SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND

Conferences and Workshops Programme

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Call for Submission of Proposals

Updated May 2018

Timelines

- The SFI Conferences and Workshops programme is run as a rolling call.
- Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year.
- Applications must be submitted at least six months in advance of the event in the case of Exceptional Conferences, and at least four months in advance of the event in the case of Conferences and Workshops.

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's (SFI) legal remit[1] is to promote, develop and assist the carrying out of oriented basic and applied research in strategic areas of scientific endeavour that concern the future development and competitiveness of industry and enterprise in the State. SFI funds in the research areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The purpose of the SFI Conferences and Workshops programme is to facilitate international and national conferences and workshops of strategic value hosted in the Republic of Ireland. These events are essential for the dissemination of research, knowledge exchange, development and exposure of early career researchers and students, together with development and growth of new and existing collaborations both nationally and internationally. SFI will support conferences and workshops of timely importance in all areas covered by SFI's legal remit. SFI is keen to support the exchange of information reciprocally between industry and academia generating new knowledge and leading-edge technologies and encouraging competitive enterprises. SFI Conferences and Workshops Awards fall into three different categories: Conferences, Exceptional conferences and Workshops.

SFI recognises also the wider economic and societal benefits of hosting high quality international research events in Ireland and links with Fáilte Ireland to provide support to such events.

2. Programme Remit

In 2012, the Government introduced Research Prioritisation, which aligns the majority of competitively awarded public investment in research with 14 priority areas, positioned within six enterprise themes as defined in Innovation 2020, to provide a more focused approach in the public funding of research and innovation activity.[2] In 2018, the Research Priority Areas were refreshed.[3] The majority of Ireland's competitive funding for research must be directed towards the priority areas deemed likely to yield greatest economic and societal impact, and towards new and emerging Strategic Areas of Opportunity. The remit of the Conferences and Workshops programme is wider than the Research Priority areas, but the event must focus on a research topic in an area covered by SFI's legal remit, and alignment with Research Priority area(s) must be indicated where relevant.

3. Objectives

The specific objectives of the SFI Conferences and Workshops programme are to

- Facilitate the hosting of conferences and workshops based on excellent scientific research that has potential economic and societal impact
- Help Irish-based researchers and research bodies contribute to and lead in scientific debate of both national and international importance
- Encourage industry-informed research and academic-industrial partnerships to build a competitive advantage for Ireland
- Enable researchers at all stages of their careers to build a network of scientific contacts and collaborations

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[1] http://www.sfi.ie/about-us/about-sfi/what-we-do/
[2] Innovation 2020
[3] Research Priority Areas 2018 to 2023

4. Eligibility

4.1 Applicant Eligibility Criteria

- The applicant must be an academic staff member, or a contract researcher with a contract that covers the period of the award and reporting, of an SFI Eligible Research Body
- The applicant does not have to be an SFI award-holder
- The applicant must be one of the event's organising committee Chairs, and if the conference or workshop Chair is not the applicant, a brief biographical sketch of the conference/workshop Chair must be included in the application

4.2 Eligibility of Research Body / Institution

The Research Body is the body responsible for the overall financial and administrative co-ordination of research programmes supported by funding 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.[4]

The term 'Research Body' and 'Institution' are equivalent and interchangeable in SFI documentation and in the SFI SESAME system.

4.3 Event Eligibility and Format

- In the case of a Conference and any associated Workshops, SFI expects one proposal to cover the event as a whole and will not accept more than one application per event.
- The proposed Conference or Workshop must be held in the Republic of Ireland.
- Events whose *primary* focus is instructional, or those with a large teaching or training course component, e.g., Summer Schools 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, are not eligible for this programme.
- Exceptional Conferences must be sponsored by an international scientific society or organisation e.g., *Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers*, *International Cytokine Society*. Conditional sponsorships are acceptable, but Conferences and Workshops funds will not be granted until proof of society sponsorship is verified. In the case of Conferences, it is expected that sponsorship by an international scientific society or organisation will be obtained. This is not mandatory but international sponsorship will be looked upon favourably in the review process. FP7 or Horizon 2020 funding does not qualify as sponsorship from an international society or organisation.
- Industry sponsorship (particularly in the form of financial sponsorship) is strongly encouraged and will be looked upon favourably during the review process.
- Representatives from indigenous industry should be invited as participants and speakers at 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.
- Postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and junior faculty should be included as participants and speakers in the event.
- All new materials (including internet pages) promoting the event generated after notification of an SFI award must carry the SFI logo. The support of the Foundation should also be acknowledged

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[4] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/eligibility-related-information/

in all news media and interviews. Awardees will be provided with guidelines on the successful promotion of SFI.

