Science Foundation Ireland/National Science Foundation Innovation Corps (I-Corps™) Collaboration

SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme 2016

Call for Submission of Proposals

Key Dates	
• Call Launch	18th July 2016
• Webinar	5th August 2016, 14:00 Dublin Local Time
• EoI Submission Deadline	4th November 2016, 13:00 Dublin Local Time
• Interviews	10th – 11th November 2016
• Full Proposal Submission Deadline	16th December 2016, 13:00 Dublin Local Time
• Funding Decision	February 2017
• NSF I-Corps™ Curriculum Cohorts	March, April and July 2017

Contents

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. As outlined in SFI's Strategic Plan, Agenda 2020[2], the Foundation is committed to continuing its focus on funding excellent science that will deliver strongly on impact, thus realising significant benefits for the Irish economy and Irish society.

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, and adopted as Government policy. The majority of public funds for research must be directed towards the fourteen priority areas. In addition, with the evolution of research priorities, new and emerging strategic areas of opportunity related to science or engineering may be prescribed with due regard to (a) economic and social benefit; (b) long term industrial competitiveness or (c) environmentally sustainable development.

As set out in Agenda 2020, Science Foundation Ireland has committed to invest in translational research capability so as to enhance the progression of research from discovery to delivery. In the case of discoveries that have potential commercial application; a key objective is to increase the number and quality of these discoveries entering both State and private commercialisation systems.

Fostering Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the motivation, attitude and skill to realise new opportunities and create economic and societal impact from them. Entrepreneurship is recognised as a powerful driver of economic growth and job creation. The National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship in Ireland[3], sets an ambition for Ireland to be among the most entrepreneurial nations in the world and to be acknowledged as a world-class environment in which to start and grow a business.

Innovation 2020[4] describes Ireland's strategic vision to be a Global Innovation Leader and highlights the important role of entrepreneurship in the translation of knowledge between Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) and enterprise to deliver economic and societal impact. In this context, it is important that a flourishing entrepreneurial culture in RPOs is encouraged through the provision of supports that allow researchers to realise new opportunities for innovative ideas and to encourage researchers to pursue those opportunities by considering entrepreneurship as an alternative career path. Innovation 2020 recognises that entrepreneurship has a critical role in the translation of intellectual property

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[1] About SFI - What we do
[2] Agenda 2020; Published 2012
[3] https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Entrepreneurship-in-Ireland-2014.pdf
[4] https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Innovation-2020.html

or new thinking into commercial products and services; and highlights that the development of talent with skills in critical thinking, creativity and entrepreneurship, will be essential to Ireland's continued success.

Towards achieving these objectives and in support of other national initiatives, SFI has partnered with the National Science Foundation on a collaborative agreement called I-Corps@SFI that will allow teams within SFI-funded Research Centres to undertake entrepreneurial training in the US on the NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps[TM]) Curriculum on a trial basis.

2. Purpose of the Programme

The SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme is intended to support SFI funded researchers in developing entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to realise new opportunities for their research that will, in turn, lead to economic and societal impact. A key objective of the pilot programme is to enhance the awareness of entrepreneurship amongst researchers at all career stages to foster entrepreneurial culture within Research Performing Organisations. In this context, researchers working in or associated with SFI-funded Research Centres who are interested in launching a technology startup (or spinout) company, undertaking entrepreneurial ventures or pursuing entrepreneurship as a career are encouraged to apply. SFI funded researchers seeking to explore the development of new technologies, products or services based on IP arising from SFI funding are especially encouraged to apply.

The pilot programme is open to applications from researchers currently working in or associated with an SFI Research Centre. Applications will be accepted from highly motivated teams led by an SFI award holder. The pilot programme supports participation of SFI teams in the NSF I-Corps[TM] Curriculum[5] which is an immersive entrepreneurial training programme built on a special, accelerated version of Stanford University's Lean LaunchPad course and additional elements. This NSF I-Corps[TM] Curriculum requires full participation from a team with each team member committing to in-depth preparation and attendance at web-based lectures and workshops. It is expected that team members will make a significant time commitment to the programme outside their activities in the laboratory (at least 15 additional hours per week for opportunity discovery/validation).

