

## **FAQs for Laureate Advanced Awards 2023**

### **(Fifth and Final Round - 09/12/22)**

This document includes FAQs from all previous rounds. New queries for the current week are headed in **orange**. Queries from all previous rounds are headed in **purple**.

Where several questions may be answered by a single response, the questions are presented together, and a single response is provided underneath these.

Throughout this document, 'HEI/RPO' = Higher Education Institution/Research Performing Organisation.

*Questions currently relate to the following headings:*

- A) EOI Process
- B) Application Queries
- C) Eligible Costs
- D) Success Rates and Approach to Ranking

## A) EOI Process

**Q: When can we expect the decision of EOI?**

**Q: Are all applicants who submitted an EOI expected to prepare a full application, i.e. there is no pre-selection process following the EOI?**

**A:** There is no decision or pre-selection process associated with the EOI. The research offices endorse the final lists of EOIs sent through to the IRC, and all potential eligible applicants from that list can subsequently submit a full application via Smart Simple if they wish to do so.

## B) Application Queries

**Q: What is the rule about having national or international co-applicants &/or collaborators? Is this allowed and can these individuals receive funding?**

**Q: Are collaborators allowed on proposed projects and if so, on what terms?**

**A:** The Advanced Laureate call does not permit co-applicants. The scheme is aimed at individual applicants rather than joint proposers. No more than one applicant can be named on an application. However, an applicant may include provision for team membership or collaboration of researchers from other institutions and organisations, including both national and international participation. The added value of any collaboration must be strongly demonstrated. Personnel costs may not be allocated outside the host institution.

**Q: If I need the input of a collaborator on an aspect of my project, do I need to include any written confirmation of their commitment in my proposal?**

**A:** No, however the collaborator should be named in the detailed proposal and their expertise and contribution to the project should be clearly defined.

**Q: Can a significant achievement that is relevant to the application be mentioned in the “track record” document if achieved earlier than 10 years ago?**

**A:** An applicant’s 10-year track record can be extended due to eligible career breaks as outlined in the call document (please see **Section 3.3.**).

**Q: Are letters of support, for example from an organisation providing data for the project, acceptable to include?**

**A:** If an applicant already has relationships in place with third party organisations/collaborators, they are free to mention such arrangements as part of the detailed project description. Please know that it is not necessary for applicants to upload the letter.

**Q: When proposing case studies research and/or fieldwork involving institutions such as charities, do we need letters of support from them in the application?**

**A:** No, however, if these arrangements are already in place they should be outlined as part of the detailed project description.

**Q: If references are not counted in the 15 page scientific proposal section, should they be submitted as a separate file or as part as the same file with the 15 page scientific content?**

A: Please submit them as part of the same file.

**Q: Do you have any advice on the Letter of Support, how detailed it should be and what should be addressed?**

A: There is a template on the Laureate webpage on the IRC website here: <https://research.ie/funding/advanced-ircla/?f=principal-investigator-led>. On the right-hand side of the webpage under the tab “templates”, you will be able to download a Word-doc template from the dropdown.

**Q: Do HEIs need to endorse Laureate applications on the portal after they are submitted by the applicants? Or, is portal-endorsement not necessary due to the inclusion of Letters of Support with the applications?**

A: The Letter of Support is the endorsement step required from the HEIs/RPOs. There is no additional endorsement step required on SmartSimple after the call deadline.

**Q: Can an electronic signature be used in order to complete the HEI/RPO Letter of Support?**

A: Yes, using an electronic/digital signature is perfectly fine.

**Q: Is a doctoral diploma from the graduating university satisfactory - I am not sure we were ever given "transcripts"?**

A: Yes - a doctoral diploma is satisfactory.

**Q: In describing the impact of your papers, is it acceptable to quote the number of times they have been cited, or does this infringe on DORA principles?**

A: Quoting the number of times a publication has been cited is acceptable.

**Q: Can a version (probably larger) of an Advanced Laureate application be submitted in response to an ERC call while the proposal is in review for a Laureate award?**

A: Yes, however, if successful in the ERC Advanced Grant before the Advanced Laureate start date, any offer of an IRC Laureate award must then be declined.

If successful in the ERC Advanced Grant after the Laureate award has commenced, both awards can be held in tandem provided that a justification for time management and an outline of how the awards differ is submitted and approved by the IRC.

