

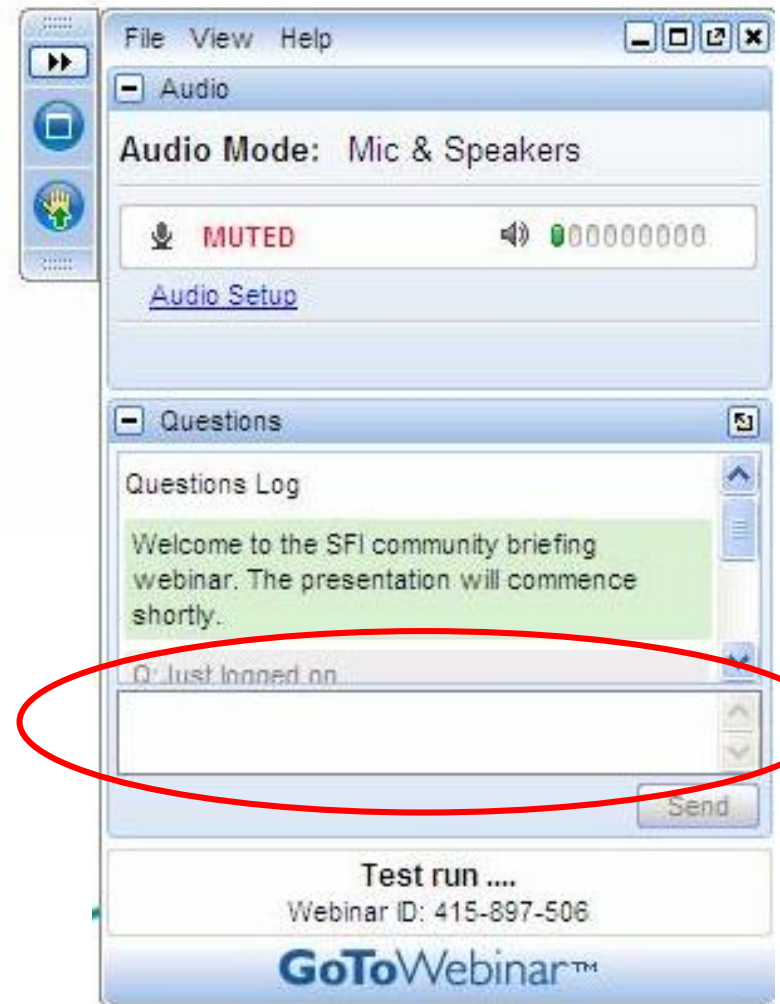
# Research Centres 2016 Call – Webinar

## January 2016

*Abstract Deadline: 04/03/16, 1pm*  
*Pre-Proposal Deadline: 28/04/16, 1pm*

# Webinar Instructions

- This webinar consists of a short PowerPoint presentation with voiceover (1-way!)
- We'll walk you through the presentation and answer questions at the end
- Submit questions by text on the GoToMeeting control panel – be concise
- We will post link to recording of webinar on [www.sfi.ie](http://www.sfi.ie) shortly



# Presentation Overview

- **Background**
- **Main Changes to 2016 Call**
- **Definitions**
- **Expectations**
- **Centre Structure**
- **Industry Partners & Funding**
- **Eligibility Criteria**
- **Application Steps & Review Criteria**
- **Post-Award Reporting & Monitoring**
- **Other SFI Industry Collaborative Programmes**

# Centres Programme Background



- **Agenda 2020: develop a set of Research Centres which:**
  - are recognised internationally;
  - attract international research talent and capital; and
  - attract, anchor and spin out related companies in Ireland
- **First launched in 2012 as an evolution of the previous CSET and SRC programmes**
- **Programme aims to consolidate research activities across HEIs**
- **Create a critical mass of internationally leading researchers in strategic areas**

# Centres Programme Background



- **2012 Call: 7 Research Centres funded**
- **2013 Call: 5 Research Centres funded**
  
- **€350m from SFI over 6 years**
- **€190m co-investment by over 250 industry partners**
  
