

Nuclear Innovation and Research Advisory Board

Terms of Reference and Ways of Working

This document sets out the terms of reference and ways of working for the nuclear research and innovation advisory framework comprising a combination of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Advisory Board (NIRAB) and the Nuclear Innovation and Research Office (NIRO).

CONTEXT

NIRAB was originally convened in January 2014 and provided advice on nuclear research and innovation to Government for a period of 3 years until it was disbanded in December 2016. Throughout this time NIRO acted as expert secretariat to NIRAB to convene meetings, gather and analyse data and draft reports.

Government found the advice valuable, along with other inputs, to inform the decision to invest in an ambitious Nuclear Innovation Programme and revitalise the nuclear research landscape in the UK. Government wishes to retain access to independent expert advice as the Nuclear Innovation Programme evolves and has tasked NIRO with convening a reconstituted and restructured NIRAB able to draw on a wide range of expertise.

Terms of Reference

NIRAB'S ROLE

To work in partnership with NIRO to advise Ministers, Government Departments and Agencies on issues related to nuclear research and innovation in the UK. In particular to:

- Monitor the delivery and impact of the BEIS Nuclear Innovation Programme and recommend any amendments that may be necessary in the light of outputs from the programme and developments in the nuclear landscape.
- Advise where innovation could drive down costs across the whole nuclear cycle
- Identify opportunities for greater collaboration with industry and international partners

- To support the development of recommendations for new research and innovation programmes required to underpin priority policies including energy policy and industrial policy
- To oversee a regular review of the nuclear research and innovation landscape which may include facilities, capability, portfolio and capacity in the UK
- To foster greater cooperation and coordination across the whole of the UK's nuclear research and innovation capability, portfolio and capacity

NIRAB does not have responsibility for managing or delivering R&D programmes or for directing or managing R&D budgets.

THE CHAIR

The role of Chair of NIRAB is independent of Government. In addition to chairing the main meetings of NIRAB the Chair may be called upon to represent the Board in discussions with other key stakeholder such as Ministers, Parliamentary select committees and attending meetings of the Nuclear Industry Council to discuss R&D issues.

MEMBERSHIP OF NIRAB

NIRAB will need to be able to draw on a wide range of expertise to be able to offer informed advice on the range of issues that may need to be addressed in the coming years. NIRAB will therefore comprise a pool of up to 40 members with attendance at meetings being determined by the expertise needed to address specific issues on the agenda.

Members will be invited to join NIRAB, for an initial period of two years with membership to reviewed periodically beyond this point. With the exception of the Chair, appointments will be unfunded, other than the reimbursement of reasonable travel and subsistence costs.

Membership will encompass a wide range of subject expertise, and Members will be individuals with the credibility and position to best represent their fields. Members will be appointed as individuals and be expected to represent the interests of their field rather than their employer.

OBSERVERS AND SUPPORTING STAFF

Meetings may include Observers such as Government and Departmental Chief Scientific Advisors, officials and representatives of public funding organisations including Research Councils, NDA and Innovate UK, as appropriate.

By agreement with the NIRAB Chair, other participants may be invited to attend meetings as observers to provide support and information.

Ways of Working

MEETINGS

It is anticipated that NIRAB meetings will take place up to four times per year, with attendance at each meeting dependent on the subjects to be covered at the meeting; not all Members will therefore be called upon for every meeting. As far as is reasonably possible Members will not deputise attendance.

SUB GROUPS

NIRAB may convene sub-groups to carry out specific workstreams as necessary, with participation not limited to NIRAB members.

RELATIONSHIP TO NIRO

NIRO is a full-time team and will comprise a part of the advisory framework. NIRO will:

- Provide secretariat support for NIRAB meetings and any sub-groups that may be convened
- Provide the analytical capacity required to provide advice to officials
- Draft annual reports and other reports, as required, for review by NIRAB
- Carry out gap analysis in order to inform advice to Government on R&D programme priorities
- Facilitate coordination of nuclear innovation and R&D activity and communications within and between Government and industry
- Support Government's production of the business cases required to underpin nuclear research and innovation programmes