SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND

SFI Science Policy Research Programme 2017

Call for Submission of Proposals

Version: 18th May 2017

Key Dates

Expression of Interest Deadline: **16 June 2017, 13.00 Dublin local time**
Proposal Submission Deadline: **18 August 2017, 13.00 Dublin local time**

Terms of Reference

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of this document, it is provided for information purposes only and as a guide to expected developments. It is not intended, and should not be relied upon, as any form of warranty, representation, undertaking, contractual, or other commitment binding in law upon Science Foundation Ireland, the Government of Ireland, or any of their respective servants or agents. SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants shall govern the administration of SFI grants and awards to the exclusion of this and any other oral, written, or recorded statement.

All responses to this Call for Submission of Proposals will be treated in confidence and no information contained therein will be communicated to any third party without the written permission of the applicant except insofar as is specifically required for the consideration and evaluation of the proposal or as may be required under law, including the Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) Act, 2003, the Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland) (Amendment) Act 2013 and the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003.

1 Introduction

Nations fund scientific research to further their economic and social interests. By building and using human and knowledge capital capacity, countries can achieve competitive advantage and sustainable development. This is vital for economic growth and the advancement of society. It is the role of government and its agencies, therefore, to catalyse and build a functioning ecosystem that includes an effective mix of government, private enterprise, academia, finance, regulation and philanthropy, all working together to deliver desirable impacts.

Ireland has invested significantly in Research and Development (R&D) over a 17 year period and there is now sufficient data amassed to critically analyse the impact of national investment in R&D and the effectiveness of science policy against other nations of similar size and R&D investment. This type of analysis will prove invaluable to the Irish Government in assessing the impact of their investment to date and for investments in the future.

At the heart of Innovation 2020[1], Ireland's five-year strategy on research and development, science and technology, is a vision of Ireland being a "Global Innovation Leader driving a strong economy and a better society", underpinned by excellent research. Critical to the delivery of this vision will be effective policies: for the funding, evaluation, dissemination of scientific research; for the building of a renowned talent pool of researchers who can train and develop future researchers and enhance Ireland's international reputation for innovation; and for building a world class research system. Building Ireland's research capacity in the area of Science Policy will ensure that international best practice can be brought to bear in an Irish context, where the positive and negative effects of policy may have a more pronounced impact than in larger economies.

In order to both develop and support this vision, SFI is pleased to launch the **SFI Science Policy Research Programme 2017.**

2 Programme Details

2.1 Programme Remit

The legal remit of Science Foundation Ireland is to promote, develop and assist the carrying out of oriented basic and applied research in strategic areas of scientific endeavour; to develop and extend the capability for carrying out such research; to support the development of research to assess the impact of such research. In order to support all aspects of its remit, Science Foundation Ireland funds research for science policy, building a strong foundation for effective funding decision-making to deliver maximum impact for the economy and society.

2.2 Objectives of the Science Policy Research Programme

The specific **objectives** of the programme are:

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[1] *Innovation 2020, Published 2015*

- To provide support to academics to conduct focused research in science funding policy in order to build capacity;

- To encourage collaborations with international experts in the field and key policy makers or research funders in government departments or agencies;

- To enable training of policy researchers;

- To fund detailed analyses of data from government departments or agencies and other sources of data;

- To allow dissemination of knowledge by various means including via peer reviewed publications and via presentations at or hosting of conferences/workshops, and presentations at government departments or agencies;

- Input to continued evolution of RDI policy in Ireland.

2.3   Topics

Science Foundation Ireland has identified a number of areas where in-depth research would greatly inform and benefit the Irish STEM research performing and funding systems. These topics are detailed in Appendix I. Applicants may only select ONE topic for their application. We expect to make only one award against any one topic.

There will be also be an option to submit a "wild card" application outside of these specific topics, where it is relevant to the furtherance of the four primary objectives outlined in Science Foundation Ireland's strategic plan, [Agenda 2020](). These four objectives are that Science Foundation Ireland:

A. Be the best science funding agency in the world at creating impact from excellent research and demonstrating clear value for money invested
B. Be exemplar in building partnerships that fund excellent science and drive it out into the market and society
C. Have the most engaged and scientifically informed public
D. Represent the ideal modern public service organisation, staffed in a lean and flexible manner, with efficient and effective management

We expect to make a maximum of two awards under the wild card themes.

2.4   Definition of Lead Applicant / Academic Collaborator

The **Lead Applicant** will be responsible for the direction of the research 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 Terms and Conditions of SFI.[2] The Lead Applicant will serve as the primary point of contact for SFI on the grant, during the review process and, if successful, during the course of the grant.

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

For the purpose of this Call, an **Academic Collaborator** is defined as an individual working in an academic institution or state body who is committed to providing a valuable intellectual and/or technical contribution to the proposed research.

While engaging with academic collaborators is not required, in recognition of the benefits of including an international perspective in policy research, applications which include international collaborators with an established and recognised track record in the relevant area of policy research, <u>will be favourably reviewed</u>.

As appropriate, Academic Collaborator(s) based in an SFI Eligible Research Body within the Republic of Ireland may receive funding through the grant (see Appendix IV, Section IV.10), but the funding allocated should reflect the supporting role that such Collaborator(s) are expected to play in the research programme. Academic Collaborators may not be the primary supervisor/mentor of postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers or research staff enrolled on the grant, but may be the local supervisor if these team members are based in a different institution to the Lead Applicant. CVs <u>must</u> be provided for Academic Collaborators. Academic Collaborators intending to act as a local supervisor to team members should be able to demonstrate a competitive track record of achievements and must have previously held a supervisory role in research programmes.