5.   Programme Details

5.1   Categories of Conferences and Workshops Awards

The different Conferences and Workshops awards are briefly described below in terms of their distinguishing features.

5.1a   *Conferences*

Conferences are expected to be events with significant international and national participation with typical delegate numbers ranging from approximately 100 to 1000. International society sponsorship is expected and will be looked upon favourably during the review process but is not absolutely required. Submissions must be received at least **four months in advance** and typically are not submitted more than 12 months in advance, as conference outline and schedule will need to be well developed for a competitive application, although early submissions may be justified. Funding of up to **€50,000** may be requested.

5.1b   *Exceptional Conferences*

Exceptional Conferences are expected to be sizeable events (1,000+ delegates) with significant international and national participation. They should be the most prestigious conferences in their fields, and would usually be competitively bid for and planned a number of years in advance. International society sponsorship is required. These events are expected to be of marked media interest and public impact. Submissions must be received at least **six months in advance** and funding of up to **€100,000** may be requested. Exceptional Conference proposals may be submitted prior to a competitive bid process as it is recognised that evidence of funding may be an important factor in the international bid process.

5.1c   *Workshops*

Workshops are expected to be smaller in scope and size than a conference. For review purposes, SFI will consider workshops with a highly focussed agenda involving approximately 100 participants or less (including speakers), with significant national participation. International society sponsorship is not required for workshops. It is recognised that workshops will involve a strong element of interaction among participants and will often comprise a practical aspect. Submissions must be received at least **four months in advance** and funding of up to **€10,000** may be requested.

5.2   Funding

It is expected that a registration fee will be imposed on attendees to cover the basic costs of the conference or workshop. Typically, funding from SFI may be requested to support expenses such as **travel and accommodation for overseas invited speakers**, **best presentation/poster awards and students' travel bursaries**. SFI requires that the event organisers acknowledge such funding by designating one or more plenary sessions as SFI-sponsored session(s) and by identifying SFI-funded presentation/poster awards in all event literature. Applications demonstrating significant non-SFI sponsorship will be reviewed favourably and SFI does not expect to be the principal funding source for the event.

5.3   Application Submission

For the SFI Conferences and Workshops programme, proposals will only be accepted through SESAME, SFI's grants and awards management system. Access to SESAME is controlled by staff at the research office of your host Research Body. Please follow your internal organisational process to request this access. Once you have been registered by your research office, **you will receive an email** containing:

1. Username
2. Password
3. SFI PIN number
4. SESAME website address

Your **username** and **password** are needed to log in to SESAME.

SESAME is accessed using the Internet; no additional software needs to be installed. You can access SESAME online from any location. The configuration of some browsers and internet infrastructure (popup blockers, firewalls, etc.) can restrict an individual's access to the internet and as a result to the SESAME system. If you are having any such difficulties, please contact your organisation's internal IT support team.

The SESAME system is accessed using the following Internet address:

https://grants.sfi.ie

Please see the SESAME Researcher User Guide for more detailed information[5].

> **SESAME enables:**

- Individual researchers to apply online for SFI grants.
- Host research bodies to review and authorise all applications.

Once submitted by the Research Body to SFI through SESAME, an application cannot be withdrawn and subsequently modified for resubmission, regardless of the date of submission.

6.   Application Procedure

6.1   Deadlines

Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the year; the Conferences and Workshops programme is open on a rolling call basis.

- Exceptional Conferences applications must be submitted at least six months in advance of the event
- Conferences applications must be submitted at least four months in advance of the event
- Workshops applications must be submitted at least four months in advance of the event

Although the deadline is four months in advance of the event for Conferences and Workshops categories, applicants are advised to submit as early as possible, in particular for larger events. Please note that **the minimum turn-around time for the processing of applications is eight weeks**.

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[5] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management-system/

Applicants should follow carefully the instructions below and in the SESAME Researcher User Guide[5] to complete the various sections of the application. In addition, a checklist of requirements is provided in Appendix A.

