COALESCE Research Fund 2019:
Frequent Asked Questions (FAQs)

The deadline for receipt of FAQs is **1 August 2019.** FAQs must be submitted no later than this date.

Similar questions have been grouped below in the following themes:
1. Eligibility
2. Applying to the Scheme
3. Budget

New questions are highlighted in <mark>yellow.</mark>

You may also be interested in consulting the presentation slides from the programme briefing session: http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2018/05/COALESCE-2019-Briefing-Slideshow.pdf and the notes which are here: http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2018/05/Notes-from-Briefing_FINAL.pdf

1. ELIGIBILITY

Can medicine, midwifery or nursing could be considered an acceptable STEM discipline under Annex B?

The list of disciplines is indicative. It is a matter for researchers to demonstrate their capability to undertake a proposed project as a STEM researcher.

Is neuroimaging a STEM discipline?

The list of disciplines is indicative. It is a matter for researchers to demonstrate their capability to undertake a proposed project as a STEM researcher.

Nepal is not an DFAT focus country. Does this mean that an organisation based in Nepal is ineligible under the Terms and Conditions of Strand 2B?

The Terms and Conditions stipulate the requirement to have a mandatory and named Co-PI (co-applicant) employed by a research-performing organisation (RPO) in one of DFAT's partner countries and who will be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start-date until the project end.

Applicants based in countries that are non-DFAT partner countries are not eligible to apply.

I understand Nigeria is not considered a DFAT Partner country. Are Nigerian nationals eligible to apply for the programme?

Eligible PIs in HEIs and RPOs in any country on the African continent are eligible to apply as co-PIs to strand 2B.

How many co-PIs from the lead institution in the Republic of Ireland (not from the DFAT partner's research performing organisation) are allowed?
At least one applicant (lead) from the Republic of Ireland institution is necessary. While project proposals can draw on the expertise of other individuals present at these institutions, such individuals cannot be named as co-PIs.
As per call document, 'applicants may concurrently apply for a Strand 1 and Strand 2 award' provided they have a justifiable time-management strategy if they get both awards. Can a PI apply for two strands simultaneously - in this case, as a lead PI for a Strand 1C, and as a co-PI (based in an Irish-based RPO) for a strand 2B.
An Irish-based PI cannot be the co-PI under Strand 2B. The **mandatory and named** Co-PI (co-applicant) on Strand 2B must **be employed by a research-performing organisation (RPO) in one of DFAT's partner countries,** and they must be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start-date until the project end.
Is a potential applicant who is a STEM partner on a New Horizons grant due to end before the call close date eligible to apply to this scheme?
PIs on projects completing before the call close date will be permitted to apply; however, the Council reserves the right to withdraw a COALESCE award in circumstances where an outgoing grant is not completed by this date.
Is an academic with experience in the field of development aid but who doesn't have two years as a named PI eligible to lead a project on Strand 2B of COALESCE?
The lead PI on strand 2B **must** have had three years of experience as a Principal Investigator AND have won a grant valued at a minimum of €100k in which they are the named PI. The lead PI must also meet all other eligibility requirements to be an eligible PI on this strand.
In Strand 2B, what countries are included as "eligible partner countries"?
As stated in the terms for Strand 2B, eligible partner countries on strand 2B include **any** African country, Vietnam and Palestine.
The appendix (2) stipulates that applicants for Strand 2B have a "proven research track record in development". If a potential applicant to Strand 2B does NOT have a proven research track record in development but meets all other eligibility requirements, are they eligible to apply?
The lead PI on strand 2B **must** have a proven track record in development and meet all other eligibility requirements in order to be an eligible PI.
Can applicants submit more than one Strand 1 application, _as well as_ a Strand 2B application?
Applicants may apply to more than one strand on Strand 1, and the same applicant may also submit one application as lead PI to Strand 2B. In the event that an applicant is successful in more than one strand of COALESCE, the applicant must clearly indicate a time-management strategy for simultaneously conducting the projects. Additionally, the applicant must receive approval for the same from the Irish Research Council in order to be permitted to accept multiple awards on this call.
The applicant is interested in Strand 2B (DFAT) and has a strong background in research in Africa. The T&Cs state that PIs must be 3 years post-PhD. The applicant submitted their PhD in November 2016, had a viva in Jan 2017 and graduated in June 2017. Hence, on paper, she is ineligible. Is there any flexibility in how the IRC/DFAT interpret the length of time post PhD for PIs?
We regret to inform you that there is no flexibility. Eligibility is calculated from the date of graduation. Three years must have passed since the date of graduation at the date of the call deadline for an applicant to be considered eligible on strand 2B.

