



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL

An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

NEW FOUNDATIONS 2023: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated: 12/05/2023

Newly submitted Queries/Answers highlighted in yellow.

Similar questions have been grouped below in the following themes:

1. Strand 1a-related Queries
2. Strand 4-related Queries
3. Strand 4b-related Queries
4. Strand 10-related Queries
5. Strand 15-related Queries
6. Strand 16-related Queries
7. Eligible Expenditure
8. Eligibility Criteria
9. Applying to the Scheme

The New Foundations 2023 Call Document can be found at [New Foundations | Funding | Irish Research Council](#).

1. Strand 1a-related queries

Can the researcher already have a relationship with the Charity? For example, I am an academic at a HEI, but also on the newly formed Board of Directors of a Charity. We want to carry out research with the charity members.

A prior or existing relationship with a charity is not deemed a conflict of interest according to our terms and conditions. Please note that a letter of support is required from the charity which should be signed by another authorised signatory, rather than the applicant.

Can a PI on a part-time contract apply for Strand 1a?

Part-time staff can apply for New Foundations, provided they have a contract of employment of sufficient duration to carry out the proposed project from the project start date until the project end date. Please

note that while academic replacement costs as per the Terms and Conditions are eligible, applicants cannot seek funding in respect of their own salary.
We have a researcher who works at TUS, who is interested in applying to the IRC New Foundations Strand 1a. They have checked the charities register and TUS are on it. Are TUS sufficient for the Civil Society partner for Strand 1a or do they require a partner outside of TUS?
The civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator. If the organisation is a registered charity, they are eligible to be a partner on a Strand 1a application. While a higher education institution may indeed be a registered charity, this would go against the spirit of the strand – ‘engaging civic society’. One of the objectives of this strand is to develop networks between academia and civic society partners in the community and voluntary sector.
<i>‘Applications should clearly indicate why the project is important and how it speaks to the issues and concerns of the civic society partner with a focus on national collaboration.’</i> Does this mean that we need a civic partner with a national reach , or can we propose to disseminate and share nationally using the civic partner’s networks?
Projects should be nationally focused. A national reach is not required however sharing and dissemination via the civic partner’s networks is encouraged.
Can we work with charities based in Northern Ireland?
As per the Call Document, the civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator .
There is a separate question in the application form "Identify any project partners" - I assume that these are separate to the civic society partner. How many project partners are applicants expected to include?
Civic society partners are deemed ‘project partners’. There is no maximum number of collaborators/project partners permissible in an application and all project partners should be included under ‘Identify any project partners’.
Are payments to PPI contributors (to compensate their time) eligible costs?
Costs for partner involvement or PPI contribution can be included on the award – this would fall under the ‘other’ category.
Page 7 of the call document states that a “letter of support” is needed for strands 1a and 4. Can you please advise if you are referring to the endorsement forms or if letters of support are needed as well as the endorsement forms?
The endorsement form and the letter of support are the same. The form should be signed by a named contact in the organisation.

I have found a partner, but my contact is currently working at home due to a long-term illness and doesn't have access to a stamp. Would their signature on the attached endorsement form suffice or must the form have a stamp?
A signature from the relevant authority at the organisation will suffice.
Are charities expected to provide financial input themselves to projects funded under this strand, and if so, what level of financial input and under what terms and conditions?
Civic society partners are not required to financially contribute to the project. This may however be a feature of some proposals, where appropriate. The charity and researcher will work out an agreement between them where both parties are satisfied. This is additional funding to the award provided by the IRC and would not be governed by our terms and conditions, rather it is at the discretion of the civic society partner.
Does Strand 1a dictate that the project must be nationally focused or is it permissible to focus on an international human rights issue? I am considering working with an Irish NGO on an international human rights issue related to the UN SDGs.
<p>Strand 1a sets out to enhance civic society within a <i>national</i> context, between researchers and civic society partners.</p> <p>This Strand supports applications from researchers in partnership with a CVO/NGO. As per the Call Document, the civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator.</p> <p>Proposals under Strand 4 support collaboration between Irish and partner research institutions. Eligible partner countries are Vietnam, Palestine, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and any country on the African continent.</p>
I have been approached by three of our researchers who wish to apply to strand 1a as co-applicants and with a civil society partner of course. Is it possible for more than one researcher apply to strand 1a as part of one application/project?
This Strand supports applications from researchers in partnership with a CVO/NGO. The latter must be a registered charity. The proposal may include the involvement of other groups; however, only one may be named as the partner in the proposal. No more than one applicant/HEI can be named on the application.

Can you please clarify if the following can be included in a budget or not? For strand 1a the type of training equipment that is required for skills development would be 4/5 laptops and a 3D printer, as these are equipment and not covered under the scheme. Would it be possible to lease the equipment and if so, would they be classified as consumables?
The HEI/RPO is responsible for providing the facilities and access to the equipment needed for the awardee to carry out the research, ensuring that all items of equipment and materials provided for the award are adequately maintained.
In terms of eligible costs, is it possible to budget for costs related to open access publications?
Expenditure incurred through the dissemination of outputs and outcomes can be included. Publication costs relevant to networking activities and academic publication are eligible.
An applicant is engaging with a CHY registered community group as a partner. Additionally, the applicant wishes to recruit an essential member of their research team who is an independent/contract researcher. I note that under eligible costs it states that staff salaries are subject to open recruitment. Can you advise how best to approach this?
The recruitment of staff must be done openly, through public advertisement. Recruitment policies should be in line with local HEI institutional practices.
In terms of eligible costs, can a charity partner be paid for their time involved in a project? Also, in strand 1a, is it possible to list as a partner a researcher in another HEI and if that is possible can they budget for teaching buyout too?
Where fully justified, costs for partner involvement can be included on the award in accordance with HEI/RPO institutional rules.
2. Strand 4-related queries
I have identified a colleague at the University of Zimbabwe to join me on my application. She is a Lecturer but does not hold a PhD. Is she still eligible to be the partner on the proposal?
For clarity, New Foundations is a single-PI scheme. Collaborators are permissible and should be included under 'Identify any project partners'.
Is the co-PI required to have a PhD, or can they show that they possess equivalent research qualifications/experience?