6.2   Proposal submission requirements

- **All text in uploaded PDFs** should be provided in Times New Roman font or similar with minimum font size of 12, and at least single-line spacing as well as a minimum margin size of 2.5cm. Text in diagrams may be in any clearly legible font.
- Uploads in SESAME must be submitted in **Adobe or Microsoft PDF format only**
- The currency to be used is the **euro** (€).
- File sizes of attachments should be **less than 5MB**

Proposals must be submitted online through SESAME to SFI by the Research Office of the applicant's research body within the specified deadlines.

Applications not adhering to these requirements, or with incomplete content, will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted for review.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that eligible proposals are received by SFI on, or before, the appropriate deadline. In order to safeguard against ineligibility, applicants are reminded to adhere rigorously to the guidelines in the call documentation and to review the proposal document prior to submission in SESAME.

6.3   ORCID ID

ORCID provides a unique identifier for all researchers, which can then be linked to their different research works across different platforms.[6] There are a number of benefits to creating an ORCID iD, which include the following:

- ORCID allows you to pull information from different platforms, creating a centralised reference to your different works (e.g., publications, patents, awards) in one location using a single sign in
- Your ORCID iD is a unique identifier, which distinguishes you from other researchers with a similar name
- Using the ORCID iD helps to make your research works more visible to funders and publishers. You are able to build a complete picture of your research in one location.

As part of the integration of SESAME with ORCID, it is possible for researchers to import publication data from ORCID directly into their SESAME Research Profile. Applicants are required to link their SESAME Research Profiles to an ORCID iD **before an application can be submitted**.

6.4   Eligibility Questions

Applicants must confirm that they have read and understood the eligibility criteria in the call document, and that they are eligible to apply to the Conferences & Workshops programme.

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[6] http://orcid.org/

6.5   Proposal Summary

- **Event Title (max. 30 words)**
  The event title should clearly convey the nature of the event. Please indicate the proposed **date**, **duration** (number of days) and **location** of the event.

- **Proposal Category**
  Applicants are required to select the proposal category from the drop-down menu, which best describes the type of the event (Conference, Exceptional Conference, or Workshop).

- **Primary Priority Area**
  Please select the appropriate priority area (where relevant) or detail the *other* area under SFI's legal remit to which the event aligns.

- **Alignment to SFI Legal Remit (max. 250 words)**
  Applicants are required to complete a brief statement **justifying how the proposed event fits within SFI's legal remit.** This statement will be used to determine the eligibility of the application.

6.6   Overview of Event

- **Background and overview of event (max. 500 words)**
  Include relevant information pertaining to the three most recent international meetings in the conference/workshop series (including, but not limited to publication acceptance rate and single track or multi-track), if applicable.

  Include details of sponsorship from international scientific society or organisation if applicable.

- **Scientific focus and significance of the event (max. 500 words)**
  Include plan for dissemination of conference/workshop output if applicable.

  Include plan for webcasting or other electronic dissemination if applicable.

- **Strategic value to Ireland of the event (max. 500 words)**

  Include description of envisaged strategic value of the event to Ireland. This may include details of potential academic, economic or social impact.

- **Brief biographical sketch of the applicant and conference/workshop Chair where the applicant is not the event Chair (max. 200 words each)**

6.7   Attendance/participation profile

- **Attendance/participation profile (max. 500 words)**

  Include expected number of Irish/international academic participants, provide detail on the Irish academic groups expected to attend, expected industrial participation, identify companies, associations and sectors that will participate, expected student and post-doctoral researcher participation, gender diversity amongst speakers or key participants, level of public participation (including plans for novel means of public dissemination if applicable), relevance to science in society.

  Applicants are further required to provide information on the expected level of national and international participation (excluding speakers), and expected number of national and international speakers.

- **List of Invited Speakers**

  Please indicate invited speakers who have already confirmed their attendance.

6.8   Conference/Workshop Programme

Applicants are required to upload the conference/workshop programme (draft version is acceptable).

6.9   Event Budget (Projected Income/Expenses)

Please complete the fields provided under Description of Projected Income (registration fees details, non-SFI sponsorship). The reduced income from subsidised registration fees is captured in the "Description of Income". In cases where there are multiple registration fee bands, use the average price and number of attendees in full and subsidised registration categories to complete the required figures under the description of projected income section. In the budget justification section, please state each fee category and number of attendees for each sub-category separately to allow for an accurate estimate of projected income from registration fees.

