

# Building Digital Economy – The Research Councils Programme and the Vision

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**Abstract.** We at the Research Councils believe that there are many aspects of society and business that could be transformed by the innovative design and use of digital technologies. This has led to the Digital Economy Programme. The Digital Economy is an RCUK Cross-Research Council Programme, led by the EPSRC, but working closely with ESRC, MRC, AHRC and TSB. What is Digital Economy? Digital Economy is the novel design or use of information and communication technology to help transform the lives of individuals, society or business. All Digital Economy research involves the user community. This can include industry, government, society, charities or other groups as applicable. The research will understand the technologies and also why change is needed, what the impacts will be and who will benefit. Research in this cross-research council area can be driven by economic, social or technical need. The early involvement of the user community is vital if new technologies are to be integrated successfully into business opportunities, technical solutions or commercial products and processes. Challenges in the Digital Economy will require multi-disciplinary academic input, including, but not limited to, the arts and humanities, economic and social sciences and medical sciences, in addition to engineering and physical sciences.