



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

Freedom of Information Team
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Nicholas Davies
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FOI2022/10288
30 August 2022

Dear Nicholas Davies,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 July, in which you made the following request for information:

1. Confirm whether your organisation applied to be part of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in A) 2018 (for 2019), B) 2019 (for 2020) or C) 2021 (for 2022) (NB the index was suspended in 2020/21 because of Covid)

2. Give details of the total amount of money you paid to Stonewall in 2021 whether or not as payment for goods or services.

3. State whether you intend to continue your membership of any Stonewall scheme in the future, and if so which.

If the answer to any part of 1 is yes please supply:

4. Any application you made in 2021 to be included on Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index, including any attachments or appendices to those applications. Please redact personal details if necessary.

5. Any feedback you received in 2018/19 or 2019/20 or 2021/22 from Stonewall in relation to either application or programme. This must include the priorities or objectives written by your organisation's representative at the end of the feedback form (under the heading 'Priorities for the year ahead' in 2019; 'Your priorities' in 2020).

We have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). I can confirm that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) does have some information within scope of your request.

1. A) 2018 (for 2019): Yes, DCMS did apply.
B) 2019 (for 2020): Yes, DCMS did apply.
C) 2021 (for 2022): No, DCMS did not apply.
2. The total spent amount spent on Stonewall was £3,000 (including VAT) which was for Stonewall Diversity Champions Membership from October 2021-22. Please note that VAT was at 20% costing £500.00.
3. DCMS is currently considering whether to renew membership of the Diversity Champions Scheme in October this year.



In response to the fourth and fifth parts of the question relating to Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index and general communications with Stonewall, we consider the information to be exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) (commercial interests) of the Act. Section 43 applies to information where '*...its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it)*'. When this exemption applies, we have to consider whether the public interest in favour of maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in favour of releasing the information. The factors we took into account in carrying out the public interest test in relation to section 43 of the Act are set out below.

Factors in favour of disclosure:

- There is a general public interest in government transparency, which can in turn increase public trust. There is also a particular public interest in understanding departmental progress concerning LGBTQ+ inclusivity.

Factors for withholding disclosure:

- We considered that there may be a detrimental impact on the commercial 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.
- It may weaken the competitive position of either government departments and/or Stonewall by disclosing sensitive information which would likely be used by competitors to gain a competitive advantage.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Complaints and comments

As is customary in our replies, I should explain that if you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our response to your request for information, and/or wish to appeal against information being withheld from you, please send full details within two calendar months of the date of this response to: foi@dcms.gov.uk. You have the right to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. Please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning an investigation.