Can researchers submit two Strand 1 applications (e.g. Strand 1D and 1J)?	
Eligible applicants may submit two Strand 1 applications. In the event that an applicant is successful in more than one strand of COALESCE, the applicant must clearly indicate a time-management strategy for simultaneously conducting the projects. Additionally, the applicant must receive approval of the same from the Irish Research Council in order to be permitted to accept multiple awards on this call.	
Can applicants upload a letter of support from a collaborator?	
Applicants may **NOT** upload a letter of support from a collaborator. Uploading material and/or documents not requested in the application form will render an application ineligible.	
Can you confirm that a PI who is an academic supervisor/mentor to an IRC Postgraduate Scholar/Postdoctoral Fellow is not considered to be in receipt of IRC funding.	
A PI who is an academic supervisor/mentor to an Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholar/Postdoctoral Fellow is **NOT** in receipt of funding from the IRC themselves and is, therefore, eligible to apply in their own right. In order to be eligible, a PI should not be in receipt of any other Council funding at the proposed start date—with the exception of New Foundations, Creative Connections and/or Ulysses grant award(s).	
Is a postdoctoral researcher eligible to apply?	
Postdocs who, at the time of the call deadline, hold a contract of sufficient duration to carry out the proposed project from the project start date until the project end date are eligible to apply as long as they meet the other criteria for eligibility of the Strand to which they are applying.	
Is there a minimum duration for awards?	
Each strand has its own individual maximum duration that can be found in the T&Cs, which is intended as a broad guideline for each project's length.	
Under Strand 1C, (or any of the projects under Strand 1E, 1F, 1J, 2B), would it be possible to have a lead PI and a Co-PI?	
Applications to strands 1C, 1E, 1F, 1J, and 2B should have **one** lead PI only.	
Does the phrase 'no later than 1 Nov 2017' mean the grants are eligible for those who have had their PhD less than 2 years?	
Where a PhD has been granted after 1 November 2017, the applicant is ineligible.	
Do all co-PIs have to have a PhD?	
Lead PIs and Co-PIs on COALESCE 2019 must have qualified with a PhD within the required time frame specified in the relevant strand of the Terms and Conditions.	
An applicant does not hold a PhD but is a Full Professor. If the date of initial appointment to a senior academic position (e.g. full Professor) is provided, would the applicant be eligible without a PhD?	
As per the Terms and Conditions, applicants to COALESCE 2019 must have a PhD qualification.	

A prospective applicant who is interested to apply for Strand 2B has been PI on 6 projects to date, the cumulative value of which is well over 100K. However, individually, the awards have been under 100K. Would he/she be eligible to apply for strand 2B?

In order to meet the eligibility criteria for Strand 2B, the lead PI must have won a single grant worth a minimum of €100k, have three years post PhD experience and experience in projects/consortia with an international and/or development focus. A cumulative figure of €100K derived from numerous grants does not meet the criteria required.

A prospective applicant to the COALESCE 2019 call currently holds a New Horizons grant which is due to finish at the end of December 2019, but for which a No Cost Extension has been approved, extending the project to April 2020. Can the applicant apply to COALESCE and, if successful, delay the start of the COALESCE project to coincide with the end of the New Horizons grant in April 2020?

Successful applicants to COALESCE 2019 may **not** hold a New Horizons Grant and a COALESCE award simultaneously. Successful awardees in COALESCE 2019 will be notified of the call outcome in December 2019 and projects will begin in March 2020.

In Strand 2B, if there are two co-PIs must they both previously have won a €100k grant? Or is it sufficient that one of them has previously won and been a lead on a €100k grant?

The lead PI should have won and led a grant of a minimum value of €100k. This condition is not required of the co-PI.

There should be one co-PI. The co-applicant will, at minimum:

  ➢ Be at least three years post PhD[4] (or possess equivalent research qualifications/experience)
  ➢ Have experience of international research collaboration with an international development focus and/or international project/s
  ➢ Have a track record in research under one or more of the DFAT themes for this strand.

For Strand 2B, will the eligibility criteria for PI and co-PIs be the same as last year's call? There is some concern that the extensive eligibility criteria for co-PIs could rule out some high-quality candidates in African Universities.

As per the Terms & Conditions:

The lead Principal Investigator must hold a contract of sufficient duration with an eligible HEI or RPO to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until project end date.

