22 July 2020

Freedom of Information request: FOI2020/00197

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 2 July in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Please could you provide the following information in regard to the Smart Grants: January 2020 Competition:

1. *Total number of applications*
2. *Number of assessed applications (not disregarded due to being deemed out of scope etc)*
3. *Number of applications funded*
4. *Number of applications funded per 'innovation area'*
5. *Average funding amount per project*
6. *Smallest and largest amount of funding per project*
7. *Average score*
8. *Success threshold*
9. *Decision-making process based on portfolio (i.e. why higher scoring projects might not get funded and lower scoring project get funded).*

I believe it is in the public interest for this information to be published, ensuring that UKRI / Innovate UK are held accountable for their utilisation and allocation of public money.

Our response:

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

1. 2,728 applications were received for the Smart Grants: January 2020 competition.

2. 285 of these were not sent for assessment as they did not meet the eligibility criteria as detailed in the competition brief, meaning 2,443 applicants will be assessed.

The Smart Grants: January 2020 competition is currently still in the assessment period and therefore the information requested in points 3 - 8 is not held.

The earliest that this information is expected to be available is week commencing 17th August 2020 once notifications and feedback have been sent.

The successful projects will be published as part of Innovate UK's usual processes through [transparency data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/innovate-uk-funded-projects)[1] and may provide answers to several of your questions once available. As part of the notification sent to projects to confirm if they are successful or unsuccessful, the number of applications received, the number of projects funded, and the % score for the lowest funded project are included.

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9. With regards to the portfolio approach, in the general guidance for applicants it states that;

   "Innovate UK reserves the right to apply a 'portfolio' approach in certain competitions. The portfolio will be spread across a range of:
   - *scope areas*
   - *categories of research and development*
   - *project durations*
   - *project costs, including demonstrating value for money*

   This is to fit the spend profile of the competition. It will make sure that funds are allocated across the strategic areas identified in the scope of the funding opportunity. Successful applications are all required to meet a quality threshold".

   Smart projects are split into the two streams as detailed in the eligibility criteria, and a top down funding approach is taken based on the % score that the application has been awarded. In order to commit the full budget for the competition it may be possible to fund to a lower % score in Stream 1 (6-18 month projects), as these projects will have requested less grant than those in Stream 2 (19-36 month projects), however, within each individual stream no lower scoring project is funded above one that received a higher score.

   More information is available from the following link:

   https://www.gov.uk/guidance/innovation-apply-for-a-funding-award#categories-of-research-and-development

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 or 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,

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