



An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Research and Innovation Survey — Public Consultation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.



An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications Research and Innovation Strategy — Public Consultation

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications has set out a vision of a climate neutral, sustainable, and digitally connected Ireland. This will involve leading ambitious climate and environment action across Government and society together with a fundamental shift in sustainable resource use and a transformation of our energy system while at the same time delivering world-class connectivity and cyber security. The Department has identified research and innovation as important enablers of its goals, and is one of a group of five Government Departments which invest significantly in research and innovation. Impact 2030, the national research and innovation strategy, outlines a strong role for the Department in delivering on Strategic Objectives in Climate, Environment and Sustainability (including Energy), and in Digital Transformation (including cyber security). During 2023, the Department is now developing its inaugural Research and Innovation Strategy.

Please complete this survey by 5:30 pm on Friday 11th August.

Note 1: There are no mandatory consultation questions. Fields can be left blank if you do not wish to answer a particular question.

Note 2: Responses to each of the consultation questions is limited to 2000 characters.

Note 3: Copying and pasting text into the boxes directly from Microsoft Word may cause user experience issues. To avoid this, it is recommended to 'paste as plain text'.

Note 4: You can download a PDF copy of your completed survey after you have submitted it.

* Please enter your name

Text of 5 to 200 characters will be accepted

* Please enter your email address

* Please enter your occupation

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please enter the name of that organisation.

200 character(s) maximum

Job Title (if applicable)

What gaps do you see in the Department's current research and innovation activities? How should we address those gaps in the Department Research and Innovation Strategy?

2000 character(s) maximum

There is insufficient RD&I support in Ireland for sustainable aviation transport including sustainable aviation fuels, electric and hybrid technology development (including batteries), safety and certification expertise, and airport infrastructure requirements. Ireland has a significant aviation industry in the areas of aircraft leasing and MRO (Maintenance and Repair) but we are clearly lacking in policy and direction in terms of how we will address the technological changes required to meet the aviation industry Net Zero 2050 targets. As an island nation, we will continue to depend on air travel to maintain social and economic connectivity internationally - we have the option to work now to ensure we can maintain that connectivity sustainably and competitively while building technological expertise and know-how enabled by the vast renewable energy resources on our shores.

What actions can the Department take to identify future trends in the areas under our remit?

2000 character(s) maximum

Are there specific thematic areas relevant to the Department's remit which you would like to see more research and innovation activity in? How can this be achieved?

2000 character(s) maximum

We strongly advocate for increased focus on sustainable aviation in the funding provision for SME technology start-ups and in the FDI strategy. We do not have an aerospace technology industry in Ireland or specific aerospace R&I funding budgets like other jurisdictions, so a more flexible approach for funding will be required to allow international partners to work and develop skills and expertise in Ireland in conjunction with the development of the green energy industrialization strategy. Technology development and commercialization for the aerospace sector takes on average 10-15 years so small technological companies will require a different approach to support their activities until revenue streams are available. Ireland's system of funding provision for Innovation via research institutes can cause significant obstacles for industry in terms of IP management and commercialization, hence we strongly recommend a more industry-focused approach be developed that would be more attractive for international collaboration.

Have you views on the impact of disruptive technologies such as AI, Quantum and 6G as part of the digital transformation agenda and the implications of these technologies for the Department?

2000 character(s) maximum

How can the Department better communicate its research and innovation needs?

2000 character(s) maximum

How can the Department work more effectively to source evidence from the national research and innovation community to support its work in policy development, policy implementation, and the uptake of new technologies?

2000 character(s) maximum

How can the Department engage more effectively with all stakeholders in the national research and innovation system? If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please state how the Department could more effectively engage with your organisation.

2000 character(s) maximum

There is a gap in how we support R&I along its development cycle in Ireland - we have a high dependence on funding mechanisms via academic institutions which is fine for lower TRL-level projects where IP is not yet a key consideration. However, there is a gap on the Innovation side particularly for emerging technologies in the area of green energy where there is a need to build demonstrators and incubator projects that pave the way for commercialization in the medium to long term. The concept of Living Labs is one that should be explored and developed in Ireland for key innovation thematic areas in green energy supply chain and routes to market - including sustainable aviation fuels, green hydrogen for aviation, battery technology, recharging infrastructure and energy management systems at airports. We need to look at governance structures with annual budget and shared resources for multiple long-term projects under thematic areas as a Living Lab. The existing national funding programs are very tactical and restrictive in nature and are not suitable to support the requirements and scale of a transformational green energy industry evolution.

Should the Department seek to grow its capacity to carry out in-house research? If yes, how can this be achieved?

2000 character(s) maximum

Are there examples internationally of Government strategies on research and innovation in climate, communications / digital, circular economy, cyber security, energy or environment that we should examine? If so, can you provide details?

2000 character(s) maximum

Are there any other matters you wish to raise in relation to the development of the research and innovation strategy?

2000 character(s) maximum

There should be more practical support and guidance from the Department for applications for European funding mechanisms eg EU Innovation Fund - the application process is extremely costly in time and money and the calls are highly competitive. These are real and practical challenges and impediments for small technological companies we want to develop and support in the medium to long term as they develop emerging technologies.

Contact

evan.argue@decc.gov.ie