Collaborator letters of support: Each collaborator <u>must</u> provide a letter of support with the grant application and this must clearly outline the role of that collaborator in the programme of research proposed. The role of the Collaborator must also be *referenced* in the main body of the research proposal (for example: *Will the Collaborators be supplying data, etc.? Will the Collaborators be providing training in techniques or directly participate in specific projects? Will Collaborators be acting in a purely advisory capacity?).* Please see Appendix IV, Section IV.13 for more details on letters of support.

2.5   Eligibility of Research Body

The research body is the body in charge of the financial and administrative co-ordination of the award received from SFI. A list of [eligible research bodies](#) is available on the SFI website. In the event of multiple collaborating research bodies, the award will be administered by the lead research body.

2.6   Eligibility of Applicant

2.6.1   Employment Status

The Applicant must be:

> A member of the academic staff of an eligible Research Body (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the grant); **or**

> A contract researcher with a contract that covers the period of the grant, who is recognised by the Research Body as an independent investigator and will have an independent office and research space at the host Research Body for which he/she will be fully responsible for *at least* the duration of the SFI grant; **or**

An individual who will be recognised by the Research Body upon receipt of the SFI grant as a member of the academic staff or as a contract researcher as defined above. The applicant does not necessarily need to be employed by the Research Body at the time of proposal submission.

Retired or Emeritus members of academic staff, meeting all other eligibility criteria, are eligible to apply if their institution makes the necessary commitments; further details are available on the SFI website.[3]

<u>Research Body submission confirms that the Applicant is either a member of the academic staff, a contract researcher, or awaiting appointment as defined above</u>.

2.6.2 Other SFI Awards

Applicants holding active SFI awards at the deadline for the submission of proposals to this call (18 August 2017), or who are under review in other SFI calls, should refer to Appendix II regarding eligibility for the Science Policy Research 2017 call.

2.6.3 PhD Duration

The Applicant must have held a PhD or equivalent qualification[4] for at least **<u>five years</u>** by the proposal deadline (18 August 2017).

- *Applicants holding an equivalent qualification may be eligible, but should nevertheless seek approval from SFI in advance of submitting a proposal.*

- *The official date of a PhD is defined as the year that the degree was conferred (i.e., the year printed on the official PhD certificate). The number of years is determined by calendar year. Therefore, only individuals with an official date of 2011 or earlier are eligible to apply to the this call.*

2.6.4 Senior-Author Publications

The Applicant is required to have demonstrated that they have been a **senior author** on at least 5 **international peer-reviewed articles**. Only original research publications, and not review articles or other secondary research literature, are acceptable. Please note that 5 senior-author publications is a minimum eligibility criterion; applicants with higher numbers of publications are likely to be more competitive. For this programme, senior authors are defined as follows:

- An author that is listed as first or joint first author, reflecting the fact that he/she has provided the greatest intellectual contribution, has held the primary responsibility for collecting and analysing data, and for the writing of the manuscript and associated drafts.

- The last author will also be considered as a senior author, since this position generally reflects his/her overall responsibility for the study and suggests that a level of mentorship has been provided.

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[3] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/grant-policies/emeritusretired-eligibility-policy/

[4] Please see the SFI website for further details on equivalence - http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/eligibility-related-information/

- It will be noted that different publishers have differing rules on how the senior authorship is indicated (e.g., by using asterisks, underlining, placing the name first or last in the list of authors, etc.); of overriding importance however is that the applicant should be able to convince and reassure reviewers that they are the key author on these publications. Joint first authorship may only be claimed **where the article clearly states** that two (or more) authors have provided equal and significant contributions to the work described. Please note that senior authorship does <u>not</u> necessarily mean that they were responsible for the finance associated with the research that was reported.

2.6.5   Research Independence

The Applicant is required to have demonstrated research independence through securing at least one independent research grant as lead investigator or as co-investigator. Eligible research grants would be expected to support at least one full-time equivalent, excluding the applicant(s), and include research team costs (e.g., materials and consumables). This excludes smaller awards such as travel grants, equipment grants, postgraduate fellowships, postdoctoral fellowships, and awards of short duration (12 months or less). Laboratory fit-out/start-up funding is also excluded. Applicants may be required to provide evidence to support the validity of an award upon request. If you are uncertain regarding the eligibility of funding you have received, please contact SFI at sciencepolicyresearch@sfi.ie.

2.6.6   Supervisory Experience

The Applicant is required to demonstrate proven prior experience, capability and authority in the mentorship and supervision of postgraduate students and team members.

2.7   Application Eligibility

The Science Policy Research programme consists of a two-stage submission process. At the initial Expression of Interest stage, Science Foundation Ireland will confirm that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements and that the proposal is sufficiently relevant to the topic headings. All applicants who pass the Expression of Interest stage will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Individuals may only submit one proposal to an open call of the SFI Science Policy Research Programme. If an Applicant submits more than one proposal to this call, both applications will be returned without review. All topics are part of the same call; individuals may not submit proposals to more than one topic.

> **The Research Body must confirm that the applicant meets the above criteria. Where an applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria outlined above, the application will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted for review.**

2.8   Funding

Science Policy Research 2016 grants may be of three or four years in duration. The maximum will be **€700,000**. General overheads, currently 30% of 'modified' total direct costs, should not be included in the requested budget (see Appendix IV, Section IV.10).

2.9 Proposal Review Procedure and Criteria

The submission of an application to SFI shall be construed as consent by the applicant to participate in the peer review process. Selection of reviewers is at the sole and exclusive discretion of SFI. The identity of experts who conduct the panel review shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed to the applicants. Applications to the Science Policy Research 2017 Call will be evaluated by panel review on the basis of the following criteria:

- Quality, significance, and relevance of the recent research record of the proposed investigator commensurate with applicant's career stage.
- Quality, significance, and relevance of the proposed research, including: value for money; the fit with the outlined topics; and the potential to advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields.

