UK Research and Innovation

EPSRC update

Sarah Harman, Head of Mathematical Sciences

HoDoMs, 01 May 2026

Mathematical Sciences Team

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Sarah Harman	Head of Theme	Mathematical Sciences strategy and sign-off of theme budget
Ben Scott	Senior Portfolio Manager	Continuum Mechanics, Uncertainty, ICT Interface
Jess Phillips	Senior Portfolio Manager	Mathematical Physics, AI Interface, TFS Champion
Rebecca Williams	Senior Portfolio Manager	Mathematical Biology, Leadership in Maths strategy, Outcomes and NSF Lead Agency Agreement
Emma Foxell	Portfolio Manager	Applied Mathematics portfolio, Fellowships and the Early Career Research Forum
George Spurdell	Portfolio Manager	Statistics & Applied Probability and Operational Research portfolios, Small Grants
Joseph Turner	Portfolio Manager	SAT convenor, NIAs, Pure Mathematics portfolio
Supported by our Delivery Support Team: Eve Williams, John Clayton and Mustafa Rizvi		

Firstname.lastname@epsrc.ukri.org

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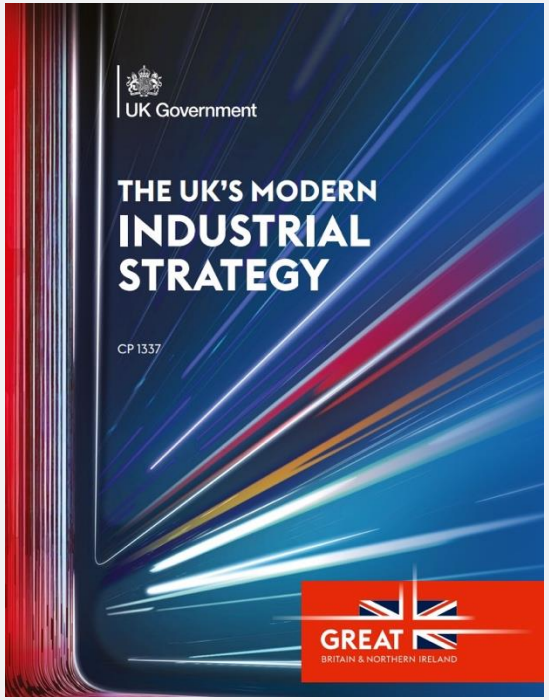
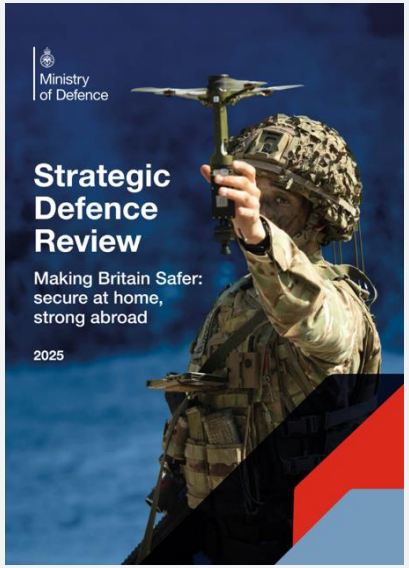
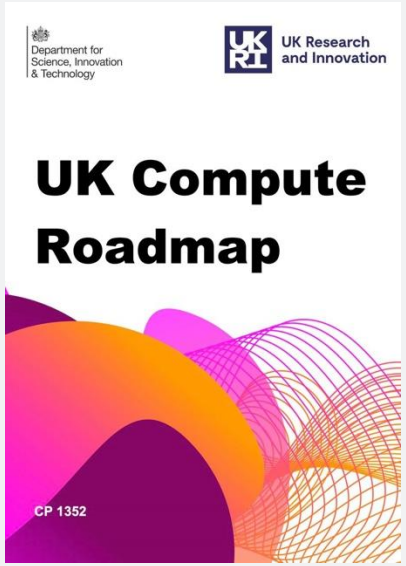
UKRI & EPSRC Context - Key Messages

2025 was a busy year…







UKRI Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

R&D Missions Accelerator Programme

- Build an NHS fit for the future
- Making Britain a clean energy superpower
- Safer Streets
- Kickstart economic growth
- Breaking down barriers to opportunities

UKRI Allocations (2026/27 – 2029/30)

