



[REDACTED]

10 March 2022

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2022/00059

Thank you for your Freedom of Information requests received on the 18 February and 27 February in which you requested the following:

Your request:

1. *How many full-time equivalent staff members and outside consultants at Innovate UK in pre-award duties?*
2. *How many full-time equivalent staff members and outside consultants at Innovate UK in post-award duties?*
3. *How many projects awarded grants is Innovate UK currently monitoring?*
4. *What is the total amount of awards is Innovate UK currently dealing with?*
5. *What are the duties of Monitoring Officers of projects funded by Innovate UK?*
6. *What are the duties of Assurance Officers (finance) with regards to projects funded by Innovate UK?*
7. *What is the procedure at Innovate UK for closing down a project?*
8. *Does it include an appeal system for grant holders?*

Our response

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

1. How many full-time equivalent staff members and outside consultants at Innovate UK in pre-award duties?

Please note that pre-award roles include pre-award funding assurance. There are 63.28 FTE staff including 3 graduate FTE that rotate around Innovate UK on different assignments.

2. How many full-time equivalent staff members and outside consultants at Innovate UK in post-award duties?

Please note that post-award roles include post award funding assurance. There are 63 FTE staff including 5 agency FTE on temporary contracts and 1 FTE on the graduate program that rotates around the whole of Innovate UK.

Please note the above data is for Innovate UK (IUK) employees only. We also currently have 1,150 assessors in our assessor pool and there are 175 active Monitoring Officers (MOs) who have applied for the projects. Assessors and MOs are not IUK employees but are contracted.

3. How many projects awarded grants is Innovate UK currently monitoring?

Innovate UK is currently monitoring 3,969 projects.

4. What is the total amount of awards is Innovate UK currently dealing with?

Under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act - Information already reasonably accessible, the information you have requested is already available in the public domain. Section 21 is an absolute exemption which means that there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

Innovate UK publishes data on all funded awards and is available as part of our [transparency data](#)¹.

5. What are the duties of Monitoring Officers of projects funded by Innovate UK?

A Monitoring Service Provider (MSP) will be assigned to every project and be the first point of contact for the project participants. The key objective of the MSP is to ensure that the project is managed effectively by the project participants through each of the three project phases (start-up, live and completion) and that the project is supported to deliver effective outcomes. The primary role will therefore be to undertake periodic reviews of the project's progress and to liaise with the lead project manager to gain:

- Assurance as to the technical progress and delivery
- Assurance in relation to project management and reporting
- Assurance in relation to financial management and control

The MSP is responsible for tasks falling into six work categories (A-F):

- A Technical support
- B Project start-up phase approval
- C Periodic reviews: meetings and reporting
- D Claim approval
- E Issue and change management
- F Project completion

6. What are the duties of Assurance Officers (finance) with regards to projects funded by Innovate UK?

Assurance Officers conduct pre-award finance reviews as follows:

1. Look up and record the Persons of Significant Control - PoSC. This includes reviewing who owns and controls the business - who ultimately benefits from the Grant Funding, including identifying nationality, residency, interests in other companies and whether those other companies are in receipt of grant funding or operate in the same industry sector or any overlaps in technology development.
2. Undertaking in Difficulty (UID) test - involves measure of accrued losses against issued share capital - must be less than 50% erosion to meet the required criteria if it is a limited company greater than 3 years old.
3. Viability – business and match funding checks including checks of company registration, legal status, size, age, standalone or sits within a group etc. Companies with either Disqualified Directors, overdue accounts filing, intention to register order for insolvency or putting the company into administration, or more than 2 County Court Judgements (CCJ's) or CCJs with a value of greater than £10,000 will not go ahead.
4. Eligibility – Project Cost Reviews including size, head count, expected staff growth due to the project, turnover, length of project, place of business and project work being undertaken.

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/publications/innovate-uk-funded-projects-since-2004/>

7. What is the procedure at Innovate UK for closing down a project?

Projects are 'closed down' for a variety of reasons including breaches of T&C's, criminal behaviour, applicants wish to withdraw, a rift with other collaboration partners, among other reasons. Conditions for suspension, termination and repayment of grants are contained in the terms and conditions of the grant, extracts of which are provided below:

1.1 Innovate UK may suspend, terminate and/or reclaim the grant in whole or in part.

1.2 We will take appropriate care in how we do this, but in certain circumstances Innovate UK can immediately suspend grant payments.

1.3 If we have concerns that mean we might need to suspend, terminate or reclaim the grant, we will write to inform you and you will then have 30 days to address our concerns.

Further the terms and conditions provide that:

1.6 If you do not resolve an issue causing suspension or if we terminate the grant, you may be required to repay some or all, of the grant.

1.7 Innovate UK has the right to take all reasonable steps to reclaim any or all of the grant already claimed by you, should it be necessary for Innovate UK to suspend or terminate your grant or terminate this agreement for any reason.

1.8 Where there is an underspend in grant funds paid to or claimed by you at the project end date, the full value of the underspend will be returned to Innovate UK immediately.

8. Does it include an appeal system for grant holders?

The terms and conditions discuss dispute resolution as follows:

1.1 Where a dispute arises between you and Innovate UK, we would encourage you to contact us to discuss how the matter can be resolved. If a mutually acceptable resolution cannot be achieved within 30 days of you contacting us, Innovate UK has the right:

1.1.1 either, unilaterally to terminate the grant and potentially to seek repayment of all or part of the grant funds previously paid to you; or

1.1.2 if both parties agree, to refer the matter to the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), whose decision will be binding. Any arbitration will be conducted in accordance with LCIA Arbitration Rules before one arbitrator seated in London.

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 or 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: <http://www.ico.gov.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,

[Redacted Signature]

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