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**Subject:** Investing in our future

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**From:** Marshall, Larry (Executive, Black Mountain)

**Sent:** Tuesday, 2 March 2021 11:12 AM

**To:**

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Dear Team

Last year we began our Annual Performance and Investment Review (APaIR) process in the middle of global and national disruption. We saw the acceleration of industry trends already in motion, including sovereign manufacturing and biosecurity capabilities, and expansion of the impacts of digital technologies into all areas of our lives. To continue to solve the greatest challenges for Australia, CSIRO must anticipate and respond to these changes, before they hit us.

It's because we made courageous bets on the future that we were so well prepared for COVID-19 and bushfires leading into last year. In 2020, our role as Australia's national science agency was crystal clear as we stepped up to support our country both in responding to crises and in driving recovery and resilience. Those bold changes and our five-year improvement on delivering financial returns through commercialisation are also why we are in such a pivotal position as the Government considers how to navigate out of global recession.

In October, this performance was supported by the Government with a funding commitment in the Federal Budget to accommodate any shortfall in our revenue as a result of COVID-19, which created the need for us to approach APaIRs differently. In November, [I updated you on the focus of our APaIR conversations](#) around cross-Business Unit (BU) opportunities, particularly those utilising digital technologies, as well as opportunities for alignment with the Government's Modern Manufacturing Strategy.

The Executive Team (ET) and I reviewed nearly 100 ideas from across CSIRO, considering inputs from many different teams and many of our customers. Predicting the future is a wicked problem, so we took a bit of time to narrow the list, but CSIRO was designed to take on wicked problems, so in February we confirmed nearly 50 investments we will make over the next four years. Thank you again to all the teams involved.

I'm pleased to now share the headline outcomes of this year's APaIRs with you. Your leaders will go into more detail with you as their plans take shape in line with our four-year investments.

- **Missions:** \$125m into our portfolio of missions in development, with an additional \$50m for a new Missions Co-Investment Fund, including a One-CSIRO program to apply AI across our missions.
- **Sustainable Growth:** \$82m driving emerging opportunities in digital healthcare delivery, commercialisation of market-ready technologies, AI-enabled science, extended funding for our KickStart program for start-ups and small businesses, and creating new industries in Northern Australia.
- **Cross-BU Manufacturing:** \$60m to drive an innovative manufacturing approach across multiple BUs aligned with market opportunities created by COVID-19 and the Government's Modern Manufacturing Strategy, including digital manufacturing, investment in quantum capability, boosting our efforts in biomedical manufacturing, and enabling more of our people to manufacture prototypes for solutions from their science.
- **Future Science Platforms (FSPs):** Commitment to continuing our \$42m per year into our FSP program to ensure we remain at the cutting edge of scientific breakthroughs. This includes two new FSPs in Quantum and Microbiomes, and seed funding to develop another five FSPs, which will support numerous new positions for CSIRO Early Research Career (CERC) Postdoctoral Fellows.

- **Digital Transformation:** \$138.5m for digital initiatives including \$1m for our Digital Academy to continue digital upskilling our people across CSIRO, investment in our Managed Data Ecosystem and Domain + Digital programs, and to support efficiencies and quality of service in our ESS teams.

In times of disruption we must move quickly to seize opportunities. As a result, your leaders will be working with you next on how to best operationalise these decisions to allocate our resources for maximum impact, including through our Interchange program, which you will have seen from [Katherine's email last week](#) has just opened for round two opportunities.

Last year we moved with agility and focus to respond to a rapidly emerging crisis, and less than a year later I'm so proud of the role we're playing in Australia being vaccinated, and in driving economic recovery through science-led innovation. We need to stay focused on our purpose, move as One-CSIRO, and keep delivering as we have over the past five years in line with our values: not just putting our **people first** but putting 25 million Australians first; not just trusting each other and our science but also earning the **trust** of Australia; not just moving forward but going **further together** as a One-CSIRO team; and not just talking about solutions but delivering resilience and recovery to **make it real**.

If we can stay true to ourselves and our values, then I know 2021 will see us continue to grow a stronger Australia ahead.

Larry

**Dr Larry Marshall**

Chief Executive  
CSIRO

[www.csiro.au](http://www.csiro.au)

CSIRO acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands that we live and work on across Australia and pays its respects to Elders past and present

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