



## 2016 New Horizons Research Project Scheme

### Frequent Asked Questions (FAQs)

Version 6 [25/10/16]

Please note that the deadline for receipt of FAQs is **16:00 (GMT) Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016**. FAQs must be submitted by Research Officers, no later than this date to [projects@research.ie](mailto:projects@research.ie)

Similar questions have been grouped below in the following themes:

1. Eligibility;
2. Eligible Funding;
3. Application Form;
4. Applying to the Scheme

#### 1. ELIGIBILITY

I do not currently hold a contract for the duration of the proposed project. Is it possible for institutions to offer conditional contracts covering the proposed project period (in other words, contracts that would be recognised for application purposes but that would only come into effect should the application be deemed successful)?

As per the Terms and Conditions the applicants must hold a contract of sufficient duration to carry out the proposed research from the project start date (12<sup>th</sup> December 2016) until the project end.

Do I have to submit an Expression of Interest (deadline 4pm, Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016) in order to apply to the programme?

Yes, failure to submit an Expressions of Interest form by the stated deadline will render your application automatically ineligible. The purpose of the Expressions of Interest form is to assist the Council in sourcing suitable reviewers in a timely manner.

I am an epidemiologist and am wondering if I am considered an AHSS researcher? Can you please let me know as none of the disciplines on the AHSS and STEM list include epidemiology? To be clear I am an epidemiologist but NOT a clinician. We are part of the society 'Social Science in Medicine'

Does Psychiatry qualify as an AHSS discipline for the purposes of this application?

The list of disciplines are indicative. It is a matter for researchers to evidence their capability to lead as an AHSS researcher, even if the qualification of the intending lead applicant is science based.

Can General Practice/Medicine be considered a STEM discipline for the New Horizons IDR grant?

The list of disciplines are indicative. It is a matter for researchers to evidence their capability as a STEM researcher. Please note that both the STEM and AHSS researchers must hold PhD and be employed by a HEI or RPO.

Many researchers working in the area of rural economics would hold qualifications and/or research experience in the area of economics and rural development. From the AHSS disciplines (Annex A) many of the listed keyword research disciplines would seem relevant



to some – for example Development, Economic Growth, Microeconomics, Behavioural Economics Asset Prices, Research and Development, Income Distribution and Poverty, International Trade.

Would it be possible to clarify what criteria will be used to define a researcher as an AHSS researcher? Subject to clarifying with individual researchers some would hold an initial BSc or Agricultural Science degree, followed by PhD on specific topic, whilst others would have an initial economics related degree.

Each applicant needs to evidence his/her expertise for leading as an AHSS applicant on the basis of his/her track record which can include PhD discipline, but is not limited to this. For someone with a STEM degree applying as an AHSS applicant, it must be very clear from the applicants track record that they have established themselves as a strong AHSS researcher

Under the scheme can funding be allocated to a co-applicant not in Ireland?

No. Both the AHSS and STEM researcher must hold a contract of sufficient duration with an eligible HEI or a RPO as defined in section 1.6 and 1.11 of the Terms and Conditions. A list of eligible institutions can be found at [www.research.ie](http://www.research.ie). All applications may include provision for team membership of researchers from institutions and organisations that fall outside the eligible institutions, including both national and international participation. However, only collaboration costs (not personnel costs) may be allocated to such institutions/organisations and the added value of such costs must be strongly demonstrated

I'm a Visiting Research Fellow but I don't have a contract

I am experienced researcher with a good funding track record in many schemes both nationally and internationally, am I eligible to apply for New Horizons funding without a PhD?

As per the terms and conditions, a key eligibility criterion for New Horizons, both AHSS Lead P.I. and STEM Co. P.I. must have been awarded their doctoral degrees no later than 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014.

I am an academic mentor on a postdoctoral award. My understanding is that the postdoctoral fellow is the award holder and therefore the recipient of the IRC funding. Can you confirm that I (the academic mentor) am not considered to be in receipt of IRC funding in this case?

Yes, the academic mentor is eligible to apply for both New Horizons and Research for Policy & Society in this instance.

I am a full Professor without a PhD, having been conferred with said title on the basis of equivalent-level experience and publications. Am I eligible to apply for the New Horizons Interdisciplinary Strand?

Applicants without a PhD who hold the title of full Professor are deemed eligible to apply for New Horizons IDR awards. The Professorship will have been awarded no later than 1st November 2014. The date on which the title was awarded/conferred should be included on the online template where date of PhD award is requested.

Will an applicant with an Ed Doc (which is a doctoral degree) be considered as eligible, with the Ed Doc considered as being equivalent to a PhD?