- **Funded consortia are typically made up of many (or all) of the leading researchers in the country in a particular discipline**



<http://www.sfi.ie/sfi-research-centres/>

# Main Changes to 2016 Call



- **Non thematic call - open to all areas of SFI's legal remit (previously thematic)\***
- **No limit on number of Co-PI's (2013: limit of 9)**
- **No restriction on max platform activities budget (2013: max 30%)**
- **Applicants encouraged to attract contributions from 'other non-exchequer sources' (see later)**
- **Changes to submission documentation**
  - Changes in section lengths
  - FI's & collaborators not required to submit CV's
  - Requesting a plan for how RC will transition to sustainability
  - Requesting additional details of EPE plans

**\* Proposals must be clearly distinct from current Research Centres. Those in similar areas should be submitted to the Spokes Programme**

# Centres Programme Objectives



- Achieve, maintain and enhance research excellence and leadership
- Deliver significant economic and societal impact
- Increase the level of industrial and commercial investment in R&D activities with existing Ireland-based companies, and help to attract FDI
- Spin out new, high-technology start-up companies
- Transfer technology, through licences to companies based in Ireland
- Transfer knowledge, expertise & know-how to companies based in Ireland
- Undertake joint research projects with industry
- Inspire, educate & train future/current STEM students/researchers
- Attract additional non-Exchequer funding
- Engage the general public and equip them to understand and debate STEM

# Important Definitions



<b>Lead Applicant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Defined as Scientific &amp; Technical Lead</li><li>• Nominated as Research Centre Director</li><li>• Will hold primary responsibility for the award</li></ul>
<b>Co-Applicant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Well-defined, critical &amp; continuing role</li><li>• Expected to lead one or more targeted project(s)</li><li>• Note: Receives <u>equal evaluation to Lead Applicant</u></li></ul>
<b>Funded Investigator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member of academic staff undertaking a management role in a research project in the RC</li><li>• Should have budgetary responsibility for a project</li><li>• FI designation should be a reflection of the level of input of an individual to the research programme</li></ul>



# Important Definitions



<b>Official Collaborator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Academic staff member (based in Ireland or abroad) or member of relevant non-academic institution (e.g. Govt. Dept.)</li><li>• Provide a focussed contribution to specific task(s)</li><li>• May not act as primary supervisor of team members</li></ul>
<b>Industry Partner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Company making a financial contribution to the Centre <u>as well as</u> an intellectual contribution to the research programme</li></ul>
<b>Industry Collaborator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lead contact(s) from an industry partner making cash or in-kind contributions</li><li>• Not eligible to receive funding</li></ul>
<b>Centre Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 components: SFI cash contribution; Industry cash contribution; and Industry in-kind contribution</li><li>• Direct costs only (i.e. overheads not factored in)</li></ul>

# Centre Expectations



- Have an **'edge' over competing research activities** world-wide – unique features, potential to be world leading in its domain
- Clear demonstration of **'added value' of being funded as a Centre** rather than as individual awards
- Lead Applicant with record of internationally recognised research achievement and demonstrated ability to lead major academic-industry partnership initiatives
- Carry out a **unifying research programme** in areas covered by the remit of the proposed programme
- Achieve the **strategic goals** shared by the host and partnering institutions
- Stimulate public understanding, interest & engagement in STEM

