



[REDACTED]

6 December 2022

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2022/00366

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 8 November in which you requested the following:

Your request:

This is an information request relating to the use of Edenred for a staff rewards scheme.

Please also provide the following information, broken down by financial years 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22

- 1. The types of vouchers or gift cards that the organisation receives from Edenred, either directly or via the Crown Commercial Service. For example, Edenred lists the following vouchers and gift cards: compliments card, incentive award card, childcare vouchers <https://www.edenred.co.uk/en/reward-recipients/>*
- 2. Please specify the number of each type of voucher or gift cards purchased, and the monetary value of each. For example, the department may have received 100 vouchers worth £50, 50 gift cards worth £20 each*
- 3. Please provide the number of staff to receive each gift card or vouchers and the monetary value of the gift cards or vouchers provided. For example, 50 staff may have received £50 compliments cards, 20 civil servants may have received £20 childcare vouchers*

Please also, if possible, include the following information broken down by financial years 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22:

- 4. Monthly payments to the company Edenred.*

Our response

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

In relation to part 1 of your request all the vouchers were 'recognition vouchers' and 'child care vouchers'.

We consider information in relation to part 2, 3 and 4 of your request falls under the exemption at Section 43(2) of the FOI Act. This exemption is used where disclosure would likely result in a person's (an individual, a company the public authority itself or any other legal entities) commercial interests being prejudiced. Section 43(2) is a qualified exemption, and we are required to carry out the public interest test in favour of or against releasing the information.

Public interest in favour of disclosure

- There is a general public interest in the disclosure of this information to ensure transparency and openness of a public organisation.
- There is also a public interest in transparency in order to ensure the accountability of public organisations and how they spend public funding.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- There is a public interest in protecting commercially sensitive information including transaction details that provide an insight into the level of engagement with commercial companies that could give a potential advantage to competitors.
- Releasing commercially sensitive information such as voucher volumes and pricing is likely to damage the possibility of ongoing relationships with this company and other organisations. Relationships may become untenable if third parties cannot be certain that their commercial information will remain confidential when held by UKRI, particularly where release of individual product line performance could adversely impact investment opportunities for affected companies.
- Breaching the commercial interest may also adversely affect future negotiation opportunities for UKRI and would prejudice UKRI's capacity to successfully attract companies to participate in any future procurement processes. UKRI may be seen as a 'confidentiality' risk if it routinely releases information relating to business arrangements into the public domain, particularly where this is third party information.

Having considered the balance of the public interest in releasing and withholding the information we have concluded that the public interest in favour of maintaining the exemption at section 43(2) commercial prejudice outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

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: 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,


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