As an Ed Doc is considered to be equivalent to a PhD, an applicant with an Ed Doc is eligible to apply to this scheme. Applicants must meet all eligibility criteria as set out in the Terms and Conditions with the limits in place regarding time since graduation for a PhD applying to the Ed Doc.

Does an applicant with an MD meet the requirement for a PhD?



Can an applicant with multiple qualifications such as MB BCh, PG Master's in medical science and FRCPsych, and who holds a contract with a research performing organisation be considered to have met the requirement for a PhD?

For the purposes of this scheme, applicants with the qualifications set out above, but without a PhD are not eligible. In future iterations of this programme, the Council will review the issue of PhD equivalence.

The terms and conditions state that both AHSS Lead PI and STEM Co-PI must not be recipients of Irish Research Council Research Development Initiative, Collaborative Research Project or Research Project Grant funding in 2014 or 2015 but what if an applicant was funded through the Research Project Grant 2013 call but it was not administered until 2014 or they were funded from the reserve list, would they be eligible to apply for New Horizons 2016?

Yes, they would still be eligible to apply for New Horizons 2016.

Can a STEM researcher submit an application for New Horizons?

No, the application must be submitted by AHSS researcher who will collaborate with a STEM Co-PI

**\*\*NEW\*\*** Are we eligible to apply for the programme if the STEM Co P.I. completed and submitted the Expression of Interest form, not the Lead P.I.?

Yes, you are still eligible to apply. However, please note as per the terms and conditions, the application should be submitted by an AHSS Lead P.I.

**\*\*NEW\*\*** Q: The T&C for this scheme state that both the AHSS Lead PI and STEM Co-PI must not be recipients of Irish Research Council Research Development Initiative, Collaborative Research Project or Research Project Grant funding in 2014 or 2015.

Can you confirm if funding received by a STEM Co-PI under the 2015 New Horizons scheme counts as 'research project grant funding' The individual concerned is considering acting as a STEM Co-PI again under this scheme and is wondering whether they are eligible.

If a STEM Co-PI received funding under the 2015 New Horizons scheme, this counts as 'research project grant funding' and they are not eligible to apply to the 2016 call as per the Terms and Conditions.

**\*\*NEW\*\*** The T&C for the scheme state that researchers are not eligible if they were recipients of a IRC Research Projects grant in 2014 or 2015. Does this refer to the date of the award start only or to actually being in receipt of funding? I have a researcher who was awarded in 2013 and in receipt of the award through to 2015. Many thanks.

As noted above, applicants who received their funding in 2013 and held the award in 2014 and 2015 are eligible to apply to the 2016 New Horizons call.

## 2. ELIGIBLE FUNDING



Eligible staffing rates – I have to use the IRC staff rates for academic replacements and my institution's researcher salary scale for research assistants and postdoctoral researchers. Is this correct?

Yes. For the 2016 call, there are some changes to the eligible staffing rates:

**For academic replacements (buy-out):** costs may include staff-replacement costs which facilitate participation in the project, but these must be clearly justified. All staff replacements ('buy-out' costs) must be accounted for according to approved Irish Research Council staff rates (see Section C of Terms and Conditions) for academic replacements

**For research assistants and postdoctoral researchers:** HEIs can use their own institutional researcher salary scale for research assistants and postdoctoral researchers. These costs must be clearly justified in the application form. The salary requested must include provisions for PRSI 10.75% & Employer Pension Contribution 20%. As part of the award acceptance process, the research office must confirm that the requested salary is in line with the institutional researcher salary scale and provide documentary evidence

My query relates to the provision for academic replacements. Due to the fact that consultancy costs are not allowed, we would like to make a provision for an internal collaborator on the project. Is it allowable to have provision for 1 x Principal Investigator and 1 x Secondary Investigator? If so, what rate should be used for the Secondary Investigator?

As per the Terms and Conditions, collaboration costs are applicable to New Horizons IDR Grants.

Can an applicant who is on a fractional (0.75) contract of 'sufficient duration with an HEI... to carry out the proposed research from the project start date (12<sup>th</sup> December 2016) until project end' apply as a PI to the New Horizons IDR Grant Scheme? If so can the PI include their fractional (0.25) costs as research staff on the project?

Part-time staff may apply to the New Horizons and Research for Policy & Society Calls. In both cases the duration of the staff member's contract must cover the period of the proposed research. All applicants must ensure in advance of the application that his/her employment contract allows for a research grant to be held, and in applying for the call applicants are confirming same. Similarly, the research office in endorsing an application is confirming that should the applicant be successful, the contractual arrangements and/or institutional policy will enable a successful applicant to take up the award. It should be noted that the same eligibility criteria apply to part-time staff regarding personnel costs as full-time staff. In particular, applicants who are part-time should note that project costs cannot be sought to 'top-up' the applicant's existing contract.

