



[REDACTED]

14 January 2022

Dear [REDACTED],

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00520**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 15 December in which you requested the following:

**Your request:**

*I would be very grateful if you could please provide the below information for all the IUK SMART competitions in the last 12 months, including;*

- a) Stream 1 projects (6-18 months duration, eligible project costs between £25-£500k), and;
- b) Stream 2 projects (19-36 months duration, total eligible project costs between £25K-£2M).

*The information I would like to request is as follows:*

1. *The total number of applications submitted and the number of those that were assessed (i.e. deemed eligible for funding);*
2. *The overall number of applications awarded funding and a breakdown of how many of these were first-time applications and how many were resubmissions;*
3. *The total number of applications within each innovation area and the number of those that were successful in each area;*
4. *The average grant request and project size of the applications successfully awarded funding;*
5. *The average score of successful applications;*
6. *The percentages of successful applications that were Industrial Research and Experimental Development;*
7. *The number of successful Industrial Research and Experimental Development projects that were (i) single applicant/partner, (ii) 2 partners, (iii) 3+ partner;*
8. *The total funding allocated in this competition round.*
9. *The number of projects funded that scored under the threshold advertised.*

**Our response:**

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

There are four Innovate UK (IUK) Smart Grant competitions that have been run in the last 12 months; [January 2021](#)<sup>1</sup>, [May 2021](#)<sup>2</sup>, [August 2021](#)<sup>3</sup> and [October 2021](#)<sup>4</sup>. The October 2021 competition is not due to close until 12 January 2022 and the applicants notified on 18 March 2022. Information on this competition will not be available until after applicants have been notified.

<sup>1</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/810/overview>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/937/overview>

<sup>3</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/963/overview>

<sup>4</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/1035/overview>

Under Section 21 of the FOIA, information already reasonably accessible, the information you have requested on the January 2021 competition is already available in the public domain:

- [FOI2021/00352: Smart Grants Jan 2021](#)<sup>5</sup>

UKRI actively publish information on the FOI requests that are received. A copy of the request and response sent by UKRI is available on [UKRI's FOI disclosure log](#)<sup>6</sup> which contains all FOI requests from April 2018 to November 2021. This includes a number of requests relating to the IUK Smart Grant competitions covering a wide range of information.

Section 21 is an absolute exemption which means that there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

The requested information for the May 2021 and August 2021 competitions can be found 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. *The total number of applications submitted and the number of those that were assessed (i.e. deemed eligible for funding)*

1144 applications were submitted and 1012 were assessed for the May 2021 competition. 815 applications were submitted and 706 were assessed for the August 2021 competition. Ineligible applications are not split into streams, therefore only the total number of eligible applications received is available per stream:

	May 2021	August 2021
	Number of eligible applications submitted	
<b>Stream 1</b>	860	629
<b>Stream 2</b>	152	77
<b>Total</b>	<b>1012</b>	<b>706</b>

2. *The overall number of applications awarded funding and a breakdown of how many of these were first-time applications and how many were resubmissions*

	May 2021		August 2021	
	Number of successful applications	Successful resubmissions	Number of successful applications	Successful resubmissions
<b>Stream 1</b>	61	28	64	26
<b>Stream 2</b>	11	5	10	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>31</b>

It is worth noting that the resubmission option is self-selected by the applicant during the application process and not verified by Innovate UK.

During eligibility checks the content of applications is reviewed to ensure the resubmission limit has not been exceeded using artificial intelligence, but not the resubmission question data. This is to ensure that the checks are thorough and that applicants cannot get additional applications through by answering "no" to the resubmission question.