See Section 4 of the Call Document for further details

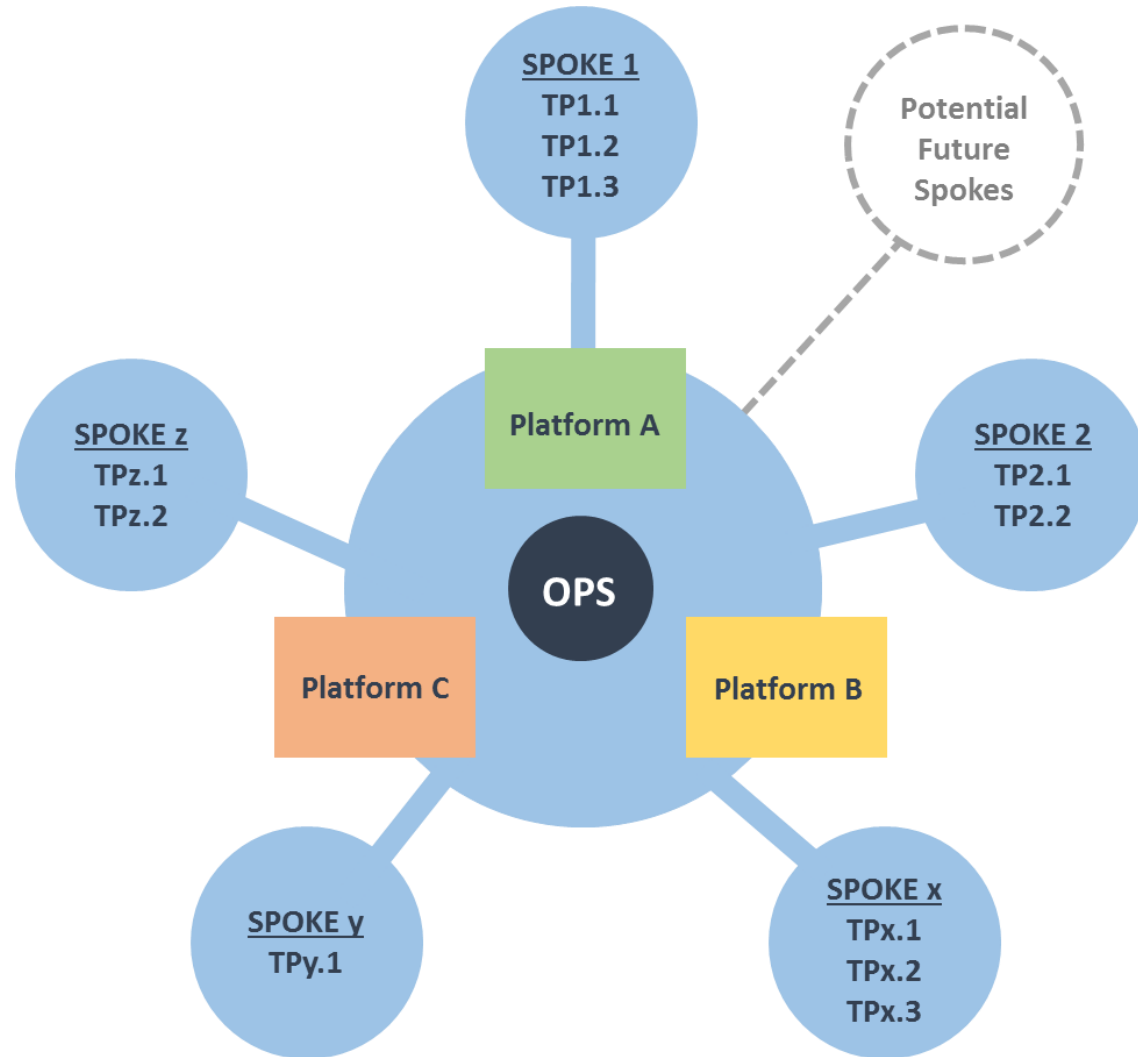
# Research Centre Size



- SFI expects to fund a range of Centre sizes
- We want to fund Centres that have ambition and growth potential
- Small and excellent is better than large and mediocre
  
