



[REDACTED]

13 January 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00512

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 9 December in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I would like to get the original application made by this project: <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=10004703>. Project reference is: 10004703.

I would like it in electronic format sent to this email address.

Our response

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

Please find attached the application form requested 'FOI2021-00512 10004703_Redacted'.

We have redacted information contained in the application as it falls under the exemption at section 41(1) of the FOIA information provided in confidence. As organisations submit grant applications in confidence, we consider the redacted information in the application is exempt under Section 41 of the FOIA. To explain further, applicants submit their grant applications in confidence with the understanding that details of their application will remain confidential. If released we believe it would result in an actionable breach of confidence. As this exemption is absolute there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test.

We also consider that the redacted information in relation to the grant application falls under the exemption at Section 43(2) of the FOIA. 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. This is a qualified exemption, meaning that a test was carried out to determine whether the public interest outweighs the requirement for commercial confidentiality.

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

- Applicants apply for funding knowing that if they achieve success only a brief overview of their successful application will be publicly available, everything else will remain confidential, including their original application.

- As such disclosing the information requested is likely to reduce the applicant's commercial advantage and thereby harm its commercial interests in a highly competitive field. We believe disclosing this information via FOI confers a disadvantage to applicants which would likely materially disadvantage and harm their interests, particularly in their ability to compete for grants.
- Releasing this information is likely to damage the possibility of ongoing relationships between UKRI and other organisations. Relationships may become untenable if third parties cannot be certain that their grant applications will remain confidential when held by UKRI.
- Breaching the commercial interest may also adversely affect future negotiation opportunities for UKRI. UKRI may be seen as a 'confidentiality' risk if it routinely releases information relating to grant applications into the public domain, particularly where this is third party information.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, we reached the decision that the need for commercial confidentiality outweighs the public interest in disclosure; therefore, the information is exempt from 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: <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,


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