

## Examples of outcomes from Foresight 1999-2002

Click on any of the links below to find out more about Foresight activities.

### Debates and publications

- [Books](#)
- [Lectures, debates and workshops: individual and series](#)
- [Reports – all available on the Foresight website](#)

### Strategy and policy

- [Energy and Natural Environment Task Force → Energy White paper](#)
- [Information, Communications and Media Panel → Broadband Stakeholders Group](#)
- [Healthcare & Ageing Population Panels → Treasury Report – \*Securing our Future Health\*](#)

### Research initiatives

- [Research Councils](#)
- [Business or joint funded](#)

### Spin-off Programmes

- [Associate programmes](#)
- [Young Foresight](#)
- [Regional networks and programmes](#)

### Toolkits and Guides

- [CD-rom small business toolkit](#)
- [Guide for Trade Associations on futures working](#)
- [Financial Services Panel – Pensions Ready Reckoner](#)

[Britain 2010](#), written by Richard Scase with the support of several panels was the fourth best selling business book in the UK in the year 2000. Its purpose is to 'raid' the future from a series of perspectives, most particularly from that of social science research.

"However we look at it, there has never been a more compelling need to see what the social consequences will be in the future of decisions made now - actively or passively - on our lives. This is true at a personal, business or governmental level. Yet never has it seemed more difficult to make the right decisions."

With support from Foresight, the Medical Research Council with the Biology and Biological Sciences Research Council, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, the Natural Environment Research Council and the Department of Trade and Industry produced "Demystifying Genomics." This publication explained the basis for and implications of genomics in the broadest context - its origins, implications and future directions, as well as the dilemmas it raised and how they might be tackled. The text was posted on the Foresight web site and the publication itself disseminated widely. The British Association of Communicators in Business awarded it a certificate of excellence. The report is still available via the [MRC website](#).

[Back to front page](#)

## **Lectures / debates / workshops / forums**

During the 1999-2002 round of Foresight, about 220 seminars and workshops were held, either nationally or regionally. (This does not include panel and task force meetings)

- Fuelling the future workshops (run jointly by the Institute of Biology, the Institute of Physics, the Institute of Chemistry, and the Institute of Energy), were based around the [Foresight Energy Futures Consultation Document](#).
- The Food Chain and Crops for Industry Panel recommended that The Food Standards Agency should establish a strategic forum for activities promoting a healthy diet; to construct convincing proposals for action; to conduct research to fill in gaps in nutritional knowledge and to bring together all organisations with a role to play in order to agree concerted action.  
At the Board meeting held on 8 March 2001 The Food Standards Agency agreed to the establishment of the Nutrition Stakeholder Forum, which met for the first time on 14 March 2002.

[Back to front page](#)

During the 1999-2002 round of Foresight, over 100 reports were published. All reports published by Foresight are publicly available, and can be accessed via the [publications](#) section of the website.

[Back to front page](#)

The Foresight Challenge and Foresight LINK Awards have supported collaborative research projects between business and research base organisations. They provided opportunities for new technologies identified by Foresight to be explored with a view to enhancing competitive success for business in current and new markets. The competition aimed to support high quality research projects with commercial potential. Business and research base partnerships were encouraged to propose research work in Foresight priority areas outside the area of coverage of open LINK programmes, which the Awards were intended to complement. A maximum public sector contribution to a project of 50% of the total eligible cost was available. The Awards were based on LINK scheme guidelines and are managed by the LINK Directorate of the Office of Science and Technology. There have been three rounds of the Foresight LINK Awards, preceded by the similar Foresight Challenge.

Foresight Challenge Awards were made to twenty-four consortia to undertake projects involving total funding of £92m. Of this, £62m was provided by the private sector. The third round of FLAs, awarded during 2001, were the first to respond to priorities identified by the 1999-2002 Foresight Programme. Unlike previous rounds, where applications were open to any subject area, this round focused on four key technologies - nanotechnology, mobile wireless communications, biomaterials and sustainable energy.

Projects have involved 110 universities or other research base organisations and 280 companies, giving an average of 10 participants per project. Of the companies, some 95 (or 34%) are SMEs. Fourteen projects bring together consortia of 10 or more members, with 2 projects having over 30 members. So far, over 100 presentations have been made at seminars and conferences, and over 40 papers submitted to refereed journals.

The Defence, Aerospace & Systems Panel (DASP) was responsible implementing the [Defence Aerospace Research Partnerships](#) (DARPs). They are university-based, industry-led centres focused on specific research themes identified by the Panel.

[Back to front page](#)

The Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) co-ordinated the joint Research Councils' [Long Term Technology Review](#) of the science and technology (S&T) base as a Foresight Associate Programme. It identified technologies and instrumentation that would be required in the near term (1 to 5 years) and up to 10 years and beyond, on which continued scientific success would depend. It analysed science drivers and potential applications, and identified broad technology needs. It formed a sound base for the current cross Council initiatives in e- and g-science and basic technologies.

A Medical Research Council (MRC) / Biology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) Foresight Associate Programme reviewed nutrition research and pointed to the need to strengthen integration of research approaches. The review contributed to the work of the Food Chain & Crops for Industry Panel and to the research councils' own strategy development.