The programme comprises an intensive 3-day bootcamp undertaken at an NSF I-Corps[TM] affiliated site in the United States, followed by an immersive 6-week period of opportunity discovery/validation during which teams are mentored by NSF I-Corps[TM] trainers. Participants will be based at their Host Research Bodies for the duration of this 6-week period but will be able to use their award to undertake opportunity discovery activities that require them to travel. During this period, teams must commit to participate in on-line webinars where they will engage with NSF mentors and other programme participants. At the end of the 6-week

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[5] https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/curriculum.jsp

mentored period, the formal training component of the programme is completed by attendance at a 2-day "lessons learned" workshop at an I-Corps™ affiliated site in the United States. The NSF runs a number of training cohorts throughout the year. It is anticipated that successful applicants to the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme will have the opportunity to participate in cohorts to be held in March, April and July of 2017.

All team members are required to attend the initial bootcamp and to participate in web-based lectures during the programme. They must also attend the final "lessons learned" workshop where they will present their business pitches.

On completion of the programme, participants will have an enhanced awareness of the economic and societal impact potential of their research and will have developed key skills to discover and validate impact opportunities. Furthermore, it is anticipated that participants will be able to utilise these skills in their careers and as part of subsequent applications for commercialisation support. The award duration will be 6-months and funding will be provided up to a maximum of €35k. While the training component of the award consists of a 3-day bootcamp, 6-week period of opportunity discovery/validation and 2-day "lessons learned" workshop, the remaining period of the award may be used to undertake further opportunity discovery/validation activities in relation to the proposed technology.

2.1. Team Composition

Under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme, proposals must identify a participating team that must comprise:

1. a **Principal Investigator** (PI). It is expected that the PI will provide administrative and technical leadership on the award and oversee project management.

2. an **Entrepreneurial Lead** (EL). The Entrepreneurial Lead (EL) will be a post-doctoral researcher who currently works under the supervision of the PI or who may wish to work with the PI as part of the programme. The EL is expected to have the necessary technical expertise relating to the proposed technology along with the motivation to lead the opportunity discovery/validation activities of the team during the programme and progress the commercialisation of the technology following completion of the programme. To encourage researchers to consider entrepreneurship as a career, postdoctoral researchers interested in technology entrepreneurship, who are keen to develop entrepreneurial skills and further their understanding of the commercialisation process are especially encouraged to participate as Entrepreneurial Lead (EL).

3. an **Entrepreneurial Mentor** (EM). The Entrepreneurial Mentor (EM) is expected to bring entrepreneurial/industry experience to the team and will serve as the principal guide to the EL in determining the technology disposition. In addition to providing mentorship to the EL, the EM is also expected to have significant input in developing the commercial strategy based on the learnings from the programme. Ideally, the EM would be willing to continue their engagement with the EL and PI following completion of the programme. In certain cases, it may be appropriate for the EM to have a business/commercial development role in the host research centre.

3. Objectives of the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme

- To train researchers in evidence-based entrepreneurship
- To support the development of validated business models and commercialisation strategies for research with commercial potential
- To support the formation of spin-outs and start-ups
- To support researchers in identifying economic and societal impact opportunities for their research

The Progress Reporting Requirements, which include relevant metrics denoting success, are outlined in Section 19.

4. Programme Eligibility

Under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme, proposals will be accepted from SFI award holders currently associated with an SFI Research Centre (either as PI, Co-PI (including Spoke Leader), FI, or an Academic Collaborator who themselves hold an active SFI award or have held an SFI award in the last 5 years (2011 – 2016). An application must identify a participating team that will be led by the lead applicant as Principal Investigator (PI). The team must include an Entrepreneurial Lead (EL) and an Entrepreneurial Mentor (EM).

4.1. Eligibility of Research Body

The Research Body is the body responsible for the overall financial and administrative co-ordination of research programmes supported by research grants from SFI. A list of Eligible Research Bodies is available on the SFI website.

