusing specifically on the Welsh economy is also planned from autumn 2021.

1. What do you think the Committee's strategic priorities should be over the next six months?

- 1.1 The three issues outlined above – Reid review implementation, post-Brexit development funds and the Advanced Research and Invention Agency – will come to a head in the next six months. Ideally, they could be covered by a single inquiry in that timeframe. We would suggest research and innovation funding as a suitably broad topic for covering the range of issues. To aid the Committee, an overview of each is below.

2. Welsh Government funding for research and innovation (Diamond and Reid review legacies)

- 2.1 Welsh universities are vital to the economy; in 2015/16, they generated over £5bn and almost 50,000 jobs.⁵ The economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and post-EU agenda make it essential that the Welsh Government implements the outstanding, accepted recommendations of the Diamond and Reid reviews, namely:
 - Maintain quality related (QR) research funding to preserve academic autonomy.⁶

¹ Diamond, I. 2016. *The Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangement in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

² Reid, G. 2018. *Review of Government Funded Research and Innovation in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

³ Cardiff University. 2021. *Centre for Innovation Policy Research*. Cardiff: Cardiff University.

⁴ Cardiff University. 2021. *Regional data vital for economic and social pandemic recovery*. Cardiff: Cardiff University.

⁵ Kelly, U. and McNicoll, I. 2018. *The Economic Impact of Higher Education in Wales*. Cardiff: Universities Wales.

⁶ Russell Group. 2021. *Underpinning our world class research base: the importance of 'QR' funding*. London: Russell Group.

- Increase HEFCW's innovation and engagement funding to £25m per annum (it is currently £15m).⁷
 - Create a £30m Future of Wales Fund, rewarding institutions that attract investment into Wales.
 - Establish a £35m St David's Investment Fund for innovation competitions and hubs.
- 2.2 The Fifth Senedd's Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee supported the implementation of these recommendations as a matter of urgency in its legacy report.⁸ Despite accepting the committee's request in principle, the Welsh Government's response is unclear as to whether it will proceed in full.⁹
- 2.3 The Welsh Government's response, as well as other statements, pointed to the UK Government's plans for post-EU funding as casting doubt on Reid implementation.^{10 11 12} However, this should not be the case as Reid *clearly included spending commitments for the Welsh Government with and without control of replacement EU funds*.¹³ Similarly disappointing claims were made throughout the last Senedd.
- 2.4 The Welsh Government's response also stated that "HEFCW is working with Universities Wales on a further coordination initiative to aid capture of competitive funding".¹⁴ It is true that HEFCW and Universities Wales are collaborating on such matters, with Professor Reid having produced an entirely separate report on how Welsh universities can best make use of their strengths.¹⁵ However, *Reid's work for Universities Wales in no way obviates or negates the implementation of the Welsh Government-commissioned and -backed Reid review*.
- 2.5 We believe the Welsh Government is still c. £63.5m per year short of its accepted Reid commitments.

Table 1: Difference between Reid recommendations and current allocations

Stream	Reid (£m) ¹⁶	2021/22 allocation (£m) ¹⁷	Difference (£m)
QR	71	81.7	10.7
Postgraduate research	8.75	6.2	-2.55
Sêr Cymru	6	5.7 ¹⁸	-0.3
HEFCW innovation and engagement	25	15	-10
Learned Society of Wales	1	0	-1
Future of Wales Fund	30	0	-30
Welsh Government innovation	10	4.7 ¹⁹	-5.3
Innovation hubs	10	0	-10
Innovation competitions	15	0	-15
<i>Total</i>	<i>176.75</i>	<i>113.3</i>	<i>-63.45</i>

- 2.6 It is not possible to model institutional shortfalls for each funding stream (e.g., innovation competitions) but the following provides a guide:

⁷ HEFCW. 2021. [HEFCW's Funding Allocations 2021/22](#). Caerphilly: HEFCW.

⁸ Welsh Parliament Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee. 2021. [Long-term recovery from COVID-19](#). Cardiff: Senedd Cymru.