SFI recognises the benefits of including an international perspective in policy research. Therefore, applications which include international collaborators with an established and recognised track record in the relevant area of policy research, will be favourably reviewed.

Should circumstances arise, SFI reserves the right to modify the review process. Applicants will be notified of any relevant modifications. The final funding decisions are at the sole and exclusive discretion of SFI.

3 Application Procedure

3.1 Submission process

Applicants are invited to submit the following documentation:
- Expression of Interest (vial email to sciencepolicyresearch@sfi.ie)

  And, if invited to do so after the Expression of Interest evaluation stage,

- Full proposal

Expressions of Interest must be signed by an authorised official from the applicant's Research Office. Full proposals must be submitted online through SESAME to SFI by that Research Office.

Applicants should follow carefully the instructions below and in the Sesame Researcher User Guide to complete the various sections of the application. In addition, a checklist of requirements is provided Appendix III of this call document.

Applicants should contact their Research Office in sufficient time to ensure that internal deadlines, if any, may be met.

3.2 General Submission Guidelines

All text in documents should be provided in Times New Roman font or similar, with minimum font size of 11, and at least single-line spacing as well as a minimum margin size of 2.5cm. Text in diagrams and tables may be in any clearly legible font.

The number of pages or words permitted in any individual section must not be exceeded. **Applications that do not comply with these requirements will be deemed ineligible and will be returned without review**.

Appendices or other unsolicited documentation are not permitted. **Applications that include such unsolicited documentation will be returned without review.**

File sizes of attachments should be **less than 5MB**.

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. In order to safeguard against ineligibility, applicants are reminded to adhere rigorously to the guidelines in the call documentation and to review the proposal document prior to submission in SESAME.

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

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4   Doctoral Education

For postgraduate students funded by SFI, the host Research Body is expected to adopt the principles, standards and good practice for doctoral education as described in the National Framework for Doctoral Education (2015),[5] which SFI has endorsed.

5   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.

6   Ethical Issues

Research supported by SFI must respect fundamental ethical principles. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify if their proposed research requires ethical approval. Where ethical approval is required, applicants must inform SFI (sciencepolicyresearch@sfi.ie) and may be requested to provide

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[5] http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/national_framework_for_doctoral_education_0.pdf

further details. Ethical approval must be obtained from the relevant national or local ethics committee prior to the start of the project.

Compliance with legislation and EU rules on data protection is required. Applicants are asked to provide that appropriate safeguards will be put in place and provide examples e.g. details of their procedures for data collection, storage, protection, retention, transfer, destruction or re-use (including, collection methodology (digital recording, picture, etc.), methods of storage and exchange.

7   Non-Compliance

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

8   Confidentiality

Science Foundation Ireland takes all reasonable steps to ensure that information provided in the application form is treated as confidential, subject to submission to the members of its committees and merit review and to any obligations under law.

9   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.

10   Award Management

10.1   Reporting Requirements

The progress reporting requirements for all awards made under the SFI Science Policy Research 2017 Call must be adhered to. That is, those awardees that fail to comply will risk having their grant payments suspended and/or the processing of any applications under review in other SFI Programme calls paused, until their reporting status is rectified. Reporting is inclusive of annual reporting, the annual stocktake of **SFI Research Outputs**, the completion of a Researcher Snapshot (which will be published on the Science Foundation Ireland website, participation in post award site reviews, and the completion of other reporting as requested from time to time by SFI.

The SFI Grants and Awards Management System, SESAME, is the primary conduit for annual reporting. Awardees will be requested to submit their annual report by 31 January every year to reflect the activity of the previous calendar year (January – December) or part thereof. The annual report template, which will be available on SESAME, must be used. An additional final report, prepared with a template that will also be available on SESAME, must be submitted within three months of the expiration date of the award.

In addition to the annual report, awardees are also obliged to keep their SESAME Research Profile updated since the annual stocktake of SFI Research Outputs is drawn directly from the data entered into the Research Profile; this must also be updated and completed by the specified deadline each year (currently mid to late January). In the annual completion of their **SFI Research Outputs**, awardees are asked to report on a variety of outputs, including funding opportunities they have pursued and won, allowing SFI to track progress related to these awards on an annual basis. Some or all of the objectives described for awards made under the Science Policy Research call will be relevant in the context of reporting. Successful awardees of the SFI Science Policy Research Programme 2017 will be required to complete **SFI Research Outputs** for five years. SFI reserves the right to request reporting beyond five years.

SFI reporting procedures are detailed on the SFI website and user guides describing the entry of data into the Research Profile are also available on the [SFI website](#).

The applicant has primary fiduciary responsibility and accountability for the management of the award, including reporting. Where the applicant is unable to continue in this role, an alternative investigator must be nominated by the research body and approval must be sought from SFI, in advance of this change.

In addition to the reporting described below, all awards will be subject to financial and operational audit as part of a site review, described in Section 10.2 below; this is to ensure compliance with the award's stated intentions and programme call's stipulations, and to inform SFI of the merits of extending such funds in the future.

To date, SFI funding has produced high-quality, high-impact publications that have resulted in Ireland rising to the top 20 in international bibliometric rankings of repute. Awardees are asked to acknowledge this support in all publications as "This work was supported in part by Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) under its Science Policy Research Programme, grant number 17/SPR/XXX."

10.2 Progress Reviews

Each award will be subject to progress review. It is envisaged that this will be in the form of a presentation to the annual meeting of the SFI-appointed International Steering Committee where each awardee would report on progress made on their projects. The Committee would be asked to review the progress and direction of the research and the quality of the team (including the gender balance of the team).