4.2. Programme Remit

The remit of the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme includes the 14 NRP areas or any other area under SFI's legal remit where strong evidence can be provided of significant industrial relevance and strong economic impact. In addition, the applicant is required to complete a brief statement justifying how the proposed research aligns with SFI's legal remit. This statement will be used to determine the eligibility of the application.

5. Review Process

Application to the programme consists of a 2-stage process:

5.1. Stage 1 - Expression of Interest (EoI) and Interview

Stage 1 evaluation involves the submission of an Expression of Interest and interview. Interested teams are requested to complete a brief Expression of Interest (EoI) which is submitted by the lead applicant. The EoI should provide high level information on the team,

technology and commercial opportunity. Following the submission of an EoI to the programme, teams will be invited to participate in a telephone interview with SFI and NSF programme staff. The purpose of this telephone interview will be to assess the team's capabilities and commitment to the programme. Following this interview, SFI staff will evaluate the Stage 1 application based on the following criteria:

- Quality and novelty of the proposed innovation
- Potential commercial opportunities for the proposed innovation
- Quality of the team
- Commitment of the team to the programme

Based on the outcome of this review stage, SFI will select teams who will be invited to submit a full proposal to Stage 2 of the review process.

5.2. Stage 2 - Full Proposal

Following the submission of full proposals to Stage 2 of the programme, all proposals are checked for compliance with: non-technical mandatory criteria (e.g. all sections complete, word count/page numbers not exceeded); technical mandatory criteria (e.g. prior funding requirements, alignment with the legal remit of SFI and alignment with NRP, where required); and any other requirements outlined in the call document. Proposals identified as ineligible at this stage will be declined without review.

Distinguished international peer reviewers are employed in the review of applications to the programme. All reviewers engaged by SFI are required to adhere to the SFI Reviewer Code of Conduct. At all times the identity of the reviewers will be confidential.

The review of applications submitted to Stage 2 of the programme is undertaken by a panel of international experts engaged by SFI. Only proposals deemed to demonstrate both excellent technical quality and strong commercial/societal impact potential are recommended for funding by the panel. During review, the following review criteria are applied by the international reviewers:

- Quality and novelty of the proposed innovation
- Potential commercial opportunities for the proposed innovation
- Significance, including usefulness, of the proposed innovation
- Quality of the team
- Potential impact of the proposed innovation

6. Programme Details

6.1. Definition of Lead Applicant

The Lead Applicant will be responsible for the technical direction of the programme and the submission of reports to SFI. The lead applicant has primary responsibility and accountability for carrying out the research within the funding limits awarded and in accordance with the

SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants. The lead will serve as the primary point of contact for SFI on the award and during the review process.

6.2. Eligibility of the Lead Applicant and Entrepreneurial Lead

Under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme, proposals will be accepted from SFI award holders currently associated with an SFI Research Centre (either as PI, Co-PI (including Spoke Leader), FI, or an Academic Collaborator who themselves holds an active award or held an award in the last 5 years (2011 – 2016).

In all cases, the Lead Applicant and Entrepreneurial Lead must be:

6.2.1. A member of the academic staff of an eligible Research Body (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the award), or

6.2.2. A contract researcher with a contract that covers the period of the award (contract may be subject to receipt of the award).

Research Body submission confirms that the Lead Applicant and Entrepreneurial Lead meet these criteria and are either a member of the academic staff, a contract researcher, or awaiting appointment as defined above.

6.2.3. The Lead Applicant and Entrepreneurial Lead must hold a PhD or equivalent. Please consult the SFI Policy on PhD Equivalence[6] for further information.

6.2.4. Only one application per person is allowed.

6.2.5. Individual team members may only be involved in one application.

6.2.6. Each application must be endorsed in a Letter of Support from the Research Centre Director.

7. Funding

Applications may be submitted under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme for up to a **maximum of €35k direct costs for a period of 6-months**. Eligible costs under the programme are limited to:

- Entrepreneurial training programme for team
- Travel (e.g. travel and accommodation costs for team to attend initial bootcamp and final workshop, opportunity discovery/validation)
- Materials and Consumables (e.g. small scale prototyping/demonstration)

Costs relating directly to research activities, professional consultancy, teaching buyout or any staff salary costs are not eligible under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme.

