Freedom of Information Request FOI1515/02/08

I refer to your Freedom of Information request, received by the University on 8th February and apologise for the delay in responding.

Your Request

1. Does your institution have a policy on the receipt of research funding from the tobacco, alcohol or gambling industries? If so, please send us the policy or direct us to a web resource

2. Has the ethics of accepting funds from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources ever been formally discussed by your institution’s Senate or Board or a body of similar status? If so, when was the most recent formal discussion about the ethics of accepting research funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources?

3. Would it be correct to say that funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources is handled in the same way as other research funding?

4. Has your institution received funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources in 2014 and 2015? If so, please state the project titles or areas of research funded and the amount of funding received per project

5. Has your institution signed any contracts with tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry bodies containing non-disclosure clauses? (i.e. clauses that prohibit release of information about the funding arrangement)

6. Does your institution anticipate modifying its current position on funding from the tobacco, alcohol or gambling industries in the next 12 months? If yes, please describe how it might change

University’s Response

Further to Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “Act”) we confirm that the information requested is partially held by the University of Sunderland (the “University”).

1. Does your institution have a policy on the receipt of research funding from the tobacco, alcohol or gambling industries? If so, please send us the policy or direct us to a web resource

The University does not currently maintain a specific policy in relation to the receipt of research funding from the tobacco, alcohol or gambling industries however all research activity is governed by a Code of Practice for Research. The Code of Practice can be found at http://www.sunderland.ac.uk/images/research/codeofpractice/Research%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf.
2. Has the ethics of accepting funds from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources ever been formally discussed by your institution’s Senate or Board or a body of similar status? If so, when was the most recent formal discussion about the ethics of accepting research funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources?

The University has searched its records and has been unable to find any information with regards to a formal discussion taking place with regards to accepting funds from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry. Therefore the University has determined that this information is not held.

3. Would it be correct to say that funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources is handled in the same way as other research funding?

The reasonableness of research income is considered by the University, including where appropriate through the research ethics committee.

4. Has your institution received funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources in 2014 and 2015? If so, please state the project titles or areas of research funded and the amount of funding received per project

The University of Sunderland has not received any funding from tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry sources in 2014 and 2015.

5. Has your institution signed any contracts with tobacco, alcohol or gambling industry bodies containing non-disclosure clauses? (i.e. clauses that prohibit release of information about the funding arrangement)

N/A

6. Does your institution anticipate modifying its current position on funding from the tobacco, alcohol or gambling industries in the next 12 months? If yes, please describe how it might change

The University is currently undertaking a review of its Research Ethics and Governance arrangements. The review will consider the process for establishing institutional policy on the acceptance of private sector research funding.

Internal Review Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request then you have a right under Section 50 of the Act to request an internal review. All such requests must sent to us within 8 weeks and must clearly state your reference number and your reason for your request for an internal review. We will respond to your request for an internal review within 20 working days of receipt.

Your request for an internal review should be sent to:-
Legal, Governance and Business Assurance,
University of Sunderland,
4th Floor Edinburgh Building,
City Campus,
Or you can email your request to sunfoi@sunderland.ac.uk, quoting your FOI reference number.

Information Commissioners Office

Should you remain dissatisfied with the final outcome of the internal review then you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner (the “ICO”) for an independent review. The ICO is the Government’s Independent Body responsible for overseeing the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and The Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Please note the ICO will only review cases that have exhausted the University’s internal review procedure. All correspondence to the ICO must quote the University’s reference number and your reasons for your appeal. The ICO’s contact details are as follows:-

The Information Commissioners Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

More information can be found at the ICO’s website at http://www.ico.org.uk

If you have any further enquiries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us on 0191 515 2040, or by emailing sunfoi@sunderland.ac.uk.

Kind Regards

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