

# SFI Terms of Reference for the 6-year Progress Review of SFI Research Centres

**June 2020**

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**Science Foundation Ireland are closely monitoring the current worldwide COVID19 pandemic and will communicate when appropriate if the review will be carried out remotely as outlined in APPENDIX I.**

## 1. Background

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) is the national foundation for investment in research in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which assists in the development and competitiveness of industry, enterprise and employment in Ireland. It also promotes and supports STEM education and engagement to improve awareness and understanding of the value of STEM to society and to support the STEM careers pipeline.

A key objective of Science Foundation Ireland's Agenda 2020 strategy is to develop a network of world-leading, large-scale SFI Research Centres that will provide major economic impact for Ireland. There are currently 16 SFI Research Centres, and these are focused on strategic areas of importance to Ireland with a focus on delivering scientific excellence with economic and societal impact. The Centres link scientists and engineers in partnerships across academia and industry to address crucial research questions; foster the development of new and existing Irish-based technology companies; attract industry that could make an important contribution to Ireland and its economy; and expand educational and career opportunities in Ireland in science and engineering. More information on the SFI Research Centres can be found here: <https://www.sfi.ie/sfi-research-centres/>.



Under the conditions of funding provided by SFI to the Centre network, the SFI Research Centres undergo progress reviews every two years. A review panel of six to eight distinguished scientists, engineers and individuals with significant commercialisation and translational/applied experiences will be convened to evaluate the SFI Research Centres. One member of each panel will also hold specialist Education and Public Engagement (EPE) expertise.

This Terms of Reference document for the 6-year progress reviews has been developed to provide guidance to the Site Review Panel, the SFI Research Centre Directors, SFI Research Centre teams (co-PIs, FIs, operations staff), Research Office staff, Vice-Presidents/Deans of Research and University Presidents/Provosts in order to prepare for the site visits.

## 2. Objectives of the Progress Review

The purpose of the 6-year progress review is to allow SFI to make a final assessment of the Phase I performance of the 2013 Research Centre Awards, to ensure progress on the implementation of the 4-year review panel recommendations and assess the Research Centre's Strategy for transitioning into Phase II funding.

**Specific objectives are as follows:**

### **I. To evaluate whether the quality of research carried out by the Centre in Phase I is scientifically excellent and impactful**

- Evaluate the scientific and impact progress, since the last review, of each research theme of the Research Centre, through the review of progress on platform and targeted projects.
- Evaluate the contribution, since the last review, of each research theme to the Academic, Training, Commercialisation, Leveraged Funding and EPE programme targets of the Centre.
- Evaluate the progress of any Spoke and/or US-Ireland Centre-2-Centre awards held by the Centre.

### **II. To evaluate the Centre's implementation of the 4-year review recommendations**

- Evaluate the implementation of the 4-year review recommendations where relevant in terms of Team & Governance, Scientific Programme, Impact, Business Plan and EPE programme of the Centre.

### **III. To evaluate the Centre's strategy for transitioning to Phase II**

- Evaluate the Centre's strategy for transition to Phase II in terms of Academic, Training, Commercialisation, Leveraged Funding and EPE programme.
- Evaluate the Centre's progress on scale up of KPI targets.

### **IV. To evaluate Education and Public Engagement (EPE) programme**

- The progress on EPE programme and targets will be evaluated during the presentations on the scientific and impact progress of each research theme of the Centre.

### **V. To evaluate the Research Centre management of the SFI budget and the ability of the Centre to use the SFI budget to leverage industry and non-exchequer, non-commercial funding**

- A financial audit will be carried out in parallel with the progress review to ensure the budget has been used effectively to date and that the reported industry cost share commitments are accurate.
- The review will establish whether the budget has been used to achieve the maximum research and commercial impact.

### 3. Organisation of the On-Site Progress Review

SFI and the Site Review Panel will perform a site visit lasting one and a half days, followed by a further half day for the panel to write their report. A review panel briefing will also be held by SFI the evening prior to Day 1 of the site visit.