The [UK National Collaboration on Ageing Research](#) was launched in response to the Ageing Population Panel recommendation on the need for a more co-ordinated approach to research on issues relating to the age shift. Four of the UK's Research Councils - MRC, ESRC, EPSRC and BBSRC - have united to create a coordinated approach to ageing research. The main aims of NCAR are to stimulate multi-disciplinary research and to develop a new cross-council approach to ageing research. The new coordinated approach also includes a Funders' Forum and a European Forum on Ageing Research.

[Back to front page](#)

The work of Foresight was supported by Associate Programmes undertaken by other organisations (mainly professional institutions and research and technology organisations). Associate Programmes investigated the future of a particular topic, within the framework of the national programme. There have been 32 such programmes set up since 1999. Some examples of the work carried out within these programmes are described below.

Scale 21 Real Time Club aimed to identify the new skills, capabilities, aptitudes, talents and professional competencies needed to develop a highly skilled and adaptive workforce. This workforce must be able to conceive, design, implement, manage, embrace and use new technologies, products and services. After that start to build these into the national educational, commercial and industrial learning environment, so that the whole community can realise the full potential of the Information Age.

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The Associate Programme for Molecular Bioscience promoted the creation of an Institute of Biomedical Informatics to develop and focus expertise in this area. The major stakeholders agreed the objective to be achieved as part of the large '[Biobank](#)' population genetics study led by the Wellcome Trust and the MRC. The Associate Programme promoted the concept of cross-disciplinary PhD programmes where biologists and chemists would be trained alongside one another, with EPSRC in the lead.

[Back to front page](#)

The appointment of Regional Foresight Co-ordinators enabled Foresight Panel recommendations to be integrated into regional innovation and economic strategies and cluster development. The Co-ordinators have brought together business, and academia by using existing networks and establishing new ones. From April 2002, the Regional Development Agencies will be responsible for resourcing and co-ordinating Foresight activities in England. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland regional activities will continue to be run by Scottish Enterprise, the Welsh Development Agency and the Centre for Competitiveness, Belfast respectively.

[Back to front page](#)

In partnership with the DfES, Foresight supported the Young Foresight initiative from 2000 to 2002. This project aims to give pupils direct experience in all the skills needed to create a successful product or service: from conceptualisation, to design, to adaptability in the market place. It encourages pupils to anticipate future trends and consumer behaviour and design products that will perform. The project aims to bring design and technology alive in the classroom by introducing local industry to its future workforce and helping teachers meet the standards set by the new curriculum. Across the UK companies are working alongside schools to brainstorm about the future and develop real products for tomorrow's world, based on ideas emerging from the Foresight programme. Much of the early work took place in the North East of England, where the scheme is now well established, and fifty teacher/mentor partnerships are in place.

[Back to front page](#)

The Energy & Natural Environment Panel inspired the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Institute of Biology and the Institute of Physics to collaborate on a series of workshops on future sources of energy.

Its reports "[\*Energy for tomorrow\*](#)" and "[\*Power without pollution\*](#)", were source documents for the [Cabinet Office Policy and Innovation Unit's energy review](#).

This is reflected in some of the substantive recommendations of the PIU review originating from the ENE recommendations. The themes explored in the PIU report were further developed into policy in the 2003 [Energy White Paper](#).

[Back to front page](#)

HM Treasury used the Foresight [Healthcare Panel](#) and [Ageing Population](#) reports, and that of their [joint taskforce](#) as source documents in their study of the future costs of healthcare. This report, "Securing our Future Health: taking a long-term view" is now available at <http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/wanless>.

[Back to front page](#)

The work leading to the publication of the Information, Communications and Media Panel's [Let's Get Digital](#) report has had a significant influence on DTI, contributing to the establishment of the [Broadband Stakeholders Group](#) and accompanying £30 million investment in broadband pilots. Aspects of the report had been taken into account in developing policy on Communications Bill and the Patent Directive.

[Back to front page](#)

The Foresight Small Business Toolkit, sponsored by Foresight in 2000, allowed the benefits of Foresight to be delivered to SMEs. The Toolkit is a training tool now being used by trained facilitators to encourage companies to plan towards a future vision and anticipate challenges and opportunities. After positive pilot workshops, the Small Business Service decided that Toolkit training should be extended to all Business Link Advisors, with positive results for SMEs. In 2001 five Foresight Training Centres were appointed to train facilitators and to monitor quality in delivery. A forum with representatives of all training centres is being led by [The Centre of Competitiveness](#) in Northern Ireland and will be responsible for further development of the Toolkit.

[Back to front page](#)

The Financial Services Panel identified the need to develop an easy to use pensions ready reckoner to assist people in their financial planning. As a result the Association of British Insurers was commissioned to develop a prototype. With the support of the Department for Work and Pensions and the Financial Services Authority, the ready reckoner (<http://www.pensioncalculator.org.uk/>) went live in November 2002.

[Back to front page](#)

"Foresight for Trade Associations and Other Member-based Organisations - a guide for running effective sectoral foresight exercises" was available throughout the 1999-2002 round of the programme. This guide was designed for people within trade associations, research associations and other member-based organisations who may be interested in leading and managing a foresight exercise for their sector. It contained general advice on how to run a Foresight exercise, including the basics of surveys, brainstorming, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and developing scenarios. As such, it found applicability well beyond its intended audience, and key themes from it were developed into a package to help smaller businesses be more future-aware and forward looking.

[Back to front page](#)