Science Foundation Ireland
Discover Programme Call 2020
Guidance Document for Submission of Proposals

Deadline for Submission

Completed applications must be submitted by 13.00 hours (Irish time) on **Wednesday 10ᵗʰ of June 2020**

Applications must be submitted via SESAME, Science Foundation Ireland's online grants and awards management system.

Webinar and Informal Consultation Sessions

- A pre-recorded webinar on the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 will shortly be made available on the relevant call page of www.sfi.ie.   If you have any questions regarding the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 that are not addressed in the webinar, please email these to discover.programme@sfi.ie and we will compile a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to answer these on our website.
- Science Foundation Ireland welcomes requests for meetings to discuss the SFI Discover Call 2020. In particular, we welcome discussion with community and youth work organisations who have expertise in working with communities that are underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths (STEM).
- Informal consultation sessions will be organised subject to demand. If you wish to avail of these sessions, please email discover.programme@sfi.ie. Please note that these consultations should not be scheduled in place of reading the SFI Discover Call 2020 documents or viewing the Webinar. They should be used for any subsequent clarifications.

Terms of Reference

Contents

1.   Introduction

It is part of Science Foundation Ireland's role to **grow** the communities contributing to Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and to empower people to **shape** Ireland's future through innovation. It is important for Science Foundation Ireland to support growth in the confidence of the Irish public to be informed and reflective on policy and decisions around the societal challenges we face together. Of equal importance for the Irish economy and our young population is to inspire young people's confidence and aspirations to pursue skills development and career choices in the science, engineering and technology fields.

As we are living through the Covid-19 pandemic, Science Foundation Ireland is more conscious than ever of the importance of supporting the public to have access to and to understand the complex science underpinning crises such as this, in the context of their lives, their health, the health of their loved ones, and the impact it has on our collective future. In acknowledgement of this, Science Foundation Ireland is launching the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020.

The SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 is a key part of the Science Foundation Ireland Education and Public Engagement activity. Its purpose is to stimulate and support projects that extend activity and ability in engaging the public in STEM. Science Foundation Ireland is particularly interested in projects that will broaden the relevance to, and participation of, communities less represented in STEM in society. This has never been so important. The successful projects through this call will support inclusion of that broader group in STEM. They will contribute to supporting the public to better understand the evidence behind challenges we have collectively faced in 2020 and the choices we need to make in the future.

Science Foundation Ireland welcomes contributions from across the sciences, arts, media, education, youth and/or community work sectors. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that create opportunities for broader participation and engagement of the public with STEM. Science Foundation Ireland is keen to push the boundaries of participation and welcomes novel approaches to engaging the public, in ways that are most suited to them.

The Science Foundation Ireland approach to Education and Public Engagement in STEM aligns to the national science innovation strategy, *Innovation 2020 (*link) and the *National Skills Strategy* (Link).

2.   SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 Details

2.1   Remit

Science Foundation Ireland invests in academic researchers and research teams who are most likely to generate new knowledge, leading edge technologies and competitive enterprise in the fields of STEM. The Foundation also promotes and supports the study of, education in, and engagement with STEM and promotes an awareness and understanding of the value of STEM to society and to the growth of the economy.

2.2 Application Categories

The SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 includes the following application categories:

1. **Project Funding** of up to €50,000 for a maximum of one year i.e. 2021 for projects that support the STEM education and outreach sector in Ireland by developing and extending capacity in this area and also exploring and encouraging novel means of public engagement and communications. Partnership projects (between different people and organisations, e.g. scientists and ethicists, educators and artists) are welcomed.

   It is expected that the majority of applications to the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 will sit within this category.

2. **Regional or National Initiative** Funding of up to €300,000 over a maximum 24 months for a project/programme of significant scale that will have, at minimum, regional or national impact and clearly aligns to the call objectives outlined in Section 2.3 of this document. These initiatives require longer-term investment to allow for their further development, for scaling and delivery of increased impact.

   Total funding requests in excess of €300,000 can be considered but applicants must provide **matched** monetary funding, as opposed to in-kind, for the full amount requested and a strong justification for the scale of the request. If you intend to apply for more than €300,000, please contact the Discover Programme Call Manager at discover.programme@sfi.ie. It is expected that applications for broadcast projects would be funded under this category. The requirement for multi annual funding must be clearly justified in the application.

