



**IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

## 2024 ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP SCHEMES

Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postgraduate)  
Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral)

### CALL DOCUMENT

Key Dates	
Call open	12:00 (Irish time) 5 October 2023
FAQ deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 9 November 2023
Applicant deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 16 November 2023
Supervisor and mentor deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 23 November 2023
Research office endorsement deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 30 November 2023
Waiver deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 31 January 2024
Outcome of scheme	End of April 2024
Award start date	1 September 2024

**Due to heavy server traffic on the day of the applicant, supervisor and mentor deadlines, all participants are strongly advised to submit their forms well in advance of the relevant deadline.**



**An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,  
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta**  
Department of Further and Higher Education,  
Research, Innovation and Science

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## 1. Enterprise Partnership Scheme

The Irish Research Council's Enterprise Partnership Scheme is a unique national initiative linking excellent researchers in all disciplines to enterprise; in the context of this call, enterprise partners can range from multinational corporations to SMEs, non-governmental organisations, and, where justified, public sector agencies. The scheme provides researchers with the opportunity to pursue research in collaboration with enterprise while based at an [eligible higher education or research-performing institution](#). Through this Irish Research Council and enterprise partner co-funded programme, researchers develop new, advanced knowledge and skills linked with industry and employer needs. The programme trains early-career researchers for the diversity of employment opportunities in industry, the public sector and the non-government sectors. For the enterprise partner, the scheme provides a low-risk, flexible route to research, talent and innovation in an area closely aligned with its strategic interests.

With consideration to national and global challenges, the involvement of those organisations, both large and small, who seek technological, social and sustainable solutions and opportunities for people and planet is welcomed. Pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or those introducing creative, innovative approaches, as well as proposals of an interdisciplinary nature are also encouraged as it is recognised that advancing fundamental understanding is achieved by integrating information, techniques, tools and perspectives from two or more disciplines. The application should be written by the applicant in collaboration with their host institution and enterprise partner.

The Enterprise Partnership Schemes support suitably qualified research master's, doctoral and postdoctoral candidates pursuing, or intending to pursue, full-time research in any discipline. Please consult the Irish Research Council's [research categorisation document](#) for further descriptions of the primary areas, disciplines and other research areas covered.

## 2. About the Irish Research Council

The Irish Research Council is the national funder of excellent research across all disciplines. It invests in discovery research and in ground-breaking ideas that address major societal challenges, funding a diverse range of excellent individual researchers across all career stages.

The Irish Research Council collaborates with enterprise, civil society, and with government to leverage the skills, knowledge, and talent of researchers to achieve maximum benefit for society.

Established in 2012, the Irish Research Council is an associated agency of the [Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science](#) and operates under the aegis of the [Higher Education Authority](#).

## 3. Purpose of this call document

- 3.1. This call document provides information for applicants in preparing and submitting an application for an Irish Research Council Enterprise Partnership Scholarship (Postgraduate) or

- Enterprise Partnership Fellowship (Postdoctoral). It also provides a general overview of the assessment process.
- 3.2. This document, in conjunction with the [General Terms and Conditions for Early-Career Awards](#), the letter of offer and the Irish Research Council's policies and procedures, sets out the terms and conditions for early-career awards funded by the Irish Research Council.
  - 3.3. The Irish Research Council reserves the right to amend this call document at any time.

## 4. What we offer

### 4.1. Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postgraduate)

- 4.1.1. These awards will support suitably qualified research master's and doctoral candidates pursuing, or intending to pursue, full-time research as a full-time registered student in any discipline in an eligible higher education institution.
- 4.1.2. The duration of an Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postgraduate) award ranges from one to four years depending on the type of degree being pursued and the date of first registration (where relevant).
- 4.1.3. The total value of the scholarship will be up to a maximum of €28,000 per annum in any approved year and consist of the following:
  - a stipend of €19,000;
  - a contribution to fees, including non-European Union fees, paid to the host institution, up to a maximum of €5,750<sup>1</sup>;
  - eligible direct research expenses of €3,250 to enable the awardee to carry out the research project.

### 4.2. Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral):

- 4.2.1. The fellowship will support suitably qualified postdoctoral candidates pursuing, or intending to pursue, full-time research in any discipline for a period of two years in an eligible higher education or research-performing institution.
- 4.2.2. These awards will consist of the following:
  - a salary of €42,033 in the first year of the award and €42,783 in the second year of the award<sup>2</sup>;
  - employer's PRSI contribution; and
  - eligible direct research expenses of €5,000 per annum.

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<sup>1</sup> Any differential in fees must be paid by the awardee and/or host institution. Awardees who hold a fee waiver from their host institution, or where no fee is required, or where fees are paid in full or in part by a third party, must inform the Irish Research Council and the appropriate offices in their host institution and will not be eligible for the fee portion of the scholarship.

<sup>2</sup> This corresponds with points 1 and 2 respectively on the [IUA's researcher salary scale](#) at the time of call opening but may be subject to change under the current national pay agreement. Any such changes will be applied in line with updates to the [IUA's researcher salary scale](#).

## 5. Information for enterprise partners

- 5.1. An enterprise partner can be a company, registered charity, social, cultural or not-for-profit civic organisation, state-owned enterprise or an eligible public body<sup>3</sup> that will co-fund the researcher for the duration of the award.
- 5.2. The enterprise partner is required to contribute €9,500 annually towards the cost of funding a researcher under the Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postgraduate). The Irish Research Council contributes the remaining €18,500 per annum.
- 5.3. The enterprise partner is required to contribute €17,224 in the first year of the award and €17,502<sup>4</sup> in the second year of the award towards the cost of funding a researcher under the Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral). The Irish Research Council contributes the remaining funds.
- 5.4. The enterprise partner can be based nationally or internationally.
- 5.5. The enterprise partner can support a maximum of 5 applications in total across the enterprise programmes - Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postgraduate), Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral) and the Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme - in any given programme call year.
- 5.6. Eligible NGOs can request a fee waiver in respect of their contribution for the first year of the award provided that the total length of the award is not less than two years in duration<sup>5</sup>. If a fee waiver is approved, the NGO must be in a position to make the appropriate contribution in the second and any subsequent years of the award. NGOs are required to seek approval from the Irish Research Council by submitting a waiver application form found on the relevant call page to [schemes@research.ie](mailto:schemes@research.ie) by 31 January 2024. Waiver approval is subject to the availability of funding, is at the sole discretion of the Irish Research Council and may be offered on a ranked or limited basis, with priority given to organisations with limited resources.
- 5.7. Eligible NGOs can apply for a maximum of 3 waivers in total across the Enterprise Partnership Schemes (Postgraduate & Postdoctoral) in any given programme call year.

## 6. Eligibility

- 6.1. Potential applicants should carefully ascertain whether they are eligible in advance of applying to either programme.
- 6.2. There is no age limit for applicants to be eligible for either programme type.
- 6.3. All applicants must be affiliated with an [eligible Irish higher education institution](#) (postgraduate or postdoctoral stream) or [research-performing organisation](#) (postdoctoral stream only).
- 6.4. The Irish Research Council is not in a position to award funding for research activity under any of the following prohibited areas:
  - human cloning for reproductive purposes;

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<sup>3</sup> An eligible public body is a public service body with specific scientific or cultural infrastructure that is integral to the conduct and completion of the proposed research. If a public body or higher education institution is an eligible research-performing organisation, it is not an eligible enterprise partner under this scheme.

<sup>4</sup> This corresponds with one-third of the award value based on the [IUA's researcher salary scale](#) at the time of call opening. This scale may be subject to change under the current national pay agreement and any such changes will be applied in line with these updates.

<sup>5</sup> To be deemed eligible for a waiver the not-for-profit employment partner must be listed on Ireland's [Register of Charities](#).

