



Ermine Amies
request-725161-d00b8501@whatdotheyknow.com

7 April 2021

Dear Ms Amies

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST DB 2146

Thank you for your email sent to the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland which we received on 8 February 2021.

You asked for the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

- 1. Any application you made in 2019 or 2020 to be a “Stonewall Diversity Champion” or to be included on Stonewall’s “Workplace Equality Index,” including any attachments or appendices to those applications. Please redact personal details if necessary.*
- 2. Any feedback you received in 2019 or 2020 from Stonewall in relation to either application or programme.*
- 3. Any other communication you have received from Stonewall in 2019 or 2020 unless privileged or otherwise exempt from disclosure (but if you claim privilege or exemption in relation to any material, please say in broad terms what the material is and the basis on which you claim to be entitled to withhold it).*

4. *Full details of any equality impact assessment you carried out connected with any of these applications (including any equality impact assessment carried out prior to an earlier application of the same kind, if no further assessment was done).*
5. *Details of the total amount of money you paid to Stonewall (i) in 2019; (ii) in 2020, whether or not as payment for goods or services.*
6. *Whether you intend to continue your membership of any Stonewall scheme in the future, and if so which.*

I can confirm that the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland (OSSS) does hold some information falling within the terms of your request and we are able to provide you with some of this information below.

1. ***Any application you made in 2019 or 2020 to be a "Stonewall Diversity Champion" or to be included on Stonewall's "Workplace Equality Index," including any attachments or appendices to those applications. Please redact personal details if necessary.***

Information not held.

2. ***Any feedback you received in 2019 or 2020 from Stonewall in relation to either application or programme.***
3. ***Any other communication you have received from Stonewall in 2019 or 2020 unless privileged or otherwise exempt from disclosure (but if you claim privilege or exemption in relation to any material, please say in broad terms what the material is and the basis on which you claim to be entitled to withhold it).***

With regards to parts 2 and 3 of your request, we can confirm that some information is held by OSSS. However some of this information is exempt under section 43(2) of the FOI Act as disclosing it would likely cause harm to the commercial interests of a third party.

Information falling within this exemption must still be provided however unless it is not in the public interest to do so.

There will always be some general public interest in the disclosure of information to promote transparency and accountability of public authorities. The OSSS recognises that this public interest includes allowing for increased understanding of the Office's processes and policies concerning LGBTQ+ diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

However, the disclosure of this information may lead to a detrimental impact on the commercial activities and revenue of Stonewall, as other public bodies may be less willing to engage in its services if detailed submission and feedback information were shown to be subject to disclosure.

As such, the public interest is not served by public bodies becoming less willing to engage in programmes and services which assist in promoting LGBTQ+ diversity and inclusivity, which is a likely consequence if OSSS favours disclosure of the information which falls in scope of your request.

We have therefore decided that, on balance, it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this time.

4. Full details of any equality impact assessment you carried out connected with any of these applications (including any equality impact assessment carried out prior to an earlier application of the same kind, if no further assessment was done).

Information not held.

5. Details of the total amount of money you paid to Stonewall (i) in 2019; (ii) in 2020, whether or not as payment for goods or services.

(i) £3000

(ii) £3000

6. Whether you intend to continue your membership of any Stonewall scheme in the future, and if so which.

Information not held.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made in relation to your request you may ask for an internal review. A request for an internal review should be addressed to:

FOI Officer
Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland
Queen Elizabeth House
EDINBURGH
EH8 8FT

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. The contact details are:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
CHESHIRE
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely

FOI Officer
Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland