



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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Rt Hon Greg Clark MP
Chair, Science and Technology Committee
House of Commons, Palace of Westminster,
Westminster,
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21 November 2022

Dear Greg,

Funding for Mathematical Sciences

Thank you for your good wishes on my appointment and I also look forward to working with you and your committee.

The position on funding for mathematical sciences remains as set out in George Freeman's letter to you of 5th July 2022. Research in mathematical sciences is key for the advancement of all areas of science and technology, and a vital area of science in itself.

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC, a council of UKRI) routinely funds Mathematical Sciences from its core budget, typically spending c£25-30m/per annum for grants, fellowships, and studentships. To date UKRI - EPSRC have committed £124 million out to 2028-29 on top of its core Mathematical Sciences funding, as part of the Additional Funding Programme for Mathematic Sciences (AFPMS) commitment.

The allocations process following SR21, considered the amount of funding already committed to Maths and other Ministerial priority areas without ringfenced budgets, both within EPSRC and across UKRI councils. This required making difficult choices across UKRI's portfolio to balance these considerations. To absorb the remaining £176 million of the AFPMS would reduce critical capabilities in disciplines such as engineering and information communications technology which, alongside mathematical sciences, are key foundations for the UK's ambitions in areas such as Net Zero and AI.

UKRI is moving towards greater collective management of its funding, which will also allow for more flexible and holistic thinking to address specific areas of growing need. Rather than ring-fenced budgets addressing single priorities, the aim is to create a portfolio of investments where each pound contributes to delivering multiple priorities, providing much better value for money and leveraging the benefits of UKRI as an integrated R&I funder. In this strategic context, UKRI is looking for opportunities to support foundational mathematical research across its portfolio, for example in planned programmes to support tomorrow's technologies, address major national and global challenges through UKRI's five strategic themes¹, extend UKRI's

¹ These themes are: *Building a Green Future* - helping to improve the health of our environment and deliver net zero, ensure UK energy security, securing prosperity across the whole of the UK; *Securing Better Health, Ageing, and Wellbeing* - advancing people's health and promoting wellbeing to maintain prosperous, productive and resilient communities throughout the UK and globally, supporting the UK Life Sciences Vision by addressing

Future Leader Fellows programme, and explore innovative funding approaches for interdisciplinary research. On this basis the UKRI Board took the difficult decision to advise BEIS Ministers not to hypothecate a further uplift for the mathematical sciences at this stage.

EPSRC Core funding for Mathematical Sciences will continue at the level of c£25-30m/year for grants, fellowships, and studentships, along with the £124m AFPMS funding provided to support activities that have been started to date.

I hope you will agree that this additional £124m funding does not amount to deprioritising maths.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Grant Shapps'.

RT HON GRANT SHAPPS MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

challenges around ageing, living with multiple conditions, mental health and health inequalities; *Tackling Infections* - protecting and enhancing health, our food supply and our natural capital by building knowledge and capabilities to detect and disrupt the emergence and spread of human, animal and plant diseases, accelerate new vaccines and therapeutics, and halt the 'slow motion pandemic' of antimicrobial resistance; *Building a Secure and Resilient World* - strengthening social and economic resilience, and enhancing national security across virtual and physical spaces, by improving awareness of risks and threats; preparedness, decision making and response; and allowing change to be understood as a force for good; *Creating Opportunities, Improving Outcomes* - understanding the causes and effects of place based disparities and finding empowering new solutions that promote prosperity and improve outcomes for people and communities across the UK.