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[6] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/grant-policies/sfi-policy-on-phd-equivalence.html

Examples of ineligible costs under the programme include (please consult the SFI Grant Budget Policy[7]):

- Contribution to salary of Entrepreneurial Mentor
- Consultancy Fees for Entrepreneurial Mentor

Appropriate justification for any requested cost must be provided in the budget justification section of your application.

Under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme, no indirect or overhead contribution will be provided to the Host Research Body.

8. Application Procedure

Applicants are invited to submit the following documentation:

- Stage 1 - Expression of Interest,

  and, **if invited** to do so after the Stage 1 evaluation stage,

- Stage 2 - Full Proposal

  Expressions of Interest and full proposals must be submitted using the official applications forms to i-corps@sfi.ie before the call deadline.

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

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that eligible proposals are received by SFI on, or before, the deadline indicated.

> **NOTE**: All application (EoI and Full Proposal) documents must be submitted in PDF format by email to i-corps@sfi.ie. These forms are available on the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme webpage.

Applications cannot be withdrawn and subsequently modified for re-submission in the same call.

8.1. Expression of Interest (EoI) Submission

The Expression of Interest Form can be downloaded from the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme webpage. Please note that the format of this form must be strictly adhered to.

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[7] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/grant-policies/grant-applications-budget-policy.html#_blank

8.1.1. Title of Proposal (max. 30 words)

Provide a succinct non-confidential title for the proposal.

8.1.2. Team (max. 500 words)

Briefly and clearly describe the team (e.g. members, roles and responsibilities) including relevant experience and motivation for participation in the programme.

8.1.3. SFI Award Lineage (max. 200 words)

Briefly and clearly describe the SFI award (including relevant SFI grant numbers) and resulting technology (and relevant IP) that forms the basis of your application to the programme.

8.1.4. Commercial Opportunity (max. 200 words)

Briefly and clearly describe the unmet market need and potential commercial impact of the technology. Indicate if you have undertaken any market validation (e.g. industry engagement) of this unmet need.

8.1.5. Commercialisation Plan (max. 200 words)

Briefly and clearly describe how you currently propose to commercialise the technology. Indicate what your next likely steps will be.

8.1.6. Curricula Vitae

Provide a short 2-page CV for each team member using the templates provided (see Appendix 1). This template can be downloaded from the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme webpage.

8.2. Interview

The purpose of this interview will be to assess the proposing team's capabilities and commitment to the programme. Applicants are advised that questions forming this interview may be based on information provided in the EoI. This interview will be conducted by telephone and will be approx. 30 minutes in duration.

> **NOTE:** All proposed team members <u>must</u> participate in the interview. If all members are not available to participate in the interview, the EoI will be withdrawn.

8.3. Full Proposal

The Full Proposal Application Form can be downloaded from the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI webpage. Please note that the format of this form must be strictly adhered to.

8.3.1. Proposal Details

Details of the proposal (e.g. title, keywords etc.) should be included in the fields provided.

8.3.2. Signatures

The application must be signed and stamped by the applicant, the Research Body and the Technology Transfer Office.

Proposals without all necessary approval signatures will be deemed ineligible and returned without review.

NOTE: Institutional submission of an application encompasses approval of an application and agreement to SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants. Submission must only be made by an authorised institutional representative. In particular, the institution is verifying:

- Eligibility of the applicant and co-applicant (if relevant)
- That the requested budget including travel, materials 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 (if relevant)
- That the proposed research programme has not been funded by other sources
- That relevant ethical approval has been sought (if relevant)

8.3.3. SFI Legal Remit

Please describe how the proposed research aligns to SFI's legal remit. This statement will be used to determine the eligibility of the application.

8.3.4. Applicant Details

Details of the applicant and each team member should be included in the fields provided.

8.3.5. Requested Budget

Please note that applicants must complete the Budget Tables contained in this section of the form.

The costs eligible for grant support by SFI are those costs which can, uniquely and unambiguously, be identified with the proposed research programme. Applicants must give details of all relevant costs, including materials and consumables, travel and training. Ensure that the final total provided includes all costs requested from SFI. All grants are made directly to the lead applicant's research body.