<sup>5</sup> <https://ukri.disclosurelog.co.uk/case/865a446d-b3b9-415b-b342-e08b910bd061>

<sup>6</sup> <https://ukri.disclosurelog.co.uk/>

3. The total number of applications within each innovation area and the number of those that were successful in each area

May 2021	Stream 1		Stream 2	
Innovation Area	Total Applications	Successful Applications	Total Applications	Successful Applications
Additive layer manufacturing (ALM)	4	0	1	0
Advanced therapies	6	0	3	0
Aerospace	6	0	0	0
Agricultural productivity	27	3	10	0
Assembly / disassembly / joining	2	1	0	0
Biosciences	31	5	9	1
Ceramic / electronic / functional materials	1	0	1	0
Chemical / bio processes	2	1	3	0
Composite materials	4	1	2	0
Connected and autonomous vehicles	1	0	1	0
Connected transport	8	2	0	0
Creative industries	53	2	9	1
Diagnostics, medical technology and devices	34	4	10	1
Digital health	59	2	15	0
Digital industries	161	5	13	1
Digital manufacturing	7	1	1	0
Digital technology	120	7	13	0
Electronic materials and manufacturing	10	0	0	0
Electronics, sensors and photonics	9	2	0	0
Emerging technology	35	3	2	0
Energy – other	29	0	10	1
Energy and automotive	13	0	2	0
Energy efficiency	16	1	7	1
Energy systems	9	0	1	0
Enhancing food quality	3	0	1	0
Forming technologies	2	0	0	0
Independent living and wellbeing	12	0	0	0
Low carbon vehicles	10	2	3	1
Marine transport	9	1	1	0
Material recovery and treatment	5	1	4	1
Materials, process and manufacturing design technologies	13	2	4	0
Metals / metallurgy	2	0	0	0
Nanotechnology / nanomaterials	4	1	1	0
Not specified	3	3	0	0
Nuclear fission	1	0	0	0
Offshore wind	9	2	1	0
Other transport	10	0	1	0
Polymers and plastics	3	0	1	0
Precision medicine	4	1	1	0

Preclinical technologies and drug target discovery	5	0	0	0
Rail transport	4	1	2	0
Resource efficiency	10	2	3	2
Robotics and autonomous systems	8	2	4	0
Smart infrastructure	15	0	2	0
Space technology	2	0	0	0
Surface engineering, coatings and thin films	3	1	1	0
Sustainable materials	11	2	5	1
Therapeutic and medicine development	5	0	0	0
Urban living	9	0	2	0
(blank)	51	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>11</b>

<b>August 2021</b>	<b>Stream 1</b>		<b>Stream 2</b>	
<b>Innovation Area</b>	<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>Successful Applications</b>	<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>Successful Applications</b>
Additive layer manufacturing (ALM)	7	1	1	0
Advanced therapies	4	0	1	1
Aerospace	4	0	2	1
Agricultural productivity	11	0	9	1
Assembly / disassembly / joining	2	0	0	0
Biosciences	22	3	3	0
Ceramic / electronic / functional materials	1	0	0	0
Chemical / bio processes	2	0	2	1
Composite materials	5	0	1	1
Connected and autonomous vehicles	3	0	2	0
Connected transport	7	0	0	0
Creative industries	36	3	1	0
Diagnostics, medical technology and Devices	29	7	6	0
Digital health	48	4	6	0
Digital industries	126	13	4	1
Digital manufacturing	8	1	0	0
Digital technology	87	3	8	1
Electronic materials and manufacturing	4	0	0	0
Electronics, sensors and photonics	6	2	1	1
Emerging technology	21	1	2	0
Energy – other	11	2	5	0
Energy and automotive	3	0	0	0
Energy efficiency	14	0	1	0
Energy systems	9	0	0	0
Enhancing food quality	5	0	1	0
Forming technologies	2	1	0	0
Independent living and wellbeing	11	2	0	0
Low carbon vehicles	5	0	0	0

