UK Research and Innovation

16 September 2021

Dear ████████ ,

Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00395

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 30 August in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Please could I have the statistics behind the number of awards vs applications made for grant funding and the amounts applied for all 'Deep Tech' projects covering AI, biotechnology, advanced materials, blockchain, robotics and drones, photonics and electronics, and quantum computing over the last five years?

Please could this include all Innovate UK, i4i, SBRI and MRC grants?

I am interested in finding out how many applications have been made, the success rates, and understanding the level of competition for funding.

Clarification received on 31 August 2021:

What I am after is data of all grant funding for IUK and MRC by competition and which of these were for projects in 'Deep Tech' -- AI, biotechnology, advanced materials, blockchain, robotics and drones, photonics and electronics, and quantum computing.

Our response

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

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) are refusing this request under Section 12 of the FOIA. Section 12 is used when the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit, which for UKRI is £450. This represents the estimated cost of 18 hours of staff resource on locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

To determine whether we hold and then to subsequently retrieve and extract this information, we have calculated that this will take upwards of 18 hours. To explain further, given the broad nature of the request and the parameters involved, initial searches have identified over 11,000 records for Innovate UK and over 600 records for MRC. Each record needs to be assessed for relevance and MRC and Innovate UK have estimated that it would take 5 to 6 minutes to review each record to identify those that are within the scope of your request.

We therefore estimate that it would take over 65 hours for MRC alone to comply with your request, and in each of these cases additional time would be required to extract the information and prepare it in the format you have requested. This would entail a considerable breach of the appropriate limit of 18 hours for both MRC and Innovate UK.

Consequently, UKRI is not obliged under Section 12 of the FOIA to respond to your request.

In order for UKRI to comply with this request, we would advise you to refine the parameters by narrowing the scope. In your request you ask for all 'Deep Tech' projects and identify several project areas; we recommend narrowing the time period or reducing the number of project areas you are interested in, which may bring your request under the cost threshold and enable us to proceed with your request.

Although your request has been refused under Section 12, under our section 16 duty to advise and assist, we can advise that Innovate UK publishes information on all its competitions and funded awards here[1] and all UKRI funding is published on Gateway to Research[2].

Gateway to Research was developed by the Research Councils to enable users to search and analyse information about publicly funded research. It includes information about projects supported by all seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and NC3Rs and can be filtered by key terms, funder and start year.

UKRI does not hold any information on i4i programmes which are run by NIHR, which falls under NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care.

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 or 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 | dataprotection@ukri.org

---

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/innovate-uk-funded-projects
[2] https://gtr.ukri.org/