During the site visit, the following personnel must be in attendance:

- SFI Research Centre Director(s)
- SFI Research Centre Operations Team
- Co-Principal Investigators
- Funded Investigators who are delivering presentations
- Spoke award leader (if relevant)
- SFI Research Centre postdoctoral researchers and PhD/MSc students who are presenting during the poster session or are delivering other presentations
- Chair of the SFI Research Centre Governance Committee for the opening address
- Vice President/Dean for Research (VPDoR) (or equivalent) from the host Research Body must be present at the institutional support session on Day 2 of the review at a minimum. VPDoRs from additional Research Bodies may also attend in addition, and the choice of which Research Bodies are represented is up to the Centre. **NB:** If a VPDoR is also a PI/FI in the Centre, he/she will not be permitted to represent the institution at the review. In this case, the VPDoR must nominate a suitable replacement from their Research Body to attend the meeting in their place.
- Selected industry partners for the industry discussions

The following personnel may additionally attend the site review:

- Funded Investigators not delivering presentations (all FIs must be invited to attend the site review, and attendance of as many FIs as possible is advisable in order to address questions that arise)
- Centre postdoctoral researchers and PhD/MSc students not delivering presentations/posters
- Other Centre research staff and students
- If a Research Centre has a US-Ireland Centre-to-Centre award, representatives from the US and NI Centres involved in the partnership
- Academic or other Centre collaborators
- Additional Governance Committee members, and members of Centre advisory boards
- Additional representatives of the host Research Body

In addition, SFI may invite representatives of Enterprise Ireland and/or the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) to attend site reviews. The purpose of this is to ensure that SFI's sister agencies are kept as up to date as possible on the progress of Research Centres, and how they can be best supported. Enterprise Ireland/IDA representatives who attend site reviews will do so as observers and will have no active role in events.

To enable smooth-running of the site visit, the following is requested from the Research Centre:

- **A suitable seminar room or meeting room will be required for two full days**

This is required to comfortably accommodate the panel of up to eight international experts, up to six members of SFI, and part of the Centre team (Centre Director, Centre Manager, all co-PIs and all FIs, and other attendees if space permits). It is preferable to have a room with a large U-shaped table set-up rather than student-style desks if possible.

*[From previous experience, a U-shaped arrangement of the tables has worked well, at which the SFI Research Centre Scientific Programme Manager, SFI Head of EPE, review panel, Centre Director(s), Centre Manager and PIs/FIs/other personnel involved in individual Q&A sessions sit. Behind the U-shaped arrangement, additional seating should be present for other attendees.]*

All members of the SFI Research Centre team are invited to be present for the site visit (including all Funded Investigators and technical collaborators). Throughout the review the review panel will be using laptops. As such, extension leads, and international adaptors should be available in the room to allow for the use of 14+ laptops. Internet access should also be available.

- **A mid-sized breakout room**

This is required to comfortably accommodate the panel of up to eight international experts, and up to six members of SFI, Centre Director(s), Centre Manager, and all co-PIs for private discussions. Extension leads, and international adaptors should be available in the room to allow for the use of 14+ laptops. Internet access should also be available.

- **A large open room/space**

This is required to allow for the poster session on Day 1 of the review. Approximately 25 posters are recommended at this session, with one PhD student/postdoctoral researcher present at each poster. There should be enough space for the review panel to comfortably circulate and converse with poster presenters. The space should be free of other Centre personnel, or other individuals passing through. If a single space is not available that can accommodate the poster session then two spaces may be used, however these areas should be as close to one another as possible. Water, tea and coffee should ideally be available for the review panel during the poster session.

- **Catering**

Please arrange for tea/coffee/snacks to be available in the seminar/meeting room at all times throughout the review. Additional snacks should be provided at scheduled breaks according to the final agenda. A buffet style lunch including vegetarian options should be provided on both days. **Water should also be available throughout both days.**

#### 4. Documents that the Research Centre must submit in advance of the review.

The following draft and final material should be emailed to the relevant Scientific Programme Manager prior to the review:

- Draft agenda
- Draft presentation slides and final agenda
- List of posters, poster presenters, and a map showing the layout of the poster session. Please note at least 3 of these posters should relate to EPE activities only.
- Final presentation slides

The Scientific Programme Manager will send the key questions/comments gathered from the panel members' pre-review reports to the Centre before the site review. These questions/comments should be addressed during the site review.

#### Guidelines for Presentations

##### Day 1:

- Presentations should go into detail on the research programme and progress made in platform projects, targeted projects, and any other relevant activities during Phase I and the Centre's transition to Phase II.
- The Centres should provide presentations on the progress of any Spoke or US-Centre to Centre awards.
- Please include, where appropriate, references to data management practices, research methodology and training that supports research integrity.
- Each researcher who presents during Day 1 must also cover EPE activities that they and their team undertook.

##### Day 2:

#### Education and Public Engagement (EPE)

- Details of how the EPE plan is developed and delivered both with and by the Centre's research community. This should include an indication of the numbers of staff involved in EPE activities.
- The achievements against the EPE plans, in terms of outputs and outcomes, during Phase 1.
- Progress against expected impacts of EPE activity.
- Centre's Phase 2 EPE strategy.