- genetic modification of human beings that could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be funded); or
  - creation of human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.
- 6.5. Applications will only be accepted in either the Irish or English language<sup>6</sup>.
- 6.6. Applicants must not have had two previous unsuccessful applications to the relevant programme. This applies regardless of whether the applicant has changed their host institution or research topic since a previous submission.
- 6.7. Applicants from any country may hold an Enterprise Partnership Scheme award<sup>7</sup>.
- 6.8. Applicants must state during the online application process whether they have submitted, or intend to submit, the same or a similar application to any other Irish Research Council (IRC), Irish or international award programme.

### **6.9. Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postgraduate):**

- 6.9.1. An applicant who is a new entrant to the postgraduate degree for which they are seeking funding is eligible to apply for funding for the full duration of the degree as outlined below:

Degree type	Duration of funding to be awarded
Research master's degree	1 year
Structured research master's degree	2 years
Traditional doctoral degree	3 years
Structured doctoral degree	4 years

- 6.9.2. For applicants who have already completed part of the postgraduate degree for which they are seeking funding, the duration of funding to be awarded is dependent on the type of degree being pursued and the date of first registration as outlined below:

Degree type	Date of first registration <sup>8</sup>	Academic year	Duration of funding to be awarded
Structured research master's degree	1 Sep 23 – 31 Aug 24 (registrations prior to 1 Sep 23 are ineligible)	2023/24	1 year
	1 Sep 23 – 31 Aug 24	2023/24	2 years

<sup>6</sup> In order to facilitate assessment, those submitting an Irish language assessment are invited to accompany it with an English language translation. Should an English translation not be provided by the applicant, the Irish Research Council will provide a translation to the relevant assessors.

<sup>7</sup> Arrangements with respect to immigration, and in the case of the postdoctoral stream, the right to work, will be a matter for settlement between the awardee, their host institution and the relevant immigration authorities of the State.

<sup>8</sup> Exceptions to the above dates of first registration may only be made for those who have taken an eligible career break from their degree programmes.

Traditional doctoral degree	1 Sep 22 – 31 Aug 23 (registrations prior to 1 Sep 22 are ineligible)	2022/23	1 year
Structured doctoral degree	1 Sep 23 – 31 Aug 24	2023/24	3 years
	1 Sep 22 – 31 Aug 23	2022/23	2 years
	1 Sep 21 – 31 Aug 22 (registrations prior to 1 Sep 21 are ineligible)	2021/22	1 year

- 6.9.3. All applicants must have a first class or upper second-class honours bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree. If undergraduate examination results are not known at the time of application, the Irish Research Council may make a provisional offer of a scholarship on condition that the scholar's bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree result is a first class or upper second-class honours<sup>9</sup>. If the applicant does not have a first class or upper second-class honours bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree, they must possess a master's degree. The Irish Research Council's determination of an applicant's eligibility on these criteria is final.
- 6.9.4. All degree results as entered in the application form and endorsed by the host institution must be the applicant's overall results and verifiable as such on official transcripts. Regardless of whether they are relevant to the eligibility requirements listed in clause 6.9.3, conditional awardees will be required to submit to their host institution official transcripts for each degree listed in the application confirming the overall result, date of graduation and awarding institution<sup>10</sup>. If such transcripts cannot be presented to the host institution, or do not verify the information exactly as detailed in the application, any conditional offer of an award will be withdrawn.
- 6.9.5. Applicants for a research master's degree must not currently hold, or have previously held, an Irish Research Council scholarship.
- 6.9.6. Applicants for a doctoral degree must not currently hold, or have previously held, any Irish Research Council scholarship other than one which would have enabled them to obtain a research master's degree.
- 6.9.7. All applications require an academic supervisor willing to guide the proposed research project and an enterprise mentor designated by the enterprise partner as being responsible for supporting and mentoring the awardee in relation to the enterprise partner's involvement. The academic supervisor and enterprise mentor cannot be same person. The Irish Research Council is not in a position to assist applicants in finding an academic supervisor, enterprise partner or enterprise mentor for their application. It is possible to include a secondary academic supervisor or co-supervisor on the application.

## 6.10 Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral):

6.10.1 All applicants must:

- have been awarded their doctoral degree within the five-year period before 31 May 2024. For the purposes of this condition, the date of graduation will be taken into account; or

<sup>9</sup> Host institutions are expected to be guided by QQI and the NFQ in terms of the recognition and equivalence of a degree.

