



[REDACTED]

16 February 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2023/00019

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 20 January in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Please could you provide the following information under the freedom of information act covering the last 12 months, or the most recent 12 month period recorded:

1. Has the organisation used agencies to recruit temporary/contractor staff?
 - 1a. If so please confirm the total agency spend on temporary/contractor staff??
 - 1b. Please provide a breakdown of your answer to question 1a, splitting the spend by job title/specialism
2. Has the organisation used agencies to recruit permanent staff?
 - 2a. If so please confirm the total agency spend on permanent staff?
 - 2b. Please provide a breakdown of your answer to question 2a, splitting the spend by job title/specialism
3. The contact name of the person responsible for dealing with permanent recruitment?
4. The contact name of the person responsible for dealing with temporary/contractor recruitment?

Our response

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

We note that you sent the same request to Innovate UK. Please note that all research councils, Innovate UK and Research England have been brought together under UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) as of April 2018. As this is the case, all your requests have been collated into a single request under UKRI.

In relation to questions 1 and 2, UKRI has used agencies to recruit temporary/contractor and permanent staff.

In relation to part 1a of your request, UKRI publishes information on the number and cost of permanent and temporary staff which is available on page 124 of UKRI's [Annual Report and Accounts](#)¹.

UKRI's [transparency data](#)² can also be filtered by the field 'item description' under the following categories, which provide information on UKRI's spend on temporary staff:

- Agency Staff
- Agency Staff & Interims
- Contract Staff
- Non-Payroll salaries

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

² <https://www.ukri.org/publications/financial-transparency-data-all-transactions-2022/>

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

In relation to questions 1b and 2a and 2b, we estimate that the cost of complying with this section of your request 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. In relation to part 2a of your request for 'total agency spend on permanent staff' we do not hold information separately on agency spend on permanent staff. This information would form part of all costs for agency and contract staff.

We have determined that to gather the information at questions 1b, 2a and 2b it would be necessary to manually review each invoice in the period specified and manually access and extract the information from each invoice. In the case of invoices related to recruitment agencies for the period January 2023 alone there were over 400 invoices and it has been estimated that it would take at least 5 minutes to review each invoice. Taken over the period specified and the volume of invoices involved this would exceed the appropriate limit. For January 2023 alone we estimate that to retrieve the information would exceed 34 hours and with approximately eleven other months of invoices to extract and retrieve information from over the date range specified, we anticipate this request could take in excess of 380 hours to complete.

Consequently, UKRI is not obliged under Section 12 of the FOIA to process this section of your request further. We have tried to identify a way in which you could refine your request to bring it under the appropriate cost limit which would enable us to comply with this request, however due to the volume of work required this has not been possible.

In relation to questions 3 and 4, please note that the names of the persons responsible for dealing with permanent and temporary recruitment have been withheld. We consider that this information constitutes personal data and falls under the exemption at section 40(2) of the FOI Act. Section 40(2) exempts personal information such as names of individuals from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would, amongst other things, contravene one of the data protection principles. Disclosing this information would contravene the first Data Protection Principle as defined under Section 86 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and Article 5 of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

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,

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