



[REDACTED]

30 January 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2022/00416

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 27 December in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Can you please advise how much of taxpayers money has been spent in the the last two years on research which involved animal testing. Can you also confirm and breakdown any other grants/ monies you receive from donors, charities and public bodies.

Can you also confirm which companies in the UK you contract with to conduct animal testing or purchase animals - and specifically Marshal Farms MBS Acres and Envigo formerly Huntington Life Sciences.

Can you please detail the research conducted and why. Can you provide all outcomes of the animal experiments in the last 2 years.

Please confirm how many animals have been used over the past two years and also how many died.

In terms of the experiments please confirm the numbers of animals which suffered moderate to severe symptoms

Can you please confirm whether non animal testing was considered and if not, why not.

Please confirm any public companies and individuals who have received funding / grants which have resulted in animal testing in their research.

Please confirm whether there are any other business relationships between UKRI and Envigo. And whether there have been incentives provided to UKRI in terms of gifts, monies etc to UKRI's employees.

Our response

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

1.a. Can you please advise how much of taxpayers money has been spent in the last two years on research which involved animal testing.

Below are figures for amounts granted to research involving animals across UKRI, based on application data for the last two complete financial years, where such data exists. The figures include funding for all research involving animals, including grants that propose to use live animals and research using samples (for example, animal tissues and cells).

	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22
BBSRC	£40.3m	£36.3m
Future Leaders Fellowships	£13.2m	£11.5m
NC3Rs	£3.82m	£2.49m
NERC	£0.6m	£4.0
MRC ¹	£114.1m	£140.8m

¹ MRC is unable to provide figures for the total amount of funding granted to MRC-owned establishments or MRC units and centres to specifically support research involving animals, as these costs are not reported separately.

The figures reflect the total committed budget for awards where the proposed research involves the use of animals licensed under the Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA). However, for each individual award we cannot separate the budget directly related to the use of animals from other research methods.

1.b. Can you also confirm and breakdown any other grants/ monies you receive from donors, charities and public bodies.

Information on UKRI's income, including funding from BEIS and other organisations can be found in UKRI's [Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22](#)¹ in table 3 on page 161. Further information on how UKRI is funded can be found [here](#)².

2. Can you also confirm which companies in the UK you contract with to conduct animal testing or purchase animals - and specifically Marshal Farms MBS Acres and Envigo formerly Huntington Life Sciences.

UKRI holds the following contracts that involve services provided by UKRI research institutes to Envigo.

- 1 contract to import a genetically altered line mouse strain and export to another party
- 2 x contracts to cryopreserve mouse strains (2 strains in total)

In addition, UKRI may award funding to research organisations that conduct research involving animals, and these organisations may purchase animals from a range of suppliers at their discretion. UKRI does not hold this information; you would need to contact the individual research organisations directly to obtain this.

3. Can you please detail the research conducted and why. Can you provide all outcomes of the animal experiments in the last 2 years.

As explained above, UKRI awards funding to research organisations that may conduct research involving animals. UKRI publishes information on all funded awards on [Gateway to Research](#)³. The Gateway to Research was developed to enable users to search and analyse information about publicly funded research. It includes information about projects supported by all seven research councils, Innovate UK and NC3Rs and can be filtered by key terms, funder and start year.

As this information is in the public domain, we consider that Section 21 - Information already reasonably accessible, of the FOIA would apply and have provided the relevant link above. Section 21 is an absolute exemption which means that there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test

4. Please confirm how many animals have been used over the past two years and also how many died.

UKRI do not hold this information for awards made to external research organisations. External research organisations have an obligation to report these figures to the Home Office, which are released annually [here](#).⁴

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/UKRI-180123-AnnualReportandAccounts-21to22.pdf>

² <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/UKRI-050822-FundingExplainer-HowWereFunded.pdf>

³ <https://gtr.ukri.org/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-of-scientific-procedures-on-living-animals>