The outcome of the progress review will be taken into consideration in the assessment of future applications made to SFI. As stated in the [SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants](#), SFI reserves the right to terminate a grant if, in the reasonable opinion of SFI, progress is not deemed to be satisfactory.

11 Intellectual Property Management

Intellectual Property (IP) should be managed according to the policies set out in the Government publication 'Inspiring Partnership - the National IP Protocol 2016'. In cases where additional guidelines are specified by SFI they must also be followed. The IP arrangements are the responsibility of the Research Body and shall reflect the collaborative nature of the project and the level of contribution of other institutions.

12 Further Information

FAQs are available from the Science Policy Research webpage:

http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/policy-research-programme/index.xml

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

Appendix I   Topics

Research Projects in any of the areas below should provide an international perspective, comparing, to the extent that it is relevant, Ireland with other small advanced economies[6], as well as relevant larger economies and groupings such as UK, USA, EU. Studies should also address the specific constraints and opportunities that are particular to Ireland. If making recommendations for the Irish system, projects should consider the practicalities of implementation.

The questions raised below set out some key areas of interest to Science Foundation Ireland and may be considered a starting focus for the research. We expect applicants to request sufficient funding to address the specific questions raised as well as pursue secondary anticipated or opportunistic research that arises from these topics.

1) Wild Card Project

An application in an area outside of the topics listed below may be submitted provided it is relevant to the furtherance of the four primary objectives outlined in Science Foundation Ireland's strategic plan, Agenda 2020. These four objectives are that Science Foundation Ireland:

A.   Be the best science funding agency in the world at creating impact from excellent research and demonstrating clear value for money invested
B.   Be exemplar in building partnerships that fund excellent science and drive it out into the market and society
C.   Have the most engaged and scientifically informed public
D.   Represent the ideal modern public service organisation, staffed in a lean and flexible manner, with efficient and effective management

2) Effectiveness of Peer Review

In 2015, Danielle Li and Leila Agha[7] published a Science paper examining the success of peer-review panels in predicting the future quality of proposed research using data from 130,000 NIH research projects. How does the effectiveness of the peer review carried out by Science Foundation Ireland compare? Moreover, how have declined applicants fared in the absence of funding from Science Foundation Ireland? How do researchers who write competitive grant applications, regardless of whether they are successful or not, compare with those that do not?

3) Revisiting Scientific Impact: Measuring Citation Significance

Bibliometrics such as the journal impact factor and h-index are used to assessment the impact of scientific activity. However, each metric has in its own way courted controversy. For example, the scientific community has been accused of gaming these metrics through publication strategies such as quantity over quality and self-citations. At the basis of many of these metrics is the idea that all citations for a given paper are equal, and that the number of citations is related to the significance of the scientific findings reported in the paper. Papers are cited for many different reasons, and papers

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[6] Ireland is a member of the Small Advanced Economies Initiative, a group of similar sized economies at similar stages of development. Other members are: Denmark, Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, Finland, Switzerland.
[7] Li, Danielle, and Agha, Leila. "Big Names or Big Ideas: Do Peer-Review Panels Select the Best Science Proposals?" *Science* 348, no. 6233 (April 24, 2015): 434–438

do not always report on scientific advancements. For example, papers are sometimes cited for their flaws (a negative citation); some papers provide a review of the literature or introduce a new laboratory technique, but do not necessarily report on any specific scientific advancement. The issues are numerous and unless the 'significance of the citation' is factored into the metric calculation, comparison of these metrics across papers and academic careers is misguided. Patent citations are rarely used but may be relevant to identifying the scientific basis of important new advances.

The purpose of this project is to look at more intelligent methodologies for assigning significance to academic citations with the aim of improving the accuracy of standard bibliometrics which depend on citation counting.

4) Impact of Industry-Academic collaborations on STEM research.

SFI strongly encourages research collaboration between SFI funded scientists & engineers and industry. It is expected that such interactions can lead to SFI scientists & engineers becoming more informed about industrial priorities and research needs; and lead to industrial collaborators being informed about important new science and engineering research developments in Ireland. As such collaborations become more part of the research landscape, it is timely to explore certain aspects of this[8]:

1) To what extent are researchers collaborating with industry in the Irish system?
2) What is the optimal way for Industry to collaborate with academia, looking at best practice internationally? Are the current programmes: Centres, Spokes, Partnerships, Industry Fellowships adequate? Can they be improved or supplemented with new programmes?
3) How does working with industry impact on the scientific excellence of the research performing organisation (RPO)? How do policies that encourage such interactions negatively impact on excellence and breakthrough research advances?

5) Using Patent Literature as a Measure of Innovation

It is generally accepted that innovation is fundamental to the growth and development of economies. However, measuring such innovation remains a challenge. With competition for limited resources, it is important to be able to ensure that investment in innovation is directed appropriately. Proxy measures from the patent literature such as patent filings, patent awards, licencing etc are often used as indicators of innovation but are they the appropriate measures? What defines an "important" patent? How early can important patents be identified? In a recent study by engineers at MIT a strong correlation was observed between information contained in patents in a technological domain and the rate of technological progress in that domain. Can such data help identify emerging areas of scientific / economic importance? How can patent quality be measured and is this a better measure of innovation than quantity? Are there other aspects of the patent lifecycle such as patent trading that could be useful measures of innovation?

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[8] The Dowling Review of Business-University Research Collaborations published in the UK in 2015 provides analysis and recommendations that may be translatable to the Irish system.