See list of eligible institutions at http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2017/05/IRC_2019_Eligible-Higher-Education-Institutions-in-Ireland.pdf.

The application must be supported by a **named** Co-PI (co-applicant) employed by an HEI or research-performing organisation (RPO) in one of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's partner countries and who will be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start-date until the project end date. The RPO in the partner country can be a public or not-for-profit higher education institution or research institute. The RPO must have the capacity and infrastructure to support the research, should be research active and be able to demonstrate the standard of academic rigour required for a large research project.

The lead applicant will:

- ➢ Be at least three years post-PhD[1]
- ➢ Have won and been the lead PI on a grant with a minimum value €100K
- ➢ Have experience of collaboration within research consortia with an international development focus and/or international project
- ➢ Have a track record in research under one or more of the DFAT themes for this strand
- ➢ Not be in receipt of any other Council funding at the proposed start date, with the exception of New Foundations and /or Creative Connections and/or Ulysses award(s).

The co-applicant will, at minimum:

- ➢ Be at least three years post PhD[4] (or possess equivalent research qualifications/experience)
- ➢ Have experience of international research collaboration with an international development focus and/or international project/have a track record in research under one or more of the DFAT themes for this strand

Does DFAT fund action research projects? (i.e. a study that is designed to intervene and improve ways in which a community addresses problems and issues)

Proposals involving action research will be considered. Please see Appendix 3 of the Terms & Conditions for the Evaluation Criteria for Strand 2B. All proposals submitted to Strand 2B must meet the standards of excellence and academic rigour required in order to be funded.

Would you provide more information on the DCYA strand? How many awards in this strand? Is there a specific topic for this strand?

As per the Terms and Conditions, the Council envisages making one award per strand. Please see Appendix 1 of the Terms and Conditions for information on this strand.

Will the Council maintain the interdisciplinary strand (last year's 2A) (i.e. requiring a lead AHSS (arts, humanities and social sciences) principal investigator (PI) working with a PI with a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) background addressing global challenges focusing on Strategic Development Goals identified by the UN)? – Our understanding is that the Council will not this year, are there plans for the following call yet?

It is planned that the open-call strands, Strands 1A and 2A, will run again in 2020.

If a lead PI is a partner on a project worth €170K, is the PI eligible for Strand 2B?

The applicant on Strand 2B should be the lead PI on a grant worth at a minimum €100k in order to be eligible as the lead PI on Strand 2B, have experience of collaboration within research consortia with an international development focus and/or international project and have a track record in research under one or more of the DFAT themes for this strand.

In order to be eligible, a PI should not be in receipt of any other Council funding at the proposed start date, with the exception of New Foundations and /or Creative Connections and/or Ulysses award(s).

Are proposal submissions to Strand 1J (Met Éireann) to address part A <u>and</u> part B or address a single part individually?

As per the Terms & Conditions, proposals to Strand 1J should address Part A **and** Part B.

---

[1] The lead and co-applicants will have been awarded their doctoral degrees no later than 1 November 2016. For this condition, the date of graduation should be taken into account.

What role do DFAT play throughout the duration of a successful awarded project?
As per the Terms and Conditions, a representative from DFAT should be invited to participate in or provide a nominee to any steering group or advisory structure being convened to support the research project. A specified member of DFAT will be available to participate on the project steering group, if requested. At least one meeting with the awardee will be required per year. DFAT will receive progress reports submitted by awardees and must be acknowledged as co-funder (along with the Irish Research Council) on all publications, reports and outreach activities. Please see Appendix 2 of the Terms and Conditions for further information on this strand.
Is a researcher based in Ireland who is a PI on a GENDER-NET Awarded project apply to COALESCE?
To be eligible to apply to COALESECE an applicant should not be in receipt of any other Council funding at the proposed start date, with the exception of New Foundations and /or Creative Connections and/or Ulysses award(s). GENDER-NET is funded in part by the Irish Research Council. A PI on a GENDER-NET award partly funded by the Irish Research Council is not eligible to apply to COALESCE while the GENDER-NET award is live.
If a PI was a partner on a €4.3m FP7 project and the partner's drawn down was 170K for which the PI was the lead and was managing the €170K grant independently of the coordinating partner. Is this PI eligible to apply for strand 2B?
To be eligible to apply to Strand 2B for COALESCE Research Fund 2019, the lead PI must be three years post PhD, have been the lead PI on a grant worth a minimum value of €100K and been named as the lead PI on that grant application.
A potential applicant to COALESCE 2019 received an IRC New Foundations award earlier this year for a networking grant with the specific purpose of developing a consortium that would apply to Strand 2B of COALESCE. The applicant does not meet all the eligibility criteria for Strand 2B of COALESCE (specifically, the potential applicant has not been the lead PI on a grant with a minimum value of €100K).
To be eligible to apply to Strand 2B for COALESCE Research Fund 2019, the lead PI must be three years post PhD, have been the lead PI on a grant worth a minimum value of €100K and been named as the lead PI on that grant application and have experience of collaboration within research consortia with an international development focus and/or international projects and have a track record in research under one or more of the DFAT themes for this strand. In order to be eligible, a PI should not be in receipt of any other Council funding at the proposed start date, with the exception of New Foundations and /or Creative Connections and/or Ulysses award(s). If a potential applicant was awarded a New Foundations 2018 grant under Strand 4A with the specific purpose of developing a research collaboration or consortium that would enable him/her to apply to Strand 2B of COALESCE and the applicant meets all eligibility criteria with the exception of the specified lead PI experience on a grant worth a minimum value of €100k, the applicant may apply.

