



[REDACTED]

20 March 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2025/00095

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request, received on the 28 January, and subsequent clarification, received on the 25 February, in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I'm writing to request the complete responses to the consultation on the approach to PCE for the REF. Specifically, I would like to request the aggregate response to the closed questions -i.e. how many respondents ticked which response, which I assume is very simple to supply and raises no confidentiality issues.

In addition, I would like to request all the write-in responses, which I understand will need to have personal information redacted from them. If that requires a bit more time, perhaps you could send me the quantitative data as above first?

Your clarification:

I was indeed referring to the responses to this survey:

<https://www.technopolis-group.com/new/ref-2029-people-culture-and-environment-indicators-survey/>

Even though you outsourced the conduct of the survey you must have all the responses – in aggregate – i.e. a report of how many people ticked which box for each question (as most of the answers were tick box). It was this information I was asking for. Plus all the write-ins that were added in the free-text boxes with the report. I assume these were also made available to you since you are presumably relying on these responses to shape PCE.

If you simply have a report from Technopolis with all the responses, then presumably you could send me that? This should be very unburdensome!

If you were also supplied with all the underlying data, which I would assume for any survey which you were responsible for – even if you outsourced its implementation – including all the free text comments (anonymised) which I would assume you would have as standard, I would welcome that. I hope this clarifies and that it makes the request simple for you to implement.

Since the survey was conducted six months ago and since it typically takes around a day (or less) to process and deliver raw data from such an exercise, that data must be available. Even if there are further activities ongoing.

Our response:

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

Following your clarification, it became evident that we misinterpreted your original request and therefore proceeded based on the information that was gathered by the Technopolis survey, which ran from 13 June 2024 to 13 September 2024.

The information you have requested 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, and a test was carried out to determine whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs public interest in disclosure.

Public interest in the favour of disclosure

- UKRI understand that being transparent in regard to data gathered as part of a public consultation is in the public interest, to ensure transparency and openness of a public organisation.

Public interest in favour of withholding the information

- Publication of the requested data outside of the context of the final report, and in the absence of other related research outcomes, would be disruptive and potentially misleading to the ongoing People, Culture and Environment (PCE) pilot. This would lead to unnecessary confusion within the sector.
- Premature release would put undue pressure on UKRI to publish outside of our scheduled timeframes which would lead to a disproportionate burden on the organisation.

We have therefore determined that the outcome of this test is that the public interest is insufficient to justify immediate disclosure. This information is due to be made available in the planned publications for September 2025, as outlined in the [REF 2029 PCE timetable](#)¹.

If you have any queries regarding our response please do let us know. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, explaining which elements of this decision you disagree with and why. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of our response and should be addressed to:

Head of Information Governance

Email: foi@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 procedure](#)².

Yours sincerely,


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

¹ <https://2029.ref.ac.uk/people-culture-and-environment-pce/pce-timetable/>

² <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>