Costs relating directly to research activities, professional consultancy, teaching buyout or any staff salary costs are not eligible under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme.

Please also refer to the SFI Grant Terms and Conditions and also the SFI Grant Budget Policy[8].

- **Materials and Consumables**
  Details of all materials and consumables that will be used in the course of the research programme should be provided.

  No access charges will be provided under the programme.

- **Travel**
  Only travel costs associated directly with undertaking the award may be requested. The applicant should detail travel expenses directly related to any commercialisation activities. In the case of working visits, the rates sought for subsistence and other allowances may be no more than those which the Research Body's permanent staff may claim.

Details of the requested budget should be included in the field provided. The cost of the entrepreneurial training programme is approx. €4,000 per team. Estimated costs (travel and accommodation) for attendance at the 3-day bootcamp and final 2-day workshop should be included. Estimate costs of travel associated with opportunity discovery/validation should also be provided.

Ineligible Costs: The following costs are *examples* of ineligible costs under the programme: PhD stipends and fees, contribution to salaries, teaching buyout, clinical buyout, contingency or miscellaneous costs, hospitality and entertainment costs; technology transfer or patent costs; workshop organisation; journal subscriptions; relocation expenses, consultancy fees.

8.3.6. Budget Justification (max. ½ page)

Justification should also be provided for <u>all requests</u> relating to: consumables and travel. Justification for attendance at the entrepreneurial training programme and participation in opportunity/validation activities must also be included.

8.3.7. Project Proposal (max. 3 pages)

- **Team (max. 1 page)**
  Briefly and clearly describe the team and provide the rationale for its formation. Describe any experience (technical or entrepreneurial) relevant to the commercialisation of this technology. Briefly and clearly describe the respective roles of the team members, in particular, describe how the Principal Investigator and Entrepreneurial Mentor will support the Entrepreneurial Lead.

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[8] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/grant-policies/grant-applications-budget-policy.html#_blank

- **Technology (max. 1/2 page)**
  Briefly and clearly describe the technology that is being proposed. Describe any previous SFI funding (include grant number(s)) that has led to the development of the technology. Describe how the outcomes of this previous research have led the team to believe that a commercial opportunity exists for this technology (e.g. what differentiates this technology, product/market fit).

- **Commercial Opportunity (max. 1 page)**
  Briefly and clearly describe the commercial opportunity for this technology. Describe the potential addressable market, the unmet need and indicate how the proposed technology will address this need. Describe a potential route to commercialisation for this technology. In particular, refer to any interactions you have had or intend to develop with industry that may facilitate this process.

- **Project Plan (max. 1/2 page)**
  Briefly and clearly describe the current commercialisation plan, with reference to expected timelines, milestones and deliverables.

- **Curricula Vitae**
  Provide a short 2-page CV for each team member using the templates provided (see Appendix 1). This template can be downloaded from the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme webpage.

9. **Letters of Support**

- A Letter of Support from the **Research Centre Director** outlining support for the application must be provided.
- A Letter of Support from the **Technology Transfer Office** outlining the commercialisation strategy for the proposed technology must be included. As part of this Letter of Support, the Technology Transfer Office must confirm that it has provided planning support to the applicant in preparation of their proposal. Furthermore, the Technology Transfer Office must outline how it will support the participating team as they progress through the entrepreneurial training programme. The Letter of Support should confirm that participants in the Programme have been briefed as to the importance of maintaining confidentiality of commercially sensitive information, including any intellectual property.
- A Letter of Support from the **Host Research Body** of the lead applicant which should comment on the infrastructure and services available to the applicant and team during participation and relevant to the entrepreneurial training programme.
- A Letter of Support from the **Entrepreneurial Mentor** outlining how they will guide the EL in determining the technology disposition and how they will advise on the development of the commercial strategy based on the learnings from the programme.

- Letters of Support from potential future industry partners may also be included where appropriate to demonstrate the relevance and business need for the proposed technology.

