

27 March 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2026/00179

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 1 March in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Please can you provide me with the following information:

1. *A list of the criterion that must be satisfied for an organisation to be considered an Independent Research Organisation (IRO), and therefore be eligible to bid for UKRI-funded projects.*
2. *Confirm the exact criterion for eligibility to bid for UKRI-funded projects.*
3. *What is the process of reviewing the list of IROs for continued eligibility both to be an IRO and to bid for UKRI-funded projects.*
4. *Dates at which each currently registered IRO was last assessed for eligibility.*

I am happy for electronic copy in answers to the above. I may require additional specific information about specific IROs in response to point 4, depending on your answers to the above. I will raise a separate FOI request if that ends up being the case.

Our response

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

There are four criteria that Independent Research Organisations (IROs) must fulfill for standard eligibility:

- The capability and capacity to further research and innovation in the UK
- Be legally constituted as an organisation or a strategically important research foundation
- Have financial viability as an organisation
- Have well-governed and formal structures of control

Full details for each criteria can be found on our website: [Apply to be an eligible organisation – UKRI](#).¹

The exact criteria for eligibility to bid for UKRI-funded projects is dependent on the funding opportunity. The organisation eligibility criteria is set out in the “Who can apply” section of the [funding finder](#)² and is usually open to organisations with either standard eligibility or non-standard eligibility. The criteria for standard eligibility is outlined above. The criteria for non-standard eligibility is as follows:

- UK based organisations: must fulfil due diligence checks based on the level of funding they would receive from UKRI. These are split into:
 - Micro – funding up to £20,000
 - Simple – funding from £20,000 to £200,000
 - Regular – funding over £200,000
- Overseas organisations: must fulfil due diligence checks based on country/regional risk factors.

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/apply-to-be-an-eligible-organisation/>

² <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/>

IRO eligibility lasts for a minimum period of five years from the date it was awarded, at which time UKRI will review the organisation using current IRO eligibility criteria. The process involves the organisation completing a renewal form similar to the IRO application. Once reviewed, providing the organisation still meets current eligibility requirements, eligibility will be extended for a further period. If an organisation fails to be awarded UKRI funding for a period of five years, then UKRI have the option not to renew its IRO eligibility status.

I have included a list of current IROs and their dates of last eligibility assessment beneath this response under Table 1.

Your rights

If you have any queries regarding our response please do let us know. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, explaining which elements of this decision you disagree with and why. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of our response and should be addressed to:


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 procedure](#).³

Yours sincerely,


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

³ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>

Table 1: List of IROs last eligibility assessment

Independent Research Organisation	Date of last IRO assessment
Aga Khan University (International) UK	Mar-23
Alan Turing Institute	Aug-17
Anthony Nolan	Sep-21
Armagh Observatory	FY 2021/22
BirdLife international	Aug-21
British Film Institute	FY 2021/22
British Institute of International and Comparative Law	Aug-21
British Library	Jul-21
British Museum	FY 2021/22
British Trust for Ornithology	Aug-21
Butterfly Conservation	Jan-21
CABI (Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International)	FY 2021/22
Cambridge Arctic Shelf Programme	Nov-21
Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre	FY 2021/22
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science	Jun-19
Centre for Sustainable Energy	Apr-23
CERN	Apr-16
Chatham House	FY 2021/22
Earthwatch Institute	Aug-21
Education Policy Institute	Oct-25
European Bioinformatics Institute	Sep-21
European Marine Energy Centre Ltd	May-23
European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF)	Mar-14
Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust	Oct-25
Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England	FY 2021/22
Historic Environment Scotland	Nov-21
Historic Royal Palaces	FY 2021/22
HR Wallingford Group	FY 2021/22
Imperial War Museums	FY 2021/22
Institute for Fiscal Studies	Sep-21
Institute of Cancer Research	Dec-04
Institute of Development Studies	Jun-21
Institute of Occupational Medicine	FY 2021/22
International Institute for Environment and Development	Oct-21
London Institute for Mathematical Sciences	FY 2021/22
Malaria Consortium	FY 2021/22
Moredun Research Institute	FY 2021/22
Museum of London Archaeology	FY 2021/22
National Archives	Jul-21
National Centre for Social Research	Nov-21
National Foundation for Educational Research	Aug-21
National Gallery	FY 2021/22

Independent Research Organisation (continued)	Date of last IRO assessment
National Institute of Agricultural Botany	FY 2021/22
National Institute of Economic and Social Research	Sep-05
National Maritime Museum	FY 2021/22
National Museum Wales	FY 2021/22
National Museums Liverpool	Sep-21
National Museums Scotland	Sep-21
National Nuclear Laboratory	Aug-21
National Oceanography Centre	FY 2021/22
National Physical Laboratory	Oct-20
National Portrait Gallery	FY 2021/22
Natural History Museum	FY 2021/22
Nesta	Sep-21
Office of Health Economics (OHE)	FY 2021/22
Overseas Development Institute	FY 2021/22
RAND Europe	Sep-21
Research Data Scotland	Oct-25
Resolution Foundation	Jan-21
Royal Armouries	Nov-22
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	Sep-21
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	FY 2021/22
Royal Shakespeare Company (United Kingdom)	May-21
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	FY 2021/22
Royal United Services Institute	FY 2021/22
Science Museum Group	Aug-21
Sightsavers	Oct-21
Tate	FY 2021/22
Tavistock Institute of Human Relations	FY 2021/22
The Design Museum	Dec-23
The James Hutton Institute	FY 2021/22
The Manufacturing Technology Centre Ltd	Aug-21
The National Trust	FY 2021/22
The Nuffield Trust for Research and Policy Studies in Health Services	Oct-25
The Thomas Coram Foundation for Children (Coram)	Oct-25
The Welding Institute	Sep-21
Transport Research Laboratory (United Kingdom)	FY 2021/22
UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	Aug-21
UK Dementia Research Institute	Oct-22
UK Health Security Agency	Jan-22
Unlimit Health	Jul-22
Victoria and Albert Museum	Oct-21
Wellcome Sanger Institute	FY 2021/22
World Conservation Monitoring Centre	FY 2021/22
Zoological Society of London	Sep-21