

SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND

SFI Research Professorship Programme

Call for Submission of Proposals

Key Dates

The SFI Research Professorship Programme is run as a rolling call. Expressions of Interest may be submitted by Eligible Research Bodies at any time. Potential candidates wishing to apply to the Programme should contact an Eligible Irish Research Body.

Full Proposals will only be accepted by invitation, following the submission and evaluation of Expressions of Interest (EoI I and EoI II) and a Candidate Letter. Full proposals must be received **within four months** of receipt of an invitation.

Terms of Reference

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

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

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1 Introduction

The legal remit of Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) is to promote, develop and assist the carrying out of oriented basic and applied research in strategic areas of scientific endeavour that concern the future development and competitiveness of industry and enterprise in the State.¹ **Oriented basic research** is “research that is carried out with the expectation that it will produce a broad base of knowledge that is likely to form the background to the solution of recognised, or expected, current or future problems or possibilities”. Additionally, **applied research** is defined as “an original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge and is directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective. The results of applied research are intended primarily to be valid for a single or limited number of products, operations, methods, or systems”. As outlined in SFI’s strategic plan, Agenda 2020,² the Foundation is committed to working towards a goal where Ireland, by 2020, will be “the best country in the world for both scientific research excellence and impact”. Furthermore, Innovation 2020,³ Ireland’s five-year strategy on research and development, science and technology, recognises that “Ireland must ensure a continued flow of top research talent and attract and retain leading Principal Investigators from overseas ... in areas where we need to develop research capacity”.

Following on from its national research strategy Innovation 2020, the Irish Government recently launched **Project Ireland 2040**,⁴ which is the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic and cultural development of Ireland from 2018 until 2040. As part of the Project Ireland Framework, funding will be made available for **challenge-based Disruptive Technology Initiatives** to ensure that the Irish public gains substantial societal and economic benefits from high-risk, high-reward scientific research and innovation. SFI Research Professors will be empowered to lead on these initiatives and, as relevant, applicants to this programme should reflect on this opportunity when preparing their applications.

As part of SFI’s mission to create impact from excellent research and to demonstrate clear value from the money invested in the Foundation, Agenda 2020 includes the key action of supporting “the development of European Research Council (ERC) scientists in Ireland and the attraction of more ERC scientists to Ireland”. The ERC is a European funding initiative under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, which since 2007 has supported the best scientists, engineers and scholars in Europe.⁵ It is the largest single component of the Excellent Science pillar of Horizon 2020, with a budget that is equivalent to approximately 17% of the total Horizon 2020 budget.⁶ The ERC’s mandate is to encourage the highest-quality research in Europe through competitive funding and to support investigator-initiated frontier research across all fields, on the basis of scientific excellence. SFI recognises the excellence of researchers funded by the ERC, and already offers two ERC-related funding schemes.^{7,8} SFI also acts as the host for Ireland’s ERC National Contact Point for the Life Sciences and the Physical Sciences and Engineering domains; that is, those areas with primary alignment to SFI’s legal remit. SFI is committed to improving the success of Ireland-based researchers in ERC schemes, which provide significant awards that, as noted in Innovation 2020, are “a global as well as a European benchmark of excellence”. SFI also recognises that the best way to create a culture of ERC success is to provide a mechanism to allow people with proven success to work alongside the next generation of ERC awardees, in an environment where the necessary support is provided.

Attracting outstanding research talent to Ireland is one of the principal ambitions of SFI. Since its launch in 2003, the **SFI Research Professorship Programme** has sought to support national strategic priorities by assisting research bodies in the recruitment of world-leading researchers for Professorial Chairs, or similar research leadership positions in targeted scientific areas. The programme has also acted as a mechanism to support the recruitment of individuals who possess a strong industry background and may also allow for the

¹ [About SFI - What we do](#)

² [Agenda 2020; Published 2012](#)

³ [Innovation 2020; Published 2015](#)

⁴ <http://npf.ie/project-ireland-2040-national-planning-framework/>

⁵ <http://erc.europa.eu/>

⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en>

⁷ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-erc-development-programme/>

