

Astronomy Forum

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Science & Technology
Facilities Council

Comprehensive Spending Review

- The government has announced major reductions in spending over the next four years
 - Average 25% across departments
- We won't know the impact on the science vote until the autumn – we are still stage of multiple scenarios and BIS is arguing for its overall allocation with Treasury
- We need to continue to provide strong evidence to Ministers, Treasury and the Government of the tangible value of publicly funded Science research to the taxpayer
 - Economic impact
 - PhD training
 - ...



CSR 2010 Timeline

- BIS have now made their pitch to Treasury
- BIS expect ongoing interactions with HMT through August; unlikely there will be an early settlement
- We are continuing to iterate with BIS
 - Describing impact of various funding scenarios
 - Must address the 33% reduction in administration costs
- Final BIS allocation to be confirmed in October as part of a public announcement of the CSR outcome
- BIS wish to conclude their internal review by November/December



Comprehensive Spending Review

- We are making a robust case for science as a driver for long term economic recovery and this case is (we hope) getting a fair hearing
- We are presenting clear plans for what we will do into the future, to ensure the UK retains its leading role in science
- Being successful may mean that we escape a pro-rata cut: what then?

If we are still faced with serious and real reductions, what is the community's vision for astronomical research?



Questions for today

- Are there facilities or projects or programmes that are so important, or withdrawal from which would be an irreversible decision, that they should be protected even at the expense of exploitation grants – on the assumption that conditions will improve in the future?
- How can we contribute to the government desire to bring academia (that's you) and business closer together?



Questions for today

- Research concentration vs. maintaining national breadth (in support of undergraduate education)?
 - 80% of STFC funding goes to only 16 institutions
- Streamline grants process to reduce administration
- Fellowships scheme to retain key talented researchers in UK?
- University institutes/consortia to maintain critical mass in strategic but vulnerable science areas?
- Concentration of research equipment at national laboratory sites?



Discuss!



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