<p>New Foundations is a single-PI scheme. Collaborators are permissible and should be included under 'Identify any project partners'.</p> <p>Applicants must hold a doctoral degree.</p>
3. Strand 4b-related queries
<p>Are applicants to Strand 4b also required to submit a partner endorsement form?</p> <p>Strand 4b does not require a signed partner endorsement form.</p> <p>Applicants will need to demonstrate they have co-ordinated with the relevant networks of practitioners, such as the Irish Development Education Association, the Irish Environmental Network, Early Childhood Ireland, Education and Training Boards as appropriate, in planning the research in order to ensure co-ordination across the sector, to encourage dialogue and to support linkages and synergies. Is collaboration limited to these organisations or can other organisation all apply?</p> <p>Applicants will need to demonstrate they have coordinated with the relevant networks of practitioners such as the Irish Development Education Association, the Irish Environmental Network, Early Childhood Ireland, Education and Training Boards as appropriate, in planning the research in order to ensure co-ordination across the sector, to encourage dialogue and to support linkages and synergies. It is not a definitive list so there may be other appropriate partners aside from those listed, however the key point is to show how the applicant has consulted and engaged with practitioners.</p> <p>Can proposals for Strand 4b identify a domestic project conducted in Ireland? Or, must applications involve a partner organisation in a developing country that receives Irish Aid funds (like in Strand 4)?</p> <p>Projects should focus on research which contributes to building awareness and understanding of Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development issues in <i>Ireland</i> (the applicants should refer to the Irish Aid GCE strategy again). The targets groups for the work of both DFA on Global Citizenship Education and DoE and DFHERIS is people living in Ireland. However, looking at building links with communities or schools or youth groups (for example) in the Global South could be a component of the research but it is not compulsory.</p>
4. Strand 10-related queries
<p>Would it be desirable to engage in conversations with the policing authority prior to submitting a proposal? (Thinking in particular about how to demonstrate evidence of collaboration if planning on a project that involves police)</p>

For reasons of transparency and fairness to all applicants, the Irish Research Council and the strategic funding partners will not enter into written or telephone correspondence with any individual about the assessment process or their eligibility to apply. However, any queries are welcomed via our email address newfoundations@research.ie and will be addressed in the FAQ document, uploaded on a weekly basis.

5. Strand 15-related queries (no queries to date)

6. Strand 16-related queries (no queries to date)

9. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE

PhD Stipends are not permitted. However, postgraduate student involvement is encouraged. Can student fees be included?

While postgraduate and undergraduate students are not eligible to apply to the current New Foundations call, their involvement in the proposed projects is encouraged. Applicants are advised to note that stipends/student fees are not an eligible cost under the New Foundations scheme.

Can an applicant budget for an RA in the partner country to facilitate the workshop and with data gathering?

Any employment costs sought for a partner must be in line with relevant local salary scales and applicable to the career stage of the partner and should be featured in 'Staff costs' category in the budget.

Can academic replacement costs be applied to Research Assistants and/or Postdoctoral Researchers?

All costs sought must be detailed and justified in the 'Project Budget' portion of the online application form. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that any costs sought are necessary to carry out the proposal. Demonstration of value for money is an important consideration under the evaluation and assessment process.

Research Assistant and/or Postdoctoral Researcher academic replacement costs are eligible (both can be pro-rata). HEIs should use the institutional researcher salary scale for research assistants and postdoctoral researchers. These costs must be clearly justified in the application form. 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.

10. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Is it possible to apply for a New Foundations grant when the individual has previously been awarded an IRC New Foundations grant?

You are not precluded from applying to NF 2023 should you have had a successful project in NF 2022. Current NF award holders are eligible provided their proposal is clearly distinct from their current New Foundations award. Furthermore, applicants must, on the call deadline, hold a contract of sufficient duration with their eligible HEI or RPO to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until the project end date and you may only make one application to the scheme in a given year.

Can staff costs include buy-out costs for permanent academic staff? For example, would it be possible to budget for the PI and the project partner (already in post) to spend 2 hours per week on the project.

The civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator. If the organisation is a registered charity, they are eligible to be a partner on a Strand 1a application. While a higher education institution may indeed be a registered charity, this would go against the spirit of the strand – ‘engaging civic society’. One of the objectives of this strand is to develop networks between academia and civic society partners in the community and voluntary sector.

Teaching buyout is an eligible cost and may be pro rata. While there is no upper limit for teaching buyout under New Foundations 2023 scheme, all costs sought must be sufficiently detailed and justified in the proposed budget. Demonstration of value for money is an important consideration under the assessment process.

My contract as a postdoc says, "up to 5 years", so the length of current funding and the length of current contract are different things for postdocs. What does documentation mean by "fully cover"? Current contract or current funding?

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

Are there any limitations around past award holders?

You are not precluded from applying to NF 2023 should you have had a successful project in NF 2022. Current NF award holders are eligible provided their proposal is clearly distinct from their current New Foundations award. Furthermore, applicants must, on the call deadline, hold a contract of sufficient duration with their eligible HEI or RPO to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until the project end date and you may only make one application to the scheme in a given year.