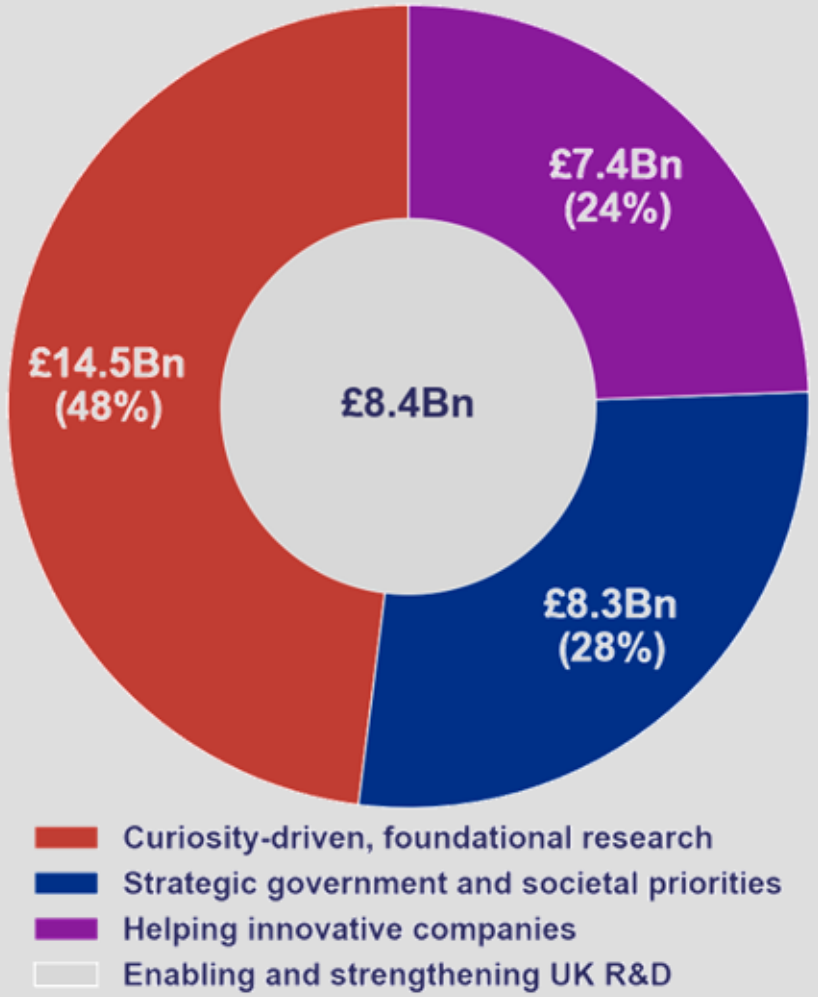
Bucket 1:

Research England - QR funding

Research Council curiosity-driven research.

Bucket 2:

Cross-UKRI programmes for government and societal priorities.



Bucket 3:

Majority Innovate UK.

Proportion for knowledge exchange and commercialisation activities within Research Councils.

Bucket 4:

Enabling investments (e.g. skills, infrastructure)

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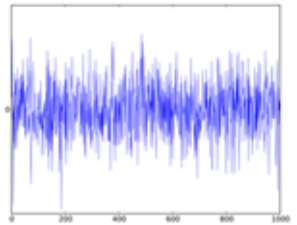
Beyond numbers: why outcomes matter

- It is the responsibility of UKRI to deliver clear and meaningful outcomes for the UK public.
- Relatable impact stories help build public trust and support for science and innovation.
- Policymakers respond best to compelling narratives that illustrate how research solves problems.

Highlight: outcomes example



Bridging foundational mathematical innovation, AI and end-use application - making societal and economic impact

People and ideas: Various UKRI (EPSRC, ESRC & NIHR) funding; SERC senior fellowship - current EPSRC Programme Grant Holder

Terry Lyons (University of Oxford/Imperial College) *has made significant contributions to the* ***field of mathematics****, most widely known for his development of* ***rough path theory*** *in the 1990s and 2000s. His theory extends calculus* ***to model the interactions of complex, messy evolving data streams and tries to make sense of that data for use in real-world applications***

OUTPUTS

- Patents
- People
- Publications
- Prizes (Hairer – Fields Medal and Breakthrough Prize)
- Datasets
- Software (RoughPy, Chinese handwriting recognition apps for the mobile phone)
- New improved methods, models and tools