UKRI does hold information relating to research undertaken within Medical Research Council (MRC) establishments, this information is published annually [here](#).⁵ As this information is in the public domain, we consider that Section 21 - Information already reasonably accessible, of the FOIA would apply and have provided the relevant link above. Section 21 is an absolute exemption which means that there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

5. In terms of the experiments please confirm the numbers of animals which suffered moderate to severe symptoms

As above, UKRI does not hold this information for awards made to external research organisations. Information relating to MRC establishments is held and is published annually [here](#).⁶ As this information is in the public domain, we consider that Section 21 - Information already reasonably accessible, of the FOIA would apply and have provided the relevant link above. Section 21 is an absolute exemption which means that there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

6. Can you please confirm whether non animal testing was considered and if not, why not.

UKRI publishes its expectations for research involving animals, including the requirement to consider the 3Rs (the replacement, reduction and refinement) principles, [here](#).⁷ Applicants submitting proposals to UKRI and its councils must justify the use of animals according to these principles. UKRI also funds the NC3Rs, a long-term strategic investment to improve availability and uptake of new and refined methods and technologies that encourage 3Rs approaches in bioscience research, in proactive support of this policy.

7. Please confirm any public companies and individuals who have received funding / grants which have resulted in animal testing in their research.

As noted above, UKRI publishes information on all funded awards on the [Gateway to Research](#).⁸ The Gateway to Research was developed to enable users to search and analyse information about publicly funded research, and can be filtered by key terms, funder and start year.

We have interpreted your question as requesting the names of research organisations and investigators who have received funding for research proposals which involve the use of animals.

We consider that releasing information beyond that which is publicly available from Gateway to Research falls under the exemption at Section 38(1)(b) of the FOIA – where disclosure would, or would be likely to endanger the safety of any individual, as we consider that disclosure would, or would be likely to endanger the safety of individuals. Section 38 is a qualified exemption and requires UKRI to consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in its disclosure.

Public interest in favour of disclosure

- It would further the understanding and participation in the public debate on issues concerning the use of animals in research.
- It would promote accountability and transparency by public authorities for decisions taken with regard to public expenditure.
- It would promote accountability and transparency in allowing individuals, organisations and other bodies to understand decisions made by public authorities about research involving animals.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- The disclosure of information relating to research organisations or individuals may put at risk the safety of individuals associated with any relevant research.

⁵ <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/mrc/our-policies-and-standards/research/research-involving-animals/facts-and-figures/>

⁶ <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/mrc/our-policies-and-standards/research/research-involving-animals/facts-and-figures/>

⁷ <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/use-of-animals-in-research/>

⁸ <https://qtr.ukri.org/>

- Disclosure of the identified information would make it available to individuals or organisations that may use this information to disrupt research or operations being conducted, or to target individuals or groups of suppliers by subjecting them to either physical harm or verbal harassment.
- UKRI has an obligation to protect information that may endanger the safety of individuals and organisations and ensure there is no harm from the release of grant information.
- Disclosure is likely to draw attention that is unwarranted, stressful or harmful to individuals that would be likely to endanger their safety.

We have therefore concluded, taking the above arguments into consideration, that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure; therefore the information is exempt from disclosure.

8.a. Please confirm whether there are any other business relationships between UKRI and Envigo.

In addition to the three above-mentioned contracts referred to in the response to question 2, UKRI has procured the following services from Envigo within the previous 2 financial years:

	2020/2021	2021/2022	Totals
Postage and couriers	£4,326.00	£638.55	£4,964.55
Research consumables	£190,477.69	£122,293.63	£312,771.32
Pest control	£2,016.00		£2,016.00
Total			£319,751.87

8.b. And whether there have been incentives provided to UKRI in terms of gifts, monies etc to UKRI's employees.

There have been no incentives provided to UKRI in terms of gifts, monies to UKRI employees from Envigo. UKRI staff must abide by strict [codes of conduct](#)⁹ which includes a policy on gifts and hospitality.

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

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,



⁹ <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-081020-CodeOfConduct.pdf>
UK Research and Innovation, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1FL

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