



## OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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### Media Release

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#### **Sir Peter Gluckman: We need clever people doing intellectually risky research**

How do we best decide what scientific research to fund? This is a question that Sir Peter Gluckman, the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, is urging the New Zealand science community to consider more deeply.

Following the release of a PMSAC [discussion paper](#) last December in which Sir Peter addressed the limitations of the current system of decision-making in the New Zealand science funding environment, Sir Peter gives the view in a new [blog post](#) that there are two important ingredients for achieving the best value for research expenditure, namely high performing people and intellectually risky research.

"The evidence is clear that recent performance and skills in research leadership are critical," writes Sir Peter. "Another issue is that our funding system, with its highly specific portfolios, has disadvantaged multidisciplinary research, yet this is where so much innovative science occurs."

"The result of this is that too much of our scientific enterprise has become unduly conservative and risk-averse with consequences that will incur a significant cost to New Zealand in the long run."

He notes that similar views have been reflected in a [report](#) recently published by the United States President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. This Council has also determined that there is a need to encourage high-risk interdisciplinary research led by high-performing investigators.

"In a small science system like New Zealand's that is expected to leverage exceptional value from modest amounts of available funds, the need to think in similar terms may be even greater."

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