Appendix II   Eligibility of Existing Award Holders

Investigators funded through an existing award from the SFI programmes listed below may apply to the Science Policy Research 2017 call at any stage of their award and once all other eligibility criteria are met:
* Research Frontiers Programme
* Investigators Programme Projects
* SFI ERC Development Programme
* US-Ireland R&D Partnership
* HRB-SFI Translational Research Award
* SFI-HRB-Wellcome Trust Biomedical Research Partnership
* Royal Society – Science Foundation Ireland University Research Fellowship
* SFI-Pfizer Biotherapeutics Innovation Award Programme
* SFI Strategic Partnerships Programme
* SFI Technology Innovation Development Award
* SFI Industry Fellowship Programme
* SFI Research Centres Programme
* SFI Spokes Programme
* BBSRC-SFI Joint Funding of Research

Investigators currently funded by SFI as either a Principal Investigator (PI) or co-Principal Investigator (co-PI) under certain programmes may not apply to the Science Policy Research 2017 call unless the deadline of the call (18 August 2017) is less than 24 months before the expiry date of the award. These programmes include, but are not limited to: SFI PI/PICA, SFI Investigators Programme Awards, SFI Investigators Programme (IvP), SFI PIYRA, SFI SIRG, SFI CDA, SFI Future Research Leaders and the SFI Research Professorship Programme. Such individuals must provide justification and rationale for how they would manage two or more major SFI grants under the heading: "Management of More Than One Major SFI Award" as part of the information concerning scientific overlap.

Applicants currently under review by SFI as either Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant under certain programmes are not entitled to apply to the Science Policy Research 2017 Call. These programmes include, but are not limited to: SFI PIYRA, SFI CDA, SFI Future Research Leaders and the SFI Research Professorship Programme.

SFI has stringent requirements for the reporting by awardees on the grants that it makes. Failure to satisfactorily participate in SFI reporting activities may result in an applicant being deemed ineligible for SFI Calls in the future.

PIs/co-PIs under the SFI Research Centres Programme should note that their progress on the Research Centres grant(s) will be assessed if they submit an application to the Science Policy Research 2017 Call. Individuals who are funded as either a PI or co-PI under the Research Centres Programme must provide justification and rationale for how they would manage two or more major SFI grants under the heading: "Management of More Than One Major SFI Award" as part of the information concerning scientific overlap.

Applicants with submissions under review in the Science Policy Research 2017 Call will not be permitted to apply to certain other SFI programmes. These programmes include, but are not limited to: SFI SIRG, SFI CDA, SFI Future Research Leaders and the SFI Research Professorship Programme.

Appendix III   Expression of Interest (Submission via Email)

A template for the Expressions of Interest stage is provided below. All sections must be completed and must be submitted as a single PDF document by email to sciencepolicyresearch@sfi.ie.

Instructions on how to fill out the application form fields in these appendices are provided as follows:

- **Proposal title:** Provide the title of the proposed research project
- **Estimated total requested budget:** Please indicate the total estimated direct costs in Euro for this research project. This should not include any overhead amount payable to the research body.
- **Lead Applicant Details:** Please provide the details of the Lead applicant for this proposal, including name, title, research body etc.
- **Lay summary of research:** Please provide a brief lay description (max 150 words) of the research that will be carried out.
- **Technical summary of research:** Provide more technical details (max 250 words) on the research project and briefly describe its alignment with the objectives of the call as appropriate.
- **Lead applicant details:**
  - Supervisory Details: Please provide the numbers of students you have supervised and graduated;
  - Summary of Publications: Please provide a summary of your publication profile (total number of peer reviewed publications, year of first publication, H-index, number of citations and the source of that data) and the numbers of publications of each type you have produced.
- **Research Grants held as an independent PI:** Please list research grants pending, or received over the previous ten years. This should include competitive research funding received from funding agencies (international and national), charities, industry, etc.
- **Research Body Authorisation:** An official from the Research Office of the Lead Applicant's Research Body must confirm the applicant's eligibility and acceptance and agreement with SFI Terms and Conditions. Applicants should ensure they contact their Research Office in sufficient time to ensure any internal deadlines are met.

SFI Science Policy Research Programme 2017
Expression of Interest Form

PROGRAMME NAME: **SFI Science Policy Research Programme 2017**	
PROPOSAL TITLE: *(Indicate title of research project; max. 30 words)*	
TOPIC: *(Indicate which of the topics this application falls under)*	
ESTIMATED TOTAL REQUESTED BUDGET *(Indicate request to SFI in euro) €*	
LEAD APPLICANT: *(Person who will lead and manage the research project)*	
Name	
Title	
Department	
Research Body	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Year of PhD (or equivalent)	
Gender	

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LAY SUMMARY OF RESEARCH
(max. 150 words)

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TECHNICAL SUMMARY OF RESEARCH
(max. 250 words)

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LEAD APPLICANT DETAILS

HISTORY OF MENTORING AND SUPERVISION
Please provide total numbers of students / staff under each heading

Masters Students Graduated	PhD Students Graduated	Masters Students Currently Supervising	PhD Students Currently Supervising	Other staff being supervised

PUBLICATIONS

Overview

Total Number of Publications:	
Year of First Publication:	
H-index:	
Number of Citations:	
Source:	

Please provide total numbers of publications under each heading

Senior Author Publications	Journal Articles	Reviews	Book Chapters	Books	Peer reviewed conference publications	Edited Conference Proceedings	Other

RESEARCH GRANTS HELD AS AN INDEPENDENT PI

Funding Body	Funding Programme	Title of Proposal	Amount of Funding	Start Date	End Date

Signatures below confirm acceptance and agreement with the SFI grants and awards Terms and Conditions, and that the institution ensures the applicant meets eligibility requirements.
RESEARCH BODY SIGNATORY AUTHORITY **NAME:** **POSITION:** **EMAIL:** **SIGNATURE:** **DATE:**

Appendix IV   Full Proposal Format (Submission via SESAME)

IV.1   SESAME Guidelines

For the Science Policy Research Programme, proposals will only be accepted through SESAME, SFI's grants and awards management system.

