



[REDACTED]

4 August 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2023/00304

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 23 May in which you requested the following:

Your request:

For each of the financial years ending:

- 31 March 2020
- 31 March 2021
- 31 March 2022
- 31 March 2023

Please provide the following information:

1. *The total number of contracts and/or tenders awarded to PricewaterhouseCoopers relating to work commissioned by Innovate UK*
2. *The total number of contracts and/or tenders awarded to KPMG relating to work commissioned by Innovate UK*
3. *The total number of contracts and/or tenders awarded to Deloitte LLP relating to work commissioned by Innovate UK*
4. *The total number of contracts and/or tenders awarded to Burges Salmon LLP relating to work commissioned by Innovate UK*
5. *The values of each of the respective contracts*
6. *Confirm whether a full procurement exercise requiring a minimum of 3 quotes was carried out for those contracts exceeding £50,000 in value*
7. *The number of corruption investigations commissioned within UKRI connected to procurement*
8. *Can you also advise if any individuals involved in the above procurement exercises have been employed by any of the above companies prior or during their time with UKRI or Innovate UK or have made declarations confirming an interest.*

Our response:

I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) hold information relevant to your request.

1-4. The total number of contracts and/or tenders awarded to PricewaterhouseCoopers/KPMG/Deloitte LLP/Burges Salmon LLP relating to work commissioned by Innovate UK

The total number of contracts/tenders that have been identified as being awarded to PricewaterhouseCoopers, KPMG, Deloitte LLP and Burges Salmon LLP relating to work commissioned by Innovate UK for the previous four financial years are detailed in Table 1 of the attached spreadsheet "FOI2023_00304_Annex1".

5. The values of each of the respective contracts

The value of each contract is included in Table 2 of "FOI2023_00304_Annex1".

Please note, prior to the full implementation of the UKRI procurement policy in the financial year 2020/2021, Innovate UK used a direct procurement methodology utilising the relevant government framework to conclude those agreements.

During this period, the procurement process was not fully tracked in a centralised manner, as it is today. Therefore, there are 11 Purchase Orders (POs) where we cannot confirm the framework was followed. It is not unusual for a contract/tender to have multiple POs, therefore it is not possible to say how many contracts/tenders these POs relate too. Additionally, some of these POs may relate to existing contracts which have already been included within Table 1 of "FOI2023_00304_Annex1".

For transparency, we have included these 11 PO amounts and their corresponding company in Table 3, on the tab labelled "Purchase Orders" in "FOI2023_00304_Annex1".

6. Confirm whether a full procurement exercise requiring a minimum of 3 quotes was carried out for those contracts exceeding £50,000 in value

UKRI do not solely use a procurement route requiring 3 quotes for contacts/tenders over £50,000. In line with the UKRI Procurement Policy, a 'framework first' approach is taken, in that a framework route is preferred, where possible, prior to using an alternative procurement route.

To clarify, for any procurement over £50,000, there are a number of procurement routes available. These are:

1. Framework – a mini-competition process is run across all suppliers within a framework, or relevant lot on a framework if there is more than one lot. Some frameworks are set up that allow a direct award to a supplier if the criteria set by the framework owner for direct awards is met
2. 3-Quotes – where 3 suppliers are approached directly to quote (usually for values under £50k, but policy allows this to be done as an exception for requirements up to £115k)
3. Tender – advertising the requirement to the market and any supplier who sees the opportunity can submit a tender response
4. Single Source – where there is no competition available, we can place a contract directly with one supplier
5. Direct Award – where a contract is placed directly with one supplier

We can confirm that for all contracts exceeding £50,000 in value, one of the above procurement routes was taken, as shown in column F of Table 2.

As clarified in point 5, Innovate UK used a direct procurement methodology for the POs exceeding £50,000 prior to the full implementation of the UKRI procurement policy, however, we do not hold information on the framework followed.

7. The number of corruption investigations commissioned within UKRI connected to procurement

UKRI has collectively received 6 referrals for non-grant related investigations.

8. Can you also advise if any individuals involved in the above procurement exercises have been employed by any of the above companies prior or during their time with UKRI or Innovate UK or have made declarations confirming an interest

Due to the number of individuals involved in each procurement process, it is not possible or practical to retrospectively identify every individual involved in a contract/tender and consult their relevant employment records. In addition, the UKRI Retention Schedule only requires that individual's CVs are kept for 1 year from the start of their employment.

Instead, to address your question, we have referred to the relevant declaration/conflict of interest processes that are part of each procurement exercise conducted by UKRI and UKSBS.

UKRI Declaration of Interest Policy (formerly Conflicts of Interest Policy)

The UKRI Procurement Policy states that UKRI Commercial will ensure that anyone that could influence the procurement process must declare any conflict of interests that they may have before dealing with bidders and suppliers. These declarations will be signed and stored securely.

If a conflict of interest becomes apparent, then UKRI Commercial reserve the right to replace or exclude any staff member from the relevant procurement activity.

UKRI Commercial have confirmed that no conflicts of interest were recorded on any of the procurements they were involved in contained within "FOI2023_00304_Annex1".

UKSBS Conflict of Interest Process

All currently employed and previously employed staff of the UKSBS procurement service delivery team, are covered by a perpetual and blanket approach for all thresholds of procurements which exceeds the statutory obligations under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Conflicts of Interest are addressed by a dual signed declaration of conflict of interest statement as part of individuals Delegated Letter of Authority (DLA). This statement covers both any direct or indirect involvement in any procurement for UKSBS or its Contracting Authorities. This document therefore obliges any individual at any stage of due process to declare if they have any perceived conflict of interest. UKSBS DLA's are reviewed annually in line with individuals current roles and responsibilities within the department, as well as aligning to Government policies and procedures.

UKSBS have confirmed that no conflicts of interests were recorded on any of the procurements they were involved in contained within "FOI2023_00304_Annex1".

Innovate UK Conflict of Interest Process

Innovate UK previously required staff to sign and declare their conflicts of interest on an annual basis. These forms were reviewed annually and staff with any notable conflicts of interest were required to undertake a follow-on conversation with our Conflicts of Interest Lead. This process has now been superseded by UKRI's Declaration of Interest Policy.

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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