⁹ Welsh Government. 2021. [Welsh Government response to the Economy Infrastructure and Skills Committee Long-term recovery from COVID-19](#). Cardiff: Senedd Cymru.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 7.

¹¹ Senedd Cymru. [WQ82855 \(e\)](#). Cardiff: Senedd Cymru.

¹² McIntyre, F. 2021. [Welsh government 'committed' to Reid R&D review](#). London: Research Professional.

¹³ Reid 2018, p. 64.

¹⁴ Welsh Government response to the Economy Infrastructure and Skills Committee Long-term recovery from COVID-19. p. 7.

¹⁵ Reid, G. 2020. [Strength in Diversity: Exploring opportunities for collaboration in research and innovation between universities in Wales](#). Cardiff: Universities Wales.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ All figures from HEFCW 2021/22 allocations, unless otherwise stated.

¹⁸ Welsh Government. 2020. [Welsh Government Draft Budget 2021-22: Ministers' written evidence to Senedd scrutiny committees on allocations within each MEG](#). Cardiff: Welsh Government.

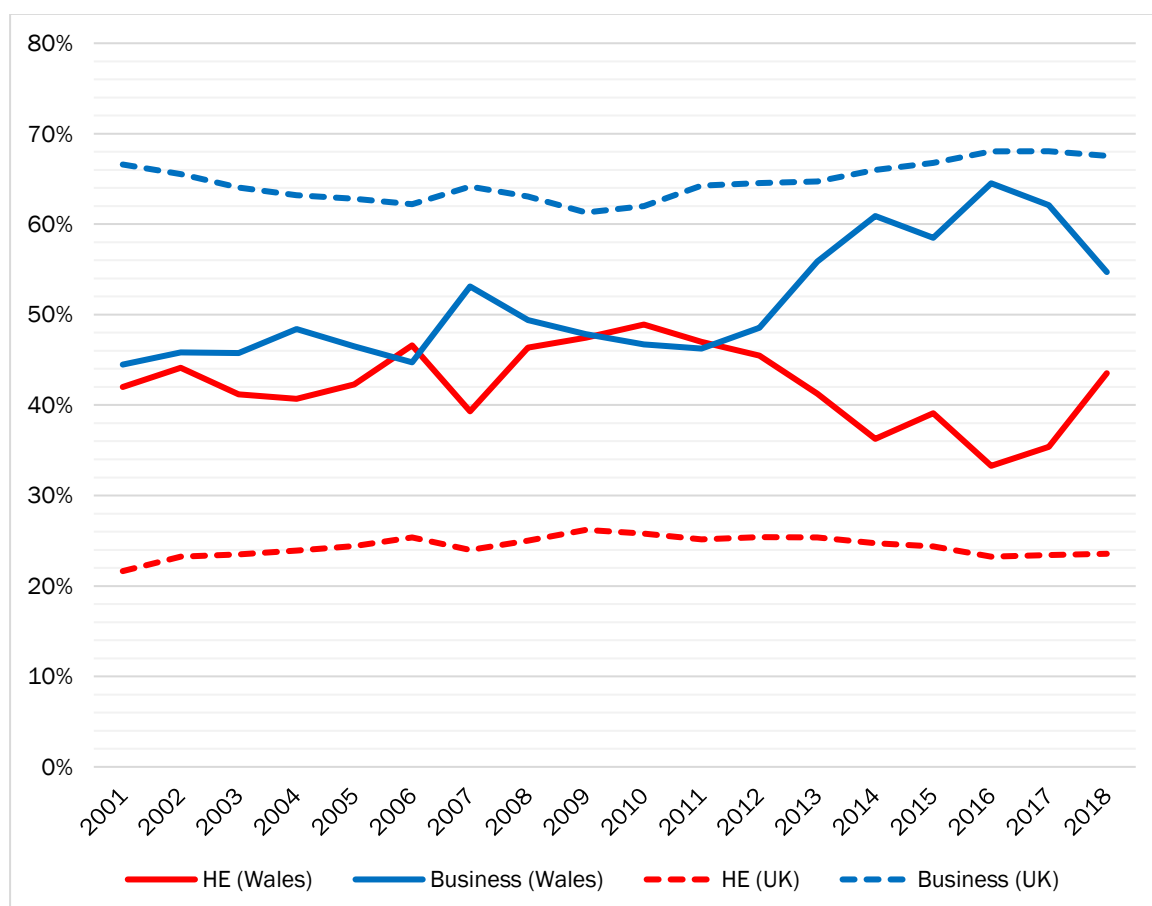
¹⁹ Total of lines marked "innovation" in the Welsh Government's budget. See: Welsh Government. 2021. [Final Budget 2021 to 2022](#). Cardiff: Welsh Government.

