

SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND

Brussels Conference Programme

Call for Submission of Proposals to host an Event in Brussels

Version July 2015

Key Dates

- The Conference and Workshop programme is run as a rolling call.
- Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year.
- Applications may not be submitted more than 12 months in advance of an event except in the case of Exceptional Conferences.
- Applications must be submitted at least four months in advance of the event.

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. SFI 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. Introduction

Science Foundation Ireland funds oriented basic and applied research in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), which promotes and assists the development and competitiveness of industry, enterprise and employment in Ireland.

The purpose of the SFI Brussels Conference programme is to support the creation of opportunities for Ireland and Irish researchers to influence EU policy, to help in the development of Horizon 2020 work programmes and to foster collaborations of strategic importance across the European Research Area (ERA). Topics where Ireland can become a pivotal player in areas of strategic pan-European benefit will be targeted by SFI. Drawing down significant Horizon 2020 investment in research and innovation is likely to occur in key strategic areas where Ireland can be, through its current research strengths, key contributors.

To maximise on such an initiative it is important at the outset to facilitate an opportunity to mobilise the relevant stakeholders in an effective manner with a view on presenting the State's product offering within a particular domain or scientific/technological field. This could be considered with regard to the kind of challenges that Ireland and/or Europe are currently facing - a societal gap or inequality of pan-European significance that needs to be addressed; or an opportunity that has been realised but no current implementation plan exists.

For SFI to help support and realise such events it is crucial that all relevant stakeholders within the research community join forces to catalyse and stimulate the creation of ideas and solutions to bring to a European platform. It will be expected that submissions to this Call will be coordinated through the SFI-funded Research Centres but will involve a broad cohort from the wider research community, both from Ireland and abroad, to ensure that multiple offerings are covered. A robust promotional plan for the event at both national and European level will therefore need to be considered as part of any proposal. Applicants will also be expected to work closely with the Enterprise Ireland Brussels office in planning the logistics of holding such an event.

2. Programme Remit

Current Irish government policy mandates that the majority of public research funding is aligned with areas of strategic opportunity for the State. These areas have been identified on the basis of an assessment of Ireland's economic potential as set out in the recommendations of the National Research Prioritisation (NRP) Steering Group, published in 2012, (NRP [report](#)) and adopted as Government policy. The majority of public funds for research must now be directed towards the fourteen priority areas and with the evolution of research priorities, new and emerging Strategic Areas of Opportunity. The remit of the SFI Brussels Conference programme is wider than NRP areas, but the event must focus on a research topic in an area covered by SFI's legal remit and alignment with NRP must be indicated where relevant.

3. Objectives

The specific objectives of the SFI Brussels Conference Programme are to

- Facilitate the hosting of conferences to help create opportunities for Ireland and Irish researchers to influence policy within the ERA
- Help Irish-based researchers and Irish business to contribute to the development of Horizon 2020 work programmes
- Encourage industry-informed research and academic-industrial partnerships to tackle economical and societal challenges of pan-European relevance
- Enable researchers at all stages of their careers to build a network of scientific contacts and collaborations

4. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- The applicant must be a Director or co-PI within an SFI-funded Research Centre.
- The applicant must be one of the event's organising committee Chairs, and if the conference Chair is not the applicant then his/her name should also appear on the cover sheet.

5. Eligibility of Research Body / Institution

The Research Body or Institution is the body responsible for the overall financial and administrative co-ordination of research programmes supported by research grants from SFI. Host Research Bodies must be situated in the Republic of Ireland. A list of [Eligible Research Bodies](#) is available on the SFI website.

6. Event Eligibility and Format

- SFI limits one proposal to cover the event as a whole and will not accept more than one application per event.
- The proposed conference must be held in Brussels, Belgium.
- Events whose primary focus is instructional, or those with a large teaching or training course component are not eligible for this programme.
- Events whose *primary* focus is based around the setting of research agendas i.e. research policy as opposed to dissemination of new knowledge is eligible for this programme.
- Representatives from other member states, including Commission representatives, should be invited as participants and speakers in the event, wherever possible.
- Representatives from indigenous industry should be invited as participants and speakers in the event, wherever possible.
- The organisers must ensure that the event is openly accessible, and that participants represent the diversity of people working in the field. Gender diversity amongst speakers or key participants is encouraged.
- The support of the Foundation should also be acknowledged in all news media and interviews. Awardees will be provided with guidelines on the successful promotion of SFI.
- Describing the promotional aspects of the event will be considered a key criteria.

