

SFI Reporting Compliance Policy

Applies to reporting submissions due from 1st of January 2023

This policy accompanies the SFI Grant General Terms & Conditions and supports clauses 6 and 8 which outline the reporting responsibilities of the Principal Investigator¹ and Research Body for grants awarded by Science Foundation Ireland.

1. This policy applies to all Annual, Final and Progress Scientific reports (“Scientific reports”) submitted to Science Foundation Ireland with the following exclusions: Grants awarded under the SFI Discover programme, and those where the grant holder does not report to SFI².
2. This policy also applies to the submission of Research Outputs where the grant holder is active (on SFI’s Grants and Award management system SESAME) within the calendar year³.
3. Points will be applied in accordance with the number of days a submission is made after a deadline has passed.
4. **When 5 points have been accrued, the Principal Investigator will be excluded from applying to a Science Foundation Ireland Funding Programme (as lead applicant or co-applicant) for a period of 5 years (i.e., a sanction).**
5. **Scientific reports** will accrue points according to the following:
 - Submission (or report outstanding) <14 days after the deadline, the Principal Investigator receives 1 point.
 - Submission (or report outstanding) ≥ 14 days and <30 days after the deadline, the Principal Investigator receives 2 points.
 - Submission (or report outstanding) ≥30 days after the deadline, the Principal Investigator receives 3 points.
6. **Research Outputs** will accrue points according to the following:
 - Submission <14 days after the deadline, the Principal Investigator will accrue 2 points.
 - Failure to submit Research Outputs or submission ≥ 14 days after the deadline, the Principal Investigator will accrue 4 points.
7. Where Research Outputs are submitted by an award administrator (as is the case for some large awards), any points accrued will be transferred to the Principal Investigator.
8. Points will be cumulative.
9. Application technical checks will consider outstanding reports and associated points when evaluating applicants for eligibility.
10. Where a sanction is applied, the points balance will be expunged, however, points may still be accrued from subsequent late submissions on active grants and/or Research Outputs.
11. Where multiple sanctions are applied, exclusion periods will run concurrently.
12. Points will continue to accrue until five sequential years with no points applied have passed, upon which any existing points will be expunged.

¹ For the purposes of this policy, the Principal Investigator means the grant holder, as per SFI’s Grant General Terms & Conditions.

² The Royal Society – SFI University Research Fellowship Programme, the SFI-HRB-Wellcome Trust Biomedical Research Partnership, SFI-IRC Policy Project Grant Programme, ERC Support Programme.

³ As per Clause 7 of [SFI’s Grant General Terms & Conditions](#) and relevant guidance under SFI’s policies concerning [Change to PI](#) and [SFI’s Maternity/Adoptive Policy](#), the Research Body must notify SFI at the earliest opportunity of any actual or planned extended absence (> 3 months) such as extended sick leave, sabbatical, maternity leave etc., or departures concerning a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator. In these scenarios, it is recommended that the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator contacts their programme manager and/or reporting@sfi.ie as early as possible.

13. Principal Investigators can inspect their points balance through a 'Report card' available on their Researcher Portal in SESAME.
14. Penalty points applied to Principal Investigators may be removed in exceptional circumstances. These include:
 - PIs who are diverted from their normal research activities due to an extended local or national emergency (e.g., the researcher is a frontline health care worker during a pandemic);
 - PIs who are on maternity / paternity / parental leave;
 - Those who experience a bereavement or who themselves succumb to a serious illness that results in significant absence;Penalty points applied where deadlines have been missed due to busy schedules or prioritising other activities (work-related or personal) over SFI reporting will not be removed. SFI encourages Principal Investigators to contact their programme manager and / or reporting@sfi.ie in advance of any deadline if they are experiencing difficulties.
15. Where a Principal Investigator considers that points have been mistakenly applied, SFI encourages them to contact reporting@sfi.ie in the first instance and present their case for consideration. If the points are deemed by the SPM to have been correctly applied, a more formal appeal may then be submitted (on behalf of the PI) by the VP/Dean of Research or equivalent for consideration by the SFI Deputy Director General. This appeal should be by way of an email to reporting@sfi.ie detailing:
 - The Principal Investigator's name;
 - The penalty points that are being appealed (e.g., penalty points incurred for late submission of Research Outputs 20XX / Annual or Final Report for grant number 22/XXX/9999).
 - The exceptional circumstances that resulted in the points having been incurred.
 - Personal documentation such as medical certs should NOT be attached.
16. The details of points accrued and associated sanctions for each Principal Investigator will be communicated to the relevant Research Body on an annual basis.

Version number	Date	Edits / Updates
V1	05/12/2019	-
V1.1.	11/01/2021	Penalty points to be applied to late submissions have been updated. See sections 4 and 5.
V1.2.	12/01/2022	Penalty points to be applied to late submissions have been updated. See section 5. See section 14 for new guidance regarding appeals and exemptions.
V1.3	11/01/2023	Definition of Principal Investigator clarified. Award changed to grant throughout. Moved description of 5 points accrual from section 8 to section 4. Clarification on the 5-year period after which points are expunged. See section 12. Language around COVID 19 removed from section 14. More specific language on the appeals process added to section 14. Clarification on the meaning of exemptions included with reference to penalty points. See section 14.