## Impact

- Key impacts achieved by the Centre.
- Centre progress towards impact objectives.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and cost share – results versus targets in Phase 1.
- EU Horizon 2020 and other sources of leveraged funding.
- Industry engagement and commercialisation outputs.
- Centre impact, KPI and cost share strategy in Phase 2.

Please note, in advance of the site review the most recent validated KPI results will be provided in the briefing documentation sent to the review panel. Centres are permitted to present more recent progress at the site review, including outputs or achievements that occur right up to the date of the review.

### **Additional information requested by Panel Members**

The panel will have access to a secure web link where they can download the original application, progress report, presentation slides and any other relevant documentation for the review. During the site visit the panel may request additional information from the Centre to aid them in their review, such as lists of publications (primary and secondary) or more specific information. This additional information will need to be provided as soon as possible, and it should be emailed to the relevant Scientific Programme Manager.

## 5. Agenda

**Each SFI Research Centre site review will have a bespoke agenda. The agenda times indicated are for guidance purposes only and modifications may be made.** Each Centre will be contacted by their SFI Scientific Programme Manager to work through and agree the final agenda, which should be finalised no later than 3 weeks before the date of the review.

Presentations should only be delivered by Centre personnel. Timings of the presentations should be strictly adhered to according to the final schedule. 50% of the time must be allocated to presentations and 50% of the time must be allocated to Q&A. The panel may need to cut presentations short if the Centre presenters exceed the time allotted.

## Agenda Template

### Day 0: Panel Briefing

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17.30-19.00	<b>Briefing</b>
	SFI and the Review Panel will meet to discuss the review process and the programme for the site visit.
19.00-20.30	<b>Private panel dinner</b>

### Day 1:

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8.30-8.35	<b>Welcome by SFI Scientific Programme Manager</b>
8.35-8.45	<b>Welcome from President of the host Research Body and the Vice President /Dean of Research</b>
8.45-8.50	<b>Welcome from Governance Chair</b>
8.50-9.10	<b>Introduction to the SFI Research Centre</b>  Delivered by the Centre Director(s)- in addition to a strategic overview of Phase 1, this is expected to include an overview of 4-year review recommendation and the Centre's transition to Phase II.
9.10-9.30	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
9.30-11.00	<b>Research Programme 1</b>
9.30-9.45	<b>Presentation title – Presenter name</b>
9.45-10.00	<b>Q&amp;A</b>  Continue in this format, showing each presentation name, who is presenting it, the start/end times of the presentation, and the start/end times of the Q&A session of equal length.
11.00-11.15	Coffee break

11.15-13.00

**Research Programme 2**

Show each presentation name, who is presenting it, the start/end times of the presentation, and the start/end times of the Q&A session of equal length.

13.00-13.30

**Lunch and private panel discussion**

13.30-15.00

**Poster session**

Approximately 25 posters should be presented by Centre PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, and other junior Centre personnel. At least 3 posters on EPE content should be included. Only individuals presenting posters may be present at the poster session.

15.00-16.30

**Research Programme 3: Progress on Spokes or US-Centre-to-Centre Awards**

16.30-17.00

**Private panel discussion**

17.00-17.30

**Director/co-PI private discussion**

Only the Director(s), co-PIs and Centre Manager may be present from the Centre side at this meeting. During this discussion, or at any point during the review, the panel may request additional information where they deem it necessary for their evaluation. This information should be emailed to the SFI SPM when it is prepared.

## Day 2:

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- 8.30-9.30                    **Education and Public Engagement (EPE)**
- This session should be led by both the EPE Manager and the Centre Director.
- 8.30-9.00                    **Presentation title – Presenter name**
- Please note that more than one presentation can be made. In this case each presentation should each be listed in the agenda.
- 9.00-9.30                    **Q&A**
- 9.30-10.30                   **Impact**
- 9.30-10.00                   **Presentation – Presenter name**
- Please note that more than one presentation can be made. In this case each presentation should each be listed in the agenda.
- 10.00-10.30                **Q&A**
- 10.30-10.45                Coffee break and private panel discussion
- 10.45-11.15                **Institutional support discussion**
- This session is an opportunity for a discussion of institutional support that the Research Centre has received from the host Research Body and partner Research Bodies involved in the Centre. No presentations should be made during this session. The VPDoR of the host Research Body must be present for this discussion. Other VPDoRs may also be invited to attend the session at the discretion of the Research Centre.
- 11.15-12.30                **Industry partner discussions (Private Session)**
- A number of discussions should be held between a selection of the industry partners and the panel. No presentations should be made during this session. Industry partners should be chosen that represent different areas of activity, as well as different types of industry partner (e.g. MNCs and SMEs). These

discussions will focus on their involvement in Centre activities, and how the Centre is meeting the needs of industry partners. Industry partners may be selected from either Phase 1 or Phase 2 engagement.

