



[REDACTED]

11 September 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2026/00597

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request, received on the 15 July, and clarification narrowing the scope of the request, received on the 4 August.

Your request:

I am requesting the agenda and minutes of any meetings of STFC's Science Board (Facilities and Laboratories) and Science Board (PPAN) since January 1st 2026, including drafts of any minutes.

I am also requesting any documents, papers or recommendations from the above boards that relate to the recent STFC Prioritization Exercise.

Your clarification:

1. *Please provide an estimate for the cost of the full request.*
2. *Please proceed with the request limited in scope to the STFC Science Board for Facilities and Laboratories.*

Our response:

Firstly, we would like to apologise for the delay in our response. Due to the high levels of interest in the STFC prioritisation activity, we have received a significant number of requests on this topic, which has unfortunately affected our FOI processing and response times.

We can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) holds some information falling within the scope of your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

We have therefore refused your request under section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Section 12 of the FOIA allows a public authority to refuse a request where it estimates that the cost of complying with the request, or in the case of section 12(2), confirming or denying whether information is held, would exceed the prescribed limit.

For UKRI, the appropriate limit is £450, equivalent to 18 hours of staff time, calculated at the statutory rate of £25 per hour.

When estimating whether the cost limit would be exceeded, a public authority may take into account one or more of the following activities:

- determining whether information is held;
- locating the information;
- retrieving the information; and
- extracting the requested information.

It may be helpful to explain why UKRI estimates that responding to your request would exceed the appropriate limit.

We can confirm that the STFC Science Board (Facilities and Laboratories - F&L) held meetings on the following dates:

- 9 January 2026
- 25 & 26 February 2026
- 24 April 2026
- 6 May 2026
- 27 & 28 May 2026
- 23 & 24 June 2026

We would like to take this opportunity to correct an inaccuracy in the information provided to you during our clarification request. The number of meetings held by the STFC Science Board (F&L) from 1 January to 15 July 2026 was miscommunicated. We can now confirm that six meetings were held across nine days.

No documents are held in relation to the meetings of 9 January and 6 May. These were closed meetings and no minutes were taken. Approximately four hours of staff time has been spent locating, retrieving and extracting the relevant agendas, minutes and papers for the remaining four meetings.

The format for these meetings is not uniform, and the number of papers produced for each varies significantly. Across the four remaining meetings, more than 20 papers have been identified. Each would need to be reviewed to determine whether it contains information relating to the STFC prioritisation exercise. The papers also vary considerably in size and, collectively, comprise more than 400 pages that would need to be reviewed to identify information falling within scope of the request.

We estimate that this would require an additional 20 hours, exceeding the statutory limit of 18 hours.

This estimate does not take into account the additional time it would take to locate and retrieve draft versions of the minutes for each meeting that may be held across multiple sources.

UKRI therefore estimates that the work required would exceed the appropriate limit and has refused your request under section 12(1) of the FOIA.

Advice and assistance

Under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, UKRI has a duty to provide advice and assistance, so far as it is reasonable to do so.

Whilst UKRI is unable to comply with your request in its current form, it may be possible for us to comply with a revised request seeking a narrower category of information. As a starting point, you may wish to request the agendas or minutes of relevant meetings. These records may assist you in identifying particular topics, decisions or discussion points that are of interest, which could help you narrow the scope of any subsequent request and avoid exceeding the appropriate limit.

Any revised request will be considered on its own merits and will be subject to the provisions of the FOIA, including the application of any relevant exemptions.

Time estimate of full, original request

In addition to the above information relating to the STFC Science Board (F&L), your original request also requested the same information for the STFC Science Board (PPAN).

The total number of meetings held by the STFC Science Board (PPAN) from 1 January to 15 July 2026 has been confirmed as 21, however many of these were short, closed meetings held by PPAN members that the secretariat did not attend and therefore have no formal minutes or notes.

We can confirm that there were seven minuted meetings of the STFC Science Board (PPAN).

Over 350 documents or papers are held in relation to these PPAN meetings. We estimate the time required to review these documents to establish if they are in scope of your request would exceed 350 hours. Furthermore, given that it took approximately four hours of staff time to locate, retrieve and extract the relevant agendas, minutes, and documents or papers for the F&L meetings, we consider it reasonable to conclude that undertaking the same exercise for the PPAN meetings would take significantly longer, as there are more than ten times as many documents held.

As above, these estimates do not take into account the additional time it would take to identify draft versions of the minutes for each meeting.

Your rights

If you have any queries regarding our response please do let us know. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, explaining which elements of this decision you disagree with and why. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of our response and should be addressed to:

Head of Information Governance

Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: www.ico.org.uk.

If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see [UKRI's complaints procedure](#)¹.

Yours sincerely,


Information Governance
Information Rights Team
UK Research and Innovation
foi@ukri.org | dataprotection@ukri.org

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>