- It may be more appropriate to be a spoke in a larger centre

# Research Centre Structure

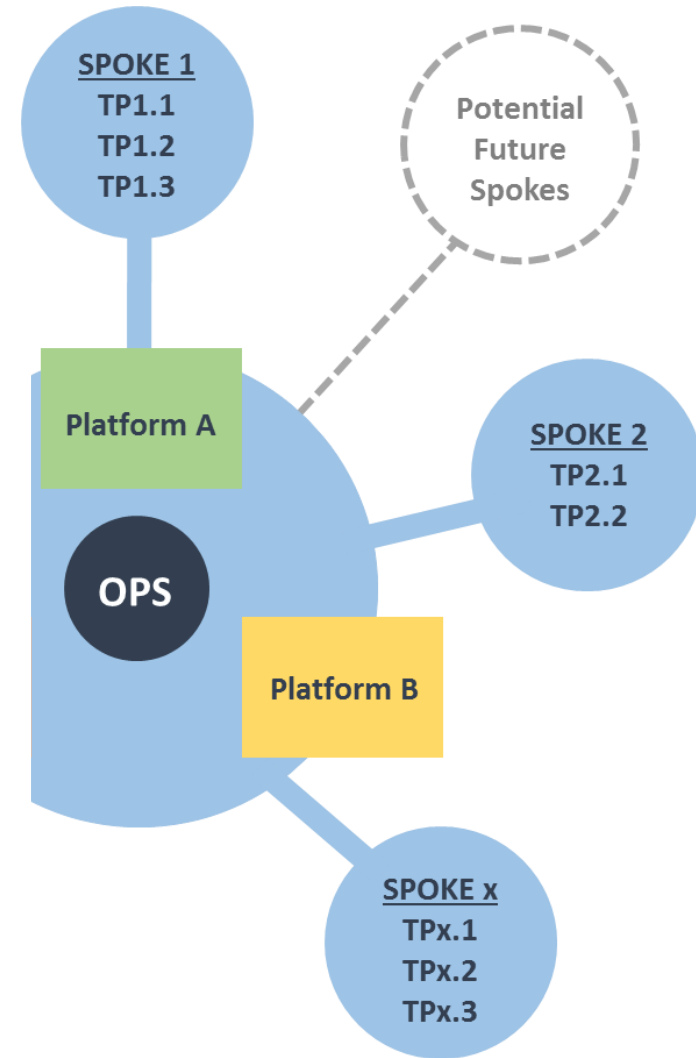
Based on Hub & Spoke Model



# Research Centre Structure

## Based on Hub & Spoke Model

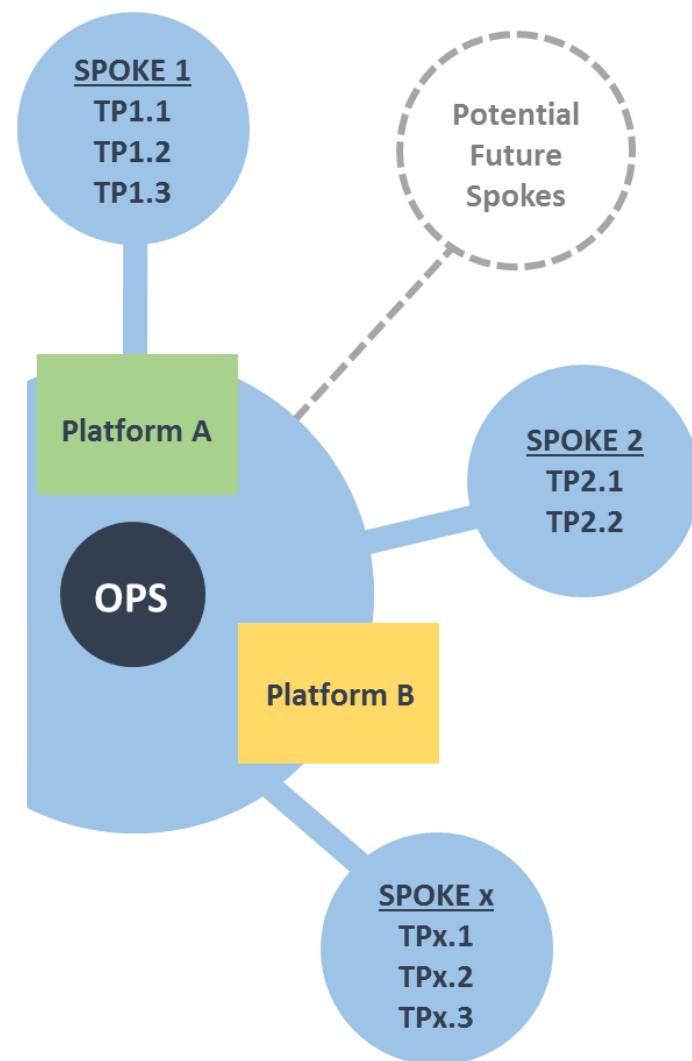
- The Hub consists of:
  - Operations: management, administration, business development, marketing & communications, EPE & IT technical support staff
  - Platform research: core/platform research activities or technologies which are deemed necessary/valuable to the RC mission and are common across a number of TPs or which underpin the development of future TPs



