



Press Release

Friday 4 December 2009

ACSTI outlines actions to maximise outcomes from investment in research and development

Today the Advisory Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (ACSTI) published a statement welcoming the tangible commitment that Government has made to research and development and outlining the successes of that investment and the actions needed to maximise the impact of future investments.

The Chairman of the ACSTI, Tom McCarthy said, "We must rededicate ourselves to the vision outlined in the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation. The investments made in research and development have created a robust basic research infrastructure, have enhanced our ability to attract new foreign investment and expanded the mandates of many foreign companies already located here."

"The challenge ahead is to create a robust innovation system that links science and technology to the growth of enterprise. Of particular importance will be the need to target growth of indigenous enterprise. At this time the Council offers its opinion on actions that ought to be pursued by Government in order to capitalise on investment to date and focus its resources to best effect in the future." concluded McCarthy.

Proposed Actions:

Improving the effectiveness of Science and Technology spending

- A priority-setting mechanism should be put in place to validate the areas / disciplines in which investment should be concentrated. Priorities should be reviewed every three to four years so that research and innovation policies are kept under continuous review.

Funding Priorities

- Special attention should be given to the link between academic research and the needs of enterprise in any review of funding priorities. The aim should be to build centres with critical mass so that the full spectrum of research can be supported and to ensure that the interfaces between basic and applied research and the translation of research into innovation are working optimally.
- Any adjustments to the R&D funding structures in Ireland should prioritise the link between research and innovation, including appropriate support for the industry-led competence centre model.

Promoting enterprise research and innovation

- Terms of the R&D tax credit should be altered so that it can be claimed against general payroll costs.
- The guidelines on public procurement for innovation that have been published by the Government should be put into practice by departments, agencies and local authorities by attaching specific metrics for innovation outcomes, and where

appropriate, ring-fencing resources for innovative solutions within the framework of EU State Aid rules.