A PI to the New Horizons IDR scheme wishes to carry out fieldwork outside Ireland/beyond Europe as a central part of a project proposal. Can the PI include costs of local research assistance as part of the eligible personnel costs? If so does the IRC research assistance salary rate apply in this instance?

No. All funded research staff are required to be based in the eligible Irish HEI or RPO. However, this does not preclude such funded staff from travelling for fieldwork, networking.

Are books an eligible expense? If so under which category heading?

Yes, provided there is a strong rationale and an account of why the books in question are required and might not be available to an applicant from any other source, such as an institutional library. In this instance books may be included as consumables.



Are costs related to publications considered eligible costs (e.g. under dissemination)?
Yes, publications are considered eligible costs under dissemination. As per the Terms and Conditions details of costs proposed and channels to be used should be detailed.
When requesting the salary of a postdoctoral researcher, can the postdoc be named/known, or is public recruitment a requirement?
Public recruitment is required for any postdoctoral research positions requested.
A Research Institute, interested in applying for a New Horizons IDR award must secure funding from external sources to finance their salary. Can the Research Institute include the cost of Co-PI to the level of buyout associated with Academics (€20,443+PRSI+Pension)?
As per the terms and conditions, if a Co-PI meets the key eligibility criterion of already having a contract to cover the proposed duration of the project, they can apply for teaching buyout funding up to the maximum as stipulated in the terms and conditions. The teaching buyout funding is provided to free up some of the existing staff member's time to engage in the proposed research.
What costs would you expect to see under travel costs versus dissemination costs? The question occurs primarily in relation to where there is an overlap (i.e. dissemination activities that require travel e.g. presentation at conferences).
The cost of travel (flights and accommodation) would come under travel costs while the cost of conference registration would come under dissemination costs. As per the Terms and Conditions details of proposed costs should be detailed and strongly justified.
I am STEM researcher who has struck up a collaboration with an AHSS researcher. As part of our proposed project we will require access to biological samples retained as part of a large-scale, nationally representative, longitudinal study that is being carried out. This will require a budget of approx. €10,000 (conservatively) for access to the samples (approx. 600 of selected candidates). In the Terms and Conditions, only €1,000 is set aside for consumables, which could with help cover the analysis in my laboratory, but won't grant access to the important samples we need. Is there any leeway in the proposal, e.g. under consultancy and collaboration funding (combined €15,000), that could be used for accessing a biobank facility?
The proposed expenses should be added to the budget as the applicant sees fit, keeping in mind that, as per the terms and conditions, the applications will be evaluated on the allocation of resources and demonstrated value for money including the description of costs, the justification for these costs and a plan to ensure the best use of resources. These costs could feasibly be justified as collaboration or equipment (facilities) costs as the researcher deems necessary for the proposed research.
As part of my application I am hoping to develop an app – is it possible to include costs for this work? If so under which budget category should I include it.
This can be included in Collaboration costs, as long as it is justified in terms of the overall objectives of the proposed research.
We need to do some micro analysis as part of our project – is it possible to include these costs? If so under which budget category should I include it.
As part of collaboration costs or equipment. It is a matter for the applicant to decide upon the specifics of the proposed activities and what is actually required and justifiable in terms of the overall objectives of the proposed research.
Can I include funding for a PhD student in my New Horizons 2016 application?
No, there is no provision for funding a PhD student under the scheme.
<b>**NEW**</b> Per page 5 of the Terms and Conditions document, The min-max personnel costs for each of the two disciplinary categories should be Min 30% and Max 70% for



AHSS and STEM respectively. The PI is looking to recruit 1 post doc researcher for the period of 2 years. We are just wondering what should we do to satisfy the conditions above? That is, should we allocate the % of the post doc time between the AHSS PI and the Co – PI in-line with above 30% - 70%? Or should AHSS PI and STEM PI each hire a post doc and allocate the % in-line with the % requirement condition? Does this min-max cost % applicable to PI's time devoted to the project as well?

The min-max personnel costs only applies to the PI's (both AHSS Lead PI and STEM Co-PI) time on the project. The lead applicant must be in a position to devote adequate time to the management and realisation of the project. The AHSS lead PI and STEM Co-PI are also advised that, by submitting applications in their own names, they personally undertake to develop the project, with due attention and viable commitments of time and without sub-contracting the project to another party or parties.

The min-max personnel costs does not apply to the postdoctoral research fellows or research assistants.

### 3. APPLICATION FORM

We note that for interdisciplinary projects, staff costs must be broken out into STEM and AHSS. How should this be done for an interdisciplinary role? For example, a postdoc who has been hired solely to work on this project as an ICT person – they may fall into STEM and AHSS so how should the costs be broken out accordingly on the form?