It will be essential for the applicant to clearly demonstrate his/her ability to achieve the ambition of the proposed project and his/her ability to successfully manage a project of significant duration, budget and scale.

Can a PI based in Ireland partner with a co-PI based in Latin America when applying to Strand 2B (COALESCE Better World Strand)?

The Terms and Conditions stipulate the requirement to have a mandatory and named Co-PI (co-applicant) employed by a research-performing organisation (RPO) in one of DFAT's partner countries and who will be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start-date until the project end.

As stated in the terms for Strand 2B, eligible partner countries on strand 2B include any African country, Vietnam and Palestine.

Applicants based in countries that are non-DFAT partner countries are not eligible to apply.

Under Strand 2B Eligibility, does the €100k managed research project required for PI eligibility have to be Irish Research Council funding?

Under Strand 2B, applicants must have won and been the lead PI on a grant with a minimum value of €100K. The award does not have to have been an Irish Research Council award/grant.

2. APPLYING TO THE SCHEME

Can an applicant submit two similar projects to Strand 1? Additionally, can an applicant submit similar proposals to Strand 1 and Strand 2?

Applicants may apply to more than one strand. Duplicate project submissions and/or the submission of similar projects is not allowed.

For their project, the collaborator would be working with a PhD student on a particular method in which neither the PI nor Co-PI are trained. Therefore, for the purposes of the IRC's FAQs, the collaborator would be someone who would provide training or additional expertise for the project team. Is such a collaboration eligible in this context?

Strong justification that this PhD student is the only person with the requisite skills such that the project couldn't proceed without their expertise would have to be provided to qualify this as an eligible collaboration.

If a PI is not a permanent staff member or does not have a contract of sufficient duration, would a letter of commitment from the Head of Department committing to the continuation of the individual's contract (should the award be successful) be sufficient to meet eligibility requirements?

As per the Terms and Conditions of Coalesce 2019, the PI must hold a contract of sufficient duration with an eligible HEI or RPO to conduct the proposed research from the project start date until project end.

The application form seems to only allow for one partner/collaborator country for Strand 2B. Are applicants permitted to collaborate with multiple partner countries? If so, how should this be presented in the application form?

The lead applicant on Strand 2B **must** work with a mandatory and named Co-PI (co-applicant) employed by a research-performing organization (RPO) in **one** of DFAT's partner countries. The

named co-PI must be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start-date until the project end.

Can you please confirm what the font size, margins and spacing should be for the project description?

The following should be used for documents being uploaded to COALESCE applications:

Font colour: Black

Font type: Calibri

Font size: 11

Side margins: 2.0cm

Top and Bottom margins: 1.5cm

Line spacing: single

Does the 14-page limit for the Detailed Project Description include references?

14 pages is the maximum length for the 'Detailed Project Description' including references. The system will not allow an applicant to upload a document longer than 14 pages.

Could you please clarify what kind of information is expected to be included in the section on 'research strategy'?

Applicants should outline the step-by-step plan of action for their project, demonstrating how the stated research questions will be answered. This includes details of the project's placement relative to existing literature, the methodology(ies) to be used, detailed implementation and dissemination plans, major project milestones and how intended project outputs and impact will be achieved.

In the online form there is no mention of "Research Strategy". Can you advise how we can complete a section on research strategy if it's not mentioned in the online form?