# Research Centre Structure

## Based on Hub & Spoke Model

- Spokes consist of thematically related targeted projects (TPs)
- A spoke can have one or multiple TPs
- Each TP must have at least one Industry Partner
- Spokes can be added to Research Centres using the Spokes Programme



# Industry Partners



- **Each targeted project must involve at least 1 industry partner**
- **Expectation of mix of large and small companies**
- **Industry partners should provide both a financial contribution and an intellectual input into the research programme**
- **Non-Irish based companies can participate but direct benefit to Ireland must be clearly demonstrated**
- **Commercial semi-state bodies are eligible as industry partners**
- **Government agencies, charities or other not-for-profit entities not eligible as industry partners (but could be collaborators)**

# Funding Available



- **SFI contribution max 70%**
  - €1-5M per annum (direct costs) over duration of six years
  - Can exceed upper limit subject to matched funding
- **Min 10% industry cash\***
- **Min 30% total industry contribution (cash + in-kind)\***
- **Must maintain min. 30% cost-share over the lifetime of the RC**

**\*Note: Funding from 'other non-exchequer sources' does not count towards the minimum industry cost share requirements**



# Funding from 'other non-exchequer sources'



- **Applicants encouraged to consider the inclusion of contributions from other national and international funding agencies, philanthropic organisations or other sources (e.g. charity, not for profit organisations)**
- **Potential benefits:**
  - Increased level of funding for the Centre overall
  - Assist in developing the sustainability of the proposed Centre
  - Demonstration of the importance of the proposed Centre to key stakeholders
- **Note: Will not count towards industry cost share, nor will it leverage additional SFI funds**

# High Level Eligibility Criteria



- **Applicant Group**
  - Consists of Lead Applicant (Director) and Co-Applicants
  - Min of 10 senior author publications each
  - Hold at least 1 independent research grant each
  - Secured min. €10m combined research funding 2010-2016
- **Lead Applicant can only be named on 1 application only**
- **Co-Applicant can be named on up to 2 applications**

# Research Centre Network



- **Targeted projects that connect with an existing RC may be supported either through the Spokes Programme or the Centres Programme**
  - Note: RC proposals which are not clearly distinct from existing RCs are likely to be returned without review
- **Applications for funding a particular spoke may not be under review for the Spokes and Centres Programmes at the same time**
- **Currently funded Research Centres**
  - **Lead PI / Directors not eligible as Lead or Co-Applicants**
  - **Co-PI's may apply as Co-Applicants or FIs**

# Key Weaknesses of Unsuccessful Proposals



- **Not all members of applicant group were internationally competitive**
- **Case for Centre funding not clearly made (e.g. lack of synergy)**
- **Ability of Centre to compete internationally questioned**
  - Scope too broad (small & excellent better than big & mediocre!)
  - Lacking in critical mass of excellent researchers
  - Unique aspects of proposed Centre unclear
- **Failure to demonstrate strong potential for delivery of economic impact to Ireland**
  - Poorly developed business plan
  - Collaborative nature of partnership with industry unclear

# Application Steps & Review Process



- 1. Abstract submission (not subject to review)**
- 2. Pre-proposal submission**
  - Review by combined scientific and impact panel
  - Scientific quality and impact equally weighted
- 3. Full proposal submission (invitation only)**
  - Postal review (scientific evaluation only)
  - Applicant response
  - Proposals demonstrating scientific excellence will progress
  - Impact panel evaluation, includes a presentation from applicants
  - List of fundable proposals ranked in order of priority for funding