2.3 SFI Discover Programme Call Objectives

The aim of the SFI Discover programme is to support projects that address one or more of the following objectives:

- *Stimulate engagement and curiosity amongst the general public in STEM*
- *Create debate and conversation amongst the public on STEM and their appreciation of its impact on society*
- *Use new ways to attract those who would not typically engage with STEM*
- *Apply STEM engagement and awareness in innovative ways for the benefit of the public e.g. within youth and community work to support youth and community work outcomes.*
- *Inspire curiosity and confidence in the scientific method*
- *Provide insights into STEM-related careers and discoveries while breaking down any negative stereotypes Support projects which develop capacity for the delivery of STEM Education and Public Engagement (EPE) in Ireland*

The objectives of the call are underpinned by a goal of broadening participation in STEM. They are also particularly focussed on interactivity and dialogue. Applicants are asked to consider how proposals can address assisting the Irish public to understand the Covid-19 pandemic, or global challenges like this. There are many angles applicants could consider including, but not limited to, how the pandemic occurred; its spread; innovations and actions to address it and prevent it happening again; life afterwards and choices society faces together.

Applicants are expected to address one or more of these objectives in their proposal and will be asked to report on achievement of outcome(s) relating to the selected objective(s) at the end of the project/initiative. Further details on these expected outcomes is provided in section 10.1.

Please note: Science Foundation Ireland does not expect that all objectives will be relevant for every application. Therefore, it is up to the applicant to identify which objectives are most relevant to their individual project/initiative and to outline how they propose to achieve these.

3   Applicant Eligibility

This Call is open to a wide range of people and organisations. Organisations are defined in the SFI Discover Programme Call Terms and Conditions.

Science Foundation Ireland has a list of **Eligible Research Bodies** (which includes universities, institutes of technology etc.) – check list of Eligible Research Bodies here.

If your organisation is included on this list, then your application must be signed off by the appropriate officer (typically the Research Office) within your organisation using the Eligible Research Body Cover Sheet available on SESAME, Science Foundation Ireland's online grants and awards management system.

Applications are also welcome from other bodies (i.e. any organisation not included on the above list). There are two categories of other bodies that can become eligible for the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020:
 (a)   **State Body** (e.g. city or county council)
In order to become eligible for the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020, applicants in this category are required to complete, sign, stamp and upload the *"Other Bodies - State Body"* Cover Sheet available on SESAME. A senior executive within the organisation is required to sign the cover sheet indicating the organisation's support for the application.
(b)   **Other Body** (i.e. not an Eligible Research Body or a State Body)
In order to become eligible for the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020, applicants in this category are required to:
- ✓ complete the *"Other Body - Cover Sheet"* available on SESAME, providing details of the organisation's status, registration number, auditors, solicitors and bankers
- ✓ provide details of the organisation structure detailing positions and names of post holders
- ✓ provide a copy of the most recent annual report (if appropriate, i.e. if your organisation is required to publish an annual report)
- ✓ provide a signed copy of the most recent Audited Financial Statements (if applicable)[1]

***Please Note:** failure to provide the required eligibility documentation outlined above, and as relevant for your organisation, will result in your application being deemed ineligible and will not be sent for review.*

If you have any doubt about your organisation's status, please email discover.programme@sfi.ie for clarification. This *must be done in good time before the closing date (minimum three days)* to ensure that your application is completed and submitted before the deadline, as no exceptions can be made in relation to the submission date for this, or any other, reason.

Proposals must be explicitly aimed at engaging audiences and participant groups in the Republic of Ireland however the subject matter can be international. Applications are welcome from organisations not based in the Republic of Ireland; however, they must demonstrate in their application how the project will explicitly engage with their target audience in the Republic of Ireland.

Applications will only be accepted from an organisation meeting the eligibility criteria outlined above. Typically, these include academic institutions, charitable bodies, not-for-profit organisations or commercial companies.

---

[1] If your organisation is not required to produce audited accounts, management accounts signed off by an accountant will be accepted. Please contact discover.programme@sfi.ie if you have any queries in relation to this requirement.

Applications are welcome from any organisation with experience in engaging the groups targeted e.g. youth and community work organisations.

Applications will **not** be accepted from individuals and/or sole traders.

No employee or board member of Science Foundation Ireland may apply.

Applicants may submit more than one grant application under the Call to Science Foundation Ireland at any one time, provided the proposals are clearly differentiated.

Regional or county Science Week Festivals are not eligible to apply for funding under this Call.