Research strategy forms part of the Detailed Project Description section, which takes the form of a single PDF upload. The precise contents of this section are not prescribed and will vary depending on the project being proposed. Recommended contents are outlined in the online form and Indicative Application Form.

Are slides from the Briefing presentation still available?

Yes, they are available on the COALESCE page on http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2018/05/COALESCE-2019-Briefing-Slideshow.pdf and the notes are available at http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2018/05/Notes-from-Briefing_FINAL.pdf

'Has a Steering Group or Advisory Committee for this project been identified?' is a question in the application form. Do you have any advice on the expectation of this scheme for such a group or committee including its composition?

The Strands composing COALESCE Research Fund 2019 provide guidance on steering groups and advisory structures for proposed projects:

- Strand 1C specifies that IHREC should be invited to participate in or provide a nominee to any steering group or advisory structure being convened to support the research project.
- Strand 1E specifies that a steering group or advisory structure should be convened to support the research project, that the composition of this group or structure should be described in the application and that the HSE SHCPP should be invited to participate in or

provide a nominee to any steering group or advisory structure being convened to support the research project.

- Strand 1J specifies that Met Éireann will be invited to participate in or provide a nominee to any steering group or advisory structure being convened to support the research project.
- Strand 2B specifies that a representative from DFAT should be invited to participate in or provide a nominee to any steering group or advisory structure being convened to support the research project.
- Strand 1E only stipulates that a steering group or advisory structure should be established.

Is the emphasis on showing engagement with sectoral interests, or is it on securing scientific advisers?

Steering groups and advisory structures are vehicles to enable relevant engagement with key stakeholders and scientific advisers. The complexity of the project may give rise to a need for scientific advice in areas outside of the applicant's expertise. Where necessary, the composition of any steering group or advisory structure should include a scientific adviser/s whose areas of expertise enable the provision of support and guidance to the project.

Is there a strong preference for the Steering Group committee to be in place at the outset?

Outlining the composition or planned composition of any steering group or advisory structure may assist assessors in determining the extent to which a project will receive support from expert advisers and engagement with key stakeholders [for example, in areas of the proposed project that lie outside of the applicant's expertise].

Is it possible to have a PI and a co-PI on Strand 1F?

Yes, it is possible to have a PI and a co-PI on a project proposal for Strand 1F. The eligibility requirements and project specifications identified in the Terms and Conditions for Strand 1F apply to both the PI and any co-PI included in the project proposal. The host HEI or RPO will be that of the lead PI and will be responsible for budget management and reporting.

In addition to the Research Office online endorsement from the PI's institution for applications to Strand 2B, is endorsement required from the HEI in the partner country?

Endorsement by the Research Office at the lead host institution is required for the completion of the application process. The online endorsement process does not require the participation of a partner HEI or RPO.

Are projects previously submitted to COALESCE 2018 but which were unsuccessful eligible for resubmission?

Projects previously assessed under COALESCE 2018 but which were unsuccessful may be resubmitted to COALESCE 2019. Details of changes made to the proposal should be included in the new proposal application.

According to the Terms of the Scheme, it is envisaged that one award each will be made for Strands 1C, 1E, 1F & 1J. Will there be more than one award made under Strand 2B?

It is anticipated that, if a sufficient quantity of excellent applications are received, more than one award will be made under Strand 2B. The exact number of awards to be made will be determined by applications' excellence relative to the evaluation criteria.

Can the project team include additional collaborating partners to the PI and Co-PI? Can the collaborating partners work at Irish institutions? Last year's COALESCE application form had a field titled 'Identify any collaborating partners' which allowed the indication of a number of collaborators without specifying their location' as per this year's application form this field is more specifically stating 'Outline of the value collaboration with the Strategic Funding Partner on this strand will bring to the project'. If further collaborating scholars can be appointed, where in the form should they be identified?

This information should be included as part of the Detailed Project Description, as such information would be expected to form part of the description of the proposed approach and methodology.

How many PIs and co-PIs can be assigned to a project under Strand 2B? Is it possible to have two PIs in the Irish RPO and two Co-PIs in the partner country? Can the project be linked to two different RPOs in the partner countries? In case it is not possible to assign more than one PI and more than one Co-PI (and more than one RPO), can they be listed as collaborators to the project?

The COALESCE 2019 Terms and Conditions state that under Strand 2B, there must be **one** mandatory and named Co-PI (co-applicant) employed by an HEI or research-performing organisation (RPO) in **one** of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's partner countries and who will be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start-date until the project end date. The RPO in the partner country can be a public or not-for-profit higher education institution or

research institute. The RPO must have the capacity and infrastructure to support the research, should be research active and be able to demonstrate the standard of academic rigour required for a large research project.