⁸ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-erc-support-programme/>

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recruitment of those intending to hold senior roles in SFI Research Centres or other centres of scale. The SFI Research Professorship Programme shares in the ERC's imperative that excellence is essential. Given the demand, as detailed above, to enhance ERC success in Ireland, the current call to the SFI Research Professorship Programme will be aligned to the ERC in three distinct ways, namely by:

- 1) Supporting the full-time recruitment of researchers whose excellence has already been demonstrated through success in calls to ERC schemes;
- 2) Embedding the next generation of ERC award holders into Ireland's research bodies by providing competitive initial funding and the potential for further support following ERC success;
- 3) Offering an opportunity for candidates who hold **active ERC awards** to take up a joint appointment, through which their working time will be divided between the host institution for their ERC award and an eligible Research Body in Ireland.

Through these three distinct opportunities, the SFI Research Professorship Programme will not only provide Research Bodies in Ireland with an opportunity to identify and create strategically relevant, timely and critically needed posts, but will also ensure that those posts are filled by world-class researchers who have either demonstrated their excellence by obtaining funding through extremely competitive ERC funding calls, or who are able to convince their peers that they have the potential to win ERC funding in the near future.

SFI is committed to providing opportunities for female researchers through its funding programmes. As laid out in SFI's Gender Strategy (*Strand 2: Gender Balance in Research Teams*),⁹ a key objective for the Foundation is for **30% of its awards to be held by female investigators by 2020**. In addition, SFI is mandating that almost all eligible Research Bodies must receive an Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional Award by 2020 to be eligible to host SFI awards.¹⁰

To date, Research Bodies in Ireland have seldom approached the SFI Research Professorship Programme as a mechanism for the recruitment of female researchers. However, it is recognised that addressing gender imbalance amongst senior academic roles can help to inspire more widespread change at all levels within academia. This call will implement actions designed to encourage Research Bodies to appropriately consider the recruitment of female Research Professors (see Section 2.2).

Through the SFI Research Professorship Programme, the Foundation is eager for Research Bodies to find innovative ways to encourage excellent researchers to transfer their activities to Ireland. In particular, it is recognised that the creation of Professorial-level positions with support from leading industrial partners or philanthropic organisations has the potential to reinforce the benefits of recruiting excellent researchers. SFI **strongly encourages** applications through this programme which, if successful, bring about the creation of **Endowed Chairs**, in which the recipient of the award will hold a position with a title that can be clearly associated with both the Foundation and the industrial or philanthropic partner(s). Both candidates and host Research Bodies are encouraged to contact potential partners for Endowed Chairs in advance of an application to this programme; should such an approach be considered, details may be added in relevant parts of the application (also see Sections 5.1 and 5.11).

Given the outstanding nature of the individuals this programme is intended to support, submission of Full Proposals will be **by invitation only** following an Expression-of-Interest phase during which SFI will work closely with the host Research Body. Funding will be provided to successful applicants for a five-year programme of work; the funding available may depend on whether the candidate holds an active ERC award, and whether the applicant plans to move to Ireland as part of a joint appointment.

⁹ <http://www.sfi.ie/about-us/women-in-science/>

¹⁰ <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-ireland/>

1.1 Objectives of the SFI Research Professorship Programme

- To provide a mechanism for recruiting world-leading researchers to Ireland's research institutions
- To increase the number of current ERC awardees working in Ireland and to provide a strong platform for future ERC successes
- To allow excellent researchers to hold a joint appointment between institutions in Ireland and an institution abroad where an ERC award is based
- To drive challenge-based Disruptive Technology Initiatives to ensure that the Irish public gains substantial societal and economic benefits from high-risk, high-reward scientific research and innovation
- To encourage institutions to appoint excellent female researchers in senior academic positions
- To increase the number of leadership roles held by Ireland-based PIs in major European initiatives, in particular those supported under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme
- To add critical expertise and excellence to SFI Research Centres and other centres of scale
- To increase Ireland's success in winning top-tier international prizes
- To build reputation that helps to attract new partnerships with industry
- To maintain Ireland's top-20 position in international bibliometric rankings through an increase in the number and quality of journal publications
- To increase the proportion of invention disclosures, patents, licences and spin-outs recorded by Enterprise Ireland that are directly linked to SFI-funded research