All Lead Applicants are required to have their SESAME Research Profiles linked to an ORCID iD before an application can be submitted. See Section IV.2 for more information.

Access to SESAME is controlled by staff at the Research Office of your host Research Body. Please follow your internal organisational process to request this access.

Once you have been registered by your Research Office, **you will receive an email** containing your:

1. Username
2. Password
4. SESAME website address

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

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

> **The SESAME system is accessed using the following Internet address:**
> **https://grants.sfi.ie**

Please see the SESAME Researcher User Guide[9] for more detailed information.

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

Proposals must be submitted online through SESAME to SFI by the Research Office of the Lead Applicant's Research Body before the call deadline.

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[9] http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SESAME-User-Guide-Researcher-v-6-11.pdf

Applicants should carefully follow the instructions below and in the SESAME Researcher User Guide to complete the various sections of the application. In addition, a checklist of requirements is provided in Appendix V of this call document.

Proposal submission requirements:

- **All text in uploaded PDFs** should be provided in Times New Roman font or similar, with minimum font size of 11, and at least single-line spacing as well as a minimum margin size of 2.5cm. Text in diagrams may be in any clearly legible font.
- Uploads in SESAME must be submitted in **Adobe or Microsoft PDF format only**.
- The number of pages in uploads <u>must not</u> exceed the specifications for any given section. **Applications that do not comply with these requirements will be deemed ineligible and will be returned without review**.
- Appendices or other unsolicited documentation are not permitted. **Applications that include such unsolicited documentation will be returned without review.**
- File sizes of attachments should be **<u>less than 5MB</u>**.
- Applicants must complete all mandatory Sesame profile fields (marked in red) before submitting an application. It is not possible to submit an application without this information.

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. In order to safeguard against ineligibility, applicants are reminded to adhere rigorously to the guidelines in the call documentation and to review the proposal document prior to submission in SESAME.

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

IV.2   ORCID ID

ORCID[10] provides a unique identifier for all researchers, which can then be linked to their different research works across different platforms. In December 2015, SESAME integrated with ORCID to make it possible for researchers with a SESAME Research Profile to connect directly to an ORCID iD from their profile. There are a number of benefits to creating an ORCID iD, which include the following:

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

As part of the integration of SESAME with ORCID, it is possible for researchers to import publication data from ORCID directly into their SESAME Research Profile. For the Science Policy Research call 2017,

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[10] http://orcid.org/

Applicants are required to link their SESAME Research Profiles to an ORCID iD **before an application can be submitted**.

IV.3   Eligibility Form

Lead Applicants are required to confirm that they comply with eligibility requirements upon commencing an application to the Science Policy Research call (see Section 2.6 for eligibility details).

IV.4   Proposal Summary

- **Proposal Title (max. 30 words)**
  The Research Proposal title should clearly convey the nature of the research to be undertaken and should not contain confidential details, given that the titles of funded proposals are published by SFI.

- **Topic**
  Applicants are required to select which topic their research proposal will address. If you are applying under the "wild card" topic, provide details of relevance to the SFI strategy, Agenda 2020.

- **Duration of Award Requested**
  SFI Science Policy Research Programme awards are funded for a period of either 36 or 48 months.

- **Ethical Issues**
  Applicants are required to answer the questions related to Ethical Issues.

IV.5   Lead Applicant Time Commitment to Project

Indicate the Applicant's time commitment to the proposed research project as a percentage of his/her total working time. The time committed should reasonably reflect the amount of funding being requested. Reviewers are likely to question time commitments that are lower than 30% of the Lead Applicant's total available time.

IV.6   Lead Applicant CV

The Applicant is requested to pull in records from their SESAME research profile in relation to their education, employment, funding and publication history for the purpose of generating a CV. The applicant should preview the CV to ensure that it is complete and as expected. The source data may be corrected in the Research Profile and the CV regenerated, as necessary.

IV.6.i. Education

The Applicant is requested to pull in relevant records from their profile in relation to their education. As these are predominantly free-text fields, the source data may need be corrected in the Research Profile to ensure they display as expected.

IV.6.ii. Employment

The Applicant is requested to pull in relevant records from their profile in relation to their employment history. As some of the fields are free-text, the source data may need be corrected in the Research Profile to ensure they display as expected.

IV.6.iii. Funding History

The Lead Applicant must report on <u>expired</u>, <u>current</u> and <u>pending</u> funding.

- The applicant should include details of any financial support pending, or received over the previous ten years. This should include competitive research funding received from funding agencies (international and national), charities, industry, etc.

- The applicant must include details of any financial support currently provided, or currently being sought. SFI will not support research currently being funded through another source.

- For each current and pending grant listed, the applicant should provide a brief description of the research. Applicants must also indicate their time commitment to these other projects, as a percentage of their total working time.

- For pending grants, please include the expected decision date in the description box.

- Please complete the requested details for each expired, current, or pending financial support. Fields coloured red are mandatory. Certain field labels are underlined and contain further information concerning the details that are required; hover the mouse pointer over these labels to view this information.

- If the applicant is solely a Collaborator on a research project, the grant should not be included here; only awards where the applicant is either the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator should be listed.

- The portion of research funding claimed in an applicant's name must be an accurate and fair reflection of their responsibility in the projects listed and will be verifiable as such. SFI may conduct audits to verify such claims and reserves the right to reject proposals where the above principle of proportionality is not observed.

- This section of the proposal will be reviewed as part of the applicant's track record. Applicants with extremely large numbers of expired grants over the previous ten years may be selective with which funding grants to include in this section. The most prestigious grants and those most relevant to the proposed research should be included.