10. Research Body Approval

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

- The eligibility of the applicants.
- That reasonable effort has been made by the Research Body (TTO Office) to ensure that participants in the Programme are briefed as to the importance of maintaining confidentiality of commercially sensitive information, including any intellectual property. (NOTE: Science Foundation Ireland or the National Science Foundation is not responsible for any disclosure by participants of any confidential or sensitive information to third parties whilst participating in the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme).
- 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 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 programme has not been funded by other sources.
- That the relevant ethical approval has been or will be sought and should 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.

11. Applicant Agreement to Terms and Conditions

It should be noted that submission of an application represents your agreement to SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants.

12. Programme Schedule and Deadlines

EoI and Full Proposal documentation must be submitted to i-corps@sfi.ie before the specified deadlines.

Call Launch	18th July 2016
Webinar	5th August 2016, 14:00 Dublin Local Time
EoI Submission Deadline	4th November 2016, 13:00 Dublin Local Time
Interviews	10th – 11th November 2016
Full Proposal Submission Deadline	16th December 2016, 13:00 Dublin Local Time
Funding Decision	February 2017
NSF I-Corps^TM Curriculum Cohorts*	March, April and July 2017

* Full details of cohort dates in these months will be provided to applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal to the programme.

13. 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 taken into account in the preparation of the new submission. SFI will not review resubmissions that have not clearly taken into account 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 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 i-corps@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.

14. 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.

15. Ethical Issues

All investigators and research bodies must ensure that, before the research commences and during the full award period, all the necessary ethical, legal and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and all the necessary licences and approvals have been obtained. All research bodies are responsible for ensuring that a safe working environment is provided for all individuals associated with a research project.

If research activities involve the use of animals, applicants must comply with the Health Products Regulatory Authority's (HPRA) position on the use of animals in research. SFI will only support research using animals that is fully compliant with the requirements of the HPRA, has been independently peer reviewed and where consideration has been given to the use of alternative approaches not involving the use of live animals and addressing the principles of the 3R's (reduction, replacement, refinement).

For studies involving humans, ethical approval must be obtained from the relevant national or local ethics committee prior to the start of the project. SFI only permits early stage regulated clinical trials (Phase I or combined Phase I/II) and investigations to be undertaken under the scope of the following SFI programmes: SFI Research Centres, Spokes, and Strategic Partnerships in addition to SFI Research Professorship where the successful candidate will become a Co-Principal Investigator within an SFI Research Centre. Clinical trials and investigations requiring approval by the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) will not be permitted through other SFI funding programmes, including the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme.

Funding requests for early stage research involving human volunteers and/or human samples that does not require regulatory approval are permitted under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme. Where there is any doubt, applicants are advised to contact the HPRA prior to submission to ensure eligibility and are required to indicate in their application that the proposed study does not require HPRA approval.

SFI will require evidence that relevant ethical and regulatory approval has been granted prior to the award commencing.

Furthermore, in line with a current directive from its parent Government Department, research funded by SFI must not comprise any component of the following:

- Research intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer
- Research using human embryonic stem cells or tissues.

16. Non-compliance

Proposals not in compliance with any details specified in this document, or in the SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants will not be eligible for a grant and will be returned without review.

17. 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.

18. Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest rules are applied rigorously and apply to both reviewers and applicants.

Reviewers engaged by SFI are required to adhere to SFI's conflict of interest policy and immediately declare to SFI where a conflict of interest exists or arises so that an alternative reviewer may be appointed. International peer reviewers will not provide comments or scores on any application on which they have a conflict of interest.

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.

19. Award Management

Progress Reporting Requirements

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) regularly requests the researchers it supports to provide detailed information on the outputs and impacts arising from their SFI award. Such data are vital for demonstrating to the Irish public the value created by investing taxpayer's money; for making the case, where appropriate, for increased budget to achieve targets set against challenging key performance indicators (as outlined in Agenda 2020[9]); for facilitating international benchmarking and from all of these, for optimising SFI's suite of existent programmes. They also contribute towards attaining the goal of making Ireland a global innovation leader, and driving a strong sustainable economy and a better society, as outlined in Innovation 2020[10], Ireland's five year strategy on research and development, science and technology. Feedback from various stakeholders, including the research community producing the outputs, and the enterprise and public systems utilising the outputs and realising the impacts of the research, is also a key component of continuously improving Ireland's research ecosystem. As such, SFI has stringent requirements for the reporting on awards that it makes. Individuals who hold the primary responsibility for reporting and who fail to comply with reporting requirements, run the risk of having their grant payments suspended and may not be able to apply for SFI funding until their reporting is rectified.

