

Mr John Gilchrist
Freedom of Information Officer

10 January 2019

Ref: FOI/November 2018/ UKRI Observatory

By email to cocreating.knowledge@epsrc.ukri.info

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Dear UKRI Observatory

Your request for information received on 19 November 2018 has been dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

We are writing to make an information request concerning the EPSRC CDT program for journalistic purposes. We should be grateful if you could provide us, for any CDT's you hold information on;

1. Copies of Outline Proposals made to the 2018 competition.
2. Copies of any submissions made to the EPSRC 2017 mid-term review panel
3. Copies of any submissions made to the EPSRC 2011 mid-term review panel
4. In respect of any EPSRC CDT's, the number of students admitted to each cohort (e.g. 12 students started in Year 1 (2014), 15 in Year 2 (2015), ...

University Response

1. We consider *copies of outline proposals made to the 2018 competition* commercially sensitive because this is a proposal related to a competitive bid. This information has therefore been withheld on the basis that it is considered to be exempt under s.43(2) of the FOIA.

This is a qualified exemption and we have therefore applied the public interest test. In making this decision we have weighed such factors as the University's desire to be open and transparent in all its dealings against the need to ensure that it is able to bid competitively for research funding when it is available. The disclosure of information would be likely to assist competitors in gaining an advantage over future bids as they could view our proposal and potentially use the content to assist with their own bid; to release this information would be likely to prejudice our ability to successfully apply for future bids; and even if the content was not used directly in another bid it could be useful more generally to develop similar research programmes there again prejudicing the University's commercial interests.

Furthermore, notwithstanding that the 2018 competition for which Middlesex University submitted a bid is closed the submission remains confidential as we would want to use the same content for similar competitions in the future.

The above mentioned prejudicial effects of disclosure for the University would be significant as any disclosures may harm our capacity to bid competitively for funding that supports research and academic strategy and this would have an adverse impact on efforts to exploit opportunities that enables Middlesex University to be competitive in the higher education sector.

Accordingly, insofar as this element of your request is concerned and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act ("the Act") this letter acts as a refusal notice.

We have not made any submissions prior to 2018 so the remaining questions are not applicable.

I trust this satisfies your request sufficiently. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you have the right to complain about the University's response to your request for information. If you have such a complaint, you may contact Mr David Maplas, Director of Student Affairs, Middlesex University, Hendon campus, London NW4 4BT, tel: 020 8411 5830, d.malpas@mdx.ac.uk within 40 days of the date of this letter for a review of the University's decision. If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome of that complaint, you may seek further recourse by lodging an appeal with the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

John Gilchrist
Freedom of Information Officer