

UKRI Modern Slavery Statement 2025–2026

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Overview of UKRI – structure, business and supply chains

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) both funds and conducts research and innovation. It brings together the nine councils. It is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). UKRI's mission is to advance knowledge, improve lives and drive growth.

UKRI's operations are primarily based in UK offices, scientific units, institutes and facilities. UKRI also has some overseas offices and funds a variety of international research through universities, businesses, and other research organisations. UKRI's supply chains reflect the diversity of its business and are managed through a number of systems and controls.

UKRI is committed to eradicating modern slavery and human trafficking in all forms within its own operations and supply chain and within the organisations it funds. By reporting through this statement UKRI demonstrates its commitment to ethical practices, transparency, accountability, and encouraging a broader culture of responsibility.

UKRI policies and modern slavery

UKRI has a suite of policies which contribute towards mitigating the risk of modern slavery occurring in its operations or supply chain and which encourage effective reporting.

Relevant policies include UKRI's Code of Conduct; Managing Conduct and Performance Policy; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy; and the UKRI Safeguarding Policy.

There are provisions regarding compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements, including those relating to the prevention of modern slavery, in standard terms and conditions used by UKRI for both suppliers (who supply goods and services to UKRI via contracts valued

over a particular threshold) and for the grants it funds (to, for example, other research organisations).

Those who work for and with UKRI are encouraged to speak up and report concerns of modern slavery through UKRI's [Complaints process](#) or [Whistleblowing process](#), both of which can be found on the UKRI website.

The Raising Concerns Project commenced in 2025. The Project aims to make it easier for individuals to raise concerns to UKRI, to make the triage and processing of concerns more efficient and consistent, and to enable effective outcomes for those involved in concerns processes. A new digital reporting platform launched in Summer 2026. The platform enables both UKRI staff and external stakeholders to raise a range of concerns (including any concerns relating to modern slavery) via a single reporting portal.

Due diligence processes

The primary modern slavery risk areas for UKRI are supply chain, employees and recruitment, and the organisations UKRI funds. A number of processes and policies support the performance of due diligence in these areas. For example, regular audits, the use of risk registers and monitoring by relevant functional departments. If any remedial action is required this is reported and progressed by the relevant function.

Supply Chain

UKRI performs due diligence on organisations in its supply chain. Many of UKRI's services are procured through UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS). UK SBS is classed as a public body and produces its own [UKSBS Modern Slavery Statement](#).

UKRI procures goods and services in line with the legal framework which governs public procurement and uses public sector framework agreements, such as Government Commercial Agency frameworks, in compliance with [Procurement Policy Note PPN009](#) ('Tackling modern slavery in Government supply chains').

First published in 2024, UKRI maintains a Responsible Procurement Charter which sets out how UKRI ensures the goods, services and works it procures are responsibly sourced. The Responsible Procurement Charter applies to all values of procurement. Where a contract or supplier is deemed to be an elevated risk of modern slavery, UKRI require suppliers to complete the Cabinet Office's Modern Slavery Assessment Tool as an additional monitoring mechanism.

Employees and recruitment

UKRI has an established process for recruiting employees which includes pre-employment checks such as UK 'right-to-work' checks and security screening. Similar processes are in place for contractors. UKRI works with several trusted agencies and recruiters, such as those included in Government frameworks, who have been vetted and approved by the Government Commercial Agency.

Funding

UKRI funds organisations which take part in higher-risk areas identified in PPN009 such as mining, manufacture, agriculture, construction and electronics. Work funded by UKRI includes projects aiming to drive positive change in sectors such as these.

UKRI maintains a programme of funding assurance to ensure the institutions it funds are complying with its Terms and Conditions. UKRI, on a sample basis, monitors publication of a Modern Slavery Statement by the organisations in receipt of competitively awarded funds who, like UKRI, are required to publish one.

Risk assessment and management

UKRI's risk management processes for modern slavery comply with Government guidance on good practice set out in the Orange Book. Local areas, supported by a central Risk and Assurance Team, manage individual modern slavery risks and assess the effectiveness of controls.

UKRI committees, including the Board, Executive Committee, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Governance, Risk and Assurance Review Committee, oversee risk within UKRI. The level of assurance of UKRI's modern slavery risk in commercial activity forms part of UKRI's Integrated Governance Risk and Assurance Framework which is assessed and reported on to UKRI committees each year.

Training on modern slavery and human trafficking

UKRI's modern slavery training module forms part of the UKRI employee 'Universal Learning' programme and completion rates are monitored. UKRI staff also have the opportunity to undertake additional courses on modern slavery via UKRI's e-Learning platform.

Where relevant, modern slavery is also addressed in targeted role-based training. For example, UKRI's Responsible Procurement Charter featured as part of a series of Bite Size training sessions for the UKRI Commercial Team. Safeguarding training, under revision following a recent review of UKRI's Safeguarding Policy, will also comment on aspects of modern slavery.

Key performance indicators

UKRI's Modern Slavery Working Group (MSWG) was established in 2024 to monitor performance of UKRI's controls on Modern Slavery. The MSWG's objectives include monitoring performance against KPI's for procurement, recruitment and learning and development.

In 2025-2026 there were no complaints or concerns received related to modern slavery.

Progress update

During 2025-2026, UKRI:

- continued to promote modern slavery e-Learning training
- reviewed and updated its Responsible Procurement Charter for 2025-2026



- added guidance referring to the Government's Anti-Slavery Risk Tiering Tool to UKRI's Responsible Procurement Impact Assessment
- monitored recruitment and commercial activity for modern slavery indicators
- continued to monitor procurement activities delivered through our third-party provider, UK SBS; in 2025-2026 UK SBS reported on its controls in relation to modern slavery as part of regular assurance updates it provides to UKRI
- commenced a review project which will include assessment of UKRI's right-to-work processes in relation to contractors
- continued to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of controls designed to mitigate modern slavery and human trafficking risks
- contributed to the UK government MSS registry by adding UKRI's Modern Slavery Statement

Next steps

During 2026-2027 UKRI will respond to guidance and changes in legislation on modern slavery and human trafficking. In addition, UKRI will undertake the following activities to be reported in future modern slavery and human trafficking statements:

- review and respond where appropriate to recommendations made following the review of UKRI's contractor right-to-work processes
- review UKRI's training offering on modern slavery and the strategies that are in place to drive course completion rates
- publish a reviewed and updated 2026-2027 Responsible Procurement Charter
- launch the reporting portal through which both UKRI staff and external stakeholders will be able to raise a range of concerns, including any which may relate to modern slavery
- finalise an updated UKRI Safeguarding Policy
- review the terms of reference for the MSWG to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose
- develop a focussed set of headline KPIs which capture processes in place to identify and respond to modern slavery risks
- continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of controls designed to mitigate modern slavery and human trafficking risks
- contribute to the UK government MSS registry by adding UKRI's Modern Slavery Statement

This statement is made pursuant to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes UKRI's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement of the financial year ending 31 March 2026.



Professor Ian Chapman

Chief Executive, UK Research and Innovation
21st September 2026

