

# Open for **new ideas**

## SFI Future Innovator Prize



# Science Foundation Ireland Future Innovator Prize

## 2018 Call Application Handbook

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Version: September 2018

### KEY DATES

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|------------------------|--|
| • Call Launch          | 18th September 2018                        |
| • Workshop             | 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018               |
| • Application Deadline | 9th November 2018, 13:00 Dublin Local Time |
| • Funding Decision     | December 2018                              |
| • Concept Phase Review | End of Q1 2019                             |
| • Seed Phase Review    | Q4 2019                                    |
| • Prize Award          | Q4 2019                                    |

### Terms of Reference

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of this document, it is provided for information purposes only and as a guide to expected developments. It is not intended, and should not be relied upon, as any form of warranty, representation, undertaking, contractual, or other commitment binding in law upon Science Foundation Ireland, the Government of Ireland, or any of their respective servants or agents. Science Foundation Ireland Terms and Conditions of Research Grants shall govern the administration of SFI grants and awards to the exclusion of this and any other oral, written, or recorded statement.

All responses to this Call for Submission of Proposals will be treated in confidence and no information contained therein will be communicated to any third party without the written permission of the applicant except insofar as is specifically required for the consideration and evaluation of the proposal or as may be required under law, including the Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) Act, 2003, the Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) (Amendment) Act 2013 and the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003.

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## **1 About the SFI Future Innovator Prize**

The SFI Future Innovator Prize is a new challenge funding opportunity from Science Foundation Ireland. It seeks to support Ireland's best and brightest unconventional thinkers and innovators to develop novel, potentially disruptive, technologies to address significant societal challenges.

To do this, the prize will enable the formation of high-performance interdisciplinary STEM research teams to identify and validate challenges of national significance. These teams will develop solutions to those challenges based on the unconventional perspectives arising from the convergence of knowledge, practice and methods from the different disciplines and sectors involved.

This prize will empower innovators through a "bottom-up" approach that will allow them to identify challenges and develop solutions in new ways. It is envisaged that future calls will be targeted at specific challenge areas. Under the SFI Future Innovator Prize, the challenges to be addressed must be significant; of strategic national importance and globally relevant. In this way, the prize will enable researchers to apply their knowledge and expertise to address key issues of strategic importance to Ireland but also provide a platform from which researchers can translate their solutions to take advantage of a global opportunity.

A challenge is a bold and ambitious goal that drives innovation toward addressing a complex, often intractable, societal issue/problem. Challenges and their solutions involve many stakeholders and beneficiaries across both public and private sectors/systems (e.g. government, national agencies and services, industry, HEIs, regulators, entrepreneurs, investors). As a result, the identification of challenges and the development of solutions requires a combination of technical and non-technical skills and insights. To maximise the potential for societal impact, the prize places strong emphasis on collaborative approaches that bring together diverse STEM researchers, stakeholders and the beneficiaries of research, to define challenges in new ways and co-create novel, potentially disruptive, solutions that should transform how we live. It is anticipated that the prize will incentivise stakeholders to co-develop solutions thereby amplifying collective capabilities to create sustainable, equitable and innovation-led growth. This has the potential to not only drive societal impact here in Ireland but also give Ireland a unique advantage in addressing challenges that have global implications.

The SFI Future Innovator Prize will consist of three phases: Concept, Seed and Prize Award. Following application review, successful applicant teams will be awarded funding of €20k to undertake team building, scoping and concept validation activities. They will then undergo a rigorous interview and

shortlisted teams will be provided with funding of €200k to further validate and prototype their proposed solutions. Finalists will compete for an overall prize award of €1M.

## **2 Objectives of the SFI Future Innovator Prize**

The overarching ambition of the SFI Future Innovator Prize is to enable the development of disruptive STEM-based solutions to key national challenges. This is underpinned by several specific objectives:

- To support development of novel, potentially disruptive, technologies to address significant national and global challenges.
- To support the formation of high-performance interdisciplinary teams based on integration of diverse STEM disciplines and complementary skillsets.
- To promote convergence of knowledge, practice and methods from different disciplines and sectors.
- To promote engagement between researchers and stakeholders/beneficiaries of research.
- To accelerate societal impact from publicly funded research.