The project may be linked to multiple academics, RPOs or HEIs in the chosen partner country, but these additional institutions/individuals cannot be added as named "Co-PIs".

These additional HEIs/RPOs and/or academics can be identified and listed as collaborating partners included as part of the Detailed Project Description, as such information would be expected to form part of the description of the proposed approach and methodology.

3. BUDGET
One of our researchers is interested in applying to 2B but is concerned that the limit of €5000 is too low for any required lab work. Is there any flexibility on this?
Consumables of up to €5,000 only may be requested on Strand 2B.
Can you please confirm whether a PhD Student may be costed into the budget for any of the Strands as an eligible cost?
Research Assistants and Postdocs are listed as eligible costs in the Terms and Conditions of Coalesce. PhD students are **not** listed as eligible costings and, therefore, **cannot** be included in budget requests.
With regard to recruitment for Postdocs, is it necessary that recruitment must be made at point 1, level 2A of the IUA Postdoc salary scales, or can recruitment be made at any point on level 2A, 2B, etc. if it can be strongly justified as necessary for the project?
It is permitted for recruitment to be made at higher points on the salary scale, but justification must be made for this.

The call document states that academic staff-replacement costs may be included. Is it sufficient to just include the rate listed, stating that it is for PI replacement costs, or is it expected that FTEs and specific salary scales are referenced in the justification?

A full justification for the costs proposed must be provided using the rates outlined in the call documentation. It is expected that applicants would provide as much justification as possible.

Are PhD student costs (fees/stipend...etc.) eligible costs under strand 2B?

Costings for PhD students may not be included in an application under Strand 2B.

Are the budget amounts pro-rated?

Successful applications on Strands 1C, 1E, 1F, 1J and Strand 2B **may** run up to the maximum period of months and funding limits specified in the Terms and Conditions. Salary costs can be pro rata, as indicated by the Terms and Conditions. All costs sought must be detailed and justified. Only costs requested in the budget submitted with the original application will be awarded to successful projects.

Can you clarify if the maximum budgets awarded is based on the duration of the proposed project? For example, if the maximum award duration is 12 months and award amount is €100,000. If an applicant wished to apply for 9 months, would the maximum amount they could apply for be €70,000?

Total project budgets are not awarded on a pro rata basis. Provided that all costs are clearly justified, the maximum budget may be granted to a project that runs up to the maximum duration or for a shorter period. All Strands have a specified maximum duration in the Terms and Conditions of COALESCE 2019. Such information should be consulted by applicants carefully.

For collaboration costs, is the max 10% of the total project inclusive of overhead and equipment?

Collaboration includes all project costs less equipment and overheads. Overheads applies to all direct costs except equipment and cannot exceed 25% of direct costs.

Can you clarify if the collaboration costs are paid under direct costs and, as such, incur overhead?

Collaboration costs are paid under direct costs and incur an overhead. Only equipment is excluded from incurring overheads.

What is the definition of a 'Collaborator' under Strand 2B, and what are examples of eligible costs under the category of 'Collaborator'? Can a piece of equipment be allocated as a Collaboration cost if the work is performed by a Collaborator outside of the partner country?

As stated in the Terms and Conditions, Strand 2B applications may include provision for team membership of researchers from institutions and organisations that fall outside the institutions of the PI and co-PI. Such collaborators are complementary and add value to the proposed research project.

Only collaboration costs (not personnel costs) may be allocated to such institutions/organisations and the added value of such costs must be **strongly** demonstrated. To justify such costs, the activities involved must be directly linked and relevant to the research project and be carried out in a context of collaboration that is appropriate and beneficial to the project's scope. Examples

might include dissemination, knowledge-exchange and travel costs; such costs must not double-counted in the budget under separate budget lines.

As noted in the Terms and Conditions, the Council will pay particular attention to any equipment sought (e.g. laptops, voice recorders, etc.). Any such requests will require a strong rationale and an account of why such items might not be available to an applicant from any other source. Equipment should be listed in its designated budget line in order to ensure that overheads are calculated correctly.

The Irish Research Council Terms and Conditions state that 'The recruitment of staff (e.g. research assistants, postdoctoral researchers) must be done openly, through public advertisement.' Does this public advertisement condition apply to specific expertise research assistant contracts that are part-time and less than six months in duration?

The condition that recruitment must be conducted openly applies to all staff to be recruited as part of the project's team.