Sent by email:

Dear [Redacted],

Freedom of Information request: 2018/0074

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request in which you requested the following:

Your Request:

Documents held or produced by your organisation which contain information about:

1. Neural stimulation (also known as neurostimulation)
2. Spinal cord stimulation
3. Deep brain stimulation or other forms of electrical brain stimulation
4. Brain-computer interfaces (BCI; sometimes called a neural-control interface (NCI), mind-machine interface (MMI), direct neural interface (DNI), or brain–machine interface (BMI))

Such documents may include reports, reviews, technical evaluations, meeting minutes or similar.

Further clarification:
The firms most of interest to me would be Boston Scientific, St. Jude/Abbott (now one firm) and Novocure.

Our response:

I can confirm UKRI may hold information that is relevant to your request.

A number of searches have been undertaken and it has become apparent substantial additional work would be needed in order to identify and extract any information that might be in scope. To undertake this analysis would exceed the 18 hour appropriate limit pursuant to Section 12 of the Freedom of Information (FOIA).

We can, however, provide advice and assistance by providing links to where you may be able to find further information. This includes information on funded research, case studies and research workshops published by UKRI councils relating to this area, further details and relevant weblinks are provided below:
UKRI Gateway to Research
The UKRI Gateway to Research (GTR) provides information on UKRI council funded research, including information on individual projects and their outcomes and outputs (https://gtr.ukri.org/). Links to searches undertaken using the terms you identified in your request are provided below, and you will also be able to search for any awards that might involve the companies you identified:

1. Neural stimulation (also known as neurostimulation): Search results on GTR
2. Spinal cord stimulation: Search results on GTR
3. Deep brain stimulation or other forms of electrical brain stimulation: Search result on GTR
4. Brain-computer interfaces: Search results on GTR

UKRI council information
UKRI's councils have also published information relating to the areas you have identified on their websites, some links that might be of interest to you are provided below:

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

Neural stimulation
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/pubs/neurodegenerative-disease-portfolio-day/ (Findings and observations of the independent panel)

Deep brain stimulation
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/pubs/neurodegenerative-disease-portfolio-day/ (Findings and observations of the independent panel)
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/preparing/includingnationalimportance/examplesnis/ (As part of ongoing guidance on National Importance, the EPSRC have worked with successful applicants to highlight good examples of National Importance statements)
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/pubs/report-of-epsrc-dementia-scoping-workshop/ (A small scale workshop to identify challenges within dementia was held on the 2 September 2013)

Brain computer interfaces
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/preparing/includingnationalimportance/examplesnis/ (As part of an ongoing guidance on National Importance, the EPSRC have worked with successful applicants to highlight good examples of National Importance statements)
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/files/research/complexitysciencereviewworkshopreport/ (EPSRC also instigated a review into complexity science as a research area. By investigating its own data and consulting with the community, a scoping workshop was held on 25 April 2017. This report is a summary of the workshop)
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/pubs/cross-disciplinary-interfaces-programme/ (Landscape document including information on Basic technology, biological systems, bioprocess engineering, complexity science, fundamental biology, human health and technologies of the life sciences)
- https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/pubs/report-of-the-epsrc-human-computer-interaction-theme-day-and-survey/ (As part of the EPSRC review of human computer interaction (HCI) research in the UK a theme day for UK HCI researchers was held in Manchester on the 20 January 2012. This was preceded by a survey of the community and both of these activities helped to inform the review panel as they made their assessment of UK HCI research)
Innovate UK
In addition to information on the GTR Innovate UK publish information on projects and winners of competitions, these can be found on their transparency data page.

Medical Research Council (MRC)
MRC publish case studies on the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the research it funds at https://mrc.ukri.org/successes/evaluating-research-outcomes/

Additional links to the areas identified include:


If you have any queries about this response please contact me, or if you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, please write to:

Complaints Officer
UK Research and Innovation Polaris House
North Star Avenue Swindon
SN2 1FL
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 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:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Enquiry/Information Line: Between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745
Further information about the Office of the Information Commissioner can be found at http://www.ico.gov.uk/

Yours sincerely,

UK Research and Innovation,
Information Governance Team
Email: foi@ukri.org