Applications for regional/national initiative funding must provide a clear rationale for how the proposed initiative differs from a project and provide adequate justification for applying for this higher rate of funding. These applications required higher and longer- term funding commitments and therefore the application review will consider the strength of this rationale. If it is not clear, and well argued it will negatively impact on the review. This longer-term commitment from Science Foundation Ireland should be viewed as seed funding to facilitate greater leverage of investment from other partners which will help with future planning and sustainability. In order to be competitive in this category, it is essential that applicants demonstrate that they have considered how they will or have evolved the initiative based on best practice. Applicants are also required to demonstrate the plan to financially sustain excellence and impact of their initiative at the end of the funding period.

Film, animation or broadcast projects are eligible to apply for funding under this Call. These projects should clearly indicate the STEM collaborators or experts contributing to the development of the project and outline the role these collaborators will play. Proposals should also clearly identify how they will be scheduled (shown to the audience) in the proposal, including support from a broadcaster or distribution partner.

Previously unsuccessful projects may not be eligible to apply for funding under this SFI Discover Programme Call 2020.   All review feedback from previous applications should be addressed in the current application. If significant gaps or issues were previously identified with the project proposal you are recommended to contact Science Foundation Ireland at discover.programme@sfi.ie in advance of your application to enquire about eligibility to apply to the current call.

The Project Lead is the person who has the main intellectual input into, and ownership of, the outcomes if the application is successful. This is the individual with whom Science Foundation Ireland will correspond about the application and who takes legal and fiduciary responsibility for the project. The Project Lead is normally considered by Science Foundation Ireland to be the grant holder.

4.   Eligible Costs

SFI Discover Project Funding	SFI Discover – Regional or National Initiative Funding
Up to a maximum of €50,000	Up to a maximum of €300,000 over a maximum of two years (2020/2021)
Projects must be completed within 2021	Initiatives may request single or multi-annual funding (for 2021 or 2021/2022)
	If an applicant wishes to request more than the maximum allowable budget of €300,000 over a maximum of two

	years, a strongly justified case for exceeding this limit, including evidence of **fully matched monetary funding** for the full amount requested, must be submitted in the application form.

Initiatives can include the expansion of proven projects to a national scale or development of new projects/programmes. Evidence should be provided to support the argument to expand the project including track record to date and a summary of evaluation, highlighting the key points. Applicants must include adequate justification for applying for this higher rate of funding, which includes a clear rationale for how this regional/national initiative differs from a project.

Previously funded programmes that have been in receipt of SFI Discover funding for consecutive years are required to demonstrate how the programme is evolving its cost model and attracting partnerships that create future long-term sustainability.

In all categories partner contributions financial or otherwise (in-kind) should be demonstrated and all costs must be justified and will be subject to cost scrutiny. Other sources of funding (including In-Kind support) must be clearly identified in the application including any income to be derived from the project, if relevant. Any letters of support provided with this application must include details of the financial commitment from partners, as appropriate.

The schedule of funding will be set out in the Letter of Offer.

Costs requested can include:
- Personnel and project management costs directly related to the project
- Production costs, including venue hire, AV, catering etc.
- Equipment and materials
- Project travel costs
- Project administration costs where these are not already covered by other funding
- Project publicity costs, including launch event costs, website etc.
- Costs relating to training and engagement for citizen science projects e.g. training material, workshops, sharing platforms, showcase events etc.
- Quality assurance evaluation on the user experience and impact measurement

Ineligible costs:
- Core overheads of the applicant organisation not related to the project e.g. heating, rent, insurance, auditing etc.
- Expenses incurred in submitting an application
- Academic courses or research such as Masters' degrees or PhDs' costs
- Direct costs for research elements of citizen science projects e.g. researcher salary, consumables, licences, publishing fees, etc.
- Conference registration fees or attendance costs

Applicants who are unsure of cost eligibility should contact the SFI Discover Programme Call Manager at discover.programme@sfi.ie.

5. General Call Criteria

5.1 Alignment with SFI and Call Objectives

All applications should demonstrate:
- how your proposal is aligned to one or more of the call objectives outlined in section 2.3
- how you have evaluated the need for your activity and defined your target audience
- your objectives and how you plan to monitor and measure if you succeeded in your objectives
- how your programme is excellent and impactful – why will it be effective?

In all cases projects should clearly demonstrate how they are informed by best practice in the field.

5.2 Space-Related Content

Applicants are advised that projects with a space context are encouraged under this Call and will be reviewed in association with the European Space Education Resource Office (ESERO) Ireland. If your project uses space as a context, you are expected to discuss with the ESERO Ireland office how it may meet ESERO Ireland objectives in advance of submission. This may involve your project outputs being reported to the European Space Agency and the output being branded as ESERO Ireland in partnership with your organisation.