Please provide a breakdown of non-SFI sponsorship and do not include contributions from groups primarily funded by SFI under Non-SFI-Sponsorship.

Please complete the fields provided under Description of Projected Expenses (include a line item for each projected expense - e.g., speaker travel/accommodation, catering, venue hire, etc.). Applicants should provide a detailed breakdown of projected expenses. **Please note that subsidies for registration may NOT be included as an expense.**

Please note: *the contribution being requested from SFI should not be included in the Description of Projected Income or the Description of Projected Expenses table.*

- **Requested Budget**

Please enter the total funding request amount in euro (€) under Year 1. Under Description please enter the relevant category (Conference, Exceptional Conference, Workshop,).

Please note *that the maximum SFI contribution is the projected expenses minus the projected income and that the request must comply with different category limits (i.e., Exceptional Conferences - €100,000, Conferences - €50,000, Workshops - €10,000,*

- **Budget Justification** (max. 500 words)

A clear justification should be provided for all projected costs associated with the event. This is *not* a justification of the value to Ireland of hosting the event, which should be detailed in the strategic impact section. The budget justification should justify the cost of each budget line item, e.g., speaker travel/accommodation, catering, venue hire, etc. The applicants are encouraged to provide estimated costs per item, where possible. In case of presentation awards and bursaries, the number and size of awards must be provided and justified. Please note that entertainment and miscellaneous costs, as well as business class travel for invited speakers are NOT eligible requests. As noted above, SFI typically supports expenses such as **travel and accommodation for overseas invited speakers**, **best presentation/poster awards and students' travel bursaries**. Additional costs may be considered, where strongly justified.

6.10   View Proposal Prior to Submission

A PDF of the proposal is available in SESAME and should be reviewed prior to submission to enable you to validate your application. The responsibility lies with the applicant in this regard. Submission is made initially to your local research office for approval, prior to submission by the research office to SFI.

6.11 Applicant Agreement to Terms and Conditions

It should be noted that submission of an application represents an agreement to the SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants[7]. Applications that fail to comply with the requirements outlined in this call document, will not be eligible and will be withdrawn without review.

6.12 Research Body Approval

It should be noted that Research Body submission of an application represents their approval of an application. Submission must only be made by an authorised Research Body representative. In particular, the Research Body is approving:

- Eligibility of the applicant
- 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 relevant ethical approval has been sought and must be granted prior to the award commencing.

7. Proposal Review Criteria

SFI will evaluate proposals taking into consideration the following criteria:

- Scientific, strategic and economic impact for Ireland
- Quality, significance and timeliness of the proposed event to Ireland
- Potential to advance research and roadmap development in academia and industry
- 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
- Accessibility of the event
- Expected number of participants
- Level of participation from relevant Irish academia and industry
- Involvement from a diverse mix of career stages (i.e., from students to senior staff)
- Gender balance amongst speakers or key participants
- Plans for dissemination of conference or workshop proceedings/findings
- Level of international and industry sponsorship and other funds raised by the organisers to support the event
- Quality of budget justification and the event's value-for-money.

The final decision on all SFI awards rests with SFI. Applications declined under the Conferences and Workshops programme may not be resubmitted for review, even under another category. Please note that turn-around time for the processing of applications is a minimum of eight weeks.

8. 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:

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[7] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/sfi-general-terms-and-conditions/

Research Integrity – SFI places high importance on ensuring research integrity and endorses the **National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland**.[8] All applicants and institutions are expected to abide by this policy and the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity**.[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 committee prior to application.

Gender Strategy – Research supported by SFI should fully consider potential biological sex and socio-cultural gender dimensions as key analytical and explanatory variables. As articulated in the **SFI Gender Strategy**,[10] applicants are recommended to demonstrate that they have considered any potential sex/gender aspects in their proposed research programme.

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

9. Reporting Requirements

For all conferences and workshops supported through this programme, a final report must be submitted to SFI within **90 days following the start date** of the conference or workshop. Submission of the final report is through SESAME where detailed guidelines can also be accessed in relation to the reporting template[11].

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 Conferences and Workshops 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, as described below.

