



Interdepartmental Committee
on Science, Technology and Innovation,
Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation.

23rd March 2015

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Re: Successor to Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation.

To Secretariat,

Irish Water welcomes the consultation process under way by the Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation on the Successor to Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Irish Water has recently published our Draft Water Services Strategic Plan. One of the aims within this plan under the strategic objective of Investment in Our Future is to promote research and utilise proven, innovative technical solutions to meet standards set by our regulators including our objectives for cost and energy efficiency.

The water services sector has been slow to adopt new processes, procedures and technologies that may offer cost reduction and efficiency gains. In the drive to become more efficient, Irish Water faces the challenges of developing and fostering an innovation culture both within the organisation and across its stakeholders. We need to identify and actively pursue Research and Development in areas relevant to our business and to track opportunities to develop and adopt new technologies. To facilitate this we must engage effectively with academia and industry. We must develop a knowledge management capability and implementation processes to maximise delivery of beneficial innovative solutions and customer value options.

A key constraint in the delivery of innovation, is ensuring effective transfer of research and development to productisation. This could be facilitated by effective agreements between industry and academic institutions as similar to the current commercial arrangements. There is also a need to link academia at the forefront of research in particular areas with potential private and state beneficiaries. As such a stakeholder group could look at how research and development can be accelerated so that Irish academia become lead players internationally whilst industry and state sector benefit from research and opportunities identified.

There is also a need to co-ordinate national third level research to avoid duplication of research being undertaken in other third level institutes and research organisations in Ireland and across Europe.

With regards to public and societal, we need to look more effectively at Global rather than local challenges and perspectives (international not "Irish" solutions) if we are to commercialise outputs.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Galvin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gerry Galvin,
Chief Technical Adviser