



[REDACTED]

29 April 2024

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2024/00292

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 3 April in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Please provide any risk assessments you have carried out or were provided to you in relation to STFC Hartree Centre's agreement with Lenovo for a new supercomputer, which you have announced on March 26, 2024.

Our response:

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

We understand that your request is related to procurement [UKRI-2341 High Performance Computer \(HPC\) System for the Hartree National Centre for Digital Innovation](#)¹.

Please find attached a procurement risk assessment in attachment “*UKRI-2341 Risk Assessment – Procurement*”. This is a general assessment that would be undertaken for any large procurement and is not specific to the awarding of this contract to the supplier.

The agreed UKRI procurement policy is to use existing frameworks if they are fit for purpose. The [Servers, Storage and Solutions National Agreement \(SSSNA\) framework](#)² of pre-vetted suppliers was identified as appropriate and used in this procurement process under Lot 4.

Therefore, UKRI do not hold any further risk assessments in relation to this agreement, as any additional risk assessments (for example, a security risk assessment) would be held by the providers of the procurement framework, which in this case is the Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium.

A [Cyber Essentials Certification](#)³ was required of all bidders and across STFC, including the Hartree Centre, to ensure that [UKRI best practice for security](#)⁴ is adhered to.

There are also multiple layers of security configured by expert STFC staff on and around Hartree systems, including within the UKRI corporate IT infrastructure that the supercomputer sits in.

At each level the behaviour of the supercomputer will be monitored, and security measures are in place to prevent any unwanted behaviour from the supercomputer and its users. This is the same for all STFC and Hartree systems.

¹ <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/notice/a3191b18-9b6d-4426-9933-c85c52a039ee>

² <https://www.supc.ac.uk/servers-storage-and-solutions-national-agreement-sssna-framework-launch/>

³ <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberessentials/overview>

⁴ <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-020920-GuidanceBestPracticeManagementResearchData.pdf>

UKRI, STFC, and Hartree have world-leading cyber security expertise that was leveraged throughout the procurement and decision-making process.

It is not standard practice to solicit external advice regarding procurement of systems that will not deal with secret or secure data. Hartree Centre and this system have never and will not work with any data above the '[OFFICIAL security classification](#)⁵ and there is no sensitive data on its systems. Hartree exists to support industry partners to turn freely available academic research into software.

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 within the next 40 working days:

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 policy: <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/complaints-policy/>

Yours sincerely,


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UK Research and Innovation
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⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications/government-security-classifications-policy-html>