To facilitate the hosting of conferences and workshops based on excellent scientific research that has potential economic and societal impact.

Science Foundation Ireland recognises the value and benefit of Ireland hosting conferences and workshops, particularly those of strategic importance that enhance Ireland's international standing in science and technology. The programme provides support for Irish based researchers to host national and international conferences in Ireland and thus promotes Ireland as a destination of choice for internationally recognised scientific conferences, with the additional benefits to the Irish economy.

- In their report awardees of a Conferences and Workshops grant are requested to list the total number of attendees, and in addition the number of international attendees where applicable.

A key performance indicator in SFI's Agenda 2020 sets out to increase the coverage of SFI and science by the media; as such conferences and workshops focusing on areas of scientific interest provide an ideal platform to address this.

- In their report awardees of a Conferences and Workshops grant are also requested to list the impactful outcomes of the event including any media coverage relating to the event.

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[8] http://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrity-in-Ireland-2014.pdf

[9] https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf

[10] http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SFI-Gender-Strategy-2016-2020.pdf

[11] http://www.sfi.ie/resources/Conferences-and-Workshops.pdf

To help Irish-based researchers and research bodies contribute to and lead in scientific debate of both national and international importance.

Conferences and workshops hosted in Ireland provide an opportunity for Irish scientists to take an active role in influencing and leading scientific discussions of global importance. Conferences often act as the platform to promote and stimulate the development of scientific research activities and provide a conduit through which ideas for international collaborative research projects are realised.

A key goal of Agenda 2020 is to increase the number of leadership roles by Irish-based researchers in European initiatives. Through the hosting of internationally recognised conferences, Irish researchers will be in a strong position to coordinate and drive scientific discussions of international relevance, which could lead to collaborative research projects.

- In their report awardees of a Conferences and Workshops grant are requested to provide an overview of the areas of scientific interest covered by the event.

To encourage industry-informed research and academic-industrial partnerships to build a competitive advantage for Ireland.

A principal aim of SFI is to support research that directly impacts on industry and commercialisation. By building a network of contacts at industry-facing conferences there will be opportunities for Irish researchers to build meaningful collaborations with industry with the aim of securing funding through partnership programmes - with this aim representing a key indicator of performance in SFI's Agenda 2020. As such, the Conferences and Workshops programme is an ideal vehicle to help foster and develop impactful academic-industry collaborations and to stimulate advanced research and roadmap development in both academia and industry.

- In their report awardees of a Conferences and Workshops grant are requested to indicate both the level and the type industrial participation at the event.

To enable researchers at all stages of their careers to build a network of scientific contacts and collaborations.

The Conferences and Workshops programme will continue to be a mechanism for researchers to build a network of contacts and potential future collaborations in addition to providing the opportunity for the recruitment of excellent graduate and postdoctoral researchers.

A key goal of Agenda 2020 is to increase the number of relationships developed between SFI funded researchers and Ireland's international strategic partners.

- In their report awardees of a Conferences and Workshops grant are requested to list the various nations that were represented at the event.

In situations where the income is greater than the expenditure awardees are requested to outline how the additional funds will be utilised. Should a future application be submitted for an event in the same series this will be taken into account in the review process.

10. Questions

[FAQs](#)

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

Appendix A: C&W Programme Proposal Checklist

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENTS
Proposal Summary	Event Title	Up to 30 words.
	Proposal Category	
	Event Start Date (dd/mm/yy)	
	Proposed Duration	
	Proposed Location	
	Priority Area selected	
	Legal remit justification	Max. 250 words
Main Body of Proposal	Background and overview of event	Max. 500 words
	Scientific focus and significance of the event	Max. 500 words
	Strategic value to Ireland of the event	Max. 500 words
	Brief biographical sketch of the applicant and conference/workshop Chair if applicable	Max. 200 words each
	Attendance/participation profile	Max. 500 words
	Figures relating to number of participants/speakers etc	
	List of Invited speakers	
	Conference/Workshop Programme	Upload
Proposed Budget	Details of all relevant costs	Budget Table
Budget Justification	Outline the justification for the requested costs	Max. 500 words

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Viewing the PDF of your application prior to submission allows you to verify content

There is no system validation on multiple upload file fields as the number of documents required may vary for each application.

It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to ensure that all documentation is included and that page lengths are not exceeded.