OUTCOMES

- **Early detection of SEPSIS** in ICU
- **Non-invasive insights into mental health**
- Tools for identifying **malware**
- Enhanced **deep learning** methods - **Fake speech detection**
- **Collaborations** from JP Morgan, to National Grid, to GCHQ
- **Annualised savings** (e.g. $50M for Amazon)
- An eco structure of **talented ECRs**
- More affordable and accessible **Large Language Models (LLMs)**

IMPACT

- **Health care (NHS)** - improved diagnosis and patient outcomes
- **Financial services -** Improved accuracy of trading algorithms and better risk management
- **Improved public safety -** tools for detecting anomalies benefit cybersecurity, malware detection and authentica ting of digital content

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Updates and Reminders

UKRI policy updates and reminders

Peer Review response rates

- Grant processing times are still longer than we'd all like them to be. One of the biggest challenges is getting enough reviewers for proposals.
- **Please encourage researchers to respond quickly to a review request.** Even if the answer is "no" this will help us move on quickly and seek others.

Use of AI in peer review

- Applicants should apply caution when using outputs from generative AI tools to develop their applications. They must comply with relevant IP and data protection legislation.
- Assessors must not use generative AI tools as part of their assessment activities. This includes to check language flow and spelling.

Event

EPSRC Update: A Community Forum with our Executive Board

Date:	18 May 2026
Time:	10:30am to 12:00pm UK time
Registration deadline:	18 May 2026
Location:	Online
Event type:	Webinar
Audience:	Suitable for all
Cost:	Free
Organisers:	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

Register to attend ▶

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

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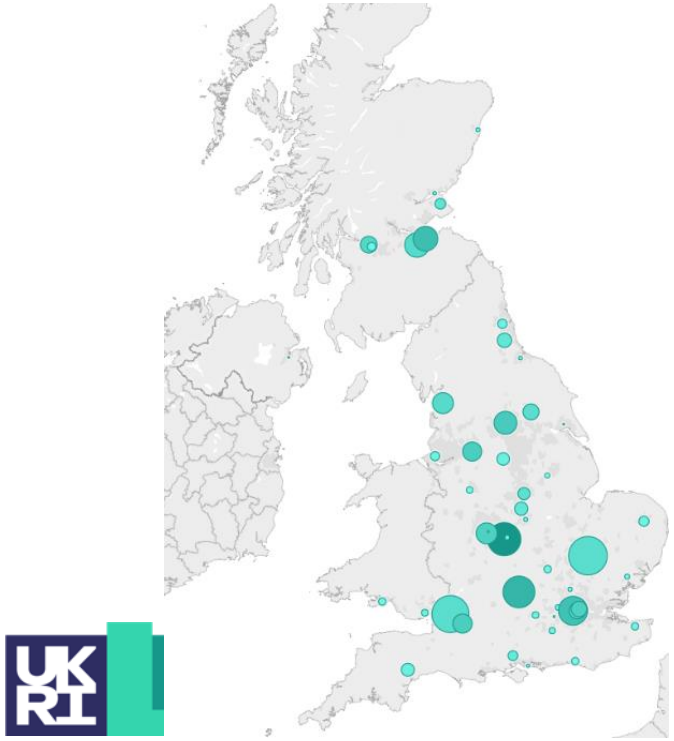
EPSRC Mathematical Sciences

Our support for Mathematical Sciences



Support new ideas, talent and early careers

- Investing in investigator-led research, catalysing new ideas and breakthroughs

Develop new and sustaining partnerships

- Working across academia, industry and government to seed connections, support collaborations, and maximise the impact of our funding

Build a more diverse and inclusive community

- Working with the RSS and Turing to analyse our data examining our applicant pool and potential bias in reviewers reports.