## **3 What is Challenge Funding?**

Challenge funding differs in two important ways from more traditional forms of research funding:

- Challenge funding sets out a specific issue to be addressed at the outset – the challenge. Challenges should be visionary, inspirational but achievable and have transformative potential if successfully addressed. Challenges are identified/defined through collaboration between innovators, stakeholders, beneficiaries and end-users.
- Challenge funding focuses on delivering solutions. To find the most innovative and impactful solutions, challenge funding uses a highly competitive process to incentivize innovators including stage gated release of funding, tight delivery timeframes and a final prize.

## **4 Challenge Teams**

The SFI Future Innovator Prize is intended to support highly motivated interdisciplinary challenge teams committed to addressing key national societal challenges of transformative impact potential. Given the complex and multi-stakeholder nature of challenges and the strong emphasis that the prize places on delivering solutions, teams must encompass a range of technical (both scientific and

engineering) and non-technical skills to address various barriers associated with challenge definition and solution deployment.

The prize will support close collaboration between researchers and solution beneficiaries so that relevant, meaningful and important challenges can be identified and validated. In this context, it is expected that the solutions are developed in collaboration with beneficiaries to maximise their societal impact potential. The inclusion of this expertise should serve to assist teams to navigate non-technical issues relating to challenges and solutions such as stakeholder engagement and barrier identification. It may also enhance the technical skill set of the team with non-technical skills such as innovation and entrepreneurship.

Challenge teams should be strongly committed to applying interdisciplinary and convergent thinking to develop unconventional approaches to the identification of challenges and to the development of novel, potentially disruptive, solutions. Given the focus of the prize on solution delivery, the technical capabilities of teams should include design and prototyping. Final deployment of a solution should occur within a 1-year timeframe after the end of the Prize Award phase.

## 5 Who Can Apply?

The SFI Future Innovator Prize will accept applications from highly motivated teams comprising researchers (established, postdoctoral) and postgraduate students (MSc/MEng, PhD) from eligible research bodies<sup>1</sup>. Applications to the prize must identify a core applicant/leadership team comprising:

- **Team Lead** (Lead Applicant) - It is expected that the Team Lead will have responsibility for managing the activities of the team, will provide technical leadership and have overall responsibility for delivery of research programme objectives.
- **Team Co-Lead** (Co-Applicant) - It is expected that the Team Co-Lead will provide technical leadership as part of the research programme but should not have the same technical/disciplinary background as that of the Team Lead.
- **Societal Impact Champion** - It is expected that the Societal Impact Champion will play a key advocacy role and assist in maximising the societal impact of the solution. They will provide non-technical leadership and support the lead and co-lead to identify and validate challenges

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/eligibility-related-information/>

in addition to advising on solution development. Importantly, it is envisaged that the Societal Impact Champion will play a crucial role in identifying barriers and developing strategies to overcome them.

Following successful application, core teams will have an opportunity to build a broader challenge team. This will include identification and recruitment of additional collaborators (e.g. researchers, beneficiaries, end-users, industry stakeholders or students) and planning or defining activities they will undertake as part of the challenge team.

## 6 Applicant Team Composition & Eligibility

For the SFI Future Innovator Prize, applications will be accepted where the Lead Applicant and Co-Applicant (where applicable) satisfy the following the eligibility criteria.

### Eligibility Criteria

- Be a **member of the academic staff** of an eligible Research Body (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the award),  
*or*
- Be a **contract researcher** with a contract that covers the period of the award (contract may be subject to receipt of the award).  
*and*
- Hold a PhD or equivalent. Please consult the SFI Policy on PhD Equivalence<sup>2</sup> for further information.

While not formal eligibility requirements, Lead and Co-Lead applicants should have a track record demonstrating: research publication, securing of research grants as lead investigator or as co-investigator; and experience, capability and authority to mentor and supervise postgraduate students and team members.

Where the Co-Applicant (Team Co-Lead) is a postgraduate student (i.e. a full-time student undertaking a postgraduate qualification, e.g. MSc/MEng, PhD, by research in a STEM discipline registered at an eligible Research Body), the Co-Applicant is exempt from the eligibility criteria and considerations

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/eligibility-related-information/>

above. Applications will not be accepted where the Lead Applicant is a postgraduate student. Table 1 indicates the possible application scenarios under the programme.

