

Dear Applicant,

Freedom of Information request reference K/20/038

Thank you for your clarified Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 27 January 2020, reference K/20/038.

Your clarified request read:

“Corporate Research undertaken by your Engineering department for external corporate customers in 2018? – I am looking for names of companies that have paid the engineering dept to do research for them.

Corporate Research undertaken by your Engineering department for external corporate customers in 2019? I am looking for names of companies that have paid the engineering dept to do research for them.

Corporate Research undertaken by your Computer Science department for external corporate customers in 2018? I am looking for names of companies that have paid the engineering dept to do research for them.

Corporate Research undertaken by your Computer science department for external corporate customers in 2019? I am looking for names of companies if any that have paid the engineering dept to do research for them.

Incubators as part of the Universities or housed on University property / land ? Does the University have any Start- up businesses or Incubators as part of the University ? Please give details of the incubators / innovation centres owned by [The University of Leeds] .

Corporate spin off companies from the Engineering dept ? Does the University have any companies that have been created from research that has been done within the dept of Engineering ?

Corporate spin off companies from the Computer Science dept ? Does the University have any companies that have been created from research that has been done within the dept of Computer Science ?

FE Colleges associated with the University? Does the University have an affiliation with any local FE Colleges ? Do any local colleges run courses in-conjunction with your University ? Do any local FE Colleges feed into access courses at your University?”

The University of Leeds holds some of this information. We have responded to your request in three sections: corporate research; start-up and spin-out companies, and; associations with Further Education colleges.

Corporate Research

The University of Leeds does work with corporate partners from time to time. However, we consider that to release details of the organisations we work (or have worked) with would be likely to jeopardise the commercial interests of both the University and those corporate partners. We are therefore withholding this information under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The University works with corporate partners on innovative, cutting edge projects across a range of fields. Whether or not an organisation is working with a University is, in itself, sensitive information. To disclose the names of organisations with whom the University partners would provide competitor organisations with information which they would not ordinarily have access to. This, in turn, would be likely to have a reputational impact (either positive or negative) on the organisations, which may impact on their position in the marketplace. We consider it likely that this would be likely to dissuade organisations from working with the University in future, reducing the University's ability to secure funding, participate in cutting-edge research and serve the needs of our students.

Section 43(2) of the FOI Act is a qualified exemption, which means that the University is required to conduct a public interest test. There is a general public interest inherent in the FOI Act which supports the disclosure of information on an open and transparent basis. We also consider there to be a general interest in understanding how the University spends its money. However, we consider this interest to be met via University's commitment to adhering to high ethical standards and the University's values, which ensure the integrity of our innovative and high quality research. Further information on this can be found on the [Research and Innovation](#) pages of our website.

We also consider there to be a strong and specific public interest in the University being able to work with corporate partners without undue interference or scrutiny. The University of Leeds is a world-leader in innovation and research and there is a very strong public interest in ensuring this work can continue.

As such, we are satisfied that the public interest in favour of disclosing the information is significantly outweighed by the public interest in maintaining the exemption.

Start-up and spin-out companies

The University of Leeds hosts Nexus Leeds. Nexus is a business incubator, which brings together business and academic minds around shared goals to drive innovation. You can find more information on the [Nexus website](#).

We can also confirm that the University does have spinout companies created from research undertaken in Engineering and Computer Science related Schools.

Associations with FE colleges

The University of Leeds has no formal associations with any further education colleges.

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions about this email, however, please do not hesitate to contact us on foi@leeds.ac.uk

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you can request an Internal Review. Requests for Internal Review should be made in writing using the following contact information:

Post: Mr D Wardle
Deputy Secretary
The University of Leeds
Leeds
LS2 9JT

Email: foi@leeds.ac.uk

Requests for Internal Review should be submitted within 40 working days of receiving the University's response to your request. Further information about how the University manages Freedom of Information requests and about our complaints procedure is also available on our website (www.leeds.ac.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review/complaints procedure provided by the University. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Kind regards

Chloe Wilkins
Freedom of Information Officer
Secretariat
University of Leeds