



[REDACTED]

27 August 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2026/00270

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 25 March, we apologise for the significant delay in providing this response. In your request you asked for the following information:

Your request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting the following information:

1. *Copies of the business case summary documents submitted by UKRI to DSIT and/or HM Treasury as part of the latest Spending Review (SR2025).*
2. *Any supporting documentation detailing the economic impact assumptions or cost-benefit analyses, particularly relating to societal impacts, employment growth, and productivity.*
3. *Internal or external documents explaining the modelling methodology behind such impact estimates.*
4. *Correspondence between UKRI and DSIT or HMT that discusses or supports these figures*

If parts of this request are withheld under any exemption, please provide a justification for each, and consider partial disclosure where possible.

Please note, I did request this last year, but it was refused on the grounds of confidentiality associated with discussion and negotiations at the time around UKRI's internal allocations process.

This process is now complete and CEO Sir Ian Chapman has been in front of the SITC to discuss the allocations and implications of the decision made. As such, I trust sufficient time has now elapsed to enable UKRI to fulfil this FOI request.

Our response

I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) does hold information relevant to your request.

The questions posed in your request are identical to your previous request (Reference FOI2025/00638, response sent 21 October, 2025). In responding to this new request, we have considered the passage of time, the progress made and status of the 2025 Spending Review since your previous request and the present context of the 2027 Spending Review exercise. We have also considered whether in this present context any information held would now be appropriate for release in regard to points 1 and 4, or if the position has since changed in regard to points 2 and 3.

1. *Copies of the business case summary documents submitted by UKRI to DSIT and/or HM Treasury as part of the latest Spending Review (SR2025).*
4. *Correspondence between UKRI and DSIT or HMT that discusses or supports these figures*

We have determined that the Business Case Summary Sheets (BCSS) submitted to the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT, which has recently been superseded by the Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade ([BIST](#))) as part of the spending review process for 2025, and correspondence between UKRI and DSIT that discussed or supported these figures, should remain exempt from disclosure.

Section 36(2)(b)(ii) of the FOIA, is considered to apply where disclosure would, or would be likely to, inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation and also Section 36(2)(c) of the FOIA, where disclosure would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely otherwise to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.

Section 36 – Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs

For Section 36, the opinion of UKRI's Chief Executive Officer, as UKRI's Qualified Person, was sought on engaging this exemption and the level of prejudice. As this is a qualified exemption, we were then required to consider the public interest both in favour of, and against, releasing the information.

Outcome of consideration of Section 36 – Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs

UKRI's Qualified Person's opinion was that Sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and 36(2)(c) of the FOIA would be engaged as disclosure would be likely to inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation and would also otherwise prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.

The Public Interest Test

As Section 36 is a qualified exemption, a test was required to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs public interest in disclosure. The public interest test was conducted by a senior manager, who was not directly involved in the matters that were the subject of your request.

Public interest in favour of disclosure

- Disclosure of this information may increase transparency and the public understanding about UKRI and the way it reaches financial decisions in relation to the spending review.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

The following arguments were provided in the response to the previous FOI request (Ref: FOI2025/00638) and we consider that they continue to remain relevant to this exemption being engaged:

- Disclosing information about the Business Case Summary Submissions to the 2025 Spending Review, and intelligence on the settlement discussions, may critically undermine the willingness of Government officials to share future updates or relevant intelligence. It may also damage UKRI's relationships with BIST, HM Treasury, and other relevant government departments. This is relevant to both implementation across the current Spending Review period and for future budget discussions. This trust is critical to ensuring that UKRI has the best possible information available when providing evidence and formulating advice.
- It is considered that engagement of this exemption is important as it relates to UKRI's ability to protect the safe space for purposes of deliberation. Any disclosure of the information and views shared would have a 'chilling effect' on both the timeliness and candour of the discussions on the ongoing process and has a potential impact on similar future exercises. This would inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation.
- Without this protected safe space, the above 'chilling effect' would significantly increase the risk that decisions around the spending review process would be substantially less well-informed, therefore hindering the effective operation of the spending review process.

We have determined that the following additional arguments are relevant to the engagement of this exemption:

- The Spending Review 2027 exercise is ongoing. As part of the exercise plans for two years of the current Spending Review period will be revisited, and issues considered are likely to include similar proposals and options. Disclosing information about these ongoing discussions could lead to misinterpretations and premature conclusions, potentially influencing the outcome. It may also mislead stakeholders and the public, causing unnecessary concern, prejudicing the effective conduct of public affairs.
- Within the current Spending Review period, options and proposals continue to remain live, and would extend across new Spending Review exercises due to overlaps across years and as budgets and available funding changes options previously dismissed or revised may be revisited, both for increases or decreases in funding. Disclosure of this information would be likely to destabilise the research sectors involved and potentially damage our ongoing partnerships, to the detriment of UKRI achieving its key objectives.

Overall, UKRI considers that on this occasion the public interest is best served by maintaining the Section 36 exemption, and therefore the relevant information has been withheld from disclosure.

2. *Any supporting documentation detailing the economic impact assumptions or cost-benefit analyses, particularly relating to societal impacts, employment growth, and productivity.*
3. *Internal or external documents explaining the modelling methodology behind such impact estimates.*

Our previous response outlined in FOI2026/00638 to both of these points remains unchanged:

For Q2, the BCSSs for the 2025 Spending Review period drew on three sources as supporting documents; published evaluations, publicly available UKRI case studies and DSIT's Large Science Portfolio model. Information UKRI had drawn upon is referenced in the BCSS's. UKRI does not hold the DSIT Large Science Portfolio model. As explained previously, while it is noted that information relating to previous versions of the model was held, these predate the 2025 Spending Review exercise and are not relevant to the current request.

For Q3, information on modelling methodology, where relevant, was contained within the published external evaluation documents used to develop the appropriate BCSS. No other internal or external documents are held by UKRI.

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.

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

Yours sincerely,



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