**Table 1 - SFI Future Innovator Prize Eligibility Matrix.**

Scenario	Lead Applicant	Co-Lead Applicant	
A	Academic Staff or Contract Researcher; Holds a PhD (or equivalent)	Academic Staff or Contract Researcher; Holds a PhD (or equivalent)	Permitted
B	Academic Staff or Contract Researcher; Holds a PhD (or equivalent)	Full-time postgraduate student at an eligible Irish research body	Permitted
C	Full-time postgraduate student at an eligible Irish research body	Academic Staff or Contract Researcher; Holds a PhD (or equivalent)	Not Permitted
D	Full-time postgraduate student at an eligible Irish research body	Full-time postgraduate student at an eligible Irish research body	Not Permitted

Only applications aligned to Scenarios A and B are allowed under the programme. Please note that Lead and Co-Lead Applicants are only permitted to be named on one application.

In cases where the Team Co-Lead is a postdoctoral researcher or postgraduate student, the Co-Lead must be endorsed by the Lead Applicant in the form of a Letter of Support. This Letter of Support must confirm, that the Lead Applicant has agreed to act as mentor (see Section 8.6) to the Co-Lead for the duration of the award. In cases where the Lead Applicant is not the current mentor/supervisor, the Letter of Support must outline how this situation will be managed and must be countersigned by the current mentor/supervisor.

Members of the applicant team may be located at different eligible research bodies. In this case, funding awarded under the prize programme will be administered through the Research Body of the Lead Applicant.

## 7 Prize Programme Process Overview

There are three phases to the programme: **Concept, Seed and Prize Award**.



### 7.1 Application

A core challenge team is formed that prepares an application to compete for the Prize. This application should include: preliminary challenge validation, a solution concept, and a description of the potential impact of addressing the challenge. Challenge validation refers to a process whereby stakeholders, beneficiaries and end-users have been consulted to: i) identify/define a challenge and its significance, and ii) assess the potential societal impact of a proposed solution.

Following submission, applications are checked for eligibility. Teams that submit applications that are not deemed eligible under the programme are notified and their application is withdrawn. Eligible applications are then assigned to a panel of international experts secured by SFI which reviews the applications based on the following criteria:

- *Quality, experience and ambition of the applicant team*
- *Significance of the challenge*
- *Novelty of the proposed solution, including its potential to deliver disruptive innovation*
- *Transformative societal impact potential of the solution*
- *Feasibility of execution within the budget and timeframe permitted*

Only applications deemed to be of both excellent scientific/engineering/technical quality and demonstrating strong impact potential are recommended for funding by the sitting panel. Applicant teams whose proposals do not proceed will be notified by SFI. Applicant teams that do not proceed at this stage will not receive feedback.

**Following assessment of applications, up to ten of the most competitive teams will each be awarded €220k and will enter the Concept Phase of the programme. During the 3-month Concept Phase,**

**teams may access up to a maximum of €20k. At the end of the Concept Phase, the progress of teams will be assessed by international review with *up to five* of the most competitive teams progressing to the Seed Phase. Teams that do not progress to the Seed Phase will have their remaining Concept Phase funding decommitted.**

## **7.2 Concept Phase**

The Concept Phase is intended to support teams to develop the feasibility and viability case for the concept presented in their application. In this regard, teams will be expected to further validate the challenge identified, provide detail on the proposed solution and its implementation, and describe an impact pathway for their solution. As part of the impact pathway, teams must describe technical and non-technical barriers to be overcome, the opportunity associated with addressing those barriers and how the solution will achieve impact. As part of this process, the core (applicant) team will have the opportunity to recruit additional team members. These additional team members should have skills and knowledge to support the objectives of the proposal. It is strongly recommended that stakeholders and beneficiaries be included as members of a broader team. At the end of the Concept Phase, representatives from the team will be invited to pitch their concept to a panel of international experts drawn from a range of sectors including academia, industry, entrepreneurship and investment. This panel will assess the progress of the team and the likelihood of success and make a recommendation as to whether the team should progress to receive seed funding under the programme.

**At the conclusion of the Concept Phase, up to five of the most competitive teams will be recommended to progress to the Seed Phase. During the 9-month Seed Phase, teams may use the remaining award amount. Those teams not successful at the end of the Concept Phase will have their funding decommitted.**

## **7.3 Seed Phase**

The Seed Phase enables teams to undertake further stakeholder engagement and collaborative co-development towards a field-ready prototype. The development of this prototype should be guided by the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries and be informed by key measures of success identified through engagement with stakeholders and beneficiaries. During this prototyping process, the team should commence planning for further development and deployment of the solution. While the programme is intended to support pre-commercial activities, and as such development of existing products is not permitted, as part of the Seed Phase it may be necessary to consider commercialisation

routes to fully scope solution deployment. In this context, teams should take into consideration the necessary requirements to facilitate this process and it is anticipated that the collective skill set of the challenge team will support such activity. The Seed Phase will culminate with teams pitching to an international prize panel who will assess progress made in developing the prototype and validation of the deployment plan.

