

# Science needs more funding to keep Britain competitive, says new report

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Scientists will warn today that the economy will be damaged without more support for British research and development.

A Royal Society of Chemistry report to be presented at a House of Commons event says: "There is growing evidence to suggest that the [UK science](#) base is at its limit of efficiency.

"Serious and irreversible damage will result if we do not reinvest now," say the authors of "Chemistry: We Mean Business."

The document concludes: "We are in danger of falling behind our international competitors. We need a long-term commitment to our knowledge economy to win the global race."

The report says science spending should be 0.7% of GDP - the EU average - by 2020 at the latest.

And it urges ministers to support science in the Spending Review due on 26 June.

Britain's science base has, stresses the report, created growth and jobs, but is now in danger of falling behind its international competitors, many of which are funding science at higher levels, aware of the benefits that flow from technology.

"The government should commit to a long-term plan to fund science at

internationally competitive levels, consolidate innovation mechanisms to convert research into growth, and ensure people have the skills to take up [new jobs](#) in the innovation economy," says the report.

One of the most worrying statistics highlighted is the disappointing UK standing in an international league table that charts innovation.

When ranked by the capacity to convert [invention](#) into [economic growth](#), the UK's score merits a definition of 'Innovation Follower', lying well behind more successful nations including Finland, the Netherlands and Germany.

In a suite of recommendations "Chemistry: We Mean Business" proposes actions that would return UK science to a competitive world position.

Robert Parker, chief executive of the [Royal Society of Chemistry](#), said today: "By building on our key strengths as a country - ingenuity and creativity in science - we can make the UK the best place in Europe to start, finance and grow businesses.

"By staying ahead in science, with internationally-competitive funding, a well-supported talent pipeline and a coherent nationwide innovation strategy, we can create strong, sustainable growth."

**More information:** [www.rsc.org/images/campaign\\_casies\\_tcm18-232087.pdf](http://www.rsc.org/images/campaign_casies_tcm18-232087.pdf)

Provided by Royal Society of Chemistry

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