

Budget 2020 and heritage science

The government has published [the 2020 budget and the documents underpinning](#) it. It announces funding to deal with COVID-19 and a large increase in spending. This includes increasing public R&D investment to £22 billion per year by 2024-25. Details of this funding will be set out at the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). At the CSR, the government will examine how R&D funding as a whole can best be distributed across the country.

Other announcements in the budget are below with potentially relevant outcomes from the National Heritage Science Forum's [strategic framework](#) in brackets afterwards:

- A £250 million Cultural Investment Fund for culture, heritage, local museums, and neighbourhood libraries. Of this, £90 million will be made available from April for a Cultural Development Fund that will support cultural regeneration proposals outside of London [Citizen heritage scientists],
- £27 million for critical maintenance work on the National Museums' estates. The government understands the maintenance challenges faced by the National Museums and will take further action to address these at the CSR [Physical and digital infrastructure],
- up to £400 million in 2020-21 for world-leading research, infrastructure and equipment. This will help build excellence in research institutes and universities across the UK, particularly in basic research and physical sciences [Accessible funding streams/ Physical and digital infrastructure],
- invest at least £800 million in a new 'blue-skies' UK funding agency, modelled on the US's 'ARPA'. This agency will fund high-risk, high-reward science [Accessible funding streams],
- increase funding for the UK's foremost specialist institutions by £80 million over the next five years [Accessible funding streams],
- invest £2 million in 2020-21 to expand the cross-cutting strategic science and resilience capabilities provided by the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and the Government Office for Science to support cross-cutting strategic science capabilities [An environment that supports interdisciplinary research],
- £180 million over 6 years for a new state-of-the-art storage and research facility for the Natural History Museum at Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. This upgrade will put the facility at the forefront of natural sciences research and international collaboration, housing and increasing access to around 40% of this world-leading biological collection [Technical skills and knowledge/ Physical and digital infrastructure],
- increasing Research & Development Expenditure Credit from 12% to 13% to encourage the private investment needed to meet the government's objective of increasing economy-wide investment in R&D to 2.4% of GDP by 2027 [Improved innovation and commercial application of research/ Strategic relationships between businesses and research organisations],

- a fund to invest in innovative public sector ideas and a new unit to scout for and develop these opportunities. The public sector holds around £150 billion of knowledge assets (intellectual property, tech, data and other intangibles).The government wants to unlock more value from these. Further detail will be provided in a forthcoming report. The CSR will also set out plans to improve the use of data, science and technology across the public sector[Physical and digital infrastructure/ Discoverability of research and data/ An environment that supports interdisciplinary research],
- a review of the Green Book, which sets out how decisions on major investment programmes are appraised to ensure that government investment spreads opportunity across the UK [Accessible funding streams/ Evidence of economic impact],
- £120 million to bring further education and higher education providers in England together with employers to open up to eight new Institutes of Technology to deliver high-quality higher level technical education and to help close skills gaps in their local areas [Technical skills and knowledge/ Accessible training and postgraduate opportunities],
- £1.5 billion over five years (£1.8 billion inclusive of indicative Barnett consequentials), supported by funding from further education colleges themselves, to bring the facilities of colleges everywhere in England up to a good level, and to support improvements to colleges to raise the quality and efficiency of vocational education provision [Accessible training and postgraduate opportunities/Physical and digital infrastructure/Technical skills and knowledge],
- £95 million for England to invest in high quality facilities and industry-standard equipment to support the rollout of T levels. Funding will support T level routes being delivered from autumn 2021, including construction, digital, and health and science. [Accessible training and postgraduate opportunities/Physical and digital infrastructure/Technical skills and knowledge],
- a consultation in the spring on how to use the new National Skills Fund [Technical skills and knowledge],
- the government will look at improving the Apprenticeship Levy to support employers meeting the long-term skills needs of the economy [Accessible training and postgraduate opportunities],
- ensure that sufficient funding is available in 2020-21 to increase the number of new high-quality apprenticeships in smalland medium-sized businesses [Accessible training and postgraduate opportunities].
- an additional £7 million to support a total of 11 maths schools in England [Technical skills and knowledge], and
- a new £2.5 billion (£3 billion inclusive of indicative Barnett consequentials) National Skills Fund to improve the technical skills of adults across the country. [Technical skills and knowledge/ Accessible training and postgraduate opportunities].