<sup>10</sup> Supporting, non-returnable material must be forwarded in a timely manner to the host institution for inspection before the award can commence. On request, this material must also be forwarded by the host institution to the Irish Research Council for inspection before the award can commence. All transcripts must be appropriately stamped and signed to confirm that they are official documents of the institution.

- have been certified as having fulfilled within the five-year period before 31 May 2024 all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including the submission of the hardbound corrected thesis, but have not yet graduated.
- 6.10.2 An applicant's period of eligibility may be extended as a result of any properly documented eligible career break, provided the grounds for the extension started before the call deadline. Eligible career breaks include maternity leave, paternity leave, adoptive leave, parental leave, extended sick leave and carer's leave.
- 6.10.3 Only career breaks taken by the applicant as a statutory entitlement will be considered eligible. Career breaks explained by working outside of academia or by being unemployed for a period of time will not be considered as valid reasons to extend the eligibility window.
- 6.10.4 If an applicant wishes to extend their period of eligibility, they must produce evidence, birth certificate(s), medical certificate(s) and/or documents from the HR office of their employer at the time of the eligible break(s):
- For maternity leave, applicants will be granted an 18-month extension for each child born before or after the first PhD award, regardless of how long the applicant took for maternity leave. If the applicant can document a longer maternity leave, the eligibility period will be extended by the documented amount of actual leave taken until the call deadline. The same principle also applies for child adoption.
  - For paternity leave, applicants will be granted an extension equal to the documented amount of paternity leave actually taken for each child born before or after the first PhD award. The same principle also applies for child adoption.
  - For parental or carer's leave, applicants will be granted an extension equal to the documented amount of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award.
  - For long-term illness (over ninety days for the applicant or a close family member, i.e. child, spouse, parent, sibling), applicants will be granted an extension equal to the documented amount of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award.
- 6.10.5 All applicants must have:
- authored or co-authored at least one published peer-reviewed research publication<sup>11</sup>; or
  - have demonstrable equivalent intellectual property output; or
  - provide a copy of the table of contents and one chapter from their doctoral thesis. Please note that submission of more than one chapter will render your application ineligible.
- 6.10.6 All degree results as entered in the application form and endorsed by the host institution must be the applicant's overall results and verifiable as such on official transcripts. Regardless of whether they are relevant to the eligibility requirements listed in clause 6.9.1, conditional awardees will be required to submit to their host institution official transcripts for each degree listed in the application confirming the overall result, date of graduation and awarding institution<sup>10</sup>. If such transcripts

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<sup>11</sup> A journal article in an international journal, or a peer-reviewed conference proceedings paper, that has been published or accepted for publication. Articles submitted or in preparation are not acceptable.



- cannot be presented to the host institution, or do not verify the information exactly as detailed in the application, any conditional offer of an award will be withdrawn.
- 6.10.7 Applicants must not currently hold, or have previously held, an Irish Research Council Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral) award.
  - 6.10.8 Applicants may previously have held a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship; however, they must have completed the full funding term of their Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship before commencing an Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral) award.
  - 6.10.9 Applicants must not have had two previous unsuccessful applications to the Enterprise Partnership Scheme (Postdoctoral).
  - 6.10.10 Applicants must not have been employed as a postdoctoral researcher for more than five years as of 31 May 2024.
  - 6.10.11 Applicants must not be a permanent member of staff in either an Irish or international higher education institution or research-performing organisation.
  - 6.10.12 All applications require an academic mentor willing to guide the proposed research project and an enterprise mentor designated by the enterprise partner as being responsible for supporting and mentoring the awardee in relation to the enterprise partner's involvement. The academic mentor and enterprise mentor cannot be same person. The Irish Research Council is not in a position to assist applicants in finding an academic mentor, enterprise partner or enterprise mentor for their application.