# Application Steps & Review Process



## 1. Abstract submission (not subject to review)

- Title of proposal
- Name of Host Institution
- Name of Lead Applicant (Director)
- Scientific Abstract (200 words max)
  
- Template on SFI Research Centres 2016 webpage
- Email to [Centres@sfi.ie](mailto:Centres@sfi.ie)
- **Deadline: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 1pm**

# Application Steps & Review Process



## 2. Pre-proposal submission (SESAME)

- **Proposal Summary** (Title, funding request, duration, research area(s), SFI remit alignment)
- **Lead & Co-Applicant details\*** (Location, % time commitment, CV, publications, supervisory experience)
- **List of Collaborators** (Funded Investigators, Academic Collaborators and Industry Collaborators).
  - Note: CVs not required
- **Main Body of Proposal** (Keywords, scientific abstract, lay abstract)

\*Note: no restriction on the max. number of Co-Applicants BUT, each Co-Applicant will receive equal evaluation to the Lead-Applicant

# Application Steps & Review Process



## 2. Pre-proposal submission (SESAME)

- **Profile of Applicant Group** (max 3 pages)
- **Funding History** (min €10m in defined period)
- **Research Programme** (max 5 pages)
  - Overall vision of the proposed RC
  - Specific research questions to be addressed by the RC
  - Current state-of-the-art & how the RC will advance it
  - Why is a RC required? What is the competitive advantage of the team to deliver in this area?



# Application Steps & Review Process



## 2. Pre-proposal submission (SESAME)

- **References**
- **Impact Statement** (max 5 pages)
- **Membership Structure** (max 1 page, only if applicable)
- **Budget Justification** (max 1 page)

# Application Steps & Review Process



## 2. Pre-proposal submission (SESAME)

- **Summary Budget** (MS Excel budget template)
- **Letters of Support** (see templates)
  - Each proposed industry partner
  - Each organisation committing 'other non-exchequer funding'
- **Prior research funding of the applicant group**
  - Description of any scientific overlap with RC proposal
- **Deadline: 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2016, 1pm**
- **Remember – your institution may have internal approval steps**

# Application Steps & Review Process



## 3. Full proposal submission (SESAME)

- **By invitation only, following review of pre-proposals**
- **Requirement for both scientific excellence and strong potential for impact in order to progress to full proposal stage**
- **Anticipate inviting to submit full proposal in late July 2016**
- **Deadline: 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 2016, 1pm**
- **Full proposals demonstrating a high level of scientific excellence will be invited to present to an impact panel in Feb/March 2017**

# Evaluation Criteria



## 1. Team

- **Quality, significance, and relevance of the recent research record of the lead and co-applicants and;**
- **The strength and cohesiveness of the applicant group, including likely synergy in delivering research and potential for international leadership**

## 2. Research

- **Quality, significance, and relevance of the proposed research, including value for money and;**
- **The potential to advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields**

# Evaluation Criteria



## **3. Potential for impact**

- **Quality, significance, and relevance of the proposed research's potential contribution to demonstrably support and underpin enterprise competitiveness and societal development in Ireland**

## **4. Execution & Delivery (full proposal only)**

- **Quality of plans for execution and delivery of the research programme and Centre goals, including the appropriateness of the proposed milestones and deliverables**

# Intellectual Property Management



- **Responsibility of the Research Body to ensure in accordance with national IP policy and compliant with State Aid law**
- **Intellectual Property Rights should be assigned to Industry Partners in a manner which reflects their contributions**
- **Contracts & IP agreements should be executed within 90 days of the award start date**
- **TTO's are empowered to pursue the most advantageous commercial route for the Research Bodies**
- See <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/national-policies-sfi-positions/index.xml> for more details

# Post Award Reporting



**SFI uses a number of evaluation instruments for Centres**

- **Monthly -**
  - Industry contracts & HR update
- **Every six months -**
  - KPI report (SESAME) and a governance report
- **Every year -**
  - Research outputs / census and annual report
- **Every two years -**
  - Site visit with external panel
- **Regular workshops with Centre Directors & Centre Managers**