The applicant must complete the textbox detailing potential overlap between current and pending funding and the proposed research in this application. For each current and pending grant listed, the applicant <u>must clearly indicate any overlap with this application, based on the methodologies being employed and the stated objectives of the funded project(s)</u>. Also within this textbox, under the sub-heading "Management of More Than One Major SFI Award" applicants should provide justification and rationale for how they would manage two or more concurrent major SFI grants, where applicable. This section does not appear on the CV.

IV.6.iv. History of Mentoring and Supervision

The Lead Applicant must report the number of students he or she has graduated or is currently supervising.

IV.6.v. Publications History

Provide summary information on the total numbers of publications to date, h-index, number of citations, year of first publication (as well as the source of that data e.g. Scopus) as well as a breakdown of the number of publications by type. Please note that h-index is requested for programme evaluation purposes only and does not appear on the CV.

The applicant should then pull in the most relevant publications from his or her profile (max 10).

Education, Employment, Funding and Publication records may be added directly to the application or added from the applicant's profile (see the SESAME Researcher User Guide).[11] If any of the sections are left blank it will indicate that the applicant has NO records relating to that section.

The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the relevant records that they have added from their profile to the application appear on the CV by previewing the CV and the application before submission.

IV.6.vi. Other Achievements

This field presents an opportunity to add relevant achievements in free-form.

IV.7 Collaborator(s) Details

Include the name, contact information and other requested details of Collaborator(s), if any. Only Academic collaborators will be considered for this applications (see Section 2.4 for a definition of Academic Collaborator).

CVs (max. 2 pages) for all Academic Collaborators **must** be uploaded. A template is not provided for Collaborator CVs.

IV.8 Main Body of Proposal

- **Keywords (max. 15)**
  These should be descriptors that best characterise the proposed research.

- **Technical Abstract (max. 200 words)**

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[11] http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SESAME-User-Guide-Researcher-v-6-11.pdf

This should be a succinct and accurate summary of the proposed work when separated from the application.

- **Lay Abstract (max. 100 words)**
  This should be a succinct and accurate summary in lay, non-technical language of the proposed work when separated from the application.

- **Research Description (upload; max. 10 pages)**
  Applicants are requested to provide sufficient detail for peer reviewers to comment on the quality of the ideas and proposed implementation.

  The following points should be considered when describing the proposed research:

  o   Describe clearly and concisely the specific aims and objectives of the proposal. They should be coherent, well-planned and should be linked with real deliverables.

  o   Explain the background and significance of the problem – does the study address an important research problem? Is it strategically important? What is the current state of the art in the area? Describe and explain how the proposed work, if successful, will advance the state of the art. The background section should reference the state of the art in this research field.

  o   Are the concepts described novel? Ensure that the novelty of the approach is clearly explained, again with reference to the state of the art.

  o   The methodology of the proposed programme should be well developed, and how this proposed methodology advances the current state of the art should be described in detail. Is the proposed approach (including the competencies and activities of the team members) feasible and realistic?

  o   Describe how the proposal fits with the selected topic.

  The application should also include:

  o   Appropriate timelines, milestones and expected outputs for the proposed research (e.g., a Gantt chart), and the roles of the Lead Applicant, Collaborators and Team Members in the work programme need to be clearly described.

  o   Relevant preliminary data, which may either take the form of (a) supporting reference(s) from the applicants' previous research, or (b) a summary of results where the data has yet to be published. In the latter case, this should be included within the 10-page research description as evidence that the applicant team has a track record in the field of the proposed research.

IV.9   References (upload; max. 5 pages)

Appropriate references and citations for the proposed research must be provided in a separate PDF document. A five-page limit is allowed for uploaded references.

IV.10   Proposed Budget

The budget requested should be appropriate to the proposed work, and should take into account the applicant's experience and recent research funding record.

SFI funding supports the research programme costs of the applicant(s) and their research group(s). Eligible costs include:

- Contributions to salaries/stipends for staff hired specifically to carry out the research programme. PI salaries are not eligible costs. Please consult the SFI website for more information on the SFI Grant Budget Policy (GBP: Version July 2016).
- Relevant research expenses, including equipment, consumables and travel.

In addition to direct costs, SFI also makes an indirect or overhead *contribution* to the host Research Body, which is reflected as a percentage of the direct costs (excluding equipment). Overheads are payable as a contribution *to the Research Body* for the indirect costs of hosting SFI-funded research programmes and are intended to enable the Research Body to develop internationally competitive research infrastructure and support services.

The costs eligible for grant support by SFI under this call are those costs which can, uniquely and unambiguously, be identified with the proposed research programme. Applicants must give details of all relevant costs, including staff, equipment, materials and travel. Ensure that the final total provided includes all costs requested from SFI. Costs which will be covered by industry partners should not be included. All grants are made directly to the Lead Applicant's Research Body. Please also refer to the SFI Grant Terms and Conditions[12] and also the GBP (version July 2016).

See notes for completion of the budget in the Sesame Researcher User Guide[13] and within SESAME.

IV.10.i. Staff: Salaries and Benefits

SFI Science Policy Research Programme grants do not fund the core salary or benefits of the Lead Applicant. Contributions to team-member salaries, and fees and stipends for postgraduate students (PhD and MSc by research) may be requested. Salaries for Collaborators are not permitted. All information required to complete the Staff section of the budget can be found in Section 4.1 of the GBP (version July 2016) and the associated SFI Grants Team Member Budgeting Scale (version July 2016). Please note that the submission of an application by the host Research Body must only take place once salaries requested have been approved by the relevant Research Office(s).

IV.10.ii.   Equipment

All information required to complete the Equipment section of the budget can be found in Section 4.2 of the GBP (version July 2016).

