23 May 2017

Reference number: Fol 339

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

I am writing in response to the request you made to BBSRC under the Freedom of Information Act, which was received on Friday 28 April 2017.

Statement of information requested

Please can you let me know:

1) How many funding applications were made to you for research, the main purpose of which was the safety and/or toxicity evaluation of GM crops / GMOs / pesticides, and how many were accepted, i) wholly or ii) in part

2) How many funding applications were made to you for research, the main purpose of which was the development of GM crops / GMOs / pesticides, and how many were accepted, i) wholly or ii) in part

3) Please provide me with a list of donations / funds made to you by non-governmental bodies or organisations between 1 Jan 2016 - present day.

If this goes over the limit, please disregard the third question.

If there is any reason why you cannot answer my request, please contact me so I can amend it, rather than rejecting it outright.

Background

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) is one of seven Research Councils that work together as Research Councils UK (RCUK). It is funded from the Government’s Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. BBSRC’s budget for 2014/15 was £509M and it supports around 1,600 scientists and 2,000 research students in universities and institutes in the UK. Information about BBSRC’s mission can be found on our website at http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/organisation/mission.aspx.

UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS) provides a range of services, including IT, to BBSRC and other public sector organisations. UK SBS enters contracts on its clients behalf and provides services to them.

Duty to confirm or deny

BBSRC does hold the information requested.

Requested Information

I shall answer each of your questions in turn.

1. How many funding applications were made to you for research, the main purpose of which was the safety and/or toxicity evaluation of GM crops / GMOs / pesticides, and how many were accepted, i) wholly or ii) in part
Since 1st January 2016, the BBSRC has received no applications where the main purpose of the research was to study the safety of GM crops or GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms). In the same period, 12 applications to research the safety and/or evaluate toxicity of pesticides were received, one of which was funded.

2. How many funding applications were made to you for research, the main purpose of which was the development of GM crops / GMOs / pesticides, and how many were accepted, i) wholly or ii) in part

The majority of funding applications received by BBSRC that involve GM are for laboratory research purposes only. It is a useful tool used by researchers where the primary purpose of their work is to investigate fundamental biological processes in cells such as gene function and regulation. In response to the specific question, since 1st January 2016, the BBSRC has received 2 applications where the primary purpose of the research is the development of a GM crop, neither of which were funded. In the same period, 5 applications were received where the main purpose of the research was the development of a GMO (other than a crop), one of which was funded. Ten applications were received for work developing a pesticide, of which 3 were successful.

3. Please provide me with a list of donations / funds made to you by non-governmental bodies or organisations between 1 Jan 2016 - present day.

There were no funds or donations made directly to the BBSRC by non-governmental bodies or organisations between 1st January 2016 and the present day.

If you have any further questions, please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely

BBSRC Freedom of Information Officer

Publication: please note that this response to your request may be published on a public website.

Complaints Process

If you are dissatisfied with how we have handled your request, you may register a formal complaint with the BBSRC Complaints Officer at complaints.officer@bbsrc.ac.uk, who will conduct an internal review.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner, Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, Tel: 01625 545 745, https://ico.org.uk/.