# Key Performance Indicators



- **At the full proposal stage, applicants will be asked to provide targets for 15 KPIs under four headings:**
  1. Academic outputs
  2. Human capital outputs
  3. Funding diversification
  4. Commercialisation
- **KPIs are aligned with the objectives of the Research Centres Programme, and overall SFI objectives (Agenda 2020)**



# Key Performance Indicators



## 1. Academic

- # Journal publications
- # Conference publications

## 2. Human Capital

- # MSc/MEng graduates
- # PhD graduates
- % Trainee departures with industry as a first destination

# Key Performance Indicators



## 3. Funding Diversification

- # Participations in major EU initiative
- # Co-ordinations of major EU initiatives
- # ERC awards
- Funding from non-exchequer sources
- Cash in bank (3x: cash, % cash, % in-kind + cash)

## 4. Commercialisation

- # Spin-out companies formed
- # EI commercialisation awards
- # Licence agreements

# Key Performance Indicators



- **Targets must be ambitious, but realistic and achievable**
- **Targets should reflect strategic & commercial positioning of the Centre**
- **Assessment of KPI targets will form part of the evaluation of the proposal**
  
- **Additional information on setting KPIs will be supplied to those invited to submit a full proposal**

# Management & Governance Structures



**All Research Centres will be required to establish**

- **Executive Committee**
  - **Governance Committee**
  - **Scientific Advisory Committee**
  - **Industry Advisory Committee**
- 
- See <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management/research-centres-award-management/> for more guidance on metrics, reporting, intellectual property, management & governance of Research Centres

# Key Timelines



<b>Deadline for submission of abstracts</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> March 2016, 13:00</b>
<b>Deadline for submission of pre-proposals</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> April 2016, 13:00</b>
<b>Invite to full proposals</b>	<b>July 2016</b>
<b>Deadline for submission of full proposals</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016, 13:00</b>
<b>Impact Panel meeting</b>	<b>February/March 2017</b>
<b>Funding Decision</b>	<b>April 2017</b>

# Other SFI Industry Collaborative Programmes



## SFI Spokes Programme 2015

- **For addition of new projects to Existing Centres**
- **Allows existing Centres to develop in line with new priorities and opportunities**
- **No maximum or minimum budget – projects of scale expected**
- **Rolling Call: 50% cash cost share, assessed based on own merit**
- **Fixed Call: 30% cash cost share, competitive review**
  - **Deadline: 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2016, 1pm**
  - **Advanced Manufacturing: lower cost share, additional incentives**

# Other SFI Industry Collaborative Programmes



## SFI Industry Fellowship Programme

- **Funds movement of researchers between Academia & Industry**
  - Salary, travel & subsistence (if Academia to Industry)
  - Travel & subsistence (if Industry to Academia)
- **Up to €120k per fellowship**
- **Up to one year full time or two years part time**
- **Open to Irish and international companies**
- **Open to all levels from Postdoctoral Researcher up to Professor**
- **Deadlines in June and December**

# Other SFI Industry Collaborative Programmes



## SFI Strategic Partnerships Programme

- **Foster and develop strategic partnerships**
- **Initiatives of scale with strong potential for delivering economic impact to Ireland**
- **Cash co-funding requirement of 50%**
- **Flexible programme for projects not otherwise served**
- **Rolling call – open now**
- **2-stage review**
  - Expression of interest
  - Full proposal (by invitation only)



## If you have a question.....



- **Q&A session now**
- **Consult the Centres Programme Call Document & FAQ's**
- **Contact your Research Office**
- **Subsequently, email [Centres@sfi.ie](mailto:Centres@sfi.ie)**

# Q&A Session

- Q&A session now
- We may put voice on 'mute' for a few minutes while we gather questions – please be patient
- Submit your text-based questions via the GoToMeeting control panel
- We will deal with as many of these as we can, verbally
- We will post a recording of the webinar on the RC 2016 webpage