**Following assessment of the five teams in the Seed Phase, one team will be selected to receive the €1M prize award to support development and deployment of their challenge solution.**

#### **7.4 Prize Award**

The winning team will finalise and implement their plan for solution deployment with a view to delivering the solution within one year of the end Prize Award phase.

**NOTE: SFI reserves the right not to grant a Prize Award if the review panel does not identify a winning team. In addition, the final funding decisions are at the sole and exclusive discretion of SFI, which are arrived at following consideration and approval by the SFI Executive Committee and the SFI Grant Approval Committee. SFI reserves the right to modify the review process. Applicants will be notified of any relevant modification to the review procedure.**

## **8 Prize Application Form**

To apply to the Prize, applicants must download and complete an official application form available on the SFI Future Innovator Prize webpage. Following completion, this file should be converted to PDF format and submitted to [innovation@sfi.ie](mailto:innovation@sfi.ie) in advance of the application deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

### **8.1 Section 1 – Applicant Team & Idea**

Section 1 of the application form allows you to provide summary information on the core applicant team and the idea you are proposing. As part of this section, you should provide a clear and concise summary of your idea. Ensure that you clearly describe the challenge you have identified and your proposed solution. Describe what is visionary about the challenge and what is unconventional about your approach, why you expect it to succeed and how it will deliver impact.

As part of this section, we also require that you justify how your application is aligned with SFI's legal remit. This involves providing a brief summary of why it is appropriate for SFI to fund this research.

More information on SFI legal remit can be found on the SFI website<sup>3</sup>. Please note that this statement will be used to determine the eligibility of your application.

## **8.2 Section 2 - Team, Challenge, Solution & Societal Impact**

Section 2 provides you with the opportunity to provide more detailed information on the team, challenge, proposed solution and the societal impact that your solution will deliver. It is important that as part of this section you:

- Briefly describe the applicant team. Describe how, through its composition and formation, the team brings a unique perspective and unfair advantage in addressing this challenge.
- Describe clearly the challenge, its importance and the opportunity for Ireland? How is it visionary and inspirational? Is it high-risk/high-reward? Why is the team's perspective on this challenge different? How have you engaged with stakeholders/beneficiaries to validate the challenge? What are the key barriers that your team will address? Has this challenge international relevance?
- Describe clearly the solution proposed? How is it novel and/or unconventional? How will the proposed approach (technical/non-technical) lead to disruptive innovation? How feasible/viable is the solution? What are the risks?
- What outcomes will your solution deliver and when (provide an indication of key milestones, deliverables and timelines)? How will your solution transform society?

## **8.3 Section 3 – Budget & Resources**

Section 3 should be used to describe the budget (direct costs) and resources you will need. Given the stage gated nature of the SFI Future Innovator Prize programme, it will not be possible to provide significant detail in relation to requirements for the Seed Phase. As such, the requested budget and resources for this phase should be indicative and be based on what you currently envisage. In this section:

- Provide a breakdown of the indicative eligible direct costs (in €) associated with your application.
- Please review the SFI Grant Budget Policy for eligible costs and team member salary scales.
- Please include any subcontracting to be undertaken in the Materials & Consumables section.

As part of this section, please also provide a high-level justification for your Concept Phase requests.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sfi.ie/about-us/about-sfi/what-we-do/>

In addition to direct costs, SFI also makes an indirect or overhead contribution to the host research body, which is reflected as a percentage (30%) of the direct costs (excluding equipment). Overheads are payable as a contribution to the Research Body for the indirect costs of hosting SFI-funded research programmes and are intended to enable the research body to develop internationally competitive research infrastructure and support services.

