



[REDACTED]

4 July 2022

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2022/00126

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 31 March in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I right under the freedom of information act to request a complete copy of the application submitted by the recipients of funds awarded by Innovate UK, named as the TAG TrustNet, in press coverage of government funding for a Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) trial.

<https://mediatel.co.uk/news/2022/01/13/uk-government-invests-in-blockchain-initiative-for-digital-advertising/>

Under the act, I would also like access to any and all documents relating to the decision taken by Innovation UK to award this money to TAG TrustNet.

Our response

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

We consider that the grant application falls under the exemption at section 41(1) of the FOIA information provided in confidence. To explain further, applicants submit their grant applications in confidence, with the understanding that details of their application will remain confidential to protect research and development plans, intellectual property, and other commercially sensitive or market information provided in the proposal. Detailed information is necessary in proposals to enable assessments. This information is more than trivial and not otherwise accessible, as it refers to a platform and technology that are not publicly available and not easily accessible. We believe that the information has the necessary quality of confidence and was imparted under an obligation of confidence. As this exemption is absolute there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

We consider that the information in relation to the grant application and the decision to award the grant also falls under the exemption at Section 43(2) of the FOIA. This exemption is used where disclosure would likely result in a person's (an individual, a company, the public authority itself, or any other legal entities) commercial interests being prejudiced.

This is a qualified exemption, meaning that a test was carried out to determine whether the public interest outweighs the requirement for commercial confidentiality.

Public interest in favour of disclosure

- There is a general public interest in the disclosure of this information to ensure transparency and openness of a public organisation.
- There is also a public interest in transparency in order to ensure the accountability of public organisations and how they spend public funding.

- It would be in the public interest to view the grant applications and information relating to decisions to award public funding. As applications include information on the impact and outcomes anticipated, disclosure may enable the public to independently assess the impact of the project.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- Applicants apply for funding under the expectation that an overview of their successful application will be publicly available if an award is made, but that their original application and the documents related to the decision to grant the award will be treated in confidence to protect the detailed information they have provided.
- The grant applicants must also have the ability to support and justify the strength of their application. This knowledge is proprietary to the applicant and exemplifies the commercial advantage and value that such expertise and skills deliver. As such disclosing the information requested is likely to damage the applicant's commercial advantage and thereby harm their commercial interests and affect the value of the award.
- The full grant proposal and documents related to the decision to grant the award contain commercially sensitive information such as technical project plans and an extensive description of the project which are held by UKRI in confidence. Releasing this information could be taken advantage of by competitors in planning competing strategies for further business opportunities.
- The grant holder provides a unique specialist function that is not widely available, and information regarding the approach to addressing issues in their field of specialisation is highly commercially sensitive. The impact of disclosure would extend beyond this award, would jeopardise future areas of research and collaboration, and have implications for the sector. Information in the grant proposal is unique to the applicant and would generally constitute the expertise and intellectual property, consisting of expert knowledge necessary to their commercial advantage.
- Releasing this information is likely to damage ongoing relationships between UKRI and other organisations. Relationships may become untenable if organisations cannot be certain that the confidential information they provide to UKRI, which may include further third party information, remains confidential.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, we have concluded that the need for commercial confidentiality outweighs the public interest in disclosure; therefore, the information is exempt from disclosure.

Please note that Innovate UK publishes information on all funded projects and information on this project is available on the [transparency page](#)¹.

As part of our duty to advise and assist under the FOIA, we are able to provide the following information on the project, which will be made available in due course on the transparency page, indicated above:

Competition Title-**GFA**

Application Number-**900207**

Project Number-**900207**

Project Title - **AdTech DLT Programme Proposal – Connectors and Dashboard Development**

Public Description - **The scope of the project is to further build out a technology platform, developed in the context of an industry consortium network, providing an always-on DLT based solution to make digital advertising more accountable, responsible, and efficient. The project deliverables are: 1. The development of data connectors for data suppliers part of the digital advertising supply chain, allowing to automate the reconciliation and recording of data across suppliers as a single unified immutable record of every single ad impression; 2. The development of a configurable dashboard, as part of the platform Supply Chain Monitor, providing the functionality for users to define and monitor supply chain metrics against pre-defined values and benchmarks.**

Innovate UK Product Type-**CR&D**

Participant Name-**FIDUCIA DLT LIMITED**

Is Lead Participant-**Yes**

Project Start Date-**01/12/2021**

Project End Date-**31/03/2022**

Award Offered-**£180000.00**

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

Total Costs-**£180575.00**
Actual Spend to Date-**None to date**
Participant Withdrawn From Project-**No**
Project Status-**Final Claim**
Postcode-**N13 5RY**
Address Region-**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: 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