Table 2: Difference between Reid recommendations and current allocations for HE

University	HEFCW innovation and engagement (£m)		Future of Wales Fund (£m)		Difference (£m)
	Reid	2021/22 allocation ²⁰	Reid	2021/22 allocation ²¹	
Aberystwyth	2.83	1.70	2.72	0	-3.85
Bangor	3.53	2.12	2.76	0	-4.16
Cardiff	4.07	2.44	15.32	0	-16.92
Cardiff Met	2.30	1.38	0.32	0	-1.25
Glyndŵr	1.82	1.09	0.08	0	-0.81
OU Wales	0.9	0.54	0	0	-0.33
Swansea	4.45	2.67	8.01	0	-9.81
USW	2.10	1.26	0.74	0	-1.61
UWTSD	2.98	1.79	0.04	0	-1.24
Total	25	15	30	0	-40

2.7 The situation is made more severe by the pandemic and the disappearance of EU funding. Universities are more important for R&D in Wales compared to the UK: in the last twenty years, higher education expenditure on research has twice overtaken the private sector in Wales (this has come nowhere close to happening at the UK level).^{22 23}

Figure 1: Contribution of HE and private sector to national R&D expenditure (2001–2018)



²⁰ Calculated *pro rata*.

²¹ Calculated by dividing £30m in accordance with average share of Wales's last five years' research income. See: Higher Education Statistics Agency. [What is the income of HE providers?](#). Cheltenham: Higher Education Statistics Agency.

²² StatsWales. 2020. [Research and development expenditure in Wales by expenditure type and year](#). Cardiff: Welsh Government.

²³ ONS. 2020. [Research and development expenditure](#). Newport: ONS.

- 2.8 Business are now divesting from R&D to safeguard core functions during the pandemic.²⁴ Recent evidence suggests the pandemic is disrupting universities' ability to collaborate with business; the impact is likely to be particularly acute in Wales where such collaboration is strongly needed.^{25 26} Such falls in activity will be felt sharply; according to the latest public data on R&D in the UK, Wales already has the second lowest level of spending, lowest level per head and second-slowest growth in private expenditure.^{27 28 29}

Table 3: R&D spending and source across the UK in 2018

Nation/region (£m)	Government and UKRI (£m)	HE (£m)	Business (£m)	Private non-profit (£m)	Total (£m)	Total per head (£) ³⁰
East of England	279	927	5,141	251	6,598	1,064
Southeast of England	643	1,262	5,031	93	7,029	770
Northeast and Northwest of England ³¹	211	999	2,474	46	3,730	698
London	569	2,058	2,906	353	5,886	661
West Midlands	74	455	2,744	12	3,285	557
Scotland	181	1,126	1,356	43	2,706	498
East Midlands	90	348	1,769	2	2,209	460
Southwest of England	262	452	1,752	17	2,483	443
Northern Ireland	17	174	524	-	715	380
Yorkshire and Humberside	120	597	921	3	1,641	299
Wales	14	342	430	-	786	250

