

To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales

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SCIENCE RESEARCH INVESTMENT FUND: ROUND THREE (SRIF3)

This letter provides advance notice of arrangements for a third round of the Science Research Investment Fund, and draws attention to plans for the electronic submission of institutions' proposals for expenditure.

The outcome of the Government's 2004 Spending Review and the *Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014*, published on 12 July 2004, announced that funding for the Science Research Investment Fund will continue at £500 million a year in 2006-07 and 2007-08. This funding will be used to support a third round of the scheme (SRIF3) in those two years.

As in the current round of SRIF, £200 million per annum of this funding will be specific to HEIs in England, and the remaining £300 million per annum will be made available on a UK wide basis by the Office of Science and Technology (OST). HEFCW has already agreed to join its capital funding for research infrastructure for 2006-07 and 2007-08 to Wales' territorial share of the OST funding. The level of this contribution will be determined in due course.

The funding provided through the current round of SRIF (SRIF2), which is running in 2004-05 and 2005-06, has been made available to help address past under-investment in research infrastructure. Institutions should assume that they will be expected to demonstrate that their SRIF3 funding will be used to:

- continue to address this past under-investment in the research infrastructure
- encourage investment that improves the utilisation of space, or improves the efficiency of the research infrastructure

Institutions should also expect that they will be asked to explain how their proposals take account of the *Science and Innovation Investment Framework*, which includes making institutions' expertise and facilities more open to access by business, as well as how proposals fit with their own sustainable research strategies.

As with previous rounds of the scheme, SRIF3 funding will be allocated to institutions by formula, and the release of allocations will be subject to submission of acceptable proposals. In the interests of streamlining the proposal and review process, institutions will be asked to submit their proposals electronically, using a system based on the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system developed by the Research Councils.

In order to access the SRIF3 submission system, institutions will need to be fully registered users of the Je-S. Institutions that expect to receive SRIF3 funding should therefore take steps now to register as Je-S users, if they have not already done so. Further information about Je-S is available at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/je-s>. Institutions wishing to register should contact the JeS helpdesk – email JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk, tel no (01793) 444 164.

We anticipate that full guidance on arrangements for SRIF3, together with the announcement of institutional allocations, will be published early in 2005, and that institutions' proposals will be required no later than May 2005.

Yours sincerely

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE