



COVERSHEET

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| Minister | Hon Dr Shane Reti | Portfolio | Science, Innovation and Technology |
| Title of Cabinet paper | Science System Advisory Group Report A pathway to the future: New Zealand's science and innovation system | Date to be published | 06 October 2025 |

List of documents that have been proactively released

| Date | Title | Author |
|-------------------|--|---|
| 22 August 2025 | Cabinet Paper – Shifting to a strategy-driven Science Innovation and Technology funding system | Office of the Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology |
| 17 September 2025 | Minute of Decision - ECO-25-MIN-0147 | Cabinet Office |

Information redacted

YES / NO

Confidential advice to Government and Free and frank opinions

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.



Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Shifting to a Strategy-driven Science Innovation and Technology Funding System

Portfolio **Science, Innovation and Technology**

On 17 September 2025, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee (ECO):

- 1 **noted** that the current Science, Innovation and Technology (SI&T) funding system is fragmented, lacks strategic coherence, and is not well aligned with national priorities for economic growth and resilience;
- 2 **agreed** to reform the SI&T funding system to support a strategy-led model that enables a simpler and more coherent funding decision process, and improved system alignment and transparency;
- 3 **noted** that the new funding system will have a domain-based pillar framework structured around enduring areas of national importance such as economic growth, environment, health, and advanced technologies;
- 4 **noted** that each pillar will be supported by a mix of funding instruments including competitive grants, mission-led platforms, capability-building schemes, and infrastructure support;
- 5 **agreed** to establish Research Funding New Zealand (RFNZ) as the single funding decision-maker for most SI&T funds, replacing the Marsden Council, Science Board, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) funding roles;
- 6 **agreed in principle** that the RFNZ remit will include health research, subject to a suitable transition strategy for the Health Research Council (HRC);
- 7 **invited** the Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology (the Minister) and the Minister of Health to report back to ECO on detailed policy and legislative work on future arrangements for health research funding and the HRC;
- 8 **noted** that in June 2025, ECO agreed to the drafting of a Science, Innovation and Technology Bill (the Bill) to give effect to a package of proposals enabling, among other things, funding decision-making bodies to be rationalised and required to respond to Government priorities [ECO-25-MIN-0088];

- 9 **agreed** that RFNZ will be structured as an independent board serviced by MBIE, and that the Bill will make RFNZ subject to monitoring and accountability requirements;
- 10 **authorised** the Minister to make decisions on the monitoring and accountability that RFNZ will be subject to;
- 11 **invited** the Minister to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office to give effect to the decisions above;
- 12 **noted** that the Minister has directed officials from MBIE to work with officials from the Public Service Commission to recommend specific monitoring and accountability requirements that could apply to RFNZ;
- 13 **noted** that the Minister will develop a Science Investment Plan (SIP), informed by advice from the Prime Minister's Science, Innovation and Technology Advisory Council, that sets out strategic priorities for SI&T funding and allocation across pillars and reflect budget reprioritisation;
- 14 **noted** that the Minister will progress the SIP through the innovation, technology and science pillar of Going for Growth, and that it will be implemented within baselines;
- 15 **noted** that Investment Plans will be developed for each pillar, detailing the mix of funding types and mechanisms required to achieve strategic objectives;
- 16 **noted** that there will be phased transition of funding to the new funding system, beginning with competitive funds (Marsden and Endeavour) in 2026, followed by other funds through to 2029;
- 17 Confidential advice to Government
[Redacted text]
- 18 Confidential advice to Government
[Redacted text]
- 19 Confidential advice to Government
[Redacted text]

20 Confidential advice to Government

Confidential advice to Government

21 Confidential advice to Government

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

Present:

Hon David Seymour (Chair)
Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Brooke van Velden
Hon Shane Jones
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Louise Upston
Hon Dr Shane Reti
Hon Simon Watts
Hon Chris Penk
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon James Meager
Simon Court MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Office of Hon Dr Shane Reti
Office of Hon Simon Watts
Officials Committee for ECO