The ESERO objectives are to use Space as a context:
- to enhance the literacy and competence of young people in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)
- to motivate and enable young Europeans to pursue a career in the STEM field, in the space domain in particular
- to increase young people's awareness of the importance of space research, exploration and applications in modern society and economy

We particularly welcome applications which deliver ESERO-related objectives and include Teacher Continuous Professional Development (Teacher CPD).

5.3 Outputs

Applicants are reminded that significant investment has been made globally into best practice across the STEM education and public engagement field. Therefore, applicants are expected to have investigated and explored the field to ensure the proposal adheres to these best practices. Applications are welcome for projects which promote engagement with STEM through proven, robust methods or pilot novel methods to test proof of concepts. Evidence of this should be demonstrated in the application.

Project/initiatives' activities and outputs may include:
- Broadcast or media including TV, film, animation or radio
- Digital content (on pervasive platforms) with high audience reach including websites, social media campaigns and multi-platform projects, for example, a project supported by an app, website etc.
- Exhibitions, theatre and museum outreach
- Aspects of citizen science projects[2]

---

[2] The European Commission advises that citizen science should be understood broadly, covering a range of different levels of participation, from raising public knowledge of science, encouraging citizens to participate in the scientific process by observing, gathering and processing data, right up to setting scientific agenda and co-designing and implementing science-related policies. In line with the remit for the SFI Discover Call 2020, applications may include funding requests for training and engagement elements of citizen science projects but not for direct research costs, as research falls outside the scope of the SFI Discover Programme. Further details of eligible costs have been included in section 4

Please note: Science Foundation Ireland is currently exploring options for fully supporting citizen science projects through future alternative funding mechanisms and will communicate any decisions reached in due course.

- Games or apps
- Workshops, events, debates and discussions
- Informal learning activities that encourage children and young people to engage with, and participate in, STEM activities outside the formal education system. These projects must aim to increase the uptake of STEM options at third level and beyond
- Novel projects that encourage general public engagement with STEM – to create dialogue with the public and introduce STEM into the community to create these conversations.
- Projects that embrace wider partnership from the arts, social sciences and humanities, as well as STEM, are encouraged.
- Activities that support national STEM festivals (Science Week, Tech Week, Engineers Week, Maths Week, Space Week), in particular with communities and in regions where there is little, or no STEM engagement (note: regional or county Science Week Festivals are excluded from this Call)
- Creation of classroom activities, teaching materials or development of teaching methods. Note that these activities that deliver in classrooms or to teachers **must** demonstrate evidence and rationale of a direct link to the relevant curricula and why teachers would engage in the programme, in an already packed timetable. Details of how these outputs will be disseminated and scaled must also be provided.

5.4 Sustaining Excellence

To date Science Foundation Ireland has invested €24.9M in STEM education and public engagement initiatives through the SFI Discover Programme Call. With growing numbers of applications received each year, the call is becoming increasingly competitive. Only projects of the highest quality that clearly demonstrate excellence are awarded funding. While sustaining excellence is a high priority for Science Foundation Ireland, as the call becomes more competitive applicants should be aware that reliance on funding through SFI Discover in the long-term cannot be guaranteed. The long-term sustainability of a project should be considered and outlined by applicants. Proposals that include clear plans for leveraging additional investment from other sources and/or plans for ensuring financial viability of the project/initiative beyond the SFI Discover funding period will therefore be particularly welcome and favourably reviewed, once all other criteria have been met. Furthermore, as part of the application process, applicants will be asked to comment on their track record of receiving SFI Discover funding and to provide a rationale for why Science Foundation Ireland should continue to fund this project/initiative. This will form part of the review process.

5.5 Co-Creation

For the 2020 Call, special consideration will be given to projects that include a strong element of co-creation with their target participant groups. The principle of co-creation is the process of creating new initiatives **with** people and not **for** them. In the context of the SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 we refer to co-creation as engaging with participant groups in the design, production and delivery phases of projects/initiatives, to gather the necessary user insight, re-define their operational processes and identify appropriate sustainability models to deliver an effective high-quality project. Applicants can include co-creation throughout their entire project/initiative or as applicable to a specific element of their project/initiative. It is up to the individual applicant to determine where co-creation might be most relevant and impactful for their own proposal.   This application of co-creation will be particularly welcome where applicants are attempting to broaden participation in STEM amongst groups currently underrepresented in the field.