- The panel will meet industry partners one at a time, and each discussion should last approximately 20 minutes.
- Centre staff or representatives will not be present during this session.

12.30-13.00

**Private panel discussion**

13.00-13.30

**Director/co-PI private discussion**

13.30-14.00

**Private panel lunch**

14.00-17.30

**Private panel session - report writing**

The panel will write the progress review report in this closed session (see panel report section for further details).

## 6. Briefing Documents

The review panel will be sent the following documents in advance of the site review:

### ***Key documents for the review***

- Site review Terms of Reference
- Research Centre Progress Report
- Most recently SFI-validated Key Performance Indicators
- 4-Year Review Panel Report
- Spoke award proposal/s (if relevant)
- US-Ireland Centre-to-Centre proposal/s (if relevant)
- Research Centre Phase 1 proposal
- Research Centre Phase 2 proposal

### ***Other documentation (to be provided if requested by reviewer)***

- Previous Annual/Progress Reports
- SFI Research Centre publications to date (primary and secondary attributions to the Centre)
- SFI Research Centre funding diversification
- SFI Research Centres call documents
- SFI Research Centres management and governance requirements
- EPE KPI criteria
- List of industry partners and status of collaborative research agreements
- Other area relevant specific government documents e.g. National IP Protocol, National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland, SFI Gender Strategy etc.

The panel will be asked to complete a short report in advance of the review. This report is similar in structure to the final consensus panel report and will be shared with other panellists and SFI. The structure of the final panel report is contained in the following section.

## 7. Panel Report

The panel report includes sections to reflect the objectives of the review. Each section will include a narrative and a score indicating the degree of progress (narrative only for Budget section). The narrative should include recommendations for alterations to future Centre activities where weaknesses or risks are identified. SFI may request that an unsatisfactory score in any section is accompanied by further recommendations for alterations, including potential reductions in Centre budgets.

### i. Research/scientific programme

Please assess the scientific excellence of the SFI Research Centre's research programme and the scientific work undertaken in Phase I, and the transition to the Phase II research programme. Take into consideration the key documents for the review and the Centre's presentations at the site visit.

As part of your response, consider the following questions:

- Based on the approved proposal and work plan, has the team delivered on its objectives during Phase I?
- What are the most important breakthroughs that the Research Centre made in Phase I?
- Has the Centre achieved research excellence and leadership in its area?
- Is the Centre transitioning effectively to its Phase II research/scientific programme?

Please comment on the Research Centre's progress on **each** Spoke and/or US Centre-to Centre award, where relevant. In your answer please include specific commentary on:

- Progress on research objectives
- Impact of objectives
- Quality and appropriateness of the collaborations
- Centre integration
- Strategic benefit and added value to the Research Centre

**Spoke/Centre-to-Centre award title**

**Commentary:**

Select the description that best matches your assessment of the SFI Research Centre's research/scientific programme from the following list:

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>	
<b>5.0</b>	Outstanding with no deficiencies.	
<b>4.5</b>	Outstanding in many regards with no serious deficiencies.	
<b>4.0</b>	Strong with no serious deficiencies.	
<b>3.5</b>	Strong in many regards with some deficiencies.	
<b>3.0</b>	Moderate with some deficiencies.	
<b>2.5</b>	Moderate in many regards with many deficiencies.	
<b>2.0</b>	Weak with many deficiencies.	
<b>1.5</b>	Weak in many regards with many critical deficiencies.	
<b>1.0</b>	Wholly inadequate with many critical deficiencies.	



## ii. Education and public engagement programme

Please comment on the SFI Research Centre's EPE programme and progress in Phase I, and the transition to the Phase II EPE programme. Take into consideration key documents for the review and the Centre's presentations at the site visit.

As part of your response, consider the following questions:

- Is the purpose/vision for EPE activities clear?
- Is there evidence of a logic modelling approach to the EPE plan? How is the Centre performing against their EPE operational plan?
- What components are being used to engage with the public?
- Are there aspects of the EPE programme that could be improved through a shift in focus?
- Is there evidence of applying best practice / the body of knowledge in the component parts of the EPE programme?
- Is there a Centre-wide culture of responsibility for EPE?
- The definition of an EPE champion is broader than just participation. An aspect of the EPE programme may feature EPE champions<sup>[1]</sup>—is there evidence of any champion work within the Centre? deeper than just the number of activities the champion has completed?
- How is the Centre engaging all its research community in delivering the public engagement plan?
- Is it clear how the EPE programme is evaluated and leads to impact?
- Is there evidence of applying learning or evaluation from EPE activity to research strands?
- Is the Centre transitioning effectively to its Phase II EPE programme?