Convene across disciplines

- Embedding Mathematical Sciences across UKRI's investments

Strategic Advisory Team

Professor Mark Kambites, Manchester (Chair)

Professor Rachel Bearon - King's College London

Dr Natasha Blitvic - Queen Mary University of London

Professor Andrea Brini - University of Sheffield

Professor Veronica Bowman OBE, Frazer-Nash

Dr Ruth Bowness, University of Bath

Professor Idris Eckley – Lancaster University

Dr Joanna Jordan - Independent Industrial User of Mathematics

Professor Jon Gillard, Cardiff University

Professor Tom Montenegro-Johnson, University of Warwick

Recently demitted members:

- Professor Helen Byrne – University of Oxford
- Professor Peter Challenor – University of Exeter
- Dr Gueorgui Mihaylov – Haleon
- Dr Lisa McFetridge – Queen's University Belfast
- Professor James Robinson – University of Warwick
- Professor Helen Balinsky – HP

Dr Vadim Zverovich - University of the West of England, Bristol

Professor Jason Lotay – University of Oxford

Dr Alexander Kaspryzk– University of Warwick

Christopher Howls, University of Southampton

Professor Alain Zemkoho, University of Southampton

EPSRC Funding Delivery – Mathematical Sciences

Responsive Mode Schemes

Programme Grants
Value: £3m to £4m
Timescale: 4 to 6 years
Fund 1 pa | Mid-Late

Standard Grants
Value: £300k to £1.2m (speak to us if >800k)
Timescale: 3 years+
Fund ~18 pa | All Stages

New Investigator Awards
Value: £300k to £500k
Timescale: 3 years+
Fund 10-12 pa | Early

Small Grants
Value: £50k to £100k
Timescale: 1 year
Fund ~30 pa | All Stages

Fellowships

Early Independence Fellowships
Coming soon

Post-Doc Fellowship
Value - £350k - £600k
Timescale: 3 years
Fund ~4 pa

Other Schemes

Prosperity Partnerships
Value: £1m+ (Matched Funding)
Timescale: 5 years

UKRI Schemes
e.g.Cross Research Council Responsive Mode Pilot, Future Leader Fellowships

Talent and Skills Schemes

Doctoral Focal Awards
(Centre for Doctoral Training)
Every 5 to 8 years

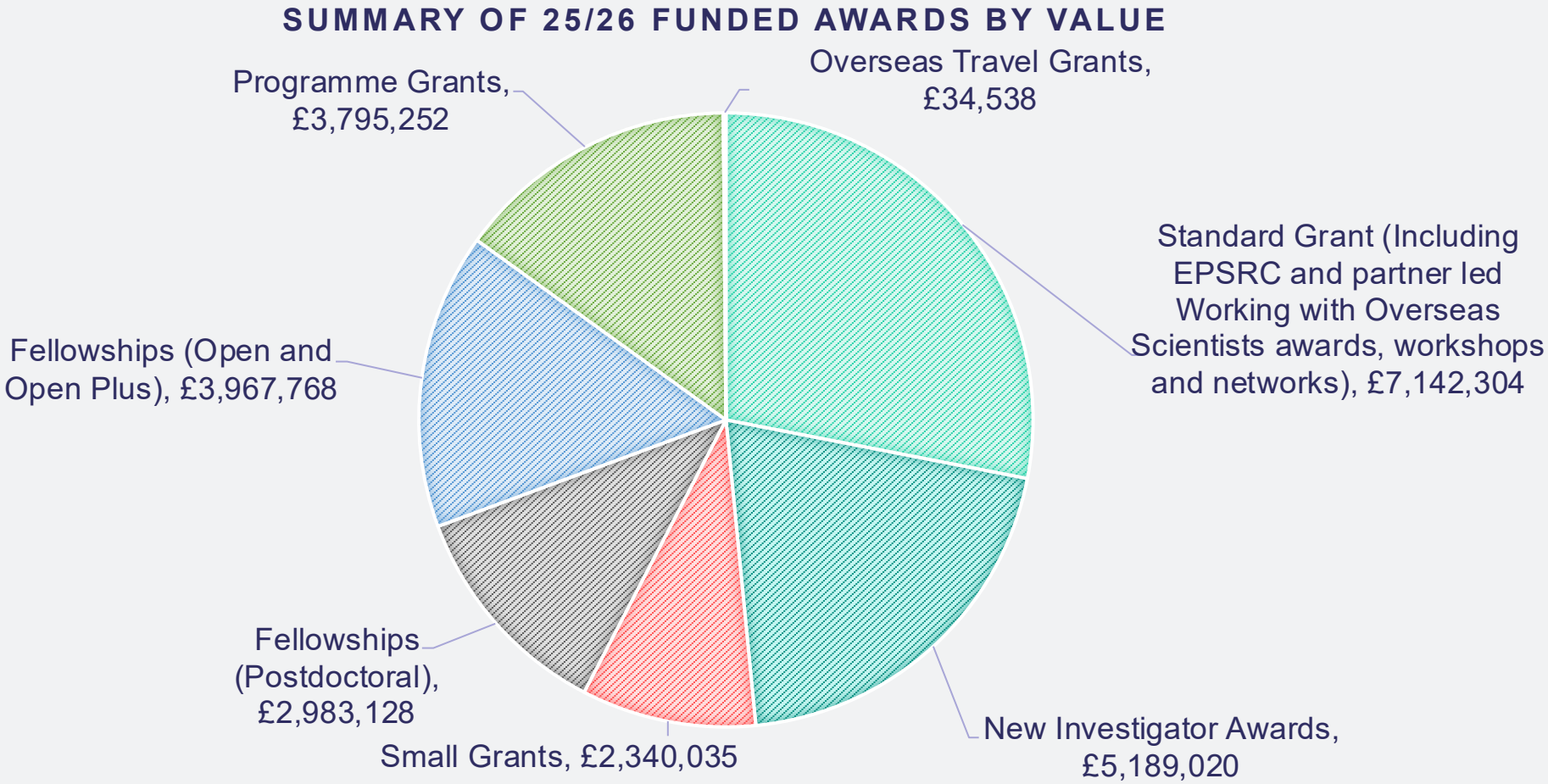
Doctoral Landscape Award
(Doctoral Training Partnership)
Algorithmic allocation per institution