Key features of co-creation include[3]:
- Brings together various stakeholders from all over society, with their respective expertise/experience
- Has a purpose; it is not a finalised thing in itself, but a means to some other end

[3]Taken from ACCOMPLISSH Guide to Co-Creation published as part of H2020 Project ACCOMPLISSH, funded by the European Commission under grant agreement number: 693477

- Tackles a 'bigger challenge' while helping each stakeholder to achieve their own goal(s)
- Needs structure yet it should also remain open to individual proposals and approaches. It needs to enhance creativity and problem solving
- Is a non-linear process of thinking and creating

6. Supplementary Information

In certain circumstances (e.g. when a pilot has been funded by SFI in the year previous to application, or a project evaluation is underway and sufficient evidence to support the application at the time of submission is not available) SFI will allow the applicant to submit such information at a later date. **The applicant must obtain written confirmation in the format of an email from the SFI Discover Programme Call Manager in advance of the application process and must:**

1. Indicate on the SESAME application that they will be sending this information,
2. Indicate on the SESAME application what the nature of the supplementary information is,
3. Indicate why this information cannot be submitted at the time of the application,
4. Upload the email from the SFI Discover Programme Manager (at the time of submission) which permits this supplementary information to be sent
5. Send the supplementary information in the format of a two A4-page PDF (max) by email to discover.programme@sfi.ie by **Friday 31st of July 2020 at 13.00 hrs**. (Irish time). Information received after this date and time will not be reviewed. It is the applicant's responsibility to submit this supplementary information before the date and time specified above. A reminder will not be issued to the applicant.

7. Project Evaluation Plan

Applicants will be required to outline how their project is clearly aligned to one or more of the Call objectives as detailed in Section 2.3 above. Applicants are also required to outline in the relevant sections of their funding application the expected outcomes of the project/initiative and to detail their plan for measuring the expected **outputs** (i.e. activities/deliverables/results) and **outcomes** (i.e. what has changed as a result of what they have done). It should be clear from this evaluation plan how the project/initiative will measure the extent to which the proposed outcomes have been achieved, as opposed to a measurement of project outputs only. For example, the plan should allow the project to demonstrate not just that it delivered five workshops to 100 people but that some outcome occurred such as a change in attitude or a learning outcome.

Applicants should demonstrate their plan to formatively evaluate the project by establishing clear goals which can be assessed pre and post project, for example engaging with members of the target audience to gauge interest and determine specific needs and expectations. The plan should incorporate how the proposed activity will ensure the project is appealing and beneficial to the target audience, for example by demonstrating how the proposal has been reviewed or co-designed with the target participant.

The Evaluation Plan should detail the following:
- what is it you want to achieve by delivering this project? Outline the questions which will be answered by the evaluation; they should relate to evidence that can be collected. Evaluation should be appropriate to the target audience
- if the project has been running for a longer period (i.e. greater than two to three years), emphasis should be placed on the long-term impact of the project and this should be reflected in the impact evaluation plan
- methodology – detail how and when the data will be gathered (please note a mixed method approach with methodologies appropriate for the different target audiences is recommended)
- data analysis – highlight how the raw data will be analysed and presented
- dissemination – identify how the results of the evaluation will be disseminated among key stakeholders.

Refer to the SFI Discover Evaluation Toolkit and an evaluation video here

A recording of a **webinar** on evaluation conducted by Dr Eric Jensen of the University of Warwick can be found here.

Further resources in relation to evaluation are available from the National Science Foundation funded Centre for Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE) website here.

Applicants will be required to submit annual and / or final reports in relation to their Award (a sample reporting template is available on the SFI Discover Programme Call page on the www.sfi.ie website) outlining the impact and outcomes of the project/initiative, including demonstrating how the project/initiative has been a success or not. Please note that this template is for guidance only. Reporting will be done through SESAME and questions may be added or changed as appropriate.

8.   Submitting your Application

Helpful tips for completing your SFI Discover Call 2020 application, along with a webinar and user guide for submission through SESAME, are included on the SFI Discover Programme page on www.sfi.ie.

All applications must be submitted via SESAME, and log-in details are required to access SESAME.

- If you are already registered on SESAME you can log in using the same email address; if you have forgotten your password, you can use the Forgot Password functionality to re-set it.
- If you have not previously been registered with SESAME, please email the following information to discover.programme@sfi.ie:
  - ✓   Project Lead Name
  - ✓   Email address
  - ✓   Registered Company Name
  - ✓   Legal Status: (e.g. company limited by guarantee, limited company, charity etc.)
  - ✓   Trading Name
  - ✓   VAT Number

A SESAME profile will be created for you and log-in details will be emailed to the email address provided.