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<sup>1</sup> Champions are identified as those who participate in five or more EPE activities, who lead or significantly participate in the development and/or delivery of EPE strategy and/or activity. They often act as role models, inspiring others to participate.

Select the description that best matches your assessment of the SFI Research Centre’s EPE programme from the following list:

Score	Description
5.0	Outstanding with no deficiencies.
4.5	Outstanding in many regards with no serious deficiencies.
4.0	Strong with no serious deficiencies.
3.5	Strong in many regards with some deficiencies.
3.0	Moderate with some deficiencies.
2.5	Moderate in many regards with many deficiencies.
2.0	Weak with many deficiencies.
1.5	Weak in many regards with many critical deficiencies.
1.0	Wholly inadequate with many critical deficiencies.

### iii. Research centre leadership, management and governance

Please comment on the ability of the SFI Research Centre to effectively manage and execute its activities in Phase I, and its transition to Phase II in this area. This includes the effectiveness of the management team, quality and commitment of investigators, robust governance, transparent and effective management of the Research Centre, as well as access to sufficient facilities, equipment and support from the Centre’s partner institutions. Take into consideration key documents for the review and the Centre’s presentations at the site visit.

As part of your response, consider the following questions:

- Is there an operationally effective management structure and organisation in place?
- Is the Centre Director leading the Centre team effectively?
- Is the Centre operating as a truly national Centre?
- Are the co-PIs engaged and working as a team?
- Has the Centre effectively attracted, recruited, and trained key personnel?
- Have the Centre’s research and EPE programmes been executed effectively and efficiently?
- Is there evidence of EPE experience in the team? If there are gaps, what partnerships are proposed to ensure engagement expertise?
- What is the Centre’s strategy for improving gender balance within the team?

- Is the Centre being effectively supported by the involved Research Bodies?
- Is the Centre transitioning effectively to Phase II in terms of leadership, management and governance?
- Are there any infrastructural issues (space, refurbishment, equipment, support services, etc.) that need to be addressed in Phase II?

Select the description that best matches your assessment of the SFI Research Centre’s leadership, management, and governance from the following list:

Score	Description
5.0	Outstanding with no deficiencies.
4.5	Outstanding in many regards with no serious deficiencies.
4.0	Strong with no serious deficiencies.
3.5	Strong in many regards with some deficiencies.
3.0	Moderate with some deficiencies.
2.5	Moderate in many regards with many deficiencies.
2.0	Weak with many deficiencies.
1.5	Weak in many regards with many critical deficiencies.
1.0	Wholly inadequate with many critical deficiencies.

#### iv. Impact

Please comment on the impact being made by the SFI Research Centre, taking into consideration key documents for the review and the Centre’s presentations at the site visit.

As part of your response, consider the following questions:

- Has the Research Centre achieved the proposed impacts outlined in the original proposal?
- Has the Centre’s strategy for pursuing impact in Phase I been effective?
- Is the Centre transitioning effectively to Phase II in terms of impact?
- Should the Centre alter their strategy with regards to achieving impacts in Phase II?

Has the Centre successfully demonstrated impact in any of the following areas:

- Societal impacts
- Economic
- International engagement
- Public policy, services and regulation
- Health and wellbeing
- Environmental
- Professional services
- Human capacity

Please consult with SFI's detailed guidance on 'Types of Impact', which can be found at the link: <https://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management/research-impact/>

It is worthwhile to note that some projects may have more immediate impacts, while others may be long term. Impact may also be difficult to measure, hence you should cross reference results attained by the Research Centre against KPI targets, since these can be used as "indicators" of different kinds of impact.

Select the description that best matches your assessment of the SFI Research Centre's impact from the following list:

Score	Description
5.0	Outstanding with no deficiencies.
4.5	Outstanding in many regards with no serious deficiencies.
4.0	Strong with no serious deficiencies.
3.5	Strong in many regards with some deficiencies.
3.0	Moderate with some deficiencies.
2.5	Moderate in many regards with many deficiencies.
2.0	Weak with many deficiencies.
1.5	Weak in many regards with many critical deficiencies.
1.0	Wholly inadequate with many critical deficiencies.

