



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL

An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

NEW FOUNDATIONS 2024: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Similar questions have been grouped below in the following themes:

1. Strand 1a-related Queries
2. Strand 1c-related Queries
3. Strand 4-related Queries
4. Strand 4b-related Queries
5. Strand 10-related Queries
6. Strand 15-related Queries
7. Strand 17-related Queries
8. Eligible Expenditure
9. Eligibility Criteria
10. Applying to the Scheme

Please note:

If you do not find the answer to your query in the call documentation, you should contact the research office in your proposed institution, which will provide information and clarification on the call.

Research offices can send any queries they are unable to clarify to newfoundations@research.ie. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and answers will be posted on the Irish Research Council's website and updated once the call opens until 13th of June 2024.

The questions submitted during the webinar which took place on the 16th of May 2024, will be addressed as part of the FAQ documents scheduled to be posted on the 17th and 24th of May 2024.

The New Foundations 2024 Call Document can be found at [New Foundations | Funding | Irish Research Council](#).

The list of eligible Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) can also be found at [New Foundations | Funding | Irish Research Council](#).

1. Strand 1a-related queries	
NEW Can an applicant to Strand 1a hold a COALESCE award at the time of application?	Applicants to Strand 1a may hold a COALESCE award.
NEW When staff costs for the charity partner in Strand 1a are budgeted under staff, then it needs to go through open recruitment, but in the past, when it was budgeted under 'other' charity partner's staff time on the grant could be budgeted. Does that remain the case?	As noted in the Call Document (pg. 10), where fully justified, costs for partner involvement can be included on the award in accordance with HEI/RPO institutional rules and with relevant local employment practices. Costs should be appropriate to the career stage of the partner and should be included in 'Staff costs' category in the budget. It is possible (and permissible) for some of the award budget to be allocated to project-related activities carried out by the charity partner, and this would fall under the 'other' category in the budget domains.
NEW In relation to Strand 1a, I understand this is a collaboration between the RPO and a charity partner. Just confirming that no other collaborators can be added to the project team? Or is it permissible to have an extra Irish RPO involved?	It is possible to add other collaborators to the team from different eligible institutions, however, the PI is the sole award holder working in collaboration with a charity partner.
NEW Is a Steering Committee a requirement for funding under Strand 1a?	A Steering Committee is not a requirement for New Foundations funding.
Will there be a list of organisations who are keen to participate in Strand 1a?	Applicants are free to partner with any civic society organisation which meets the criteria outlined in the call document for this strand. It is important to note, that the civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator . For information on new expressions of interest received from organisations to participate in the scheme, please see the sidebar New Civic Society Organizations for 2024 on the New Foundations webpage.
What does the civic partner need to submit exactly?	Under the 'endorsement form' tab on the New Foundations webpage, you will find a form specific to Strand 1a. This form is to be completed by the civic society partner organisation. The completed form needs to be signed and uploaded as part of the application onto SmartSimple by the applicant. This form is deemed as proof that the application is supported by the civic society partner organisation.
Can you give us an example of the type of project that has been funded under Strand 1a?	The full list of projects which have been granted funding under past iterations of the New Foundations scheme can be found here: https://research.ie/awardees/
Does the civil society group need to be Ireland-based?	The civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator.
For Strand 1A (Enhancing Civic Society), is it possible (and permissible) for some of the award budget to be allocated to project-related activities carried out by the charity partner? In other words, can the expenditure include a budget of sorts for the charity to use?	

Costs for partner involvement can be included on the award – this would fall under the ‘other’ category in the budget domains.

2. Strand 1c-related queries

****NEW** What is required from the signed letter of endorsement from the Co-PI’s host institution for Strand 1c?**

As noted in the Call Document (pg.8), there is a requirement to upload a signed letter of endorsement from the Co-PI’s host institution as part of the application. Applicants should contact and be advised by their Research Office regarding the requirements of institutional endorsement.

Can the duration of a Strand 1c project be less than 9 or 12 months?

As per the Call Document Guidelines for Strand 1c, awards under this strand will be either 9 or 12 months in duration.

Is it possible to make an application as a PI while also being a named Co-PI on a separate application?

As stated on page 7 of the Call Document, applicants may only make one application to the scheme in a given year. This includes applications as a co-PI.

If a PI and Co-PI are from the same HEI, will the Research Office be able to endorse both in the Smart Simple portal, or should the Research Office submit a letter of support for the Co-PI during the application process?