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 (pop-up 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 IT support team.

Draft applications may be amended as many times as required but once submitted no further changes can be made.

Once submitted, applications cannot be withdrawn and subsequently modified for re-submission in the same Call.

Early submission in SESAME is strongly recommended. Applicants who wait until shortly before the close of the call take serious risk of encountering submission issues. The submit button will cease to be active at the indicated deadline.

A checklist of requirements is provided at the end of this document.

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

9. Review Process

9.1 Process

Projects must be technically sound and have clear STEM content, either through direct collaboration with a qualified STEM professional (e.g. scientist, engineer) leading or acting in an advisory role.

Applications considered ineligible or unaligned to the SFI Discover Programme objectives or uncompetitive for the programme, for example if the subject area addressed is not related to STEM, will not be reviewed. Applicants will be notified within 8 weeks of the submission deadline if their proposal has **not** been deemed eligible for review.

All eligible applications will be subject to review by independent experts based on the criteria set out below.

Results will be notified in Quarter 4 of 2020.

The decision of Science Foundation Ireland is final. Every effort has been made to develop a thorough and informed assessment process. Science Foundation Ireland reserves the right not to enter into any correspondence about the assessment process and/or any subsequent monitoring procedures.

9.2 Assessment Criteria

Reviewers of applications will be asked to comment on the following aspects of a grant proposal:

- The project team (suitability of the project lead and any partners and whether the skills required to deliver the project successfully are evident)
- The project details (clarity around the project details, objectives and alignment to SFI Discover call 2020 objectives, quality indicators, content, target participant groups and suitability of venues/facilities) Special consideration will be given to projects targeting specific groups, as outlined below.
- Budget and funding (project costs, value for money and leverage of funding from other partners, benefit of SFI funding to the project. Applications for projects previously funded through the SFI Discover Programme will also be assessed on how the initiative is building on any previous SFI Discover funding received to-date to move towards a more sustainable model with long-term committed partners and increased non-exchequer financial support)
- Evaluation plans (outputs and impacts, evaluation methodology, dissemination of learnings, strategic planning approach and appropriate exit strategy e.g. a legacy should the project funding be discontinued/reduced)
- Projects/initiatives previously funded under the SFI Discover Programme Call will be assessed on how previous review feedback has been addressed.
- The strength of justification and rationale presented for
    o Projects to be considered as a National/Regional Initiative.
    o Sustained excellence – where previously funded projects are seeking continued funding or where new initiatives are for regional/national funding. In both cases proposals will be assessed on the outlined plan to develop and evolve the initiative year-on-year informed by and in line with best practice

Special consideration will be given to the following proposals types:

- projects/initiatives targeted at an adult audience, attending without children (in particular 30-55 age group)
- projects/initiatives that support the participation of women and girls in STEM

- projects/initiatives that are designed to engage with socially, economically or educationally disadvantaged population groups
- projects/initiatives that target older populations and minority groups, such as persons with disabilities and ethnic minority groups including the Traveller community
- projects/initiatives which create debate, dialogue and critical engagement with STEM
- projects/initiatives which include a strong element of co-creation with their target participant groups

Please note: it is essential that you clearly outline **how** you intend to target/include the specific group identified above, in order to obtain special consideration for your proposal. Just indicating that the project is intended to reach target groups will not be sufficient. Overall proposals should be targeted to engage with those who traditionally do not attend or engage with STEM events/projects/initiatives.

10. Award Management

10.1 Reporting

Science Foundation Ireland has specific requirements for the reporting on awards that it makes. Individuals who hold the primary responsibility for reporting and who fail to comply with reporting requirements, run the risk of having their grant payments suspended and their eligibility to apply for funding in forthcoming SFI calls affected.

The SFI Grants and Awards Management System, SESAME, is the primary conduit for reporting. SFI Discover 2020 awardees will be requested to submit their final report by 14th February 2022. Awardees of two year regional/national initiatives are required to submit an annual report by 30th November 2021 and to meet with the SFI Discover Programme team before the end of year 1 to discuss the grant to-date and plans for the second year. A final version of this annual report must be submitted by 14th February 2022. Templates for these reports will be provided on SESAME.
Each of the SFI Discover Programme call objectives, with expected outputs, is discussed in turn below:

Objective: *To stimulate engagement and curiosity amongst the general public in STEM*
STEM plays an increasingly important role in addressing the economic, social and environmental problems faced by the world today. That role needs the support, understanding and active engagement of the public who are the ultimate beneficiaries of it. The SFI Discover Programme Call seeks to promote the awareness, curiosity and engagement of the Irish public with STEM projects in order to understand the important role that STEM plays in addressing key challenges affecting our society.

