



Innovate
UK

Chair
Science and Technology Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

14 January 2020

Re: Innovate UK Assessors and Monitoring Officers

Dear Chair,

Your predecessor wrote to me regarding Innovate UK assessors and monitoring officers, please find my reply below.

Firstly, Innovate UK requires its staff, its Council and those who act as agents for them – that includes members or steering boards, monitoring officers or assessors – to comply with the requirements of [The Seven Principles of Public Life – Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership](#)¹. The principles explicitly state that holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Regarding the specific roles of monitoring officers and assessors, these roles are a vital part of the assurance framework for Innovate UK grant-funded projects. Assessors are assigned to independently assess the applications to our competitions. This ensures that we have the right technical expertise in place to determine the merits of projects. Financial due diligence activities on applicants are separately undertaken by our internal team. Monitoring officers evaluate the progress of live projects.

We do not allow assessors or monitoring officers to perform these duties in respect of companies in which they have a financial or personal interest. We manage any potential conflicts of interest by requiring our assessors and monitoring officers to declare any interests that could be (or be perceived as) a conflict in their work for us. More detail on what UKRI defines as a conflict of interest is available [here](#)². We review our processes in this area on a continuous basis.

Being a monitoring officer, assessor or steering board member for Innovate UK, or indeed being a former employee, does not necessarily preclude that person from being associated with a company applying for or receiving funds from Innovate UK. Indeed, those who Innovate UK appoint to advisory or consultative roles are often from an innovation background. As such, some of them may have worked for organisations in receipt of Innovate UK funding. The important point is that they would not be allowed to undertake their assessment or monitoring duties on those companies if they were applying for or receiving grants. Our funding process is transparent, fair and externally verified.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>

² <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/governance-and-structure/conflicts-of-interest/>



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I hope this will answer your questions sufficiently but please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like any further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louisa Simons', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Louisa Simons
Chief Operating Officer
Innovate UK
UK Research and Innovation