

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Infrastructure Advisory Committee
Date: 06 November 2025 14:26:24
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
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Hi [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Today our infrastructure leads were told about the challenges facing UKRI in funding infrastructure projects in light of the likely allocations, and the job of the IAC at their next meeting. I am now emailing IAC members slightly ahead of them receiving their papers. I have copied their letter below for your information.

All exec chairs impacted by the IAC approach have been fully engaged (same with Ian), and we're working with comms for if/when this leaks. We have proactive lines to take.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

06 November 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

We are looking forward to welcome you to the IAC meeting in two weeks in Liverpool. The papers for the meeting will be forwarded by the secretariat shortly, but I wanted to write to you personally regarding this meeting format as it represents a change from normal.

The IAC have until now taken the following approach to prioritising infrastructure investments:

1. Members individually assess proposals received e.g. for Wave 3 of the infrastructure fund
2. Together at the meeting members agree a position and feedback on each proposal
3. A portfolio of projects is recommended for funding to UKRI's Executive Committee, who have up until now rubber stamped the IAC's recommendation without change

Our meeting in two weeks will take a different approach. At step 3, instead of recommending a single portfolio of projects for funding, we will be asking the IAC to

recommend several different options – portfolios of projects – that could be delivered with the budget that is available. This will allow the IAC to provide options with different strategic strengths and allow Executive Committee to make a choice.

We will also be returning to the choices we made for Wave 3 projects two years ago, to ensure they are the right decisions in the current climate. These were assessed favourably by the IAC but have not formally started and were always prioritised subject to affordability and business case approval. We have also been asked by DSIT to consider a new project through their ‘wildcard’ route. As such, we have [REDACTED] projects to consider – the [REDACTED] Wave 4 projects you assessed last summer, [REDACTED] Wave 3 projects yet to initiate and the DSIT wildcard.

We recognise that this is a big change for you and may increase the reading we’re asking you to do between now and the meeting. We apologise and have done our best to minimise this. We are providing you with condensed information so we can have an informed discussion without asking you to start assessing each from scratch, whilst linking to additional information sources in recognition that some of our members were not involved in the Wave 3 prioritisation or may wish to delve deeper.

The driver for this change is two-fold. Firstly, we have an opportunity. We have a new CEO and clear mission to advance knowledge, improve lives and drive growth, which we’ll describe at the meeting. This is an opportunity to ensure we maximise our impact and support the UK’s R&D ecosystem through this mission with infrastructure delivery.

Secondly, on 30 October, DSIT announced a £38bn multi-year budget allocation for UKRI covering the four-year period from 2026/27 through 2029/30. Whilst the headline settlement for UKRI’s budget is promising, we know there will be some difficult choices ahead. We know there are more amazing opportunities for infrastructure than we will be able to afford. We don’t yet have our budget for the Infrastructure Fund - the next steps are for the UKRI Board to provide formal advice in mid-November to the Secretary of State. Final sign-off from Treasury and the Secretary of State is expected before the end of the calendar year.

This multi-year allocation is a valuable opportunity to reflect and change in response to those pressures. We will explore if changes are needed to allow UKRI to deliver on each part of our mission and to ensure our unique portfolio of investments is strategically prioritised to deliver in those areas where the UK can lead globally. Clearly this approach will be unsettling for those who have projects under consideration, especially those previously prioritised and announced (subject to budget and business case approval).

At present the information in this letter has only been shared with those directly involved within infrastructure in UKRI and yourselves, and **we ask that you do not discuss it further**. We recognise that several IAC members have conflicts of interest and involvement in Wave 3 projects, but request that you do not discuss this information with those projects. Project teams have not been informed, either for the new Wave 4 projects you reviewed over the summer nor those Wave 3 projects that are returning to the IAC, because at present no decisions have been taken.

We aim to handle the communications about this sensitively. After the IAC meeting in November your recommendations will be taken to UKRI's Executive Committee meeting for decision on 16 December 2025. We are developing a communication strategy that runs alongside these milestones.

I'd like to thank you in advance for bearing with us during the upcoming meeting. We have not taken an approach like this before, which is being developed at pace, and there may be some bumps in the road. We appreciate your support in this challenging journey.

If you have any questions in advance, please do reach out to me –

[REDACTED]

If not, I look forward to seeing you in Liverpool later this month.

Best wishes

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