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be required to report details of how they engaged with their target audiences in addressing this aim and what has changed for the target group as a result of this engagement e.g. how pre and post evaluation of an event can measure the change in public perception or increased knowledge of the audience in the role of STEM in addressing societal challenges.

Objective: *To create debate and conversation amongst the public on STEM and their appreciation of its impact on society.*
The SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 seeks to empower society to understand the important role that STEM plays in addressing key challenges affecting our society, A scientifically engaged society involves debate, dialogue, critical engagement and opportunities for the public and evidence to influence policy. The SFI Discover Call seeks to increase the proportion of funding awarded to projects that create debate, dialogue, critical engagement and that have an element of co-creation with target groups

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be required to include detail of outcomes such as change of attitude, perception, opinion, or increased learning, arising from the funded activity.

Objective: *To use new ways to attract those who would not typically engage with STEM*

The SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 seeks to provide innovative and novel STEM experiences, in particular in ways which will attract audiences who typically do not engage with STEM. Science Foundation Ireland's expectation is that target audiences will include, socially, economically and/or educationally disadvantaged groups; adults, in particular women, attending without children; older populations; minority groups; first time STEM event/project attendees and those involved with interest groups outside of STEM, such as sports or the arts.

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be asked to report on the different types of audience that they have targeted and ultimately engaged with. Applicants will be required to outline the approach taken to reach these audiences and provide details of how this approach increased inclusivity of engagement with these identified groups, and will inform future similar inclusive engagement

Objective: *To apply STEM engagement and awareness in innovative ways for the benefit of the public e.g. within youth and community work to support youth and community work outcomes.*
The SFI Discover Programme Call seeks to support partners with experience in applying STEM in innovative and novel ways. This should include projects that emphasise group work, co-creation and the use of emerging digital tools, as well as those that offer enjoyable hands-on inspirational experiences of STEM. Science Foundation Ireland seeks to increase the number of Awards made to community work and youth groups and welcomes applications that detail projects helping to develop 21st century skills (creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking and team working) which are critical to engagement with society.

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be asked to report on the different types of audience that they have engaged with and the relevant skills that have been developed. Applicants will be required to outline the innovative approach taken to reach these audiences and provide details of how this approach will inform future innovative engagement.

Objective: *To inspire curiosity, and confidence in the scientific method*.
Projects supported by the SFI Discover Programme Call should have clear STEM content, either through direct collaboration with a qualified STEM professional (e.g. scientist, engineer) leading or acting in an advisory role. Applicants are encouraged to work with STEM professionals to ensure that they are competent and confident in communicating and collaborating with non-specialist audiences and to help them to share their story with the groups targeted. Applicants are encouraged to include projects through which participants engage with the scientific method enabling them to understand the process, to distinguish between fact and evidence-based information vs opinion or "fake news".

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be required to include details of outcomes such as change of attitude, perception, opinion, or increased understanding and/or appreciation of the scientific method arising from the funded activity.

Objective: *To provide insights into STEM-related careers and discoveries while breaking down any negative stereotypes Support projects which develop capacity for the delivery of STEM Education and Public Engagement (EPE) in Ireland.*
Having a STEM qualified pipeline to support Ireland's knowledge economy is vital. To that end we need to support young people in exploring and understanding the opportunities that are open to them. The SFI Discover Programme Call seeks to support projects that promote the diversity of STEM careers available and to increase:
- Children, young people's and teachers' understanding STEM careers and pathways
- Children and young people's interaction with STEM role models
- Young people's knowledge of what working life is like in STEM-related jobs
- Young people's and teachers' awareness of areas with the greatest employment prospects/skills need in STEM

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be required to provide details of the approach taken to highlight the diversity of STEM careers illustrated as part of this funded activity, and how this will inform future similar engagements.

Objective: *To support projects which develop capacity for the delivery of STEM Education and Public Engagement (EPE) in Ireland*
SFI recognises the need for increased training and up-skilling in the delivery of high quality EPE experiences. To this end the SFI Discover Programme seeks to increase the number of capacity building projects it supports, including developing networks and sharing mechanisms that will increase capacity and enable best practice to be understood, developed and shared nationally.

Expected Outcomes: Applicants will be required to provide details of the approach taken to develop capacity in STEM Education and Public Engagement as part of this funded activity, and how this will enhance future STEM learning (formal or informal).

