

## Policy Impact Unit – Update

July 2024.

### Festival of Engineering



With over 7000 attendees and 250+ events and exhibits, the Festival of Engineering truly delivered on its ambitions to be a celebration and showcase of how engineers can change the world.

Policy was one of the main engagement streams for the Festival with events on specific policy areas such as AI and Deepfakes, showcase events and new policy publications. We also published a [new video](#) and a [new brochure](#) during the week – please check them out!

PIU highlights from the week included launching new policy engagement methods (more on that below!) and a workshop designed and delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets on the link between housing and health, and how we can deepen collaborations between academic and policy communities.

We are delighted that so many policymakers joined us for the Festival, including DSIT, DHSC, FCDO, Cabinet Office, DBT, DLUHC, DESNZ as well as colleagues from Chief Scientific Adviser teams, Parliamentarians, regulators and more. The benefit of supporting University spinouts has already been raised in the House of Lords as a result of attending the Festival’s launch event, and we will report on broader impacts in due course.

PIU were proud to lead the Festival’s Policy Engagement Advisory Group throughout, and a huge thanks to all members for their support.



## ARI Live!



Areas of Research Interest (ARI's) are published by Government Departments to communicate their key research and policy questions, inviting expert opinion to develop their evidence base and inform policy decisions.

*ARI Live!* is a new concept developed by PIU which brings academic experts and policymakers together to develop responses to ARI's in a live environment, offering the opportunity to dig deeper into key questions, challenge assumptions and build deeper relationships.

The focus for the inaugural ARI Live! delivered earlier this month was ***The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Productivity and Future Skills Needs.***

We heard from expert Panellists including [Lord Clement Jones](#), Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Artificial Intelligence, and had spinout sessions on associated socio-economic impacts, policing and health.

In partnership with [Maria Cross](#), we tested the usability of AI tools in delivering the event – including live event report writing enabling us to share immediate outputs with attendees to maintain momentum. More information [can be found here](#) including the colleagues who made this event possible - and we are currently working on additional associated outputs (watch this space!)

## Futures Forum



The **VaxHub Futures Forum on Pandemic Preparedness: *Are We Really Ready?*** brought together policymakers from across Government including UKHSA, MHRA, Office for Life Sciences as well as representatives from local government, funding and advisory bodies.

The event took place at a pivotal moment. The ongoing negotiations for the WHO Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Accord have intensified the global focus on pandemic preparedness as illustrated by the Global Pandemic Preparedness Summit co-organised by CEPI taking place at the end of July. The new UK Science Secretary has also highlighted UK's readiness for a future pandemic as a key national resilience area where further work is needed.

Insights from the event will be captured in an event report which will be made available in the coming weeks.

## Futures Forum Toolkit Published!



Interested to learn more about the Futures Forum model, or run your own?

We are delighted to have produced and published a new Toolkit on the Futures Forum approach and methodology. This approach draws on futures thinking to enable joint exploration of particular policy topics and understand long term impacts as well as more immediate policy considerations.

[Download your copy today](#) – and share the new Futures Forum [video](#) on your networks.

## PIU's June highlights also included...



- Designed and delivered ***Engineering Reality: The Impact and Future of Deepfake Technology*** in conjunction with the Dawes Centre for Future Crime. Including a screening of award-winning film [Another Body](#) and Panel discussion on Deepfake policy. Special thanks to Radya Hussien and Lorenzo Pasculli (SCS) Leonie Dunn (STeAPP) Maddy Janickyj (CS) and [Sophie Compton](#).
- Published a new blogpost on [Seaweed Revolution - how can we support the emergent seaweed industry to deliver a more sustainable future?](#)
- Met with the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) to set out Future Targeted Healthcare Manufacturing Hub Research alongside [Suzy Farid](#), with a particular focus on sustainability benchmarks.
- Met with the Home Office to explore policy options in line with new Ministerial briefs, related to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) alongside [Dr Leonie Tanczer](#). Also joined the Ending VAWG Policy Network and Online Safety Act Network, discussing engagement approaches for the new Government.
- Facilitated workshops at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) Cyber Conference - exploring the relationship between government and academia.

## Opportunities

- The Government Office for Science would like your views on how academics engage with the UK Government. The information you provide will help build an evidence base which may influence the number of mid-career scientists in the Civil Service - [Respond here](#) until 16<sup>th</sup> August
- UKRI Policy Fellowships [are now open for applications](#) for doctoral students – deadline 2<sup>nd</sup> October
- The Senedd's Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee are seeking views on [halting and reversing the loss of nature by 2030](#) – deadline is 23<sup>rd</sup> August



## STeAPP Public Policy



This month at STeAPP we.....

- Co-ordinated STeAPP response to [Engineers 2030 consultation](#) from the **National Engineering Policy Centre** [[CLW](#)] [[AC](#)]
- Participated in a [meeting of the Pujiang Innovation Forum in Shanghai](#) on the theme of ‘the science of science in the New Era’. [[JW](#)]
- Supported the **Ukraine Ministry of Education and Science** to develop a national research assessment system. [[JW](#)]
- Provided **Nature media** comment on [science policy and the general election](#). [[JW](#)]
- Hosted experience-sharing webinar with **UN-Habitat** – in capacity as Chair of the Steering Committee of the Global Urban Observatory Network ([GUO-Net](#)) - for **National Urban Observatory** (Egypt) and **Al Baha Urban Observatory** (Saudi Arabia) [[CLW](#)]
- Reported on a proposed evaluation design **to Government Skills and Campus Unit** for evaluation of line management training across Civil Service. [[IS](#)]
- Chaired in a panel discussion on AMR with **MHRA** and **HSA** for the **UCL Microbiology Domain’s summer reception**. [[SE](#)]

- Provided [media comment](#) on the new **Code of practice on human stem cell-based embryo models** for the journal, **Science**. [[SE](#)]
- Co-chaired a discussion with the **International Science Council** on their science diplomacy strategy towards the multilateral world ahead of the [UN Summit of the Future](#). [[JCM](#)]

To wrap up, a shout out and note of gratitude for the STEaPP students leave PIU this month having temporarily joined us back in June – Thank you Elise Pi, Chloe Colomer and Macarena Cox Gil, it's been a pleasure to have you with us.

Know a colleague who may be interested in receiving these updates? [Let us know!](#)

**Thank you.**