

UKRI investment and outputs 2015-16 to 2024-25

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Introduction

This statistical publication releases the latest figures on UKRI Investment and Outputs covering a 10-year period (financial years 2015-16 to 2024-25) reviewing and updating all the [previously published figures](#). The publication is divided into two main sections:

1. funding investments: covering applications, funding decisions, and active awards;
2. outputs: covering studentships and outputs collected on awards using UKRI outcome collection surveys.

The figures discussed here are all [available as MS Excel file](#). The figures are derived from a data snapshot from Databank (the UKRI central repository of administrative data) taken on 24 April 2025. As with any administrative data system, there are some limitations when using this data for statistical reporting, and these are captured in the [data quality statement](#) that accompanies this publication. The data quality statement provides additional information about the accuracy, reliability, completeness, and overall usability of the data.

UKRI also publishes other figures that complement this publication. These are:

- Gateway to Research, which publishes details of UKRI funding from 2006, including project descriptions, people and organisations involved
- [UKRI equalities monitoring](#), which publishes diversity data on the personal characteristics of applicants and awardees
- [geographical distribution of funding](#), which publishes UKRI investments using financial data and breaking this down by different geographical regions (this is different from figures shown here as the data source is not the same)
- an in-depth analysis of spin-outs with the aim to understand the impacts of spin-out companies arising from UKRI investments which can be found in [Spin-outs analysis 2023](#) publication (it is based on 2023-24 and the data published here updates the data presented in that publication)

Funding investments

This section provides information on UKRI funding investments. It covers all funding applications received and funding decisions made within a financial year, including lifetime commitment value of awards. All values are reported in nominal terms. There is a regional breakdown of investments and the leveraged investment from project partners on the awards. It also shows numbers for active awards in each financial year including number of people, organisations and sector type supported.

There are two key considerations when interpreting trends arising from the analysis of the data between 2015-16 and 2024-25:

1. the UKRI response to the COVID-19 emergency which affects figures particularly between 2020-21 and 2021-22

2. overall numbers of applications from Innovate UK are only available from 2017-18 onwards and since they account for 53% of all applications in 2024-25 (and 94% of all organisations in 2024-25) comparisons over time on application numbers should only be made from 2017-18

Not all UKRI funding investments are captured in this publication due to data unavailability. We estimate that approximately 40% of the UKRI Research and Innovation budget is currently not included. A large portion of this is [Research England block funding](#). Efforts are underway to enhance and expand the dataset and subsequent publication will republish the full time series including any currently missing data. At present the focus is on applications and awards, where we estimate less than 2% of the data is unavailable. Again, for more information on data quality please refer to the Data quality statement for the [UKRI Investment and Outputs 2015-16 to 2024-25](#).

Key findings for 2024-25

Since 2017-18 the number of applications assessed for funding doubled (from 15,436 to 30,550) (Table 2).

Since 2017-18 there was a 3% increase in the number of awards (from 5,522 to 5,667) (Table 2).

The award rate reduced 17 percentage points from 2017-18 (36% to 19%) (Table 2).

The total active awards have remained stable since 2015-16 around 20,700 awards (Table 5).

Applications (Table 1)

Applications for funding made to UKRI during a given financial year, however decisions on the applications may not be done within the same financial year. Decisions within a financial year are addressed in the next section.

There was a 1.8-fold increase in applications from 2017-18 to 2024-25 (from 16,355 to 29,927 applications). This is aligned with a corresponding 3-fold increase in the total number of lead organisations applying for funding (from 3,938 to 11,736 organisations).

Funding decisions (Tables 2, 2.1, 2.2 and 3)

‘Funding decisions’ are applications assessed during a given financial year. This is irrespective of the year of the application. For example, an application for funding could be made to UKRI in 2015-16, but its funding decision be made in 2016-17.

The number of applications assessed doubled from 2017-18 to 2024-25 (from 15,436 to 30,550). There was a 3% increase in the number of awards (from 5,522 to 5,667) after averaging almost 7,500 awards between 2020-21 and 2023-24. The award rate has almost halved from 36% to 19% since 2017-18.

Since 2017-18, the total value of applications has seen a 2.1-fold increase, and the total value awarded a 1.2-fold increase. The award rate by value has decreased from 46% to 25%.

Training grants often show an award rate value over 100%. This is because for around a third of all training grant decisions the applied amount has been recorded as zero. However if awarded, the awarded amount is recorded.

Table 2.1 provides a breakdown of these figures by decision owner within UKRI of the application assessment. While Table 2.2 provides a breakdown by lead organisation. Table 3 shows the figures broken down by country and region (across England).

Awarded project partner contributions (Table 4)

A project partner contributes directly or indirectly to the award funded. These contributions are reported at the application stage, along with the applicant's estimate of their financial value both in terms of direct cash and in-kind benefits. This is often used as a proxy indicator of the extent of co-investment leveraged by UKRI funding.

The number of awards reporting at least one project partner has remained stable over the period between 2015-16 and 2024-25, averaging approximately 4,500 awards in the last three years (around two thirds of all awards). Since 2015-16 the total number of reported partnerships increased 61% to 14,113 organisations, while the number of project partner organisations increased 48% to 8,908 organisations. Additionally, the total value of contributions saw an 84% increase from £840 million to £1,549 million.

14% of awards with at least one project partner in 2015-16 the location of project partner organisation was outside of the UK. This figure increased to 25% in 2024-25. At the same time, the contributions from project partners outside of the UK increased 63% increase (from £124 million to £242 million).

Active awards (Table 5)

This section covers active awards during a financial year. It provides a breakdown by category, people, organisations, and organisation sector.

The total active awards have remained stable since 2015-16 around 20,700 awards. The number of people supported has seen a 1.3-fold increase, from 23,796 to 29,911 between 2015-16 and 2024-25. The total number of organisations supported increased by 6% from 3,974 to 4,216.