10.2   Publicity and Progress

Funded organisations will be required to ensure that Science Foundation Ireland is credited and acknowledged in all promotional material in a prominent place in line with Clause 17 of the SFI Discover Programme Grant Terms and Conditions. In addition to Clause 17:

- Science Foundation Ireland should be acknowledged in all press materials (in the first paragraph), web site (at the top), collateral (on the front) and branding for event etc. Acknowledgement should indicate applicable Science Foundation Ireland support for specific events, speakers, lectures, etc. The Science Foundation Ireland logo and brand guidelines are available to download from the www.sfi.ie website. It is essential that the Science Foundation Ireland team is kept informed of any promotional activity, project progress and media plans
- Any printed materials e.g. brochures, reports, promotional materials, banners etc., must include the SFI logo in a clear and visible position in accordance with the SFI brand guidelines
- The project lead shall notify SFI at least 10 days in advance of any media activity (including but not limited to) photo calls, press releases, press briefings etc. pre-arranged by project lead or their Research Body.

10.3   Child Protection

Where relevant, applicants and Organisations are required to comply with the provisions of the **Children First Act 2015,**[4] and the **National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017**.[5] It is the responsibility of the Organisation to ensure that they are compliant with all applicable law.

10.4   Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation[6] is a legal framework that sets out guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information of individuals within the European Union.[7] Applicants are advised that they must be compliant with this regulation if they collect or process personal data.

SFI may collect, use and disclose personal data provided in the application and/or otherwise obtained under, or in connection with, the application for processing the submission, for the performance of its statutory powers and functions, and for the general activities of SFI. Further details regarding SFI's collection, use and disclosure of personal data, and the rights of individuals with respect to any personal data held by SFI, are available in the **SFI Privacy Statement.[8]**

---

[4] http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf
[5] http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf
[6] https://www.dataprotection.ie/docs/GDPR/1623.htm
[7] https://www.eugdpr.org/
[8] http://www.sfi.ie/privacy/

During peer-review procedures, information may be sent to external experts in countries outside of the European Economic Area, including countries that are not recognised by the European Commission as having adequate data protection laws. By submitting an application to SFI, the Organisation and members of the Project Team are agreeing that they consent to the processing and transfer of personal information in this way.

During the application process or at any time thereafter, SFI may contact the Organisation, the Project Lead, or any member of the Project Team with regard to funding opportunities, activities or events organised by SFI or other relevant bodies, or for the purposes of monitoring and evaluation (including, but not limited to, the collection of scientific data or data relating to the application process). SFI may choose to authorise a third party to contact the Organisation, the Project Lead or any member of the Project Team on its behalf.

11. SFI Discover Programme Call 2020 - Application Submission Checklist

To allow Science Foundation Ireland to fully evaluate completed applications you should:

- ☐ Complete all sections of the application form via SESAME, Science Foundation Ireland's online grants and awards management system.

- ☐ Upload a one-page (max) CV for the project lead and each of the project team members **written with relevance to this project.**

- ☐ Upload a Gantt chart to provide a timeline for key milestones in the project. A template can be found here.

- ☐ **Eligible Research Bodies** should complete, sign, stamp and upload the Eligible Research Body cover sheet (i.e. if your organisation is listed here).

- ☐ **Other Body – State Body** (e.g. city or county council) should complete, sign, stamp and upload the "Other Body -State Body" Cover Sheet available on SESAME.

- ☐ **Other Body** (i.e. not an Eligible Research Body or a State Body) should complete, sign and upload, as a single PDF document, relevant cover sheet (– Other Organisation Cover Sheet) and all required corporate / financial information as outlined in the Guidance Document/on SESAME.

  Other Bodies Only: Complete, sign and upload the Declaration of Bona Fides (available to download from SESAME).
- ☐ Upload a description of your track record in STEM Education and Public Engagement (max 4 pages)

- ☐ Upload any letters of support / commitment to the project from partners if appropriate. Letters of support are only required from relevant organisations whose contribution is a key element to the delivery of the project. The level and type of funding being provided by a project partner should be indicated in their letter of support.

- ☐ Upload a Glossary of any acronyms included in your proposal.

The above checklist is for guidance purposes only and Science Foundation Ireland will not accept any responsibility for omissions from this checklist or in an application. Applicants are advised to read all the documentation in full in order to provide a comprehensive submission.

12   Grant Conditions

SFI Terms and Conditions for the Discover Programme Calls can be found here.