Minister Harris and Science Foundation Ireland urge public to follow expert information and support Government's National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

From Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

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Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris TD and Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) have today urged public to follow the expert information and support the government's National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

Minister Harris met SFI this morning to discuss priorities for 2021 and how the government can support science in 2021.

The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, through SFI, will engage the research community across the Higher Education Institutes to provide accurate and independent information around COVID-19 vaccines in line with the evidence informed approach set out in the strategy.

Speaking today, Minister Harris said:

"2021 will mark the beginning of the vaccination programme. I would really encourage people to listen to the experts - our scientists and our doctors - when it comes to vaccination. These are the people who have steered the country through the pandemic, and they will steer us out of it. As the Amarach research shows, there continues to be uncertainty, but now is not the time to doubt our experts. That does not mean we shouldn't listen to the genuine concerns people have. I hope that by working with the research community we can work together to allay those concerns by providing accurate information."

Commenting on the role the research community can play, Professor Mark Ferguson, Director General of Science Foundation Ireland said:

"We hope that by working with the experts from our research community and answering any questions the Irish public may have around the government's National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme that we can play a helpful role in providing the accurate information which the public greatly desires.'