**Q: Is the Data Management Plan (DMP) no longer required as part of the submission?**

A: The IRC has removed the DMP from the main application, and it will now be a requirement only for successful awardees. It will be due within the first 6 months of the award starting.

**Q: From section 3.2.1 of Advanced Call Document - “Up to 10 publications as main author in major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals, and/or leading international peer-reviewed journals and peer reviewed conferences proceedings of their respective field”. Does this mean a minimum of 10?**

A: No, this does not mean that applicants should have a minimum of 10 publications. Applicants are being asked to demonstrate a record of achievements in the past 10 years appropriate to their research field and can list a up to a maximum of 10 publications.

**Q: The guide for applicants says that approx. 24 proposals will progress to stage 2 per panel (or approx. 96 total). Will the remainder automatically be scored a C, regardless of the quality of their proposal? Will they all face the same resubmission penalties if they are introduced in future calls?**

A: Yes – any applications that are deemed unsuccessful at Stage 1 will receive a ‘C’ rating. Applications that do not progress beyond stage 1 may face restrictions to future Laureate Advanced calls.

**Q: Can an applicant opt to use the opposite gender?**

A: Applicants can self-identify against the following gender categories:

- man
- woman
- gender non-binary
- other
- prefer not to say
- 

**Q: Regarding publications: Guidance states “Up to ten representative publications as main author (or in those fields where alphabetic order of authorship is the norm, joint author) in major international peer-reviewed multidisciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals and peer-reviewed conference proceedings of their respective research fields (properly referenced, field relevant bibliometric indicators may also be included); preprints may be included, if freely available from a preprint server (preprints should be properly referenced and either a link to the preprint or a DOI should be provided);”**

**Please can the IRC Laureate Team advise on the detail needed here - all authors and full title or just PMID?**

A: This should be left to the applicants’ interpretation. It is down to the applicants to decide how to format their publication lists.

**Q: We received a query regarding the track record from one of our applicants. In relation to the “Major contributions to the early careers of excellent researchers”, the applicant is enquiring if this refers to the positions held by past PhD students and postdocs now and/or the past 10 years or does it refer to people who left the research group in the past 10 years**

A: This should be left to the applicants’ interpretation. It is down to the applicants to decide what they consider to be a major contribution.

**Q: I am finalising my two-page CV and 10 year track record in the templates for IRC Laureate Advanced proposal. I noticed that at least two sections are common in both: CV template includes ‘FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS’ and ‘ORGANISATION OF SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS’ Track record template also includes ‘Organisation of international conferences’ and ‘Prizes, awards, academy**

memberships'. Considering the two page restriction on both these documents, I would like to avoid repetition and specify these in one of the documents (say CV) and not repeat it in the other (track record). Please confirm whether this is acceptable.

A: The templates on the website are purely a guide as to how you might complete your CV and Track Record. It is up to each PI to decide for themselves what information to include and what to exclude in each document.

Q: Is there any allowance for a 14-letter acronym?

A: Unfortunately not, the maximum has been set to 12 letters for the call.

Q: The Call document states 'A minimum time commitment of 25% of full-time employment is required'. Can you please clarify if this is 25% over the entire duration of the project or specifically 25% time per year of the award?

A: The time commitment required is 25% per year of the award.

Q: Can an applicant create a PDF of their application for review? There doesn't seem to be an option to create a PDF of the draft application. Can you advise?

A: The system doesn't make the PDF until all the relevant fields and files are submitted. In other words, the applicant won't be able to review it in PDF.

### C) Eligible Costs

Q: Are subscriptions to international facilities an allowed cost?

A: Yes - requests may be included for accessing international databases and facilities or for the commissioning of experiments in international facilities/research labs where appropriately detailed. Justification should be provided where the required infrastructure is not available in Ireland (please see **Appendix 2** of call document).

Q: Is it correct to use the IUA salary rates effective 01.10.2022 for all years of the award i.e., no provision made for any increase in base salary scales in the period 1 December 2023 – end of award date?

A: Applicants should use the IUA salary rates effective 01.10.22 for the purposes of the application. Budgets can be updated at award acceptance stage to reflect any changes that may arise in IUA base salary rates in the interim.

Q: Can an applicant claim for replacement costs if they are an existing permanent member of academic staff?

A: Yes – an applicant can claim for replacement costs if they are an existing permanent member of academic staff.

Q: Should conference registration fees be disclosed under dissemination and knowledge costs, and should travel costs related with conference attendance be disclosed under travel costs?

