

Comments on “Energy Research, Development and Demonstration” Paper

I believe the general approach being proposed by the Dept is sound. Clearly the goals being stressed are important and should be pursued. Viz. Coordination, all island cooperation, long term sustainability, and participation in EU programmes to leverage funds. I also applaud the emphasis on education and the **importance of a competitive grant funding programme as the best vehicle for spending** public funds.

I also agree that multiplying bureaucracy is not a good idea and was pleased to see that the Dept was eager to minimize such overhead.

I think that the suggestions I have are quite consistent with the general thrust of your document.

Let me also stress that these opinions and suggestions are simply my own and do not in any way represent official SFI views.

I believe that the following steps would be useful in moving forward and believe that with the proper leadership such a process could be in place before the end of this calendar year.

- Convene the appropriate representatives of funders of energy R&D and try to agree on a set of criteria under which proposals could be reviewed. There may need to be more than one kind of competition set up depending on the perceived priorities of the funders.
(The golden rule operates: he who has the gold makes the rules).
- This step will require enlightened leadership and skilled management experience to get an outcome agreeable to all or enough parties and in a short time. This could be the beginning of a coordinating council or the council could be a body set up under the aegis of the Department. I have some experience with this kind of deliberation and would be happy to advise on this if you thought it would be useful.
- Establish a small advisory body of potential applicants or at least of people from the communities that would be likely to be funded. I.e. the academic community plus any other groups that are likely to be funded under one or more of the programmes. The reasons are many but mainly to have a group to readily bounce ideas off about the actual running of the programmes.
- Either do a deal with some agency like SFI which has experience in running competitive research programmes or do it yourself within the Department with consultancy help from someone who has such experience. I would be happy to give advice on what kind of resources the Department would need to mount such an operation yourselves if that was what you decided to do.

- The goals of such a review process would be to have a fair and objective review, using the criteria arrived at in the first step mentioned above, and yet not make it too cumbersome to the applicants nor too expensive for the reviewing body.

I hope that these comments are helpful,

Good luck,

Regards

Gary