



[REDACTED]

27 April 2022

Dear [REDACTED],

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2022/00117**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 24 March in which you requested the following:

**Your request:**

*I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to the Future Flight Phase 3 Strands 1 & 2.*

*For both Strands, please send me details about:*

1. *Total number of applications*
2. *If a portfolio approach was adopted, and if so how the applications were grouped.*
3. *Number of assessed applications (not disregarded due to being deemed out of scope etc)*
4. *Number of applications funded (per portfolio if applicable).*
5. *Average score (per portfolio if applicable).*
6. *Success threshold (lowest score funded) (per portfolio if applicable).*
7. *Highest score (per portfolio if applicable).*

**Our response:**

I can confirm UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) hold some of the information relevant to your request. Please see the information below.

Information in relation to questions 1 and 3 to 7 is provided in the table below (without splitting successful applications by portfolio):

Question		Strand 1	Strand 2
1	Total number of applications	62	29
3	Number of assessed applications	56	29
4	Number of applications funded	11	5
5	Average score	69.9%	72.7%
6	Success threshold	65.8%	74%
7	Highest score	82.8%	79.2%

Please note, that the above scores are from the written assessment stage. As noted in the process below, once applications were selected to advance to the interview stage, they were re-scored based solely on the interview. Therefore, the only scores that are applicable to all applications are that of the written assessment.

In regard to question 2, on whether a portfolio approach was adopted and how applications were grouped, a portfolio approach was adopted as part of the selection process, as highlighted in the scope section of the competition overviews for both [Strand 1](#)<sup>1</sup> and [Strand 2](#)<sup>2</sup>.

To provide further detail, the selection of projects for the Future Flight Challenge (FFC) Phase 3 competition followed several well-defined steps to ensure that the challenge ambitions were realised whilst operating in a fair, open and transparent manner.

The sequence and processes were as follows:

1. All applications, for both strands, were assessed by independent assessors against standard scoring criteria.
2. Those applications scoring over the minimum threshold were then narrowed down to 35 projects by the FFC team for interview. This selection was made primarily using the written assessment scores but with a check to ensure that several projects would be interviewed for each 'technical pillar' of the overall competition scope. These technical pillars were Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), ground Infrastructure, sub-regional aircraft, airspace management, drone delivery, drone inspection and other drone applications.
3. Interviews were conducted by a panel of independent assessors. These scores overwrite the scores from the written assessment. The interviewers had access to the written assessor's feedback and would expect applicants to address this as part of the interviews.
4. The FFC team were also present at the interviews. They asked questions principally to understand the scope of the projects, how they fit within the 'technical pillars' and how well the projects addressed the published [FFC roadmap](#)<sup>3</sup>. The FFC team did not score the projects.
5. The successful projects were then selected by the FFC team from those that scored over the quality threshold after the interview stage. This selection was made against the following criteria:
  - a. How well the projects addressed published deliverables from the FFC roadmap
  - b. Ensuring that all prime 'technical pillars' were covered by the portfolio
  - c. Ensuring all three classes of aircraft were covered by the portfolio (Drones or unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), advanced air mobility (AAM) and sub-regional zero-carbon aircraft).
  - d. Prioritising ambitious demonstration projects
  - e. Viability of industrial scale-up to create businesses in the nearer term
  - f. Certification risks (i.e. how likely it is that a project would be able to develop a certification basis in the timescales planned)

Step 5 is the portfolio selection step. All projects were considered as part of a single portfolio and individual projects were not grouped by any sub-category for the purposes of comparison of scores, therefore it is not possible to provide answers to questions 4 to 7 per portfolio, due to not all applications receiving an interview score.

If you have any queries regarding our response or you are unhappy with the outcome of your request and wish to seek an internal review of the decision, please contact:

Head of Information Governance

Email: [foi@ukri.org](mailto:foi@ukri.org) or [infogovernance@ukri.org](mailto:infogovernance@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: <https://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 policy: <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/complaints-policy/>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/979/overview#scope>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/980/overview#scope>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ukri.org/publications/future-flight-vision-and-roadmap/>

Yours sincerely,



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