Outputs

The section covers awards that have reported an output. This includes numbers for awards reporting an output (historically ranging between 56% and 85%), training grants outputs (studentships and PhDs submitted), collaborations, engagement activities, knowledge, further funding, intellectual property, spin-outs, jobs created and new products.

The data on outputs is collected from awards with a decision date between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2025 using UKRI outcomes collections systems. For Innovate UK this data is only fully available between 2017-18 and 2024-25. For 2015-16 and 2016-17 output collection for Innovate UK awards is only available for awards that were still active in 2017-18 onwards, hence numbers for these two financial years are small. For more information on the data available please refer to the [Data quality statement for the UKRI Investment and Outputs 2015-16 to 2024-25](#).

Outputs are routinely collected for at least 5 years beyond the end of the award and older awards have had more time to generate outputs. Awards starting in more recent years are expected to continue to produce outputs, which means figures for recent years should be seen as provisional and any comparisons over time should take this into account. To mitigate this, most of the commentary will look at earlier periods of the 10-year time series presented here and it will exclude 2015-16 and 2016-17 comparisons when Innovate UK data is included.

Key findings for 2024 to 2025

Historically, around 80% of awards excluding Innovate UK are sent for output collection. The percentage of Innovate UK awards that have a returned Project Completion Form is around 55%. (Table 6).

Between 2017-18 and 2020-21 around 58% of all awards starting in a financial year have at least one engagement activity (Table 9).

Between 2015-16 and 2020-21 around 50% of all awards starting in a financial year have at least one publication (Table 10).

Between 2017-18 and 2020-21 there have been over 8,000 instances of further funding on average (Table 12).

Between 2017-18 and 2020-21 around 6% of total awards starting had at least one instance of intellectual property (Table 13).

Since 2015-16 UKRI awards have enabled the incorporation of 909 spin-outs (Table 14).

The number of active studentships has remained stable since 2015-16 (from 27,110 to 27,020) (Table 15).

Between 2017-18 and 2022-23 the average number of FTE jobs created from Innovate UK awards was over 2,560 (Table 16).

Awards reporting outputs (Table 6)

This shows the number of awards starting in each financial year that are sent for output collection (or with a returned Project Completion Form for Innovate UK). Historically, around 80% of research council awards are sent for output collection. The percentage of Innovate UK awards that have a returned Project Completion Form is around 55%.

Collaborations (Tables 7 and 8)

Collaborations might take the form of joint funding, exchanging expertise, access to wide ranging facilities and equipment, accessing datasets, working across different sectors, and bringing together inter-disciplinary teams. The data presented here excludes Innovate UK collaborations.

Around 50% of the total number of collaborators are from Academic, University or Learned Society. Between 2015-16 and 2020-21 the total number of awards with 1 or more instances of collaboration is around 50% of the total awards started.

This section also presents figures for international collaboration showing how awardees are collaborating and exchanging expertise around the world.

Engagement activity (Table 9)

These figures show the number of engagement activities with a variety of audiences and stakeholders. The data presented here excludes Innovate UK engagement activities.

Between 2017-18 and 2020-21 around 58% of all awards starting in a financial year have at least one engagement activity.

Knowledge (Tables 10 and 11)

Knowledge outputs breaks down how the awards are disseminated. Table 10 provides a breakdown by book, book chapters, journal article or any other publications (e.g., conference paper or a policy briefing). Between 2015-16 and 2020-21 around 50% of all awards starting in a financial year have at least one publication.

Table 11 breaks down the figures by other types of knowledge (this data excludes Innovate UK) and covers artistic/creative, medical, research models and tools, and software and technical products.

Further funding (Table 12)

This section shows figures on instances where an award's funding has been extended or enhanced. Between 2017-18 and 2020-21 on average there have been over 8,000 instances of further funding.

Intellectual property (Table 13)

This section shows figures on the instance of intellectual property within UKRI funded awards. This can include inventions, designs, processes or tools that result from the award. Researchers and innovators are asked to report on any IP arising from the award such as patents or patent applications.

Between 2017-18 and 2020-21 around 6% of total awards starting had at least one instance of intellectual property.

Spin-outs (Table 14)

Spin-outs are new private sector organisations that are established, developed or influenced as a result of UKRI awards. These organisations aim to commercialise or apply outputs from their awards in a practical, real-world context. Since 2015-16 UKRI awards have enabled the incorporation of 909 spin-outs.

Studentships (Table 15)

Studentships are one of the outcomes from training grants funded by UKRI. UKRI training grants are allocated to organisations which in turn support studentships from those grants and recruit students to them. The data presented here excludes Innovate UK.

The number of active studentships and people supported through them has remained stable since 2015-16. The number of organisations supported has also remained consistent hovering around 120.

Studentship PhD submissions are collected via the PhD Submission Survey. This survey collects the thesis submission and completion of degree data for PhD students who were due to submit by the preceding September. The number of PhDs submitted remained broadly stable, averaging around 4,600 between 2015-16 and 2023-24, with a peak in 2021-22 of 5,252 submissions. The figure for 2024-25 is currently 685, but this number is likely to increase as figures are provisional due to a time lag between a student submitting their PhD and the student submission survey being completed.

[Jobs created and new products \(Tables 16 and 17\)](#)

For Innovate UK awards we also get number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created due to a project funding. For these project participants provide an estimate of the numbers of jobs created/retained during the project. Between 2017-18 and 2022-23 the average number of FTE jobs created is over 2,500. In these figures, the number of jobs has been capped to 10 FTE per participant on a project.

The average number of new products, services, and processes arising from Innovate UK awards between 2017-18 and 2022-23 is just over 600.