



Sent by email: [REDACTED]

18 August 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2020/00186**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 26 June in which you requested the following:

**Your request:**

*For the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20:*

- 1. Is there a UKRI employee benefit policy and/or practice to provide any UKRI staff with free tea and coffee in the office?*
- 2. If so, for 2018/19 and 2019/20, at which UKRI offices was this employee benefit entitlement given?*
- 3. If so, do you hold a financial record of free tea and coffee provision for UKRI staff employed at your HQ, Polaris House, Swindon?*
- 4. If so, what was the financial cost in 2018/19 and 2019/20 for the provision of free tea and coffee benefit at Polaris House, Swindon?*
- 5. If so, as an employee benefit, when was this employee benefit introduced?*
- 6. If so, was this employee benefit included in the pay remit costings for the annual staff pay award, and cleared by the relevant Secretary of State?*

**Our response**

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

1. There is no UKRI employee benefit policy for the provision of tea and coffee in the office. However, there is practice across different parts of the organisation.
2. Prior to August 2019 local arrangements were in place across UKRI and practice varied across different parts of the organisation and sites. Since August 2019 free tea and coffee has been provided across our Swindon, London and Bristol office locations. For research center's, institutes and other facilities, arrangements continue to be agreed locally.
2. We can confirm that a financial record is held for the provision of free tea and coffee at Polaris House, Swindon.
3. The financial cost of providing free tea and coffee at Polaris House, Swindon was £25,543.96 in 2018/19 and £90,288.75 in 2019/20.

4. As noted in the response to request 2, free tea and coffee was provided at Polaris House from August 2019. Prior to this date provision was managed by councils and arrangements varied.
6. The provision of free tea and coffee at Polaris House was not included in the pay remit costings for the annual pay award as this was not considered a new benefit. Additionally, at the point of centralising its provision at Swindon Office, the provision of free fruit, available in some councils, was withdrawn providing some offsetting cost savings.

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](mailto:foi@ukri.org) or [infogovernance@ukri.org](mailto: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,

  
Information Governance  
Information Rights Team  
UK Research and Innovation  
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