



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

[REDACTED]

08 March 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00052**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 8 February in which you requested the following:

**Your request:**

*Innovate UK Smart Grants: August 2020 (Competition opened: 28/08/2020, Competition closed 25/08/2020).*

1. *Total number of applications*
2. *Total number of successful applications*
3. *Total number of applications ineligible for assessment*
4. *Total number of applications considered a resubmission of a previous application*
5. *Total number of successful applications which were considered a resubmission of a previous application*
6. *The score of the lowest scoring funded project*
7. *The score of the highest-scoring funded project*
8. *The average (mean) score of funded projects*
9. *The average number of Assessors indicating that they recommend a project for funding per application*
10. *The number of projects with an outlying assessor score, which was removed*
11. *The number of projects against which an assessor marked that they would not recommend the project for funding*
12. *Please could you provide score raw data for each application question including questions Q1 through Q10*
13. *The exact programmed metrics used to route a project to 'ineligible' (i.e. the chain of pre-programmed questions/tick boxes the application is compared against within the system)*
14. *The number of projects deemed to be ineligible for reasons relating to UID*

**Our response:**

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

Please note that:

**Stream 1:** Projects 18 months or less in duration, with total project cost of £500k or less

**Stream 2:** Projects either over 18 months in duration and/or £500k project costs

1. *Total number of applications*

2183 applications were submitted for the Innovate UK Smart Grants: August 2020 competition.

2. *Total number of successful applications*

Stream	Number of successful applications
Stream 1	63
Stream 2	11
Total	74

3. *Total number of applications ineligible for assessment*

264 applications were considered ineligible for assessment.

4. *Total number of applications considered a resubmission of a previous application*

We estimate that the cost of determining the following information 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.

- number of applications that were considered a resubmission of a previous application
- number of successful applications that were considered a resubmission of a previous application
- average number of assessors indicating they were recommending a project for funding per applications
- number of projects with an outlying assessor score which was removed
- raw score data for each application question

To explain further, in order to gather this information we would be required to go into each individual application to gather the information requested. Given the volume of applications, our reasonable time estimate to complete these tasks would be over 150 hours, at 5 minutes per application, to extract the relevant data. Consequently, UKRI is not obliged under Section 12 of the FOIA to process these sections of your request further.

5. *Total number of successful applications which were considered a resubmission of a previous application*

See response to Q4.

6. *The score of the lowest scoring funded project*

Stream	Lowest scoring funded project
Stream 1	84.8%
Stream 2	86.4%

7. *The score of the highest-scoring funded project*

Stream	Highest scoring funded project
Stream 1	93.2%
Stream 2	90.0%

8. *The average (mean) score of funded projects*

Stream	Average score of funded projects
Stream 1	86.5%
Stream 2	87.7%

9. *The average number of Assessors indicating that they recommend a project for funding per application*

See response to Q4.

10. *The number of projects with an outlying assessor score, which was removed*

See response to Q4.

11. *The number of projects against which an assessor marked that they would not recommend the project for funding*

A total of 1587 applications (1384 in Stream 1 and 203 in Stream 2) had at least one assessor who would not recommend that they received funding. This only impacts upon the funding decision if the majority of assessors would not recommend the project for funding. There were no projects that scored above the funding threshold where more than one assessor marked that they would not recommend that the project received funding.

12. *Please could you provide score raw data for each application question including questions Q1 through Q10*

See response to Q4.

In addition, we have also determined that the information you have requested, for unsuccessful applications, falls under Section 41 of the FOIA, information provided in confidence. To explain further, Innovate UK's application guidance states that if an application is successful that some of their information will be published and made publicly available. It is therefore implied that all organisations can confidently apply to Innovate UK and information relating to their specific application will be kept confidential unless they are successful. If the information was released, we believe it would result in an actionable breach of confidentiality.

As this exemption is absolute there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

13. *The exact programmed metrics used to route a project to 'ineligible' (i.e. the chain of pre-programmed questions/tick boxes the application is compared against within the system)*

It is important to make the distinction that eligibility checks are not conducted through a chain of pre-programmed questions or tick boxes within the application, as suggested in your question. Eligibility criteria is published as part of the online competition brief which is available [here](#)<sup>1</sup>.

To summarise, criteria that are checked to determine if a project is ineligible are:

- Project start date
- Project end date
- Project cost
  - Stream 1 project costs must be between £25,000 and £500,000
  - Stream 2 project costs must be between £25,000 and £2,000,000
- Collaboration partners
  - Applies to Stream 2 projects only, which must be collaborative, stream 1 projects can be single or collaborative
- Project duration
  - Stream 1 project duration must be between 6 and 18 months
  - Stream 2 project duration must be between 19 and 36 months
- For a single applicant project the lead must be a micro, small or medium-size enterprise (SME)
- For a collaborative project the lead must be:
  - a business (of any size) or research and technology organisation (RTO)
  - and the collaboration must contain at least one SME
- Funding has been requested
- The Lead organisation has not submitted multiple applications
  - Organisations can only lead on one project within a competition
- The proposal does not exceed the resubmission limit
  - The same proposal can only be submitted to Innovate UK twice

<sup>1</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/701/overview#eligibility>

Due to the Smart Grant competitions operating with two funding streams, not all eligibility criteria apply to all applications and has been highlighted above where applicable.

14. *The number of projects deemed to be ineligible for reasons relating to UID*

The Undertakings in Difficult (UID) test is not considered as part of the eligibility checks of applications, it is performed at the project setup stage, once funding decisions have been made.

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](mailto:foi@ukri.org) or [infogovernance@ukri.org](mailto: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,

  
Information Governance  
Information Rights Team  
UK Research and Innovation  
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