7. Programme Details

7.1 Application Procedure

Applications should be prepared using the application form provided by SFI.

Required application materials are as follows:

- Completed cover sheet, signed by the applicant, and signed and stamped by the Irish Research Body.
- Application form in pdf format to include:
 - Requested starting date, duration and location of the event
 - Applicant gender and year of PhD
 - Justification how the proposed event fits within SFI's legal remit
 - NRP area selection (where relevant)
 - Contact details of the applicant
 - Brief biographical sketch of the applicant and conference/workshop Chair where the applicant is not the Chair of the event
 - Background and overview of the event
 - The area of focus being targeted through the event
 - Strategic value to Ireland of the event
 - An attendance/participation profile
 - Conference programme if applicable
 - List of invited speakers
 - An indicative budget using the budget template provided, with budget justification. The currency to be used is the euro (€)

Incomplete applications will be returned without review.

7.2 Funding & Eligible Costs

It is anticipated that the costs for hosting such an event will be no greater than €50,000. The following are eligible costs to the programme:

- Venue hire
- Meals
- Programme material
- Travel costs are eligible costs for speakers only
- Accommodation costs (maximum of one overnight stay) are eligible costs for speakers only

7.3 Submission

One electronic copy of the proposal as a single document in pdf format must be submitted by email to H2020@sfi.ie. The cover sheet must be signed by the applicant, and signed and stamped by the eligible Research Body.

7.4 Deadlines

Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year; the Programme is open on a rolling call basis. Applications may not be submitted more than 12 months in advance of an event. Applications must be submitted at least four months in advance of the event

7.5 Proposal Review Criteria

SFI will review the merits of proposals based on the following:

- Strategic impact for Ireland
- Quality, significance and timeliness of the proposed event to the ERA
- Quality of proposal preparation
- Track record of speakers or key participants (e.g. the event Chair if different from applicant)
- Track record of the applicant
- Expected number of participants
- Level of participation from relevant Irish academia and industry
- Level of participation from the European Commission
- Level of participation from other member states
- Promotional and advertising plan
- Gender diversity amongst speakers or key participants
- Requested budget

The final decision on all SFI awards rests with SFI.

8. Research Integrity

SFI places high importance on ensuring research integrity and endorses the [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#). All applicants and institutions are expected to abide by the aforementioned Irish Policy on Research Integrity and the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#). SFI plans to audit compliance by its award holders and relevant research bodies with the principles laid down in these guidelines that are relevant to the agency's activities and the awards it makes.

9. Ethical Issues

Research supported by SFI must respect fundamental ethical principles. Applicants must ensure that the proposed event respects all national rules and procedures. Where necessary, approval must be sought from the relevant national or local ethics committee prior to application.

10. Non-compliance

Proposals not in compliance with any details specified in this document or in the [Terms and Conditions of SFI Research Grants](#) or any other relevant SFI policies will not be eligible for an award and will be returned without review.

11. Confidentiality

Science Foundation Ireland takes all reasonable steps to ensure that information provided in the application is treated as confidential subject to submission to the members of its committees and merit review and to any obligations under law.

12. Reporting Requirements

For all conferences and workshops supported through this programme, a final report must be submitted to SFI within 90 days following the end date of the event. Submission of the final report is through SESAME where detailed guidelines can also be accessed in relation to the reporting template.

The Foundation has stringent requirements for the reporting by applicants on the grants that it makes. In order for SFI to evaluate the success of a Brussels Conference award, the grant recipient will be asked to describe the outputs arising from the event as part of their reporting requirements. The purpose of the report is to assess how well the award has delivered on the programmatic objectives.

13. Questions

For all additional queries please contact: H2020@sfi.ie.