



[REDACTED]

25 February 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00008**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 8 January and clarification received on the 11 January in which you requested the following:

**Your request:**

[REDACTED]  
[In relation to Innovate UK and Innovate UK competitions]

1. *Can I ask if you record the disability of the person submitting the funding application? If so, how many disabled applicants do you have as a percentage?*

- [REDACTED]
2. *Does your organization record the exact [type] of disability the funding applicant has? If so, can you define by the percentage the type of disability? i.e. physical or mental disability?*
  3. *Can I request a list of reasonable adjustments other disabled applicants have asked for?*
  4. *Can I also find out the percentage that were successful in achieving their reasonable adjustment request?*
  5. *Can you please also list the training that your staff has had in dealing with learning difficulties? i.e. the course name? the percentage of staff attending this course? and how long this course too? i.e. how many hours in total?*
  6. *The number of complaints that have been raised by disabled applicants? As a percentage of disabled applicants applying for funding?*

**Our response:**

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

1. *Can I ask if you record the disability of the person submitting the funding application? If so, how many disabled applicants do you have as a percentage?*

All applications for Innovate UK (IUK) competitions are now required to complete an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) survey as part of the process. This requirement came into effect at the end of June 2020. However, it is important to note that this data is collected for the purposes of reviewing application and success rates and not for identifying individuals that disclose a protected characteristic.

The information you have requested on how many disabled applicants IUK have as a percentage is exempt from disclosure under Section 22(1) of the FOIA as it is intended for future publication. Section 22 is a qualified exemption meaning that it is subject to the public interest test.

UKRI understand that being transparent in regard to the percentage of disabled applicants is in the public interest. However, the data is still incomplete and we are of the view that releasing the information as it currently stands would be inaccurate, incomplete and misleading and thus not in the public interest.

We have therefore determined that the outcome of this test is that the public interest is insufficient to justify immediate disclosure. This information is likely to be available by the end of June 2021.

2. *Does your organization record the exact [type] of disability the funding applicant has? If so, can you define by the percentage the type of disability? i.e. physical or mental disability?*

As part of the EDI survey, applicants are asked, "Are your activities ever affected by a disability, impairment or long-term illness which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?". The options for response are 'Yes', 'No' and 'Prefer not to say'. There is also an optional free form box titled 'If Yes (please specify)'.

We intend to publish this disability data as part of a future publication, however due to the nature of the way the data is collected, being provided voluntarily and described in the applicants own words, in its current form this information requires further analysis before it can be presented in a meaningful way.

Therefore, the information you have requested on the type of disability defined as a percentage is exempt from disclosure under Section 22(1) of the FOIA as it is intended for future publication. Section 22 is a qualified exemption meaning that it is subject to the public interest test.

UKRI understand that being transparent in regard to the type of disability funding applicants have is in the public interest. However, the data is incomplete in its current form, and we are of the view that releasing the information as it currently stands would be inaccurate, incomplete and misleading and thus not in the public interest.

We have therefore determined that the outcome of this test is that the public interest is insufficient to justify immediate disclosure.

3. *Can I request a list of reasonable adjustments other disabled applicants have asked for?*

This information is not held.

Applicants that face barriers to accessing IUK support and engaging with IUK systems are asked to contact Customer Support Services as early as possible during the application process to discuss the reasonable adjustments they require.

This is stated in the guidance for applicants, an example of which from the current Innovate UK Smart Grants January 2021 competition can be found [here](https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/810/overview#supporting-information)<sup>1</sup>. This guidance was updated to be more visible and clearer at the end of 2020 and new guidance for Reasonable Adjustments is currently being developed and finalised. This new guidance will be reviewed by an external expert organisation before end March 2021.

Each request for support is treated individually and is tailored to support the technical limits of the individuals making the request. These can include, but are not limited to, online guided tours of Innovate UK systems and direction to support services at the [Knowledge Transfer Network](https://ktn-uk.org/)<sup>2</sup>.

4. *Can I also find out the percentage that were successful in achieving their reasonable adjustment request?*

This information is not held.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/810/overview#supporting-information>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ktn-uk.org/>

5. *Can you please also list the training that your staff has had in dealing with learning difficulties? i.e. the course name? the percentage of staff attending this course? and how long this course too? i.e. how many hours in total?*

Training for staff who will be involved in the implementation of the new guidance for Reasonable Adjustments will be delivered by the end of March 2021. In the past, whilst staff received no formal training in this area, as stated above, each request for support is treated individually and is tailored to support the technical limits of the individuals making the request. Staff at IUK engage with other colleagues across IUK and UKRI who are experts in these areas to advise on the appropriate support that should be offered relevant to each individual.

6. *The number of complaints that have been raised by disabled applicants? As a percentage of disabled applicants applying for funding?*

This information is not held. The EDI data that is collected as part of the application process is not linked to the IUK complaints procedure and individual complaints.

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  
[foi@ukri.org](mailto:foi@ukri.org) | [dataprotection@ukri.org](mailto:dataprotection@ukri.org)