#### v. Implementation of recommendations from the 4-year progress review

Please comment on the Research Centre’s progress on implementing the recommendations from the 4-year review, including recommendations on:

- Research/scientific programme
- EPE programme
- Execution and team
- Commercial/funding performance
- Impact
- Any other recommendations received from the 4-year review

Please find details of the 4-year recommendations in the 4-year site review panel report, provided in your briefing documents. The Research Centre’s progress against these recommendations is presented in the Progress Report, Appendix II “Responses to Recommendations”.

Select the description that best matches your assessment of the SFI Research Centre’s implementation of the recommendations from the following list:

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>	
<b>5.0</b>	Outstanding with no deficiencies.	
<b>4.5</b>	Outstanding in many regards with no serious deficiencies.	
<b>4.0</b>	Strong with no serious deficiencies.	
<b>3.5</b>	Strong in many regards with some deficiencies.	
<b>3.0</b>	Moderate with some deficiencies.	
<b>2.5</b>	Moderate in many regards with many deficiencies.	
<b>2.0</b>	Weak with many deficiencies.	
<b>1.5</b>	Weak in many regards with many critical deficiencies.	
<b>1.0</b>	Wholly inadequate with many critical deficiencies.	

#### vi. Research centre budget and KPI performance

Please comment on the Research Centre Phase I budget, as well as the Centre's performance against their Phase I KPI targets:

- Has the Research Centre managed its budget effectively?
- Has the budget been used to achieve the maximum research and commercial impact?
- Has the budget been appropriately allocated across the different research and non-research activities of the Centre?
- How has the Centre performed against its KPI targets in Phase I?
- Has the Centre been effective in attracting cash and/or in-kind contributions from industry partners?
- Has the Centre been successful in attracting funding from non-exchequer, non-commercial sources, such as EU Horizon 2020?

Please consult with SFI's detailed guidance on KPI targets which can be found at: <https://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management/research-centres-award-management/4.1-Research-Centres-Performance-Indicator-Targets-2018-Final.pdf>

#### vii. Executive summary

Please provide a summary of the key conclusions of the site review, taking into consideration commentary in the other sections of the report, and providing recommendations for the Research Centre for the future.

As part of your executive summary, please provide narrative for each of the following points:

- Overview
- Strengths and weaknesses of the Centre's performance during Phase I
- Spoke awards (where relevant); US-Ireland Centre to Centre awards (where relevant)
- Progress on the implementation of 4-year review recommendations
- Progress on transition to Phase II
- Significant issues raised during the review
- New recommendations for the Research Centre, and SFI, to consider

Select the description that best matches your assessment of the Research Centre’s overall performance during the reporting period from the following list:

Score	Description
5.0	Outstanding with no deficiencies.
4.5	Outstanding in many regards with no serious deficiencies.
4.0	Strong with no serious deficiencies.
3.5	Strong in many regards with some deficiencies.
3.0	Moderate with some deficiencies.
2.5	Moderate in many regards with many deficiencies.
2.0	Weak with many deficiencies.
1.5	Weak in many regards with many critical deficiencies.
1.0	Wholly inadequate with many critical deficiencies.

**x. Reviewer feedback for SFI**

SFI requests feedback of expert reviewers on the site review process, briefings provided, documents received, or any other aspect of your experience as reviewers. We take this feedback into account to continuously improve our internal process as well as the SFI Research Centres programme.

## 8. Financial Review Procedure

The SFI Finance team will arrange to meet with both the SFI Research Centre Manager and Research Accountant of the host Research Body, in advance of the site review. Any issues that arise during the financial review may be raised with the scientific review panel if required.

The SFI Finance team will analyse the following for each Centre to date:

- A Master schedule of Collaborative Research Agreements made with all industry partners to date, showing the following:
  - Cash amounts committed for each calendar year of the agreement and in total over the contract.
  - In-kind amounts committed for each calendar year of the agreement and in total over the contract.
- The individual Collaborative Research Agreements.
- The **Consolidated Industry Partner Cost Share Reports** for the Centre for each 6-month period up to the end of Q2 2020.
- The **Individual Industry Cost Share reports** – signed by the industry partner (for each 12-month period up to the end of Q2 2020).

The above reports will be checked in detail by SFI Finance to ensure the following:

- The reports are compiled correctly and reflect all active and completed Platform and Targeted projects for each Centre.
- That the cash amounts received, and in-kind amounts received have been accurately reported and can be traced to the Research Body bank account.
- The values placed on the In-kind contributions are fair and reasonable, have been signed as 'received' by the Centre and the Research Bodies in the period under review and can be traced to the **Individual Industry Cost Share reports** where applicable.
- That overheads received from industry partners which have been diverted directly to the Centre activity have been correctly accounted for.