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[9] Agenda 2020; Published 2012
[10] https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Innovation-2020.html

In order for SFI to evaluate the success of the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme, award holders will be asked to report on the outputs arising from their award. As such, at the end of the award term, award holders will be asked to complete their Research Profile in SESAME, SFI's on-line Grants and Awards Management System. The degree to which the award achieves the objectives set out in the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme call, will be evaluated from the data entered, and other reports provided (see below).

Each of the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme Call objectives, with expected outputs, is discussed in turn below:

- *To train researchers in evidence-based entrepreneurship*

Awardees with be asked to detail the outputs of their training programme, with reference to the initial business proposition. It is expected that the latter will contain an outline of the proposed next steps based on the outcomes of the evaluation including a description of the final business model. Other relevant details entered into the Research Profile will include the number of potential users / customers contacted, any additional technologies that have been evaluated using the Lean Launchpad methodology, any new collaborations or teams that have been established, and any funding applications made. The role of the training programme in developing awareness of entrepreneurship and the commercialisation process will be implicit in the award holder's participation on the course and will be evident from the contents of the evaluation report and Research Profile.

- *To support the development of validated business models and commercialisation strategies for research with commercial potential*

Success against this objective will be determined from data entered into the Research Profile and details provided in the initial business proposition / evaluation plan. It is expected that milestones will be described that will strengthen the feasibility of their idea for further commercialisation. These milestones might include fulfilling the technical objectives of the project and any formal commercialisation steps that have taken place. They might also include steps such as the production of prototypes, the engagement with commercialisation funders or investors, or the protection of intellectual property. It is recognised that innovation can be driven by the combination of ideas or processes from different disciplines. As such, awardees will refer to collaborators that have been associated with the award and that have supported its successful outcome, if relevant.

- *To support the formation of spin-outs and start-ups*

Awardees will be asked to report in their Research Profile on the number of start-up companies that have been created and / or spun-out from the Host Institution as a result of their SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme award. Additionally,

awardees may be asked to track and report on fund-raising activities associated with these spin-out companies through Enterprise Ireland as well as private sources such as angel investors or venture capital firms. Longitudinal reporting will likely be a requirement for awardees upon issuance of the Letter of Offer. This will satisfy SFI's reporting requirements as part of its annual stocktake of Research Outputs (formerly referred to as the SFI census).

- *To support researchers in identifying economic and societal impact opportunities for their research*

It is expected that the outputs of awards made under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme award will place awardees firmly on the roadmap towards delivering economic and societal impact. Towards identifying these opportunities, awardees will be provided with a list of 10 impact statements or declarations and will be asked to prioritise those that are relevant to the outputs on their award (for further details, see here). Narrative must then be provided with additional details justifying the options chosen, with cross reference to relevant metrics included in the Research Profile. This data will help towards quantifying the types of impacts arising from the awards SFI has made under the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme.

20. Questions

FAQs are available on the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme webpage. For all additional queries please contact: i-corps@sfi.ie

Appendix 1 – Curriculum Vitae Template

To be used for applications to the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme. This template can be downloaded from the SFI/NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme webpage.

Curriculum Vitae

NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS

Text Here

CAREERE PROFILE (EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT)

Text Here

HISTORY OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, MENTORING, SUPERVISION

Where relevant, please include numbers of current and completed MSc and PhD students, <u>directly under your supervision</u>, as well as details of previous and current postdoctoral staff.

Text Here

INNOVATION/COMMERCIALISATION/ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACTIVITY

NOTE: In relation to patents, please distinguish between patents applied and under review versus patents granted

Text Here

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE

Please include details of key achievements relevant to the application

Text Here