

5 September 2017



Gael Wright

Email: fyi-request-6100-b9693965@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Gael

Official Information Act (OIA) Request

You requested the following on 9 August 2017:

Thank you for your reply and providing some background about the audits done. New Zealand is an unusually small funding environment with limited numbers of researchers. In particular, we would like to analyse whether there are any biases in the panel decision making processes. For example, do past and present panel member applications get treated more generously than other proposals. This is a critically important in ensuring the entire process is fair to all applicants.

HRC holds all the data to test this question in an unbiased manner. For example, we propose to look at the panel scores and compare them to reviewer scores and look for discrepancies between the two aggregate scores (if they exist). If they do exist then it could be determined analytically what the cause of this might be...

Since the dataset held by the HRC is large this can be definitively. We request the data such that we can perform this analysis. Having all the data (all panels) allows more test sensitivity. We do not require the identities of reviewers. We don't need the identities of the applicants or panel members either but that would require HRC to perform significant work to blind the application scores. We are happy to do this ourselves to reduce your workload. We note that we can treat the data provided in confidence.

Further to our response on 11 August 2017, HRC has undertaken an initial scoping exercise with the understanding that you request all the panel and reviewer scores for a period of five years. Based on our scoping exercise which focuses on one grant type (projects) as this is the major investment, we are in a position to grant part of your requested information. For the reasons outlined in our previous correspondences, we are not in a position to provide you with our complete dataset, and may have to withhold some information in light of the legislations noted below and our need to:

- i) S9(2)(ba)(i) protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied

and

- ii) s9(2)(g)(i) maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organization or officers and employees of any department or organization in the course of their duty.

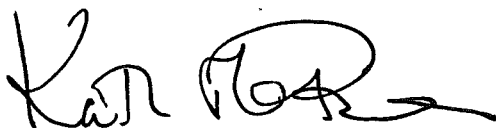
Given the amount of resource required to process your request, a charge must be made for addressing your enquiry (OIA s15). We estimate that the maximum charge will be \$8,436.00. Any unused component of this charge will be refunded to you. For details of how this charge has been calculated please refer to the enclosed estimate of costs.

Before we proceed further with your request, please confirm our understanding of your request and your agreement to the charge. We will start preparing the information for release without undue delay upon receipt of your 20% deposit (\$1,940.28). Attached is the invoice.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact info@hrc.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Professor Kathryn McPherson
Chief Executive

Encl

Estimate of costs

Chargeable activities required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and collation • Research (reading and reviewing to identify the information) • Editing (excising or redacting information to be withheld) • Coding to remove identifying details • Reasonably required peer review to ensure that these tasks have been carried out correctly
Estimate total time to complete chargeable activities	112 hours

	Quantity	Price	Totals
Labour	112 hours	\$38/half hour, with the first hour free	\$8,436.00
Total cost			\$8,436.00