Freedom of Information request: 2019/0078

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 15th March 2019 in which you requested the following:

Your Request:

Can the responses for these requests be broken down by each Research Council: AHRC, BBSRC, ESRC, EPSRC, Innovate UK, MRC, NERC, Research England, and STFC and if applicable for the UKRI organisation itself.

1. How much did each organisation spend last year on training within the IT department(s)?
2. Please furnish me with the names of the training organisations that the IT training budget was spent with and how much was spent with each organisation.
3. I would like an organisational structure of the IT department(s) complete where possible, with names of relevant directors, departmental heads and line managers.
4. What databases and IT development technologies / Programming languages are predominantly employed within the organisations?

Our response:

I can confirm UK Research and Innovation hold information relevant to your request.

Please note that several of the Research Councils are based primarily within Polaris House and the majority of their IT services are provided by UK Shared Business Services. Therefore the following information refers to any IT training for UKRI, excluding UK SBS’ training expenditure.

1. How much did each organisation spend last year on training within the IT department(s)?

(Figures provided are for 2018/2019)
Cross-Council Training (all UKRI organisations): Approximately £8,000
NERC: Approximately £8,650
STFC: Approximately £50,000
Innovate UK: Approximately £17,100
Research England: Approximately £1,800
2. Please furnish me with the names of the training organisations that the IT training budget was spent with and how much was spent with each organisation.

Releasing the names of the training organisations and the corresponding budget spend would constitute the disclosure of commercially sensitive information, therefore we have considered Section 43 (Commercial Interests) to withhold this information from disclosure.

Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act is a qualified exemption and therefore subject to a Public Interest Test. Our arguments are set out below:

**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 the transparency in order to ensure accountability of public organisations and how they spend public money.

**Public interest test in favour of withholding the information:**
- Releasing information provided in confidence to UKRI is likely to damage the possibility of ongoing relationships with other organisations. Relationships may become untenable if third parties cannot be certain that their commercial information will remain confidential if it is held by UKRI.
- Breaching the commercial interests may also adversely affect future negotiation opportunities for UKRI. 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.
- The release of information that is commercially sensitive to the supplier may harm future commercial opportunities.

UKRI has reached the view that, on balance, the public interest is better served by withholding the selected information under section 43(2) of the FOI Act, Prejudice to Commercial Interests.

3. I would like an organisational structure of the IT department(s) complete where possible, with names of relevant directors, departmental heads and line managers.

This is information not held. UKRI is currently undergoing a period of transformation whereby IT structures are currently under review. As part of this process training provision and funding is also under review. We are therefore unable to provide up to date or relevant IT organograms at this time.

4. What databases and IT development technologies / Programming languages are predominantly employed within the organisations?

Microsoft SQL, MySQL, Neo4J, Java/JavaScript, C#, Node JS, HTML

Given that STFC are, in part, a scientific computing and scientific research organisation their range of technologies is usually very specialist or niche, therefore it is not possible to provide information as requested.
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