



[REDACTED]

22 May 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2023/00152

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

Your request:

I understand that a technical issue within your systems resulted in a large number of over-payments being made to your grant recipients over the past 4 years.

Please could you tell me:

- 1. The number of organisations which received an over-payment in each of 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022*
- 2. The total value of over-payments in each of 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022*
- 3. The amount recovered from over-payments made in each of 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022*

Our response

Thank you once again for your continued patience and we extend our sincerest apologies for the delay in getting back to you.

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

Given that a large number of Innovate UK (IUK) funded projects typically receive payments on an incurred and defrayed basis, we have interpreted your request for information on "over-payments" to relate to the total payments outstanding upon the completion of the project, and subsequently the need for funds to be recovered from an organisation by IUK.

The IUK Recovery team has tracked reasons for recovery on all outstanding amounts since September 2021. These reasons include a number of categories including over-payment, but also fraudulent spending and underspend on grant pre-payments, to name a few. Occasionally, we receive voluntary requests to return funds. In this event, we will validate the amount due for the organisation, and assist with the payment process, but we will not enter these cases into Recovery.

For over-payments recovered prior to September 2021, and for over-payments that did not enter into the recovery process after this date, centralised data is not held. To determine this information, we would need to review our account records since 2019. This would require manual interrogation of raw data for all invoices issued and payments made to IUK to determine whether these were related to an over-payment.

We have identified 1,183 invoices and separately, 153 ad-hoc, direct repayments made to IUK during this period.

| Year | Period | No. of Direct Repayment | No. of Invoices Issued |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 2018/19 | Jan 2019 - Mar 2019 | 31 | 0 |
| 2019/20 | Apr 2019 - Mar 2020 | 44 | 16 |
| 2020/21 | Apr 2020 - Mar 2021 | 55 | 32 |
| 2021/22 | Apr 2021 - Mar 2022 | 6 | 619 |
| 2022/23 | Mar 2022 - Dec 2022 | 17 | 516 |
| Period requested | | 153 | 1,183 |

For the majority of cases, manually identifying the reason that an invoice was raised, or a payment was made would take 2 minutes per case, however for some cases this could take significantly more time. Subsequently, the cost of complying with your request as it currently stands would exceed the appropriate statutory limit as specified within Section 12 of the FOIA which for UKRI is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of 18 hours of staff resource on locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

If you would like to narrow the scope of your request, so that the appropriate statutory limit is not engaged, we will be happy to reassess your request.

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 within the next 40 working days:

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 policy: <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/complaints-policy/>

Yours sincerely,

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