



[Redacted]  
[Redacted]

19 January 2024

Dear [Redacted],

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2023/01009**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 13 December in which you requested the following:

**Your request:**

*I request the following information in relation to my application ref [Redacted], under the Freedom of Information Act:*

- \* *Breakdown of numerical grading by assessor for my application*
- \* *Course outlines for any training assessors undertake*
- \* *Recruitment advertisement, process and due diligence for assessors*
- \* *Professional qualifications of the persons responsible for designing the assessment process*
- \* *Assessment framework/guidance for assessors for the unlocking potential award (begin)*
- \* *Guidance for assigning assessors to applications*

**Our response**

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

**\* Breakdown of numerical grading by assessor for my application**

This information has been provided to you by Innovate UK's Customer Support Service team on 20 December 2023.

**\* Course outlines for any training assessors undertake**

Information on assessor guidance and training is publicly available on [UKRI's disclosure log<sup>1</sup>](#)

**\* Recruitment advertisement, process and due diligence for assessors**

Innovation Leads (IL) are the subject matter experts (SMEs) and are responsible for recruiting new assessors for competitions. Where Innovate UK receives applications for assessors we require a cover letter detailing current areas of skills and expertise as well as a brief summary of industry experience along with an up to date CV. This information is then discussed by the Applications and Assessment teams with the Innovation Leads that match the skills/domain areas. Where satisfied the assessor is informed and added to the next available induction session.

**\* Professional qualifications of the persons responsible for designing the assessment process**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ukri.disclosurelog.co.uk/case/45a0f3b8-a123-4034-b995-4c671f69a0f3>  
UK Research and Innovation, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1FL

The Innovate UK assessment process has been designed collaboratively by various teams over the years since Innovate UK was established in 2007, therefore singular persons or individuals are not responsible for the design of the process. However, the overall responsibility sits within the Operations directorate, which is led by [Guy Woolley, the Chief Operating Officer](#).<sup>2</sup>

#### **\* Assessment framework/guidance for assessors for the unlocking potential award (begin)**

This information is attached as documents 'FOI2023/01009 Innovate UK Unlocking Potential Award Assessor Drop-in September 2023' and 'FOI2023/01009 Innovate UK Unlocking Potential Award 2023 Assessor Briefing'.

Some information has been redacted in the attached documents. This has been applied where the information contains:

- Personal data, such as names and email addresses.
- Screenshots and extracts from individual applications, which contain confidential and commercially sensitive information, such as finance information, feedback and scoring data.
- Information that is out of scope of your request.

#### Section 40(2) personal data

Information such as names of individuals, and email addresses has been withheld under section 40(2) personal data of the FOI Act. Disclosing this information would contravene the first Data Protection Principle as defined under Section 86 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and Article 5 of the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR).

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

#### Section 41(1) information provided in confidence

The screenshots and extracts contain information from actual applications, which we consider as exempt under Section 41 of the FOIA, information provided in confidence. For example, the extracts contain financial information, feedback examples and scores. To explain further, applicants submit their grant applications in confidence, with the understanding that details of their application will remain confidential to protect research and development plans, intellectual property, and other commercially sensitive or market information provided in the proposal. If this information was released, we believe it would result in an actionable breach of confidentiality.

Section 41 is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

#### **\* Guidance for assigning assessors to applications**

Assessors are allocated to applications via the Innovation Funding Service (IFS) dashboard which is an online system Innovate UK uses for managing the application process. There are several ways in which assessors can be allocated to applications within a competition. The first is manually, when the Innovation Lead (IL) will manually allocate assessors to applications based on their individual skills and how they specifically align with certain applications in that particular innovation area.

The second is where assessors are matched with applications using the innovation area of the application and the assessors with that matching innovation area. For large competitions, such as the Unlocking Potential Award, we also use machine intelligence that will look at assessor skills and the innovation area in the application and match based on these elements. This allocation process was used for the Unlocking Potential Award.

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 within the next 40 working days:

Head of Information Governance  
Email: [foi@ukri.org](mailto:foi@ukri.org)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/people/guy-woolley>

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](http://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  
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