## 9. Follow-up to Site Review Process

When the panel report has been completed, a covering letter highlighting the pertinent points of the review and financial review, along with final recommendations, will be prepared by SFI. Following approval, the outcome of the progress review and the financial review, covering letter and panel report are delivered to the SFI Research Centre Director, Governance Chair, Centre Manager and Vice-President/Dean of Research of the Host Institution(s). The Centre Director, as lead investigator, is given 6 weeks in which to submit a response to the reviewers' comments and recommendations. A feedback meeting between the Centre Director, Centre Manager and SFI will take place once this response is submitted to facilitate further discussion on the outcomes and recommendations from the progress review.



## 10. Post-Review Communications Meeting

As a follow up to the Research Centre site review, a meeting will be held to discuss the Centre's recent and planned communications activities. This meeting will take place ideally one month after the site review. The purpose of this meeting is for the Centre to relay the key communications successes over the last two years, and to talk through future plans, resources, identify any areas for improvement or increased focus, and to discuss any supports the SFI Communications team can provide. The date of the meeting, as well as further detail on its format, will be decided in communication with the SFI SPM prior to the site review.

## APPENDIX I: REMOTE REVIEW

### Overview of SFI Remote Review

SFI takes seriously the need to ensure the health and safety of its staff, reviewers, funded researchers, and other potential participants in the site review process. This plan has been developed to provide guidance for the Review Panel members and the Research Centre personnel in the event that the Centre review cannot take place on-site, in which case the 6-year review will be carried out remotely.

### Remote Review: Key changes to the review format

- The review will be carried out remotely using Zoom Video Communications.
- The review will be held over three days.
- The number of people that will attend the review will be limited to:
  - Review panel members
  - SFI staff
  - President of the host Research Body, the Vice President/Dean of Research and Governance Chair
  - Research Centre Director(s)
  - Research Centre Manager
  - Research Centre EPE Manager
  - Co-PIs and FIs
  - Leader/selected collaborators of Spokes or US Centre-to-Centre awards (if relevant)
  - Industry Partners (select session only)
  - Any additional team member who may be scheduled to present
  - EI and IDA staff members may be invited to attend relevant sessions
  - Additional participants not mentioned on the list can be discussed with SPM in advance of the review
- Centres need to submit a number of pre-recorded presentations in advance of the remote review.
- The poster session will take place using Zoom breakout room facilities and will not involve a traditional poster format.
- An agenda template is outlined later in this document. It is **important** to note that **times are for guidance purposes only** and can be modified to suit the needs of the individual Research Centre.

### Instructions for Pre-Recorded Presentations

- A pre-recorded welcome from President of the host Research Body, the Vice President/Dean of Research and Governance Chair will be provided by the Research Centres.
- The Centre Director will provide a pre-recorded presentation to introduce the Research Centres.
  - This recording should be no longer than 20 minutes.

- This presentation should provide a strategic overview of Phase 1, including an overview of the implementation of the 4-year review recommendations and the Centre’s strategy for transitioning to Phase II funding.
- The Centres will also pre-record presentations for EPE and the Impact session.
  - Each presentation should not exceed 30 minutes.
- Centres must submit their final pre-recorded presentations and presentation slides in advance of the remote review.
- Panel members will view the pre-recorded presentations prior to the remote review.
- A 5-10-minute recap of the pre-recorded presentations will be provided by the Centre at the beginning of each session. This presentation should cover the main points raised in the pre-recorded presentations.

## “Poster” Session

- The poster session will be carried out using the Zoom breakout room facilities.
- One panel member will be placed in each breakout room with 3 PhD/MSc or postdoctoral researchers.
- There will be 8 break out rooms in total and 24 posters will be reviewed.
- Given the format of the poster session in the remote review, instead of a traditional poster, the students and postdoctoral researchers are asked to prepare short presentation (3-5 slides max.) on their work and Centre activities they have taken part in. This will be followed by a 5-10-minute Q&A session with the Panel member.
- Please note that one of the reviewers will be an expert in EPE. EPE content is welcome in all presentations in the poster session, however 3 presentations will need to be prepared that focus specifically on this topic. This could be, for instance, on the EPE activities that those PhD students/postdoctoral researchers have taken part in.