- 2.9 Recent research for the world's central banks examined innovation after crises, noting that patenting is expected to drop as firms cancel new and existing R&D projects; it suggested targeting finance at R&D to speed up recovery, with measures most effective for the first two years after a crisis.³² It also warned of a larger drop in industries more dependent on external finance – to note, the Welsh HE sector has “external debt forecast at well over 50% of income in 2020/21, significantly above average UK levels”.³³ Welsh Government backing for university innovation is, therefore, especially important because of private sector retrenchment. The key role innovation plays in fostering resilience cannot be overstated.³⁴
- 2.10 The Welsh Government has indicated that the UK Government's proposals for replacing EU funding (see below) will mean a period of austerity in Wales, with the Welsh Government required to make difficult spending decisions.^{35 36} It is imperative that research and innovation funding is safeguarded in such an eventuality.
- 2.11 It should be noted that the Welsh Government provided several allocations throughout the pandemic in a bid to provide financial stability for the sector. The Welsh Government allocated £27m for a Higher Education and Recovery Fund, of which £7.4m (27.4%) went towards protecting the Welsh research base.^{37 38} The sector was also supported with £40m to allocate to

²⁴ National Centre for Universities and Business. 2021. *Innovation and Resilience in a Crisis: the Impact of Covid-19 on Business R&D*. London: National Centre for Universities and Business.

²⁵ Ulrichsen, T. 2021. *Innovating During a Crisis: the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on how universities contribute to innovation*. London: National Centre for Universities and Business / University Commercialisation & Innovation Policy Exchange Unit.

²⁶ Bristow, G. and Healy, A. 2020. *Evidence submitted to the Welsh Affairs Committee Inquiry into the impact of Covid-19 on the Welsh economy*. London: UK Parliament.

²⁷ ONS. 2020. *Gross domestic expenditure on research and development, by region, UK*. Newport: ONS.

²⁸ Rhodes, C., Hutton, G. and Ward, M. 2020. *Research Briefing: research and development spending*. London: UK Parliament.

²⁹ Welsh Government. 2020. *Research and development business enterprise expenditure: 2019*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

³⁰ Per head calculations from House of Commons calculations (see above).

³¹ Figures partially combined in ONS dataset.

³² Hardy, B. and Sever, C. 2020. *BIS Working Papers No 846: Financial Crises and Innovation*. Basel: Bank for International Settlements.

³³ HEFCW. 2021. *Impact of Covid-19 on Welsh HE Sector: HEFCW report to Children, Young People and Education Committee, March 2021*. Cardiff: Senedd Cymru.

³⁴ Bristow, G. and Healy, A. 2018. *Innovation and regional economic resilience: an exploratory analysis*, *The Annals of Regional Science* 60, pp. 265-284.

³⁵ Nation.Cymru. 2021. *Mark Drakeford: Wales facing 'very difficult days' if UK Gov breaks Brexit promise*. Carmarthen: Nation.Cymru.

³⁶ Bounds, A. 2021. *Wales is on path to austerity after EU funds cut, says minister*. London: Financial Times.

³⁷ Welsh Government. 2020. *Over £50 million to support Welsh universities, colleges and students*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

³⁸ HEFCW. 2021. *W21/08HE: Higher Education Investment and Recovery Fund – Outcomes*. Caerphilly: HEFCW.

students facing financial hardship.³⁹ Lastly, headroom in the Welsh Government's third supplementary budget for 2020–21 meant £44m could be allocated at pace to capital projects.⁴⁰ These were extremely welcome interventions, and we are in no doubt about the gratitude owed to the public. However, the need for *recurrent and sustainable funding* remains pressing; it is not possible to budget for in-year allocations, especially those that have no likelihood of reappearing.