## 7. Ineligible applications

- 7.1. In addition to section 6 above, applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding if:
  - an applicant submits more than one application to this year's Enterprise Partnership Scheme or Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme calls<sup>12</sup>;
  - an application has not been submitted via the online system by the relevant deadline. No hardcopies or email forms will be accepted;
  - an application does not have all the required participant forms, i.e. academic supervisor or mentor (as relevant) and enterprise mentor forms, completed in full and submitted via the online system by the relevant deadline. No hardcopies or email forms will be accepted;
  - an application is incomplete or exceeds the word limits;
  - an application includes additional materials other than those requested;
  - an application includes materials in a format other than those requested;
  - it is found at any stage during the process that any section of an application has been plagiarised or is not the applicant's own work (see section 12 for more information);
  - any information supplied in an application is false, misleading or unverifiable with appropriate documentation;
  - the research project as proposed in the application form has previously been funded either in full, or in part, by the Irish Research Council or any other funding agency;

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<sup>12</sup> An applicant may have submitted an application to the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme or the Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme in addition to either the Enterprise Partnership Scheme or the Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme. If they have submitted, or intend to submit, the same or similar application to another programme call this year they must state so in their application.

- the application is not endorsed by the applicant's host institution, i.e. the vice-president/dean of research or their authorised nominee, via the online system by the relevant deadline;
- any potential or perceived conflict of interest between the applicant, enterprise partner, enterprise mentor or academic supervisor or mentor (as relevant) was not declared at the time of application;
- if the enterprise partner has outstanding payments under the scheme at the time of application or there has previously been significant delays in payment of their contribution or progress reporting on a current or expired award;
- canvassing on behalf of the applicant occurs.

## 8. Thinking about applying?

- 8.1. For reasons of transparency and fairness to all applicants, we will not enter into written or telephone correspondence with any individual about the assessment process or their eligibility to apply.
- 8.2. In the first instance, you should contact the research office in your proposed host institution for information and clarification on the call. It is highly recommended that applicants contact the research office well in advance of submitting an application.
- 8.3. If your research office is unable to answer your query, the research office should email it to [schemes@research.ie](mailto:schemes@research.ie) for answer through the frequently asked questions (FAQ) process. An updated FAQ document will be published weekly on the [Irish Research Council's](#) website.
- 8.4. You should not add an academic supervisor or mentor (as relevant) or enterprise mentor to your application without their prior approval.
- 8.5. Prior to creating an application, you should contact and discuss your research project with your proposed academic supervisor or mentor (as relevant) and enterprise mentor.
- 8.6. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to inform the proposed academic supervisor or mentor (as relevant) and enterprise mentor of their nomination. This should be done well in advance of completing the online application.
- 8.7. It is strongly encouraged that application and participant forms are submitted well in advance of the relevant deadline as heavy server traffic on the day may slow down their submission. Applicants are advised not to wait until the day of the deadline to register on the system or submit their application. If you need to submit your application on the closing day, it is strongly recommended to do this at least six hours before the deadline.
- 8.8. While an academic supervisor or mentor at an Irish host institution is permitted to support more than one award holder under each programme, this should not be used as a means for academic supervisors or mentors to form research teams. Each application must be in support of an individual and original project, written by the applicant and distinctively different to other applications which may be received under the same academic supervisor or mentor.

## 9. Gender

- 9.1. A key feature of the [Irish Research Council's Gender Strategy and Action Plan](#) is to provide equal outcomes for all applicants so that Ireland can attract and retain the most talented, creative and innovative researchers, thereby maximising its collective research intelligence.
- 9.2. To ensure a level playing field for all applicants, the Irish Research Council seeks to gender-blind the assessment process for these programmes.
- 9.3. As such, profile information containing the name and gender of applicants is not provided to reviewers during the assessment process.
- 9.4. Applicants are therefore asked to refrain from identifying their gender when completing their application forms.
- 9.5. We also ask that supervisors and mentors use 'the applicant', 's/he' and 'his/her' when providing their observations rather than the person's name or pronouns which would identify their gender.
- 9.6. Applicants are advised to consult the sex/gender dimension statement in appendix 1 in advance of completing the personal, ethical and sex/gender statements section of their application.

