



What will the SSIF do?

The SSIF is government's mechanism to invest in underpinning research programmes and infrastructure of enduring importance to New Zealand, benefitting our economy, environment and wellbeing. The SSIF investment plan 2017-2024 and the [Innovative New Zealand](#) Budget 2016 publication explain SSIF funding in more detail.

How does SSIF fit with the NSSI?

The SSIF contributes to a better-performing science system by; investing effectively for long-term impact; supporting attraction, development and retention of talented scientists; and leading to improvement in New Zealand's international standing as an R&D destination.

The SSIF investment plan sets out the role of SSIF within the context of the broader science system.

How does the scope of SSIF fit with the National Science Challenges?

The NSCs are significant new mission-led investments that focus on defined issues of national importance. Each NSC is designed to include New Zealand's best team and looks for additionality, e.g. new ways of doing things to provide scientific solutions to the challenge.

SSIF research will underpin a high-performing science system, including the NSCs. SSIF funding invests in underpinning research programmes and infrastructure of enduring importance to New Zealand – including that identified as priorities under the NSCs.

Who will get SSIF funding?

The SSIF will be open to all research providers. Funding will be allocated on merit for proposals that respond to the strategic scientific goals and priorities in the SSIF investment plan 2017-2024.

Some Budget 2016 funding within SSIF responds to immediate pressures and has been or will be invested on a transitional basis in 2016, including:

- Funding for Nationally Significant Collections and Databases.
- Funding for freshwater research.
- Funding for the RV Tangaroa.

How do scientists access funding?

The SSIF investment plan outlines the Government's strategic scientific goals and priorities, how the fund will be invested, and performance expectations. Research organisations should develop proposals that focus on delivering on strategic funding priorities, in line with the plan. The Government will invest as required to deliver on the strategic priorities in the plan.

What will be the impact of the SSIF on CRI core funding? Will it go down?

In future, strategic investment in CRIs will be made through the SSIF. Most of what is currently core funding will be invested through the SSIF programmes component. The rest will be invested through the infrastructure component. Upon full implementation of the SSIF in 2017, we propose to maintain the amount of strategic funding received by each CRI.



How much will go to independent research organisations (IROs)? How will this be decided?

Current IRO capability funding is about \$5.9m per year across three contracts. These contracts end from 2018 onwards. We will revisit IRO contracts in 2017 with a view to aligning them to SSIF signals.

What funding will freshwater research receive?

Core funding contracts would have ended in 2016 but were extended for 12 months during development of SSIF policy and processes. For 2016/17, the \$8 million of Budget 2016 funding for freshwater research will go to those CRIs conducting freshwater research using core funding. From 2017, the funds will be managed through the SSIF.

What infrastructure will be covered?

Current major research infrastructure investments include the RV Tangaroa, Square Kilometre Array, REANNZ, NeSI, NZGL, and Australian Synchrotron. The new investment plan sets out the Government's future approach to research infrastructure investment. The Government will seek to inform research infrastructure capability development and investment over a ten-year horizon with a roadmap that will consider demand in priority areas, as well as cross-cutting issues.

What will happen to Nationally Significant Collections and Databases (NSC&Ds) under SSIF?

NSC&Ds were mostly funded via CRI core funding. In future, investment in collections and databases will be made under the SSIF infrastructure mechanism.

What will funding for the RV Tangaroa support?

The additional Budget 2016 funding of \$14 million over four years will enable Crown-funded marine research projects to access the RV Tangaroa.

The SSIF investment plan mentions funding opportunities for Advanced Genomics Research; Analysis and Computation of Big Data; and Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. What is the process for making these investments?

MBIE released a Request for Proposals for a new Advanced Genomics Research platform on 8 November.

MBIE is at the early stages of investigating SSIF platforms in Analysis and Computation of Big Data and Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Our intention is to work with the sector to shape these ideas. The process for making new investments will be tailored to the investment, but is likely to include a provider-neutral process to seek proposals, such as a Request for Proposals or Expression of Interest.

A research infrastructure roadmap will inform future development of research infrastructure, drawing on the NSSI and other government strategy, as well as scientific or technological developments.

What does the SSIF Advanced Genomics Research investment signal mean for NZGL?



New Zealand Genomics Ltd (NZGL) will continue in its current form through to 30 June 2017 under its Crown Funding Agreement. There is a desire to retain the capability that NZGL has established through its collaborator network over the last 5 years. Any future approach to genomics will be expected to consider how to leverage existing capability.

What does this mean for NZGL clients and their projects?

The current Crown Funding Agreement supports NZGL to continue with its business as usual activities until further notice from NZGL. NZGL will accept project requests up to 30 June 2017. Funding arrangements provide for NZGL to be able to meet any contract obligations it makes up to that date. So for example if a project will not be completed until 20 December 2017, it can still be delivered.

Why is science funding for CRIs changing after only five years of core funding?

CRI core funding contracts were due to end in June 2016, but were extended for one year while SSIF is implemented. The NSSI sets out the Government's long-term vision for a high performing science system and the development of SSIF follows from the NSSI vision. We are reforming these investments to reduce complexity in the science system, improve transparency, clarify the role of government in different investments and to create stability over time. The SSIF creates a framework for long-term planning and longer-term investments, including seven year research programmes.

Core funding has led to improvements in CRI performance since 2011. The review of CRI core funding in 2015/16 found that there is a further opportunity to drive greater strategic value from this investment in future by focussing on the impact of the science generated, as well as on the performance of CRIs generally. This is what investments in programmes of research under SSIF aim to do.

Who will make SSIF investment decisions?

In October 2016, Cabinet approved the first SSIF investment plan for the period 2017-2024. MBIE will be the decision-maker for individual SSIF investments. Further information about the operation of the SSIF, including the use of independent advisory and assessment panels will be released shortly.

How will investment in people and capability be managed?

SSIF is a mechanism for investing in underpinning research programmes and infrastructure on a transparent and long-term basis.

Transparent and stable investment signals will enable research institutions to make the best decisions about how to attract, develop and retain the best scientists. The investment plan for SSIF reinforces the Government's longer-term commitment to investment in the New Zealand science system. This will send a signal to students, early career researchers and investors in R&D that New Zealand is an attractive destination for research and researchers.

Is MBIE cancelling research contracts?

A variety of temporary arrangements will be in place over the next 18 months to ensure a smooth transition to the SSIF mechanism. For example, CRI core funding contracts were



extended by a year to June 2017 while the SSIF is being implemented. From 2017, any new investments and new contracts will be made under the SSIF framework.

Does the SSIF mean more government intervention in CRIs?

The review of CRI core funding in 2015/16 found that CRIs Boards did a good job with internal prioritisation and allocation of core funding. CRIs indicated during the review that they would welcome greater strategic direction from the Crown with greater clarity on expectations and high level priorities for investment.

SSIF decisions will not diminish the role and responsibilities of the CRI Boards. The SSIF investment principles and signals are intended to provide clarity for all research providers. In future, the Crown will be a more engaged investor, providing stronger signals to research providers regarding priorities for strategic science funding, and on accountability for performance and delivery.

Research providers will respond to the investment plan by developing tailored investment proposals. From these proposals, plans will be negotiated individually with each research organisation and will form the basis of the individual contracts.