3. Post-EU regional development funding

- 3.1 Pre-Brexit, Wales benefitted significantly from EU regional development funding. This was particularly important for universities, who received roughly £570m from European structural funds since the turn of the millennium. For the University, this funding was instrumental in several of our major initiatives, including our state-of-the-art Brain Imaging Centre, our Data Innovation Accelerator providing data expertise for small companies, and our contributions to the South Wales compound semiconductor cluster. Funding enabled co-operation between universities and wider partners, with a positive knock-on impact for the local economy. It also kept Welsh universities competitive; Welsh expenditure on R&D lags other UK nations and regions by some way, hampering innovation (see above).
- 3.2 Post-Brexit, the UK Government is pursuing a 'levelling up' agenda. This is of direct relevance to universities, not least because the agenda's success will in part be measured by the percentage of recent HE graduates in high-skilled employment and any increased productivity in the nations and regions of the UK.⁴¹ The University supports this agenda in principle and will help these efforts in every possible way.
- 3.3 Levelling up and its various attendant funds will step into the gap left by the removal of access to EU support for regional development. One of the primary vehicles for levelling up is the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The 2019 Conservative manifesto promised the UKSPF would tackle "inequality and deprivation in each of the four nations" and at a "minimum match the size of [EU structural] funds in each nation".⁴² This was reiterated at the despatch box and in media statements after the Westminster election.^{43 44}
- 3.4 However, the UK Government is now committing only that "total domestic UK-wide funding will at least match current EU receipts, on average reaching around of £1.5 billion a year".⁴⁵ Matching UK-wide receipts is not the same as matching within each region and nation. The UKSPF will also start as a pilot programme with £220m for the entire UK, but Wales alone would have received some £370m under the EU programme in 2021.⁴⁶
- 3.5 To reiterate, public investment in R&D helps to leverage significant private sector investment. UK Government analysis indicates that an additional £1 of public spending in R&D gives rise to an increase in private R&D funding of £1.36 over a ten-year period.⁴⁷ A 2020 report calculated that imbalances in R&D spending mean that regions and nations beyond the 'Golden Triangle' of London and Oxbridge miss out annually on £4bn and an associated £8bn private sector multiplier.⁴⁸ Wales is missing out on £420m on public R&D investment and a substantial private sector multiplier.⁴⁹
- 3.6 The University believes the UK Government should:

³⁹ Welsh Government. 2021. [£40 million extra to support students facing financial hardship](#). Cardiff: Welsh Government.

⁴⁰ Welsh Government. 2021. [3rd Supplementary Budget for 2020 to 2021](#). Cardiff: Welsh Government.

⁴¹ HM Treasury. 2020. [Spending Review 2020: Provisional priority outcomes and metrics](#). London: UK Government.

⁴² Conservative Party. 2019. [Get Brexit Done, Unleash Britain's Potential: The Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto 2019](#). London: Conservative Party.

⁴³ *Hansard* HC Deb, [vol.669 col.1007](#), 15 January 2020.

⁴⁴ Wells, I. 2020. [Brexit: Wales' EU aid replacement progress 'unacceptable'](#). London: BBC.

⁴⁵ HM Treasury. 2020. [Spending Review](#). London: UK Government.

⁴⁶ HM Treasury. 2021. [Budget 2021](#). London: UK Government.

⁴⁷ Economic Insight. 2015. [What is the relationship between public and private investment in science, research and innovation?: a report commissioned by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills](#). London: UK Government.

⁴⁸ Forth, T. and Jones, R. 2020. [The Missing £4 Billion: Making R&D work for the whole UK](#). London: Nesta.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 7.

- Fulfil its manifesto pledge and subsequent promises by at least matching regional investment funding Wales would have received under the next EU funding round.
- Underpin regional development funding with a common framework to set the terms of co-operation between the four governments of the UK.⁵⁰
- Not force regions and nations of the UK to choose between competing economic development initiatives (levelling up should not mean universities picking sides between Cardiff and Westminster).
- Ring-fence funds for research and innovation within levelling up schemes.