## **10. Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)**

- 10.1. The Irish Research Council is signatory to the [San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#) and, as such, we are aligning our assessment processes with DORA principles.
- 10.2. To this end, all types of research output are recognised and we are committed to assessing the quality and impact of research through means other than journal impact factors.

## **11. ORCID**

- 11.1. ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes you from every other researcher and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between you and your professional activities ensuring that your work is recognised.
- 11.2. If you do not currently have an ORCID, please register for one at [www.orcid.org](http://www.orcid.org) in advance of submitting your application.

## **12. Plagiarism and related issues**

- 12.1. Applications are expected to be entirely the applicant's own work.
- 12.2. Random sampling for evidence of plagiarism and excessive duplication will be carried out during the application and award process. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. It will be deemed that excessive duplication has arisen when significant portions of multiple applications to the Irish Research Council are similar or identical in content.
- 12.3. If such instances of plagiarism or excessive duplication are identified by the Irish Research Council at any stage during the application or award process, the relevant application(s) will be deemed ineligible, award offers will be withdrawn, or active awards will be terminated with one month's notice.

- 12.4. Such instances of plagiarism or excessive duplication will also be brought to the attention of the host institution and the applicant in question will be prohibited from applying for Irish Research Council funding in the future.

### **13. Assessment process**

- 13.1. Applications are first checked by the Irish Research Council for eligibility.
- 13.2. All applications will be assessed solely on the basis of the material provided at the time of submission.
- 13.3. Award holders will be selected following a transparent, merit-based, impartial and equitable selection procedure, based on international peer review.
- 13.4. Profile information containing the name, date of birth and gender of applicants is not provided to reviewers during the assessment process.
- 13.5. Each application is assessed by at least two independent, international reviewers. Each assessor submits their quantitative evaluation and the applications are preliminarily ranked.
- 13.6. Applications are then discussed at an international assessment board meeting to determine the final ranking of the applications referred to it, arrive at an overall judgment of standard and make final recommendations to the Irish Research Council.
- 13.7. The Irish Research Council will then fund down the ranked list presented to it by the international assessment board until funding is exhausted. The Irish Research Council's decision on whether to make an award is final.
- 13.8. Applications are assessed under four headings:
  - applicant;
  - project;
  - training and career development; and
  - environment.
- 13.9. Assessors consider all four headings and allocate scores as per the evaluation criteria detailed in appendix 2. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves fully with the evaluation criteria prior to making an application.
- 13.10. If the total average score is the same between two or more applications, applications with the same average scores will be ranked according to average score under the project category.

### **14. Notification and feedback**

- 14.1. The Irish Research Council is precluded from discussing results of the competition or the outcome of individual applications over the telephone or in writing.
- 14.2. Feedback to unsuccessful candidates will consist of the score assigned by the international assessment board. No additional qualitative feedback will be provided. The score assigned by the international assessment board is final and no correspondence will be undertaken in relation to individual assessments or scoring.
- 14.3. Under no circumstance will feedback provided by the Irish Research Council compromise the confidentiality of any participant in the process.

## APPENDIX 1

### GUIDANCE ON THE SEX/GENDER DIMENSION STATEMENT

While there are research projects in which biological sex and/or gender may not be relevant in terms of the research content, it is well established that, where relevant, integrating sex and gender analysis into the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the research can lead to better results and opportunities. If relevant sex-gender issues are missed or poorly addressed, research results will be partial and potentially biased. In worst-case scenarios poor consideration of the sex-gender dimension in research can result in real-world applications based on inaccurate results or conceptions. Full consideration of the sex-gender dimension in research content is a requirement for all Irish Research Council awards.

The integration of the sex-gender dimension in research is commonly mistaken for the integration of gender balance in research teams. These are two distinct matters, and the gender balance of a team should not be used to answer the sex-gender dimension in research question. We recommend this short video [here](#) from the European Commission on the integration of sex/gender dimension in research.

#### *Definitions*

Sex refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorised as female or male.

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender is usually conceptualised as a binary (girl/woman and boy/man) yet there is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience, and express it. The Irish charity, BelongTo provides a list of terminology associated with gender [here](#).

