

Reference: 02200796

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

16 June 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Civil Society Partners, regarding the Data and Intelligence Team.

We received this request on 16 May 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

In its document "Making Life Safer Online: Our Priorities for the Year Ahead" (published May 2026), Ofcom states that its new Data and Intelligence team marshals "intelligence supplied by our partners in civil society or law enforcement." This request concerns the civil society element of that statement.

Part 1 - Identity of civil society partners

Please provide all information held by Ofcom that identifies the organisations or individuals that Ofcom designates, treats, or has treated as "partners in civil society" for the purposes of the Data and Intelligence team, including:

any list or register of civil society partner organisations;

(b) any correspondence in which an organisation's status as a civil society partner was established, confirmed, or communicated;

(c) the names of all organisations or individuals that have supplied intelligence to Ofcom in connection with its compliance programme concerning illegal hate and terrorist content on regulated services, launched in December 2025.

Part 2 - Basis and terms of partnership

Please provide all information held by Ofcom that describes or governs the basis on which civil society organisations are recognised as partners, including:

(a) any criteria or process by which Ofcom selects, appoints, invites, or recognises civil society organisations as partners;

(b) any formal agreement, memorandum of understanding, data-sharing agreement, contract, or other legal instrument governing Ofcom's relationship with any civil society partner;

(c) any internal governance document, policy, or guidance describing the nature, scope, terms, or limits of civil society partnerships, including any description of how intelligence received from civil society partners is assessed, weighted, or verified before use in Ofcom's compliance or enforcement work.

I note that Ofcom has already placed the existence of these partnerships in the public domain in the document referenced above. I am not requesting the content of any intelligence supplied by civil society partners; I am requesting information about the identity of those partners and the formal or informal basis on which the relationships are structured.

Our response

We have reviewed your request. We think that the request is based on a misunderstanding of the relevant sentence from our May 2026 publication. In referring to “partners in civil society” the document was not suggesting that there exists a defined class of such entities for Ofcom’s purposes, the phrase was used in a looser fashion to refer in general to the very broad range of bodies that we engage with that are part of civil society. We apologise for the misunderstanding caused.

We regularly publish information on our website concerning our activities under the Online Safety Act, including in relation to data and intelligence. Additionally, you may find the following published information of interest:

[Data analytics and data sharing under the Online Safety Act 2023](#)

[Ofcom's Illegal Hate and Terror Statement](#)

[Organisations we work with](#)

Additionally, we publish all non-confidential stakeholder responses to our consultations, which are available here: [Consultations and statements](#)

Given the above, the answer to Parts 1 and 2 of your request is that we do not hold such information as there is no designation process (or equivalent).

To the extent that sub-section (c) of Part 1 is limited to a defined set of “civil society partners” our response is also that this information is not held. If sub-section (c) is intended to be self-standing then we consider that this information is exempt under section 12 of the FOI Act. Section 12 of the FOI Act provides that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the “appropriate limit”. The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, and is, for Ofcom, £450, which is equivalent to 18-hours. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, identifying, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour. We estimate that conducting a search to identify all such names would take in excess of 30 hours.

You may wish to consider submitting a narrower, more focused request, for example, correspondence with a particular stakeholder. We would then consider this under the FOI Act.

However, should you decide to make a further request for information, please note that the aforementioned appropriate limit and/or other exemptions may apply.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).