3.7 Anything short of these recommendations will present serious problems for research and innovation in Wales. Indeed, the Institute for Government has warned that the UKSPF will:

- Risk duplication of functions, with the UK and Welsh Government funding similar initiatives that compete with one another.
- Fragment service provision and confuse lines of accountability at the local level.
- Introduce funding uncertainty for the Welsh Government and local authorities.
- Increase already high tensions between the UK and devolved governments, putting additional strain on the Union.⁵¹

3.8 Many of these issues with the UKSPF are outwith the Senedd's direct influence. However, the Committee should explore the options that can be pursued within the competencies of the Senedd and the Welsh Government. The collaborative work on the Welsh Government's regional development framework showed that there is appetite to advance this agenda.⁵² The University offers its full support to the framework and would welcome the chance to explore how it can be delivered despite the new Westminster reservations included in the UK Internal Market Act.

3.9 The Committee may wish to look at that matter in a way that draws lessons from recent accomplishments. For example, UKRI's Strength in Places Fund has been a success story for the University, but its future is unclear. The Fund "helps areas of the UK to build on existing strengths in research and innovation to deliver benefits for their local economy".⁵³ It has backed two consortia led by the University, bringing significant UKRI investment into Wales; University-led bids resulted in £44m and £50m for the region's compound semiconductor and media sectors, respectively.^{54 55} In terms of 'levelling up', the University believes this is an excellent way of providing targeted support for sectors with specific strength in regions and localities. The Fund's future should be prioritised, which is a matter on which the University would appreciate the Welsh Government and Senedd's support.

4. Advanced Research and Invention Agency and the UK Government's ambitions

4.1 The University submitted evidence to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee regarding the UK Government's creation of the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA).⁵⁶ This evidence was cited extensively by the Committee in its recommendations to the UK Government.⁵⁷ In sum, the University advocated that ARIA should:

- Be based outside of London and the southeast of England, preferably in a devolved nation.
- Be mission-orientated, more agile and less risk-averse than current funding systems.
- Operate over the long-term, with programmes running from 10 to 15 years.

⁵⁰ For further information, see: Dougan, M. et al. 2020. *UK Internal Market Bill, Devolution and the Union*. Edinburgh: Centre on Constitutional Change.

⁵¹ Nice, A., Paun, A. and Hall, D. 2021. *The UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Strengthening the union or undermining devolution?*. London: Institute for Government.

⁵² Welsh Government. 2020. *A Framework for Regional Investment in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

⁵³ UKRI. 2021. *Strength in Places Fund*. Swindon: UKRI.

⁵⁴ Cardiff University. 2020. *Cardiff-led consortium wins £44m bid to develop CS chip cluster*. Cardiff: Cardiff University.

⁵⁵ Cardiff University. 2021. *Media sector in Cardiff Capital Region to benefit from £50m funding*. Cardiff: Cardiff University.

⁵⁶ Cardiff University. 2020. *Written Evidence Submitted by Cardiff University (RFA0018)*. London: UK Parliament.

⁵⁷ House of Commons Science and Technology Committee. 2021. *A new UK research funding agency*. London: UK Parliament.