#### *Resources*

The following links provide positive and negative examples that result from the inclusion or exclusion of sex and gender in research respectively. These may be useful for applicants to complete the sex-gender dimension statement in the application:

#### *General*

- [Stanford University resource concerning the sex-gender aspects of research](#)

#### *STEM*

- [Online training for integrating sex and gender in health research](#)
- [Article about the dangers of drug testing on all-male animal populations](#) (animal studies, drug design)
- [Gender research focus in agricultural technology and botanical science](#) (agriculture, botanical science)
- [Transport Infrastructure Ireland report on the implications of transport design for women in Ireland](#) (transportation engineering)
- [Machine learning reinforcing gender stereotypes](#) (machine learning)

#### *AHSS*

- [Book by Trine Rogg Korsvik & Linda M. Rustad on the gender dimension in research](#) (multiple examples provided in the chapter, Safe Societies)
- [Article on urban design principles that take into account the needs of women and minority groups](#) (urban design)

*How to consider the potential gender dimension and implications for your research*

The following is provided to help applicants complete the sex/gender dimension statement in the application. This is taken from the [‘Gender in EU-funded research’ toolkit](#), which aims to give the research community practical tools to integrate gender aspects into their research, including gender equality (equal outcomes for women and men) and integration of sex/gender analysis in research content.

1. The best possible research validity: Research should take into account the differences between men and women in the research population, and results will be more representative. General categories such as ‘people’, ‘patients’ or ‘users’ do not distinguish between men and women. Research based on such categories may well draw partial conclusions based on partial data. For example, research on a new breast cancer treatment should include male patients, so as to draw a complete picture. Most basic research with animal models focuses on males to the exclusion of females (Zucker et al., 2010; Marts et al., 2004). Research on economic migrants cannot limit itself to male points of view if it wants to understand the whole migrant population.
2. Research ideas and hypotheses: The relevance of biological sex and/or gender for and within the subject matter needs to be analysed and an assessment made as to whether these are relevant variables. The formulation of hypotheses can draw upon previous research and existing literature. Indeed, the body of knowledge on sex/gender issues has been steadily growing over recent decades and can serve as interesting reference material to build new hypotheses for future research.
3. Project design and research methodology: While research methodologies may vary, they all strive to represent (aspects of) reality. Whenever this reality concerns humans, any sound methodology should differentiate between the sexes and take into account the men’s and women’s situations equally. Groups such as ‘citizens’, ‘patients’, ‘consumers’, ‘victims’ or ‘children’ are therefore too general as categories.
4. Research implementation: *Data collection tools* (such as questionnaires and interview checklists) need to be gender-sensitive, use gender neutral language, and should make it possible to detect the different realities of men and women. This will help to avoid gender bias. For example, answers to be provided by the ‘head of household’ are not necessarily valid for all household members.
5. Data analysis: In most research concerning human subjects, data is routinely disaggregated by sex, which would logically lead to analyses according to sex. However, to date this is still not common practice. Systematically taking sex as a central variable and analysing other variables with respect to it (e.g. sex and age, sex and income, sex and mobility, sex and labour) will provide significant and useful insights. Involving gender-balanced end-user groups in the course of the research is also a good way of guaranteeing the highest impact.
6. Dissemination phase – reporting of data: Collecting and analysing sex and/or gender specific data is not enough if they are omitted from the published results. Sex and/or gender should be included in ‘mainstream’ publications as it is as much part of daily reality as any other variable studied. Specific dissemination actions (publications or events) for sex and/or gender findings can be considered. Institutions and departments that focus on gender

should be included in the target groups for dissemination. Publications should use gender-neutral language.

### *Checklist for sex and/or gender in research content*

#### Research ideas phase:

- If the research involves humans as research objects, has the relevance of biological sex and/or gender to the research topic been analysed?
- If the research does not directly involve humans, are the possibly differentiated relations of men and women to the research subject sufficiently clear?
- Have you reviewed literature and other sources relating to differences in the research field?