In the case of an interdisciplinary role, proposed staff should be classed based on their primary role in the project, whether that be supporting the AHSS or STEM aspect of the research. For example in scenario given in the question the ICT person would fall into the STEM category and the costs should be broken down accordingly.

The 'description of topic' section currently has no subheading where the background information on the research topic is provided or a 'state of the art' of the relevant literature. Would I be correct in assuming this should be included prior to outlining the research methodology/research questions?

The headings and subheading provided represent a guide to what should be included in an application and do not prevent the inclusion of other headings/subheadings which the applicant may feel strengthens their application.

I am a little unclear as to the distinction between methodology and research strategy as these terms are often used interchangeably. Would you be able to clarify please?

Methodology is the theoretical framework (or frameworks) and it (they) will be applied to address the research question at hand. The research strategy on the other hand is the timetable or project plan-the practical approach as opposed to the theoretical approach.

Can you explain the difference between the research strategy to be addressed in the project description section of the application (you defined this previously as 'the timetable or project plan-the practical approach as opposed to the theoretical approach') and the Research Schedule?

The research strategy is a broad description of the project plan and should include a description of the practical work to be performed as part of the proposed work. The research schedule should provide a detailed guide as to how you will complete the work



described in the research strategy within the time specified, a Gantt chart can be used to illustrate the research schedule.

The detailed project description is 'strictly 12 pages max'. Are there any other stipulations around this? E.g. font size/line spacing?

There are no stipulations regarding font size/line spacing. However, it is to the benefit of the applicant that the project description is well presented and easily readable. Line spacing of at least 1.5 and font size of 11 is recommended along with a clearly legible font type.

When attaching the project description pdf, do I attach a separate document for footnotes/references?

No, the project description should contain all the pertinent information you wish to include about the project, including any footnotes/references you wish to include. The project description is strictly limited to a maximum of 12 pages.

Who should submit an expression of interest form, just the AHSS lead PI or can the STEM co PI submit an expression of interest form?

Only the AHSS lead PI should submit an expression of interest form.

I submitted an expression of interest form by the deadline, can I now submit an additional form for a second, related proposal?

No, it is not possible to submit an additional expression of interest form now, as the deadline has passed.

I don't see a place to input the name of the STEM partner on the indicative application form, where do I input this information?

There are some discrepancies between the indicative application form and the actual online application form that applicants will complete. In this instance, the STEM partner's details are input on page 1 of the online application form but are not included on the indicative application form. The IRC apologises for any confusion caused by these discrepancies.

**\*\*NEW\*\*** Could you clarify how long the 'Detailed Project Description section' of the application form should be? The indicative application form states it should be 10 pages long but SMART simple references 12 pages

There are some discrepancies between the indicative application form and the actual online application form that applicants will complete. In this instance, the project proposal should be 12 pages maximum. The IRC apologises for any confusion caused by these discrepancies.

## 4. APPLYING TO THE SCHEME

Is it possible for the PI to spend a period of time (max 3 months) abroad for research purposes?

Travel and networking costs may be justified with regard to the proposed research. The Council reserves the right to reduce funding to a successful proposal, if the International Assessment Panel deems that an extended period of research abroad is unwarranted.

Does the request for the list of projects refer to those of the PI or both the PI and Co-PI?

As stated in the indicative application form (word version) and in the actual template, the request for projects is for the Principal Investigator (Lead).



Where the PI and Co-PI are located in different institutions, is the lead PI's institution considered the "Host Organisation" and should the response to the project description refer to alignment with both institutions (strategy/teaching etc.) and just the Host Organisation? Referring to both will have a significant impact on the word count compared to applications from a single institution.

Only the Lead.

Where PI's and Co-PI's are based in different institutions should ethical approval be obtained from both or just the institution of the lead PI?

Ethical approval must be sought from the institution where the work will be carried out. For example, if the work requiring ethical approval is exclusively carried out in Institution A then ethical approval is only required from Institution A. However, if work is carried out between Institution A and B then ethical approval must be sought from both.

Is any approval or endorsement required from the institute of a Co-PI?

It is a matter for the Lead P.I. and host institution to satisfy him/her and itself that the Co. P.I. meets the eligibility criteria. If upon conditional award offer, it is apparent that the Co. P.I. does not, the award offer may be withdrawn.

My query relates to the expertise of the panel of international assessors- will they be experts in our field or could they be from outside our discipline but still within the core area of, for example, 'Individuals, institutions, etc.'

Composition of the International Assessment Board normally comprises at least one proposal specific experienced expert along with at least a general discipline expert who is also experienced in proposal evaluation.