- Sit as a new stand-alone body, separate from UKRI and Innovate UK. Doing so would give the new UK research agency fresh impetus and not tie it to existing structures and existing ways of thinking.
 - Have proportional representation from each of the UK nations on its board and a clear four-nation remit – ideally also being based in one of the devolved nations to further emphasise the need to move the UK’s research agenda and thinking outside of the ‘Golden Triangle’ of Oxbridge and London.
 - Be funded as an addition to current research investments (i.e., not displacing current funding available to UKRI).
- 4.2 Judging by the ARIA Bill, its accompanying documents and the UK Government’s response to the committee, many of these calls will become reality.^{58 59} However, Wales’s access and role in the set-up are yet to be clarified.
- 4.3 The Welsh Government recently issued its memorandum on whether the Senedd should grant legislative consent to the Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill, which the UK Government intends to pass to establish ARIA.⁶⁰ The Welsh Government has recommended that the Senedd should not grant legislative consent to the Bill, objecting on two grounds:
- The Bill does not make provision for the Welsh Government to have any representative in ARIA’s governance, with UK Government officials the only persons mandated.
 - The Bill will “reserve a number of powers to UK Government with respect to research and innovation in Wales and we [the Welsh Government] consider this is unacceptable”.⁶¹
- 4.4 The first objection is a point the University has made on other matters and is understandable, with Welsh representation on UK boards often insufficient. We also accept Downing Street’s view that the point of ARIA is to do things differently and that it should, therefore, have its governance and culture created by the chief executive and staff (if ARIA is to work, it needs as few ‘rules’ imposed on it as possible).
- 4.5 The second objection is more problematic. Schedule 7A of the Government of Wales Act 2006 lists the areas that are reserved at Westminster. The Wales Act 2017 amended the Government of Wales Act 2006 to include “Research Councils within the meaning of the Science and Technology Act 1965, and the subject-matter of section 5 of that Act (funding of scientific research) so far as relating to those Councils” as a specific reservation, with competency resting with Westminster. In addition, the Higher Education Act 2017 extended that definition to include UKRI.⁶² In effect, Research Councils have always been reserved and were joined by UKRI in 2017. Objecting to ARIA would not be in accordance with that precedent and, moreover, does little to help Welsh research and science.
- 4.6 The Welsh Government’s objection is portentous for the Sixth Senedd. Failing to fulfil Reid promises at the same time as jeopardising Welsh access to an innovative UK scheme does little to advance Welsh research, scientists and universities. There are significant efforts from the UK Government to invest substantially in research and innovation, with a particular focus on science and technology. The UK Government has a stated commitment to increase R&D investment to an amount equivalent to 2.4% of GDP by 2027, which would bring the UK into line with the OECD average. By contrast, Wales currently spends 1%.⁶³ The Committee could consider how Wales can best allow its universities and others to benefit from the UK Government’s ambitions.

⁵⁸ UK Parliament. 2021. [Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill](#). London: UK Parliament.

⁵⁹ House of Commons Science and Technology Committee. [A new UK research funding agency: Government Response to the Committee’s Third Report of Session 2019–21](#). London: UK Parliament.

⁶⁰ Gething, V. 2021. [Legislative Consent Memorandum: Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill](#). Cardiff: Senedd Cymru.

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 6.

⁶² [Government of Wales Act 2006](#). c. 32.

⁶³ Tilby, E. 2021. [Research and Innovation in Wales: Research Briefing](#). Cardiff: Senedd Cymru.

- 5. What do you think the Committee's longer term objectives and priorities should be for the term of the sixth Senedd?**
- 5.1 If it is not possible to prioritise research and innovation funding in the next six months, the Committee should commit to examine the issue thereafter. Of the priorities we have suggested, the fallout of regional development funding will retain salience through the Sixth Senedd.
- 5.2 The Committee should consider focussing on research culture and how the Welsh Government and Senedd can support this agenda in Wales. The UK Government has published a strategy for people and culture in R&D, and the matter is of importance for UKRI.⁶⁴ The Russell Group, of which the University is a member, has issued proposals to boost the working environment and culture in research.⁶⁵ Within Wales, HEFCW has published an action plan to support the career development of researchers and will participate in a UK-wide consideration of research assessment.^{66 67}
- 5.3 The Committee may also need to conduct a joint inquiry with the Children, Young People and Education Committee, should the UK Government pursue major reforms that fundamentally alter the funding of universities (despite devolved competencies, there is clear spill-over into Welsh higher education). The Committee should note that the level of reforms being proposed for England has considerable potential to render the current system in Wales obsolete.
- 5.4 Similarly, the expansion of Wales's medical education – suggested as a priority to the Health and Social Care Committee – will have an impact on the staff involved in medical research and innovation.

⁶⁴ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. 2021. [R&D People and Culture Strategy](#). London: UK Government.

⁶⁵ Russell Group. 2021. [Realising Our Potential: Backing Talent and Strengthening UK Research Culture and Environment](#). London: Russell Group.

⁶⁶ HEFCW. 2021. [HEFCW Action Plan for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#). Caerphilly: HEFCW.

⁶⁷ HEFCW. 2021. [Launch of the future research assessment programme](#). Caerphilly: HEFCW.