#### Proposal phase:

- Does the methodology ensure that (possible) sex/gender differences will be investigated: that sex/gender differentiated data will be collected and analysed throughout the research cycle and will be part of the final publication?
- Does the proposal explicitly and comprehensively explain how sex/gender issues will be handled (e.g. in a specific work package)?
- Have possibly differentiated outcomes and impacts of the research on women and men been considered?

#### Research phase:

- Are questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc. designed to unravel potentially relevant sex and/or gender differences in your data?
- Are the groups involved in the project (e.g. samples, testing groups) gender-balanced? Is data analysed according to the sex variable? Are other relevant variables analysed with respect to sex?

#### Dissemination phase:

- Do analyses present statistics, tables, figures and descriptions that focus on the relevant sex/gender differences that came up in the course of the project?
- Are institutions, departments and journals that focus on gender included among the target groups for dissemination, along with mainstream research magazines?
- Have you considered a specific publication or event on sex/gender-related findings?

**APPENDIX 2  
EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME (POSTGRADUATE)**

Evaluation criteria and detail	Maximum marks
<p><b>PROJECT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity and coherence of the proposed research</li> <li>• Quality of the proposed research design and methodologies</li> <li>• Feasibility of the proposed milestones, deliverables and contingency plans</li> <li>• Consideration as to how the proposed research will advance state of the art and make a contribution to existing knowledge</li> <li>• Plans for dissemination and knowledge exchange of the proposed research</li> <li>• Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender dimension</li> </ul>	40
<p><b>APPLICANT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track record and research potential of the applicant</li> <li>• Quality, significance and relevance of the applicant's key achievements, taking their personal statement into account</li> <li>• Match between the applicant's profile and the proposed research project</li> <li>• Evidence of independent thinking</li> <li>• Quality of the references provided by the academic supervisor and enterprise mentor</li> </ul>	30
<p><b>ENVIRONMENT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitability and ability of the academic supervisor(s) and enterprise mentor to provide adequate supervision</li> <li>• Quality of infrastructure and facilities provided by the host institution and enterprise partner</li> <li>• Match between the applicant, academic supervisor(s), enterprise mentor, host institution and enterprise partner</li> </ul>	20
<p><b>TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity and quality of training and career development plan</li> <li>• Potential for the development of new research-related and transferable skills and competencies, including those relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector</li> <li>• Capacity to acquire new knowledge</li> <li>• Clarity of thought as to how the scholarship will impact on the applicant's career path</li> </ul>	10



## ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME (POSTDOCTORAL)

Postdoctoral evaluation criteria and detail	Maximum marks
<p><b>APPLICANT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track record and research potential of the applicant</li> <li>• Quality, significance and relevance of the applicant’s key achievements, including international collaboration and intersectoral engagement beyond academia, taking their personal statement into account</li> <li>• Match between the applicant’s profile and the proposed project</li> <li>• Evidence of independent thinking and leadership qualities</li> <li>• Quality of the references provided by the academic mentor and enterprise mentor</li> </ul>	30
<p><b>TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity and quality of training and career development plan Potential for the development of new research-related and transferable skills and competencies, including those relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector</li> <li>• Capacity to acquire new knowledge</li> <li>• Clarity of thought as to how the fellowship will impact on the applicant's career path, including their professional independence</li> </ul>	25
<p><b>PROJECT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity and coherence of the proposed research</li> <li>• Quality of the proposed research design and methodologies</li> <li>• Feasibility of the proposed milestones, deliverables and contingency plans</li> <li>• Consideration as to how the proposed research will advance state of the art and make a contribution to existing knowledge</li> <li>• Plans for dissemination and knowledge exchange of the proposed research</li> <li>• Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender dimension</li> </ul>	25
<p><b>ENVIRONMENT, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitability and ability of the academic mentor and enterprise mentor to provide adequate supervision</li> <li>• Quality of infrastructure and facilities provided by the host institution and enterprise partner</li> <li>• Match between the applicant, academic mentor, enterprise mentor, host institution and enterprise partner</li> </ul>	20