19th March 2015

Dear Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation

I write as the Director of the Digital Repository of Ireland in response to the consultation paper for the successor to the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation. The Digital Repository of Ireland is a national digital infrastructure for humanities and social sciences research data funded by PRTLI cycle5, www.dri.ie .

Thank you for this opportunity to consult. I believe it is an important opportunity to include in the next strategy two critical issues that will greatly benefit Ireland.

1) Research Data Management

The data that is produced by all publicly funded research grants should be viewed as a public good, and robust research data management policies and practices should be developed and implemented.

The EU Commission has committed €4Billion for Open Research Data Pilots; the European Commission's vision is that information already paid for by the public purse should not be paid for again each time it is accessed or used, and that it should benefit European companies and citizens to the full.

In Ireland, we can start by mandating Research Data Management plans as a component of every research proposal (and included in the peer review process), make Data Archiving an eligible funding cost in research proposals, and invest at a national level in digital infrastructure to provide research data management services.

2) National Digital Infrastructure

It is important for Ireland to have trusted digital repositories for storage, preservation, access, and exploitation of digital content, including research data. The average lifetime of a web-link is 100 days; exploitation of digital content relies on stable, robust sources of curated content.

A key aspect to enable this is the development of funding instruments that accommodate the medium to long term view required to maintain and grow a national digital infrastructure, in order to achieve optimal performance and engagement with the designated user communities.

This is not an appeal to bypass competitive peer review, but rather to develop/modify instruments that are suited to service-oriented digital infrastructures, and that can build on existing national investments to date.

Big data, data analytics, digital content exploitation, secondary analysis and research reproducibility all benefit from stable access to open data services. The Digital Repository of Ireland is one such national digital infrastructure, and is an enabler for Irish researchers to seek Horizon 2020 funding and helps Ireland to achieve *Open Data*.

I am happy to elaborate in more detail or to provide supporting international references and documentation. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Sandra Collins

Director of the Digital Repository of Ireland.