Marine transport	4	1	0	0
Material recovery and treatment	5	2	1	0
Materials, process and manufacturing design technologies	9	1	3	0
Metals / metallurgy	3	0	0	0
Nanotechnology / nanomaterials	2	0	2	0
Not specified	49	4	1	0
Nuclear fission	2	0	0	0
Offshore wind	5	1	0	0
Other transport	4	0	0	0
Polymers and plastics	2	0	0	0
Precision medicine	2	1	2	1
Preclinical technologies and drug target discovery	2	0	0	0
Rail transport	5	1	1	0
Resource efficiency	5	0	0	0
Robotics and autonomous systems	10	3	3	0
Satellite applications	1	0	1	0
Smart infrastructure	6	0	3	0
Surface engineering, coatings and thin films	6	3	0	0
Sustainable materials	3	2	2	1
Therapeutic and medicine development	4	2	1	0
Urban living	7	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>10</b>

4. *The average grant request and project size of the applications successfully awarded funding*

	May 2021		August 2021	
	Average Grant Request	Average Project Size	Average Grant Request	Average Project Size
<b>Stream 1</b>	£274,231	£391,476	£278,078	£398,474
<b>Stream 2</b>	£713,669	£1,093,738	£698,662	£965,873

5. *The average score of successful applications*

	May 2021	August 2021
	Average score of funded projects	
<b>Stream 1</b>	86.40%	84.40%
<b>Stream 2</b>	86.27%	85.56%

6. *The percentages of successful applications that were Industrial Research and Experimental Development*

May 2021	Successful Applications			
Research Category	Stream 1	%	Stream 2	%
<b>Experimental Development</b>	3	5%	1	9%
<b>Industrial Research</b>	54	89%	9	82%



August 2021	Successful Applications			
Research Category	Stream 1	%	Stream 2	%
Experimental Development	2	3%	1	10%
Industrial Research	58	91%	7	70%

7. The number of successful Industrial Research and Experimental Development projects that were;  
(i) Single applicant/partner, (ii) 2 partner, (iii) 3+ partners

May 2021	Research Category			
	Stream 1		Stream 2	
Number of Partners	Experimental Development	Industrial Research	Experimental Development	Industrial Research
1	2	28	0	0
2	1	15	1	5
3+	0	11	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>

August 2021	Research Category			
	Stream 1		Stream 2	
Number of Partners	Experimental Development	Industrial Research	Experimental Development	Industrial Research
1	2	44	0	0
2	0	9	0	2
3+	0	5	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>

As outlined in the 'Eligibility' sections of the competition briefs, projects in stream 2 must be collaborative, therefore there are no successful single partner applications. Projects can also be categorised as a feasibility study, which accounts for any differences in figures between the total number of successful applications and the data provided in Q6 and Q7.

8. The total funding allocated in this competition round

As per the information published in the competition briefs, the total funding allocated for both Innovate UK Smart Grants competitions is up to £25 million.

The exact figure is exempt from disclosure under Section 22(1) of the FOIA as it is intended for future publication. Section 22 is a qualified exemption meaning that it is subject to the public interest test.

UKRI understand that being transparent in regard to the total amount of funding provided is in the public interest. However, the data is still incomplete and we are of the view that releasing the information as it currently stands would be inaccurate, incomplete and misleading and thus not in the public interest.

To explain further, successful projects are required to complete various project set up steps, including providing Innovate UK with documentation, collaboration agreements and exploitation plans, as well as passing financial viability and eligibility checks in order to receive grant funding. Until these steps have been completed accurate total funding amounts cannot be confirmed.

Once these checks have been completed and the projects have moved past the setup phase and are live, their information, including total funding amount, will be published in the [Innovate UK Transparency Data](#)<sup>7</sup>.

We have therefore determined that the outcome of this test is that the public interest is insufficient to justify

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/innovate-uk-funded-projects>

immediate disclosure. The exact date on when this information will be updated is dependent on when the projects complete the setup process.

*9. The number of projects funded that scored under the threshold advertised*

The Smart Grant competitions fund on a solely top-down basis based on the scores provided by the independent assessors and split across the two streams, as detailed in the online competition briefs. There are therefore no funded applications that scored under the lowest scoring funded project that received funding.

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  
[foi@ukri.org](mailto:foi@ukri.org) | [dataprotection@ukri.org](mailto:dataprotection@ukri.org)