



Sent by email: [REDACTED]

10 August 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2026/00489

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 7 June in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to the CLIC Further Education Innovation Fund with City of Glasgow College as lead institution.

- 1. Please provide the full funding application subject to applicable exemptions.*
- 2. Did the application disclose that the College's Deputy Principal is publicly identified as IKE Institute Director Scotland, that the Board member leading the programme is described in published materials as the IKE Institute's Manager and is listed as an IKE Institute employee on LinkedIn, and that the Principal is a Fellow of the IKE Institute that subsequently certified the programme in May 2026.*
- 3. Under clause 6.1.6 of your Terms and Conditions, did the College disclose anything that might reasonably have influenced the funding decision regarding those connections.*
- 4. Under clause 5.1.10, did Innovate UK assess whether the College maintained adequate conflict of interest procedures in relation to those connections.*
- 5. Under clause 5.1.5, was the IKE Institute engaged as a subcontractor. If so was prior approval granted, what services were provided, and what was paid.*
- 6. Please provide all expenditure reports and claims submitted by the College including any payments to the IKE Institute or IKE Group Limited.*
- 7. Did Innovate UK conduct financial due diligence on the IKE Institute before allowing its certification to validate the programme.*
- 8. Please provide all correspondence between Innovate UK and the College relating to governance, conflicts of interest, subcontracting, or certification.*
- 9. Has Innovate UK received any concerns about the institutional connections between the College and the IKE Institute.*

This request covers all recorded information in any format. Where information is withheld please confirm the specific exemption and whether a public interest test was applied.

Our response

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

Question 1: *“Please provide the full funding application subject to applicable exemptions”*

Please see attached “FOI2026_00489 - Application overview - Glasgow City Region College Innovation Network”

We believe the information you have requested falls under the scope of 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.

Section 43, is a qualified exemption, and a test was carried out to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs public interest in disclosure.

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 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 application form as public monies are used to fund this activity. As this is the case it is important that the programme has a positive impact and is beneficial to all parties involved. Seeing copies of the grant application enables the public to independently assess the impact of the competition.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- The information requested contains commercially sensitive information such as salary information and business plans such as cost and schedule information, technical project plans and extensive description of the project which are disclosed to UKRI in confidence. The agreement we have with participants in our programmes is that we will not release any confidential information without their permission. Releasing the information requested could be taken advantage of by competitors in planning competing strategies for further business opportunities. Applicants complete the application form knowing that if they achieve success only a brief overview of their successful bid will be publicly available, everything else will remain confidential.
- Innovate UK's competition process is highly competitive and composing a successful bid requires expertise and skill in providing quality information, as well as understanding the most advantageous content to present in order to succeed. The applicant must also have the ability to support and justify the strength of their application. The applicant must do this whilst adhering within the strictly enforced scope and eligibility requirements of the applicable competition. This knowledge is proprietary to the applicant. In addition, there are companies and consultancy groups that specialise in selling a grant writing service based on their grant writing expertise and knowledge. This exemplifies the commercial advantage and value that such expertise and skills deliver. As such disclosing the information requested is likely to reduce the competitive commercial advantage of the applicant in the grant application and thereby harm their commercial interests in a highly competitive field.
- If commercially sensitive information were to be disclosed, we believe this would materially harm UKRI's ability to ensure confidence in the application process and could lead to damage in trust with our stakeholders and harm our ability to run future competitions.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, we reached the decision that the need for commercial confidentiality outweighs the public interest in disclosure; therefore we have redacted some information under Section 43(2).

Question 2: *“Did the application disclose that the College's Deputy Principal is publicly identified as IKE Institute Director Scotland, that the Board member leading the programme is described in published materials as the IKE Institute's Manager and is listed as an IKE Institute employee on LinkedIn, and that the Principal is a Fellow of the IKE Institute that subsequently certified the programme in May 2026.”*

No, this connection was not disclosed to UKRI, due to the small pool of applicants already being restricted by region pre-existing connections would not rule any participant out of the competition.

Question 3: *“Under clause 6.1.6 of your Terms and Conditions, did the College disclose anything that might reasonably have influenced the funding decision regarding those connections.”*

Nothing was disclosed to UKRI that would have affected the funding decision, the intent of this opportunity was for colleges within Glasgow City Region to improve the number of businesses innovating, pre-existing connections between stakeholders would not by itself remove anyone in the region's eligibility.

Question 4: *“Under clause 5.1.10, did Innovate UK assess whether the College maintained adequate conflict of interest procedures in relation to those connections.”*

As no conflict of interest was raised there was no need for an assessment. Applicants to IUK must declare any private, personal, or commercial conflicts of interest by contacting support staff directly at application submission including details in a covering letter/attachment, and by following specific instructions within the Innovation Funding Service¹.

Question 5: *“Under clause 5.1.5, was the IKE Institute engaged as a subcontractor. If so was prior approval granted, what services were provided, and what was paid”*

No, IKE was not engaged as a subcontractor and therefore, no services or payments are applicable for disclosure.

Question 6: *“Please provide all expenditure reports and claims submitted by the College including any payments to the IKE Institute or IKE Group Limited”*

We believe the financial Information you have requested also falls under the scope of Section 43(2) of the FOIA.

This is a qualified exemption, and a test was carried out to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs public interest in disclosure.

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 financial submissions as public monies are used to fund these projects. As this is the case it is important that the programme has a positive impact and is beneficial to all parties involved. Seeing copies of the financial submissions enables the public to independently assess the impact of the programme.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- These financial records will hold information that relates to individual salary payments, material, equipment costs, facilities and potential novel technical details around how money is being spent within the project, we believe if this information were disclosed it would materially harm the commercial interests of the college and anyone else who could be identified by the information.
- We follow the government guidance on managing public money². Standards expected of all public services include integrity, reliability, spending money in the public interest and achieving value for money. Our current thorough process ensures that only the best projects receive public monies. Releasing this information could jeopardize the fair and transparent competition process and undermine our function to fund the best projects. In turn, undermining this process would go against our responsibilities to manage our use of public funds.

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/your-application/>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742188/Managing_Public_Money_MPM_2018.pdf

- We also considered the impact on UKRI if commercially sensitive information of companies we engage and work closely with were disclosed. We believe it would damage the trust in UKRI and likely impact our ability to carry out our role and manage our current and future investments.

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

Question 7: *“Did Innovate UK conduct financial due diligence on the IKE Institute before allowing its certification to validate the programme”*

No this activity was not applicable, based on response to Q5.

Question 8: *“Please provide all correspondence between Innovate UK and the College relating to governance, conflicts of interest, subcontracting, or certification”*

IUK/UKRI do not hold this information; we have carried out internal searches, and we were not able to identify any correspondence on these matters between Innovate UK and City of Glasgow College.

Question 9: *“Has Innovate UK received any concerns about the institutional connections between the College and the IKE Institute”*

No concerns have been raised to Innovate UK regarding the IKE institute and any other stakeholders having connections to each other.

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](#)³.

Yours sincerely,


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

³ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>

