SFI-NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme Call 2023

Information Webinar – 02/11/2023

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For further information:
https://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/i-corps@sfi/

Contact Email:
i-corps@sfi.ie
SFI-NSF I-Corps@SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme

Purpose

Support SFI researchers to develop entrepreneurial and innovation skills that will enable them to realise new economic and societal impact opportunities for their research.

Objectives

• Support researchers to develop skills in entrepreneurship and innovation.

• Enable researchers to realise economic and societal impact opportunities from publicly funded research.

• Accelerate the translation of publicly funded research to impact.

• Raise awareness of entrepreneurial thinking and skills amongst researchers at different career stages.
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I-Corps@SFI Partnership

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Funding
Up to €35k

Duration of 6-months

Training
NSF I-Corps Teams (7-weeks)

I-Corps@SFI Academy

Training

Local Training (7-weeks)
The NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps) Programme is one of the most successful entrepreneurship and innovation programmes in the world. Developed by the NSF with Steve Blank, launched in 2012.

To-date:
- Trained over 5,800 researchers (over 2,500 teams).
- 1,400 startups formed.
- Startups have cumulatively raised $3.16 billion.
- Progressive improvement in methodology and training processes.
- Obama Administration supports scale-up of NSF I-Corps in 2015.
- One international partner – SFI.
Specifically, the ETP provides access to the NSF I-Corps Teams Programme. This is an intensive 7-week training programme delivered by the NSF during which teams receive training in evidence-based entrepreneurship and undertake extensive opportunity (e.g., stakeholder, beneficiary, customer) discovery activities.

**Details**
- Training duration 7-weeks.
- All training/mentoring delivered online.
- Time commitment approx. 15 hours per week.
- Team members are required to attend all elements of the training programme.
Why Apply? - Researcher

As a researcher, why should you apply?

• Grant funding of up to €35k.
• Develop transferable skills that will support career development – Entrepreneurial and innovation skills are in demand.
• Develop sectoral insights to give you a competitive advantage in research – Go beyond secondary research.
• Explore the impact potential of your idea (quickly) – Can your idea deliver the impact you think?
• Prestige - NSF I-Corps is world-renowned.
• Self-discovery – Do you have the qualities to commercialise research or pursue an entrepreneurial venture?

Why Apply? - Institution

As an institution, why should you encourage researchers to apply?

• Focus of training is to establish problem-solution fit.
• Rigorously discover and validate unmet needs – deal flow.
• Identify high potential prospects – deal flow.
• Trains researchers in opportunity discovery and recognition – deal flow.
• Horizon scanning.
• Expand network.
Who Can Apply?

- Teams comprising a Principal Investigator, Entrepreneurial Lead and Entrepreneurial Mentor.

- **Principal Investigator (PI)** must be a member of academic staff at an Eligible Research Body (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the award) and hold an SFI-funded grant (active in last 3-years).

- **Entrepreneurial Lead (EL)** must be a member of academic staff at an Eligible Research Body (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the award) or contract researcher or postgraduate researcher.

- **Entrepreneurial Mentor (EM)** should come from outside academia and have significant innovation, entrepreneurial, industry or other relevant experience appropriate to this role. May be selected from a non-academic commercialisation/business development role within an Eligible Research Body.
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Application Process Overview

How to Apply?

• Read the Call Document.
• Identify or develop an idea based on intellectual property (IP).
• Form a team comprising:
  Principal Investigator;
  Entrepreneurial Lead;
  Entrepreneurial Mentor.
• Write your application. Consult with Research and Tech Transfer Offices.
• Select the Application Track.
• Submit your application.
• (Successful teams awarded grant and place on upcoming NSF I-Corps Teams cohort).
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Two Application Tracks

**Standard Track**

- **Standard Application Track** is open to researchers (Principal, Co-Principal or Funded Investigators) who currently hold, or are funded by, any active SFI grant or an SFI grant active in the past 3 years.

- **Funding of up to €35k** can be requested for up to 6-months.

- Applications must be submitted through SESAME.

- Application form available on programme call webpage.

- Applications must be submitted in advance of specific deadlines.

**Accelerated Track**

- **Accelerated Application Track** is open to researchers (Principal, Co-Principal or Funded Investigators) who currently hold, or are funded by, any active SFI grant awarded under an affiliated SFI programme.

- Affiliated SFI programmes: Challenges (incl. NCF), Research Centres and ARC Hubs.

- **No funding** may be requested.

- Applications can be submitted at any time and will be processed on-demand.

- Researchers may also apply under the Standard Track.
What Can The Budget Be Used For?

• **Salary Contribution**
  • Contribution to Postdoctoral Researcher Salary.

• **Principal Investigator (PI) Teaching Buyout**
  • Teaching buy-out of up to €15k can be applied for by the lead applicant (PI) (Irrespective of institution type).

• **Materials & Consumables**
  • Materials and consumables associated with small-scale prototyping may be permitted to assist in opportunity discovery.

• **Travel**
  • Travel costs associated directly with undertaking training and opportunity discovery activities may be requested.

• **Entrepreneurial Mentor**
  • A contribution of up to a **maximum of €5k** to secure an independent expert to act as Entrepreneurial Mentor (EM) on a team may be requested.
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### Review Process

**Standard Track**

- Two stage review process.
- Review of submitted (written) application:
  - Quality, experience and ambition of the team.
  - Quality of problem understanding.
  - Quality of the solution.
  - Quality of the impact opportunity.
- Interview with SFI/NSF Staff.
- Review of applications undertaken by SFI staff with independent international oversight.

**Accelerated Track**

- Two stage review process.
- Review of submitted (written) application*:
  - Quality of strategic alignment.
- Interview with SFI/NSF Staff.
- * Contact Programme Team at i-corps@sfi.ie in advance of application preparation.
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Key Dates

- **Four Call Deadlines Under 2023 Call (Relevant to Standard Application Track Only)**
  
  **Call A**
  
  Launch: October 9th, 2023
  
  Application Deadline: **January 19th, 2024**, 13:00 Dublin Local Time

  **Call B**
  
  Launch: January 22nd, 2024
  
  Application Deadline: **March 15th, 2024**, 13:00 Dublin Local Time

  **Call C**
  
  Launch: March 18th, 2024
  
  Application Deadline: **May 24th, 2024**, 13:00 Dublin Local Time

  **Call D**
  
  Launch: May 27th, 2024
  
  Application Deadline: **July 19th, 2024**, 13:00 Dublin Local Time
Contacts

For further information please contact:

Programme Team: Laura Quinn, Carla Marina Soriano or Stephen O’Driscoll

E: i-corps@sfi.ie

W: https://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/i-corps@sfi/

W: https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/i-corps/about-teams

You can also book a meeting with us from the call webpage.