A letter of support should be submitted for the Co-PI.

Should the letter of support supplied by the Co-PI’s host institution be signed by the PI’s department or their Research Office?

As per the Call Document, there is a requirement to upload a signed letter of endorsement from the Co-PI’s host institution as part of the application. Applicants should contact and be advised by their Research Office regarding institutional endorsement.

Can more than one Co-PI be included on the application?

As per the Call Document (pg. 17) this new strand encourages both new and existing collaborations between two principal investigators from different disciplines (a PI and a Co-PI).

For strand 1c, will the IRC issue a letter of endorsement template for the Co-PI’s institution (similar to the endorsement templates for strands 1a and 4)? If not, can you please clarify if you just need a statement that the institution supports the application, or is any other information needed?

The CO-PI’s institution should have a template for an endorsement form that can be used.

Does the Co-PI need to be based in an Irish Higher Education Institution / Research Performing Organisation? Can the Co-PI be based outside of Ireland?

The Co-PI on the project needs to be based in an eligible Irish HEI/RPO.

How many awards will be granted for strand 1c?

As per the Call Document, up to 5 awards will be made.

For strand 1c, can some members of the be drawn from outside Ireland?

The Co-PI must be based in an eligible Irish HEI/RPO. Collaborators and other members can be drawn from outside of Ireland.
Is it necessary that the PI and Co-PI are in different institutions? Can one be for instance in TCD and the other in a TCD centre at a hospital? Can both the PI and Co-PI be from the same HEI?
The PI and Co-PI can be from the same Irish HEI/RPO. However, it is important to note that the research being proposed in the application must be of an interdisciplinary nature. The PI must name a Co-PI on their application who will add their expertise to specifically target interdisciplinary research addressing national societal challenge.
Can you expand on what societal shocks, which are mentioned in strand 1c might be? Would the problem of antimicrobial resistance be deemed a societal shock?
As stated in the Call Document, Ireland faces an array of key social, environmental and economic challenges, the complexity and scale of which have been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic, technological change, demographic change, the energy crisis and geopolitical conflict. In summary, a situation becomes a societal shock, crisis or emergency when its scale, timing or unpredictability lead to societal consequences which have the potential to overwhelm routine community capabilities to address them.
For the interdisciplinary 1c strand, can the disciplines be within AHSS, or does the network have to be from both AHSS and STEM?
As stated on pg. 18 of the Call Document, the strand is open to either AHSS or STEM leadership, with any combination of an AHSS and STEM co-partnership. So yes - the disciplines can be within AHSS.
3. Strand 4-related queries
NEW How do I know if a country is ODA-eligible?
Please refer to the DAC list of ODA Recipients, found here: OECD DAC List of ODA Recipients
NEW We are proposing to buy out hours of a research assistant already employed in our partner RPO, from the eligible partner country. This person is not the PI or Co-PI. Would this be allowed under the buying out of hours cost?
As noted in the Call Document (pg. 11), teaching buyout/academic replacement costs are an eligible cost and may be pro rata. All staff costs must be specified and fully justified.
Is it possible to include more than one partner country as collaborators in the same project?
Yes, more than one partner country may be involved in your project.
We have a researcher interested in partnering with Palestine, however due to the current conflict, they will find it difficult to get a Palestinian University to endorse the project. Would it be OK to partner with a Palestinian researcher working in an Israeli University? Or is there another way to address this possible issue?
Collaborative agreements are a matter for the research team and should be developed within the framework of institutional policies and any relevant national regulations.
Do you have examples of past partnerships Ireland and Africa?