## Report Writing

- The panel members will complete their final report through an online shared document on Day 3.
- A 1-hour conference call will be scheduled 2 weeks post the review to approve the final panel report

## Agenda template

Day 1: 12.00-18:00GMT (+1 until October 2020)

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Time	Title	Minutes
12.00-12.20	Private Introductory Discussion with SFI and Panel Members	20
<b>SESSION 1</b>		
12.20-12.25	<b>Welcome by SFI Scientific Programme Manager</b>	5
	A pre-recorded welcome from President of the host Research Body, the Vice President/Dean of Research and Governance Chair will be provided to the panel members prior to the remote review	
12.25-13.05	<b>Introduction to the SFI Research Centre</b>	40
	<i>5-10 min recap of pre-recorded presentation</i>	
	Q&A	
13.45-14.00	Private Panel Session	15
14.00-15.00	Research Programme 1	60
	Q&A	
15.00-16.00	<b>Long Break</b>	60
16.00-17.00	Research Programme 2	60
17.00-17.20	Private Panel Discussion	20
17.20-17.50	Director/Co-PI Private Discussion	30

Day 2: 12.00-18:00 GMT (+1until October 2020)

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Time	Title	Minutes
<b>SESSION 2</b>		
12.00-12.15	Private Panel Session	15
12.15-13.00	Research Programme 3: Progress of Spokes or US Centre-to-Centre Awards (if relevant)	45
13.00-13.40	Education and Public Engagement	40
13.40-14.20	Impact	40
14.20-15.20	<b>Long Break</b>	60
15.20-16.20	Remote Poster Session	60
16.20-16.30	<b>Short Break</b>	10
<b>SESSION 3</b>		
16.30-16.45	Private Panel Session	15
16.45-17.15	Institutional Support -Discussion of key Issues	30
17.15-17.35	Private Panel Discussion	20
17.35-18.00	Director/Co-PI Private Discussion	25

Day 3: 12.00-18:00 GMT (+1 until October 2020)

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Time	Title	Minutes
<b>SESSION 4</b>		
12.00-12.15	Private Panel Session	15
12.15-13.15	Industry Partners (3 x 20 minutes per industry partner)	60
13.15-13.35	Private Panel Discussion	20
13.35-14.05	Director/Co-PI Private Discussion	30
14.05-15.05	<b>Long Break</b>	60
<b>SESSION 5</b>		
15.05-15.20	Private Panel Session	15
15.20-18.00	Private Panel Session - Report Writing	160
	<i>The panel will write the progress review report in this closed session (see panel report section for further details).</i>	

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## Remote Participation: Dial-In Details

Zoom Video Communications will be used for the duration of this review. Several Zoom channels will be used depending on the day, and the nature of the session. A calendar invite with the relevant Zoom instructions will be sent to all participants at least one week in advance of the review. As participants will be dialing in from different time zones please take note of your start time in each section. Session times will be provided in advance of the meeting.


## Security Concerns regarding the use of Zoom Video Communications

SFI is aware of security concerns participants may have in relation to the use of Zoom. Please note all SFI Zoom invitations will have meeting link sfi.zoom.us rather than the generic zoom.us. Additional automatic meeting controls have been implemented for all SFI users such as automatic waiting rooms, passwords, and the ability to record meetings or chat messages has been disabled. Participants must sign in with their full name and upon signing participants will be directed to a waiting room which will display SFI branding.

## Remote Participation: Chair

- Both an Academic chair and Process chair are required
- Role of the Academic chair (peer review panel member):
  - to ensure involvement of all panel members in the review
  - to submit the final report and ensure it is a true reflection of the panel's questions, discussions and the presentations at the review
  - to ensure international benchmarking of research progress
- Role of the Process chair (SFI staff member):
  - time keeping
  - assist with technology issues/ restructure review as necessary
  - manage scope of the review
  - ensure panel are presented with adequate information to complete report
  - ensure PI given opportunity to present progress on award to date

## Remote Participation: Etiquette

- All participants will automatically be on mute when they enter the zoom meeting. Please remember to unmute before speaking.
- When Centre personnel are presenting, **please ensure to mute your microphone to minimise interference and excess noise.**
- A Q&A session will follow each presentation where the panel members can ask questions. The panel Chair will invite the reviewers to ask questions during these sessions.
- Please use the raise hand button below to participate in discussion.
  - Click **Raise Hand** in the Webinar Controls. 
  - The host will be notified that you've raised your hand.



- If your microphone is not working, you can email questions to SFI Scientific Programme Manager who will pass them to the Chair to be raised with the Centre.
- SFI and the Chair will ensure that all remote reviewers are given sufficient opportunity to raise any questions throughout the review.

## Remote Participation: Troubleshooting

- Should you require assistance at any stage during the review, SFI personnel will be available. The contact details will be provided prior to review.
- There is a chat function on Zoom. **Please only use the chat function if you are having technical issues and do not make comments or remarks about the Centre or the review using this function.**
- If you find the connection is slow at any point, you can turn off your video and this usually helps.

**\*Please note that SFI may request a modification to the format of the review if deemed appropriate.**