Industrial Doctoral Landscape Awards (iCASE)
Algorithmic allocation per business

Prosperity Partnerships
Value: £1m+ (Matched Funding)
Timescale: 5 years

EPSRC and UKRI Strategic Activities
e.g. UKRI Strategic Themes, Industrial Strategy and Missions

Summary of Funding 25/26



Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

EPSRC Theoretical Physics Workshop, Manchester, 23 June 2026

- Enhancing UK leadership in theoretical physics provides a core foundation towards advancing knowledge.
- EPSRC are organising a workshop with the theoretical and mathematical physics community, to explore the community's future within EPSRC and embed long-term strategic thinking into planning and strategy development.
- The event aims to:
  - reinvigorate discovery-led research in EPSRC theoretical physics and improve the community's perception and understanding of '*what EPSRC wants to see'*;
  - identify opportunities to ensure that theory is at the heart of advancing knowledge, improving lives and driving growth;
  - consider how EPSRC engages and works with the theoretical community to shape future strategy

UKRI Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Expression of Interest form has gone live! Please circulate to your communities in case of interest.

Recent Team Activity

- **Visits** - Swansea University, University of Southampton, Imperial College London, University of Edinburgh, Lancaster University and Warwick University. The team are continuing to organise upcoming visits for Loughborough University and the University of Exeter
- **Grants and Panels!**
- **Evolved the fellowship scheme**
- Introduced **partial randomisation** and integer scoring for **Small Grants** scheme
- Planning for **EPSRC theoretical physics workshop** to explore future strategy
- **Strengthening AI interface**
- **Early Career Forum and Strategic Advisory Team meetings**

Priorities for Mathematical Sciences at EPSRC

- Continue our support for **discovery-led science:**
  - Building and maintaining partnerships and connections across the community
  - Supporting the National Academy of Mathematical Sciences with their objectives
  - Convening across disciplines, including developing the AI interface and realising the opportunities for AI for Science
  - Continue to be outcomes focused – helping to tell ‘our’ story
  - Undertaking a landscape review to understand how best to support the mathematical sciences infrastructure

Looking ahead

- Continue to support and advocate for the Mathematical Sciences community.
- Ensure Mathematical Sciences is embedded into the science strategy:
  - How can we **better connect** our discovery portfolio with the industrial strategy priorities?
  - How can we **maximise the potential** of frontier technologies (from AI to quantum)?
- Capture the benefits of the work we fund

How you can help

1

Amplifying our **key messages into Government**.

2

Sharing your **investment strategies and priorities**.

3

Feeding back **challenges and barriers** you are facing.

4

Providing **powerful impact stories** that align to Government missions or Industrial Strategy sectors.

5

Become a reviewer. Join EPSRC's peer review college to see what good (and bad) applications look like.

UKRI Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

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Thank you

Any questions?

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