A: How costs are handled in line with budget domains can often vary between HEIs/RPOs and can be combined costs in the case of some international conferences. Therefore, the IRC is happy for applicants to confer with their Research Finance Office on a case-by-case basis.

**Q: One of our applicants for the Advanced Laureate award is enquiring if they would be able to budget for the time buyout for a collaborator based within the university. This is a highly interdisciplinary project and the contribution from the collaborator would be crucial for the project.**

A: Collaborators are permitted and encouraged. The Advanced Laureate Awards are single beneficiary for the Principal Investigator (PI), but collaborators can belong to the same Host Institution or other research structures, established in the same or different country, including non-EU third countries. The collaborating partners are not eligible for the salary replacement costs, but all other eligible costs described in appendix 2 of the Call Document of the programme are eligible. Provided the PI fulfils their obligations and time commitment to the project, they may distribute resources to third parties. These expenses should be justified, integral to the success of their proposal and the PI should perform due diligence to ensure best value is obtained.

**Q: In relation to the replacement costs, can you confirm if the HEI can use Academic Scales up to the value of the Postdoctoral Researchers/Research Fellow (@ Oct 22 IUA point 4 salary of Research Fellow €64,537), if this being the case, are we eligible to budget for an Assistant Lecturer or Lecturer but cannot exceed the salary of €64,537 per annum?**

A: The IRC uses the IUA salary scales as a guide for advising on pay scales. Internal pay scales within HEIs/RPIs can be used provided they do not exceed the maximum value of the IUA scale, in this case the point 4 of the Research Fellow scale.

**Q: Am I correct that applicants do not need to pro rata their budget according to number of years? It is fine for someone to request 1M over 3 or 3.5 years, provided its very well justified?**

A: That is correct. Applicants do not need to pro rate the budget if they ask for less than the maximum 4-year award, but, they will need to fully justify the request for the full budget over a shorter timeframe.

**Q: Can you please clarify what is meant by “no adjustment to overheads will be required” in relation to if definitive guidance confirms that pensions are to be paid centrally the IRC will require any pension costs budgeted in each Laureate proposal to be returned to the IRC. Providing a worked example of such a scenario would help clarify this please?**

A: If a decision is made that pensions will be paid centrally and pension costs are returned to the IRC, any associated overheads can be retained by the HEI.

**Q: Should applicants include overheads on collaborator work? I saw on IRC documentation about this previously that collaboration costs are paid under direct costs and incur an overhead - equipment excluded. But I wanted to make sure it is the same situation for this particular call?**

**A:** All costs are subject to overheads, except equipment and any costs indicated as exceptions by your HEI/RPO finance office.

#### **D) Success Rates and Approach to Ranking**

**Q:** Are the numbers for each panel available, to give us a better appreciation of success rates?

**A:** The IRC received over 260 expressions of interest for this Laureate Advanced call which is nearly 50% more than when the call ran previously in 2019. It should be noted that not all expressions of interest result in submitted applications.

**Q:** So if the funding is split between the 4 panels equally and the indicative budget is 12m, can we assume that each panel will only fund 3 proposals?

**A:** There will be 12 awards in total, 3 awards in each of the 4 panels.

**Q:** Stage 2 - panel meetings - how are applications ranked within 'A' rating? i.e., what will distinguish between 'funded' and 'reserve'?

**A:** The ranking will be based on the final ranked score. In the event of a tied score, the scoring of the quality of the proposed research will be used as the selection criterion to separate applications. In the event that proposals are still tied, the minority gender for that panel will be used as a criterion for selection. Minority gender is determined by the percentage representation in each panel against the total eligible applications received in that panel (as per **Section 5.3.8** of call document).

**Q:** What is the success rate of round 1?

**A:** Stage 1 success rates cannot be confirmed at this time as the number of applications that will be submitted is not yet known.

**Q:** 'In the event that proposals are still tied, the minority gender for that panel will be used as a criterion for selection'. How will gender-blind proposals be treated in this instance?

**A:** Where applications are tied, gender can be used as a selection criterion as the gender is known to the IRC. Where the applicant prefers not to disclose their gender to the IRC, gender will not be used as a tie-breaker criterion.

**Q:** Is there any guidance on the advantages/disadvantages of submitting a gender-blind application?

**A:** Information related to gender-blinding in the IRC programmes can be found in the ORTUS Economic Research review of the IRC gender strategy.

<https://research.ie/assets/uploads/2022/03/IRCGenderPlan-s.pdf>