

**Speech by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown**  
**16 March 2004**

**Check against delivery**

I would like to welcome you all to Number 11 this morning – and I am very glad to have Charles Clarke, Lord Sainsbury, and two of our major R&D business investors here with me today to speak at the launch of our consultation document on science and innovation.

This is Budget week and it is also National Science Week – an ideal time not just to be celebrating Britain’s history of scientific excellence but to equip ourselves for a future in which science and engineering skills will be even more crucial to global success.

After consultation with the scientific community the Government is today publishing a consultation document, which sets out the Government’s priorities for science and innovation over the next 10 years:

- World class excellence from our very best centres of science and technology, driven by competition for funding and talent;
- A dynamic research base that meets the needs of both public and private funders and is managed effectively to achieve financial sustainability;
- Greater collaboration between universities and business to provide a sharper focus for research and an impetus to innovation and productivity growth;
- Better application of leading edge technologies in business and the public sector
- Development, from investing in the education supply, of the science and technology skills that our businesses and public services will need over the next decade, underpinned by excellent teaching in schools to engage the next generation of workers in the knowledge economy
- And a society that is confident about the use of science and technology.

**A Britain equipped for the future will be a Britain that invests in excellence in science,**

**And I can say directly: to prepare for the challenges of a more competitive global economy, a Budget for a Britain of stability and strength has to be a Budget for investment in science.**

**Faced with the challenge from America, Japan and the Euro area, and witnessing the rise of India and China – half the world – as technological powers – already a China rising with 750,000 researchers and 750,000 graduates a year, now an India rising with nearly 700,000 graduates a year, we in Britain cannot afford not to invest.**

**Indeed a Government that fails to invest in science is a Government failing to equip Britain for the new economy.**

**So in today's world a budget for investment in science is not only desirable – it is a necessity.**

**As we give priority to investment in science I am delighted that a whole range of leading R&D businesses have indicated that they wish to work with us on our science strategy and to make their own commitments to the future of British science over the next decade.**

- **GSK are launching today a £76 million clinical imaging centre in partnership with Imperial College**
- **Astra Zeneca will be opening a new R&D centre in Cheshire, an investment of over £58 million, and investing another £16 million at their Charnwood site – taking their investment in the UK over seven years to 2006 to approaching £1 billion**
- **And Shell, Vodafone, Amersham, BP, Rolls Royce - alongside the Wellcome Trust - have today set out their commitment to R&D in the UK and their willingness to work with us to develop this long term strategy for the future of British science.**

**But it's not just our businesses who are pushing forward technological advances.**

- **The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council is planning to establish new centres of systems biology within universities – with an initial investment of £15 million, opening up the potential for innovative new technologies in medicine, agri-food, chemicals and energy.**
- **The Faulkes Telescope Project is being launched today - enabling school children throughout the UK to see astronomical images in the sky from their classroom by controlling two remotely operated research-class telescopes**
- **And Acolyte Biomedica, an investment company of Partnerships UK, is soon to announce a key advance in microbiology testing, developed with funding from HM Treasury and private funders.**

**We want to see more successful British research and innovation. And to achieve that, we will support our ten year science strategy by locking in the significant boosts to science from the last two spending reviews.**

**Final decisions will be made in our forthcoming Spending Review - but Patricia Hewitt, Charles Clarke, Lord Sainsbury and I can announce that we will develop a ten year framework for building British leadership in science.**

**And I can confirm that we will continue to work with leading science based companies, the scientific community and research charities so that for the years from 2005-6 we can raise science funding as a share of national income.**

**This is a collaborative effort. Our final funding decisions will reflect the extent of the parallel commitments made by all the key players on science and innovation in the UK. So this is the challenge I am putting to all our partners, leading businesses and charities, today - with one ambition and purpose: to make Britain the best and most attractive location in the world for science and innovation.**