#### **8.4 Section 4 – Authorisation**

For an application to be accepted, it must be authorised for submission by the host research body of the lead applicant. To demonstrate authorisation, Section 4 must be completed in full. It should be noted that Research Body submission of an application represents their approval of an application and agreement to SFI General Terms and Conditions<sup>4</sup>. Submission must only be made by an authorised Research Body representative. In particular, the Research Body is approving:

- The eligibility of the applicants.
- That the applicants are, or will be upon receipt of the grant, recognised as employees of the Research Body for the duration of the grant.
- That the requested budget including salaries/stipends, equipment, travel and consumables are in line with accepted institutional guidelines.
- The availability of infrastructure within the institution as outlined by the applicant in the research proposal.
- That the proposed research programme has not been funded by other sources.
- That relevant ethical and regulatory approval has been or will be sought and must be granted prior to the award commencing.
- That the relevant licences will be in place at the time of award.
- That the details provided in relation to research funding history i.e., current, pending or expired grants, as detailed in the application, are valid and accurate.
- That permission from all team members and collaborators has been obtained, such that SFI may receive their personal information, and may process such data for the purpose of peer review.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/sfi-general-terms-and-conditions/>

## **8.5 Section 5 – Curricula Vitae**

As part of Section 5, please include curricula vita for each of the core applicant team members. The CV template is available for download from the SFI Future Innovator Prize webpage. The CV not only provides you with an opportunity to give information about your education, employment record and research outputs where relevant, but also allows you to identify up to five key achievements in research and impact.

**NOTE:** The Societal Impact Champion is not required to use the CV template provided and may use a format of their choosing. However, the overall length of the CV must not exceed 2-pages.

## **8.6 Section 6 – Letters of Support**

As part of an application to the prize, several Letters of Support must be provided. Details of these Letters can be found in Section 6 of the Application Form.

## **9 Progress Review and Prize Award Management**

Review of progress at the end of the Concept and Seed Phases will be undertaken by a sitting panel of international experts. This process will involve the completion and submission of a progress report to SFI. This report will then form the basis of a presentation given by the team to the sitting panel. The sitting panel will review progress and future plans and make a recommendation to SFI as to whether the team should progress to the subsequent phase of the programme. Guidance on progress reports will be provided to applicants at the start of each phase.

Upon completion of the Seed Phase, the remaining teams will make a final presentation to a prize panel. This panel will assess the potential societal and economic impact of the work undertaken to date and recommend an overall winning team that will receive the prize award of €1M to deliver the solution developed through the Concept and Seed Phases of the programme.

## **10 Additional Information**

### **10.1 SFI Resubmission Policy**

Applications to any call that are based primarily on unsuccessful submissions (following peer review) to any SFI programme must demonstrate that the review comments resulting from the initial application have been considered in the preparation of the new submission. SFI will not review

resubmissions that have not clearly considered the major comments or concerns resulting from the prior review and these proposals will be withdrawn without review. Please see SFI Policy on Resubmission of Grant Applications<sup>5</sup> for further information. Applicants to an SFI call for proposals must declare whether a new submission relates to a previously submitted application to any SFI scheme. If the application is a resubmission, a statement referencing the previous application and explaining the differences must be provided and making reference to reviewer comments where relevant. Please email this statement to [innovation@sfi.ie](mailto:innovation@sfi.ie) prior to the deadline. This statement will assist SFI Scientific Staff in the assessment of eligibility of a revised application and will not be shared with reviewers.

## **10.2 Conflict of Interest**

Experts engaged by SFI are required to abide by the [SFI Reviewer Code of Conduct](#). Amongst other requirements, this includes operation in a confidential, fair, independent and equitable manner. Experts are required to confirm, in advance of carrying out their review(s), that they will do so in a confidential manner. The identity of experts who conduct the postal reviews shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed to the applicant. SFI shall not be liable for the release of information concerning proposals to third parties by those international experts involved in the peer-review process. Adherence to the SFI Reviewer Code of Conduct also requires experts to immediately identify and declare where a conflict of interest exists or arises; in such cases, alternative reviewers will be appointed. Reviewers must adhere to high standards of integrity during the peer-review process. They must not compromise the intellectual property integrity of the application and may not appropriate and use as their own, or disclose to any third party, ideas, concepts or data contained in the applications they review.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SFI\\_Resubmission-Policy\\_August-2016.pdf](http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SFI_Resubmission-Policy_August-2016.pdf)

### 10.3 SFI Policies and Positions

In advance of applying to any SFI programme, applicants are expected to be familiar with all relevant national and SFI policies including, but not limited to, the following:

**Clinical Trials** – Research programmes that include clinical trials as part of the study must adhere to the **SFI Clinical Trial and Clinical Investigation Policy**,<sup>6</sup> as well as with the requirements set out by the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA).