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[12] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/sfi-general-terms-and-conditions/
[13] http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SESAME-User-Guide-Researcher-v-6-11.pdf

IV.10.iii.   Materials and Consumables

All information required to complete the Materials and Consumables section of the budget can be found in Section 4.3 of the GBP (version July 2016).

IV.10.iv.   Travel

All information required to complete the Travel section of the budget can be found in Section 4.4 of the GBP (version July 2016).

IV.10.v.   Ineligible Costs

PI salaries are not eligible costs. Information regarding ineligible costs can be found in Section 5 of the GBP (version July 2016).

IV.11   Budget Justification (upload, max. 2 pages)

All information required to complete the Budget Justification can be found in Section 7 of the GBP (version July 2016).

Clear indication should be given where funding is apportioned to Collaborators. Please note that Collaborators outside the Republic of Ireland or those not located within eligible Research Bodies in the Republic of Ireland are not eligible to receive funding through the Science Policy Research Programme.

IV.12   Infrastructure and Services Provided by Research Body (upload; max. 1 page)

The Applicant must describe the infrastructure, facilities and space to be provided by the Research Body/Bodies. This should include details of the office, laboratory, computing or other facilities as necessary, where the research will be carried out, including all of the equipment that will be available, but excluding equipment requested in this application. A separate letter of support must be included from the Applicant's Research Body (see Section IV.13 below).

IV.13   Letters of Support (uploads; max. 2 pages for each letter)

The following letters of support **must** be included:

- A letter of support from the **host Research Body of the Applicant**, which should comment on the infrastructure and services available, as outlined by the Applicant (see Section 4.11). This letter should contain a brief description of the institutional policy regarding the management of conflicts of interest (see Section 11).
- A letter of support from **each Academic Collaborator**. Letters from Academic Collaborators should provide full details of the intended intellectual and/or technical input to the proposal. In addition, Academic Collaborators seeking funds through the award must describe how these funds will be utilised. Letters of support from International Academic Collaborators should provide details of any cash and/or in-kind contributions. Letters of support that do not originate from officially listed Collaborators will be removed from the proposal, as will letters from listed Collaborators that merely provide theoretical or general support without specifically describing a meaningful and impactful contribution to the proposal.

Letters of support may be **a maximum of two pages**; extraneous pages will be removed from the letter and the proposal. Letters of support may not be included from other bodies and individuals who are not Collaborators. Such letters of support will be removed from the proposal.

Submission of an application through SESAME serves as the Research Body's endorsement of the eligibility of the Lead Applicant as well as approval of the budget requested, the infrastructure to be provided by the Research Body, and furthermore, confirms the validity and accuracy of the details provided in relation to the current, pending and expired grants as detailed in the application.

IV.14   Research Body Approval

Submissions may only be made by an authorised representative of the Research Body of the Lead Applicant. In particular, the Research Body is approving:

- The eligibility of the applicants

- That the applicants are, or will be upon receipt of the grant, recognised as employees of their Research Body for the duration of the grant

- That the requested budget including salaries/stipends, equipment, 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 research programme has not been funded by other sources

- That relevant ethical approval has been or will be sought and must 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

IV.15   Applicant Agreement to Terms and Conditions

It should be noted that submission of an application represents an agreement to SFI Terms and Conditions of Research Grants.[14]

IV.16   View Proposal Prior to Submission

Before submission, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the proposal and to ensure that the specified word and page limits have been adhered to, and that any required supporting information (e.g., letters of support) are included. The responsibility for verifying that the proposal is ready for submission lies with the Applicant(s) in this regard.

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

IV.17   Proposal Submission

A submission is made initially to the Research Office of the Lead Applicant for approval, prior to final submission by the Research Office to SFI.

Proposals must be received by SFI no later than **13:00 (Dublin time) on 18 August 2017**.

Please contact the Research Office well in advance in order to obtain registration details for SESAME and to become familiar with any internal Research Body submission deadlines.

After the submission deadline, applications will not be accepted by SESAME. Therefore, they will not be reviewed by SFI.

Applicants will receive a notification from SESAME periodically when the status of their proposal changes. Alternatively, the status of a proposal (e.g., where a proposal is pending Research Office approval or is under review at SFI) is displayed in SESAME.

Appendix V   Science Policy Research Programme Proposal Checklist

SECTION	*DESCRIPTION*	*REQUIREMENTS*
Proposal Summary	Title	Up to 30 words
	Duration	36 or 48 months
	Provide requested information on Ethical Issues	See Sesame application for details
Lead Applicant details	Complete mandatory Sesame Profile information	Mandatory profile fields marked in red
	ORCID iD	Link Sesame profile to ORCID iD
	Percentage Time Commitment	
	Summary info – publication/ supervisory	
	Add: • Education / Employment history • Outputs such as publications / funding etc to generate CV. These entries will be saved to your research profile and may be used again in future applications. CHECK the content of the CV generated to ensure it reads as expected.	Publications: Max 10 records
	Other achievements: specify any additional achievements that you wish to add to your CV that are not included above	Max 200 words
Collaborator Details	Name/Contact details etc.	
	Upload CV for **each** Collaborator	PDF format – Max 2 pages
Proposal Details	Keywords	Up to 15 words
	Technical Abstract	Up to 200 words
	Lay Abstract	Up to 100 words
	Upload Research Description	PDF format – max 10 pages
	References and citations for proposed research	PDF format – Max 5 pages
	Create budget	See Appendix IV.10
	Upload the budget justification	PDF format – Max 2 pages
	Description of the infrastructure, facilities, services and space provided by Research Body	PDF format – Max 1 page
	Collaborators and Lead Applicant Host Research Body Letters of Support	PDF format - 2 pages per letter

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

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

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