

Mr Chris Skidmore  
60 High Street  
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From the President Venki Ramakrishnan

6 December 2019

Dear Chris,

We were pleased to see science take such a prominent role in the Conservative Party's manifesto. As was rightly pointed out, capitalising on the UK's exceptional science base will be key to harnessing Britain's potential. Whether in tackling major challenges like climate change and anti-microbial resistance, or in boosting our economy and delivering for people right across the UK.

In order for the Royal Society and the scientific community at large to better understand what has been formally committed to in this general election, I am writing to seek clarity on the promises made within the manifesto regarding investment in research and innovation and how they relate to announcements made during the election campaign.

On 13<sup>th</sup> November, the Prime Minister outlined plans to "increase spending so that it reaches £18 billion in 2024-25. This will be a doubling of public R&D spending compared to 2017". Such investment would help put us on track to achieve the Conservative ambition of investing 2.4% of GDP on research and development.

However, we are unsure where to locate this commitment in your manifesto. Similarly, the investment figures contained in the supporting costings document – which contains spending up to 2023-24 – do not appear to put us on a trajectory to reach the £18bn. Investment in 2023-24 looks to be forecast at £14bn. We are therefore hoping you can provide clarity on these points.

In providing us with this information, it would also be useful to know if the investment figures included in the manifesto are inclusive of underwrites promised to replace funding previously received via the EU.

We look forward to working constructively with Conservative Party representatives in the next parliament and beyond, to ensure that we maximise the potential of UK science for the benefit of our economy and society.

With best wishes,



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