<p>Further details specific to past awards made under Strand 4 can be found here: Irish Aid Partnerships Irish Research Council</p>
<p>What countries in sub-Saharan Africa qualify as partner countries?</p>
<p>As stated on pg. 20 of the Call Document, eligible partner countries include any Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible country on the African continent; any ODA-eligible Small Island Developing State (SIDS); Vietnam; Palestine; Laos; Cambodia; Myanmar.</p>
<p>4. Strand 4b-related queries</p>
<p>We hope to collaborate with an external expert who would form an integral part of the project. The collaborator will be paid then from the project budget for their time. Would that fall within the eligible expenses or would there need to be an open recruitment for their services?</p>
<p>Any external services sought must fall in line with institutional procurement policies. If staff are to be recruited to the project, recruitment must be via an open recruitment process in line with institutional policies.</p>
<p>If you have already received an award through strand 4b (as a partner) are you eligible to apply a second time?</p>
<p>You are not excluded from applying to New Foundations 2024 should you have had a successful project in the past. Past and current award holders are eligible to apply provided the new proposal is clearly distinct from their past/current award. Applications will be deemed ineligible if the research project as proposed in the application has previously been funded in full, or in part, by the IRC.</p>
<p>5. Strand 10-related queries (no queries to date)</p>
<p>**NEW** The call document clearly states that the max budget for strand 10 is €20,000. However, in the application itself it says (max €15,000). We are working on the assumption that the call document (€20k) is correct however, can you please confirm the correct max requested budget for strand 10 please?</p>
<p>The max budget for strand 10 is €20,000, as stated in the Call Document.</p>
<p>6. Strand 15-related queries (no queries to date)</p>
<p>7. Strand 17-related queries (no queries to date)</p>
<p>8. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE (no queries to date)</p>
<p>**NEW** Is there an overhead payable with the New Foundations scheme?</p>
<p>There is no overhead payable. Only eligible costs as set out in the Eligible expenditure table in the Call Document (pgs. 10-11) will be considered.</p>
<p>**NEW** A PI is planning an event as part of their proposal. Is it permitted to ask attendees to pay a fee to cover costs of the event?</p>
<p>It is expected that the budget will reflect costs associated with execution of the proposal, e.g. events and other activities that are part of the research.</p>
<p>9. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</p>

NEW An applicant wishes to plan for an event outside the funding period, would it be acceptable to spend the funds on the planning and readying for an event which then occurs outside the funding period?
All expenses must be incurred within the lifetime of the project, and all budgeted project activities must be completed by the project end date.
Do lead applicants need to have a PhD?
Yes, as per section 4 of the Call Document, applicants must hold a doctoral degree.
10. APPLYING TO THE SCHEME
NEW ‘Has a Steering Group or Advisory Committee for this project been identified?’, we are looking for advice on how to best tackle this question. Is it something external that needs to be set up? Or is it ok that the PIs are the committee itself?
A Steering Committee is not a requirement for New Foundations funding. If a Steering Committee is put in place, it is up to the PI to determine the composition of the Committee.
NEW If an applicant transfers to a different eligible institution prior to being offered an award, or if an awardee transfers to a different eligible institution during the lifetime of their award, are they permitted to continue the award?
As per the Call Document (pg. 7), 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. As per the IRC’s General Terms and Conditions for PI-led awards, if the awardee has or intends to take up an appointment at another eligible institution, then they may seek the Irish Research Council’s agreement for the award to be transferred. The Irish Research Council may, but shall not be obliged to, agree to such request
NEW A PI does not currently hold a contract of sufficient duration, but they expect it to be extended at the end of the year. If a colleague submits the application, does the IRC allow a change of PI on the grant post-award?
As per the Call Document (pg. 7), 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.
Where can I find information on eligible Higher Education Institutions and Research Performing Organisations?
Please refer to the list of eligible Higher Education Institutions and RPOs , which is available on the New Foundations webpage.
Can a single supporting organization or civil service partner be attached to more than one application across different strands?
A civic society partner can support more than one application across strands provided the research projects proposed are clearly distinct.
Can a diagram/figure be uploaded to Smart Simple to illustrate how the proposal contributes to the identified themes of the strand, or is only text allowed?
The application form in Smart Simple only provides a text box for this section - uploading a diagram is not possible.
Are PI costs an eligible cost? Can the PI budget a specified number of hours per week that they would work on the project and include these costs in the budget? For example, if the PI planned to work one day per week on the project, could they include the cost of one day’s labour per week in the budget?

As stated on page 11 of the call document under Eligible Expenditures, teaching buyout/academic replacement costs are an eligible cost and may be pro rata.
Is it possible to delay the beginning of a New Foundations project or get a no-cost extension for a project in the case of applicants taking parental leave?
The IRC has a standard leave policy which applies to the New Foundations scheme. Successful applicants can review the leave policy in line with the Terms & Conditions of the award. The leave policy can be found here: Policies About us Irish Research Council
You said that each applicant can only submit one application. Is this one application per strand or one application overall?
As stated on page 7 of the Call Document, applicants may only make one application to the scheme in a given year. It is one application overall.
Could you please explain what a contract of sufficient duration is? For example, if the applicant is an occasional lecturer (employed during term time), are they excluded from this call? Thank you
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.