**Animal Usage** – Applicants intending to use animals in their research projects are obliged to comply with the **SFI Use of Animals in Research Policy**,<sup>7</sup> and should also ensure that their studies are in line with the HRPAs position on the use of animals in research.

**Research Integrity** – SFI places high importance on ensuring research integrity and endorses the **National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland**.<sup>8</sup> All applicants and institutions are expected to abide by this policy and the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity**.<sup>9</sup>

**Doctoral Education** – For postgraduate students funded by SFI, the host Research Body is expected to adopt the principles, standards and good practice for doctoral education as described in the **National Framework for Doctoral Education (2015)**,<sup>10</sup> which SFI has endorsed.

**Intellectual Property Management** - Intellectual Property (IP) should be managed according to the policies set out in the Government publication: **Inspiring Partnership - the National IP Protocol 2016**.<sup>11</sup> In cases where additional guidelines are specified by SFI they must also be followed. The IP arrangements are the responsibility of the Research Body and shall reflect the collaborative nature of the project, the level of cash and in-kind commitment made by the Industry Partner and compliance with State Aid Regulations.

**Gender Strategy** – Research should fully consider potential biological sex and socio-cultural gender dimensions as key analytical and explanatory variables. As articulated in the **SFI Gender Strategy**,<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/ethical-and-scientific-issues/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/ethical-and-scientific-issues/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.iaa.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrity-in-Ireland-2014.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics\\_code-of-conduct\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/national\\_framework\\_for\\_doctoral\\_education\\_0.pdf](http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/national_framework_for_doctoral_education_0.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/ManagingIP/KTI-Protocol-2016.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.sfi.ie/about-us/women-in-science/>

applicants are recommended to demonstrate that they have considered any potential sex/gender aspects in their proposed research programme.

**Appeals Process** - This policy establishes procedures and responsibilities for the appeal of the declination of a proposal by SFI.<sup>13</sup>

**State Aid** - All SFI funding granted under this call will be subject to and must be compliant with State aid law. As such, proposals must be designed to ensure that any funding received from SFI does not, directly or indirectly, give rise to the granting of State aid. Potential applicants are referred to the guidance provided by the European Commission in Section 2 of its **2014 Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/01)**<sup>14</sup>. If in any doubt as to the interpretation or application of this guidance, potential applicants are advised to seek independent legal advice.

**Child Protection** – Where relevant, applicants and Research Bodies are required to comply with the provisions of the **Children First Act 2015**,<sup>15</sup> and the **National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017**.<sup>16</sup> It is the responsibility of the Research Body to ensure that they are compliant with all applicable law.

**Data Protection Policy – The General Data Protection Regulation** is a legal framework that sets out guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information of individuals within the European Union.<sup>17</sup> Applicants are advised that they must be compliant with this regulation if they collect or process personal data. SFI may collect, use and disclose personal data provided in the application and/or otherwise obtained under, or in connection with, the application for processing the submission, for the performance of its statutory powers and functions, and for the general activities of SFI. Further details regarding SFI's collection, use and disclosure of personal data, and the rights of individuals with respect to any personal data held by SFI, are available in the **SFI Privacy Statement**.<sup>18</sup> During peer-review procedures, information may be sent to external experts in countries outside of the European Economic Area, including countries that are not recognised by the European Commission as having adequate data protection laws. By submitting an application to SFI, the

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/other/>

<sup>14</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627(01)&from=EN)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children\\_First\\_National\\_Guidance\\_2017.pdf](http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.eugdpr.org/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.sfi.ie/privacy/>

Research Body and members of the Research Team are agreeing that they consent to the processing and transfer of personal information in this way. During the application process or at any time thereafter, SFI may contact the Research Body, the Principal Investigator, or any member of the Research Team with regard to funding opportunities, activities or events organised by SFI or other relevant bodies, or for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation (including, but not limited to, the collection of scientific data or data relating to the application process). SFI may choose to authorise a third party to contact the Research Body, the Principal Investigator or any member of the Research Team on its behalf.

**NOTE: Current SFI policies and positions are reviewed on a regular basis; applicants are advised to consult the policy information in advance of submission of a proposal.**