2 The Applicant: Eligibility and Programme Remit

2.1 Calibre of Applicant

Suitable applicants for an SFI Research Professorship Programme award will be outstanding researchers in academia or industry, recognised as world leaders in their discipline, with a demonstrated capacity for strategic and dynamic leadership on the international stage. They will either have already been successful in obtaining funding through a main ERC funding scheme (that is, the **ERC Starting Grant**, **ERC Consolidator Grant**, **ERC Advanced Grant** or **ERC Synergy Grant**), or they will be researchers with the clear potential to be future ERC award winners, most likely with a track record rendering them competitive for an **ERC Advanced Grant** or **ERC Synergy Grant**. Applicants who are not **active** ERC award holders may not seek the maximum funding available through this call; however, additional support may be sought by host institutions once an ERC award has been secured (**not including awards made through the ERC Proof of Concept Grant scheme**), regardless of whether it is the applicant's first ERC success (see Section 4.3 for details).

SFI expects researchers funded through this programme to be exceptional people with the clear potential to bring about significant advancements for their chosen host institutions and for Ireland as a whole. In addition to their success in ERC calls, or their clear potential for winning ERC funding, applicants will meet many, if not all, of the following criteria:

- Holder of a full professorial position, or equivalent, at a major international research institution, or of a senior position in industry
- Recognised within their field(s) for their influential scientific and/or technological achievements
- Senior authorship of a considerable body of literature that has made a significant impact in their field
- Recipient of significant international awards and fellowships
- Plenary/keynote speaker at top-tier international conferences, and organiser of such meetings of importance
- Distinguished service record on national or international grant review boards
- Successful track record in securing independent funding from competitive, publicly funded sources and/or through private investment

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Applicants from industry are required to demonstrate equivalent measures of esteem (e.g., serving on corporate boards, receipt of industry awards or fellowships). A successful track record in technology transfer, technology commercialisation and academic–industrial collaborations, where appropriate, is also highly desirable.

2.2 Eligibility of the Research Body

The Research Body is the body responsible for the overall financial and administrative co-ordination of research programmes supported by funding from SFI. Host Research Bodies must be situated in the Republic of Ireland. A list of eligible Research Bodies is available on the SFI website.¹¹

For this call, all Research Bodies are required to adhere to measures put in place by SFI relating to the enhancement of female participation in the SFI Research Professorship Programme. SFI will contact all Research Bodies to advise them of these measures; it will be incumbent upon all Research Bodies to adhere to these requirements and to advise candidates on how their applications may be affected as a result.

The term ‘Research Body’ and ‘Institution’ are equivalent and interchangeable in SFI documentation and in the SFI SESAME system.

2.3 Programme Remit

The Irish Government has recently undertaken a review of the objectives of National Research Prioritisation, building upon the original exercise carried out in 2012,¹² and taking into account a number of important current challenges and developments, including the growth of disruptive technologies, Brexit and the adoption of UN Sustainable Development Goals, amongst others.¹³ Research Prioritisation will continue to demand that the majority of Ireland’s competitive funding is concentrated on areas deemed likely to yield the greatest economic and societal impact. For this call, proposals must either be aligned to one of the 14 *Refreshed Priority Areas* for 2018-2023, which are the constituents of six broad Research Priority themes that underpin the updated prioritisation exercise, or they must demonstrate significant industrial relevance and strong economic impact (see Section 5.4).

2.4 Joint Appointments

This call to the SFI Research Professorship Programme will, for the first time, support excellent researchers who wish to carry out their activities across two institutions, and who will look to take up a **joint appointment**. SFI acknowledges that many world-leading researchers are keen to have greater flexibility in where they carry out their work and will often manage large teams and the necessary funding to be able to successfully hold positions in more than one institution, or country. Given the appropriate resources, and ensuring that the joint appointment is properly planned and carefully managed, such joint appointments have the potential to be mutually beneficial to the institutions involved, and to increase the productivity and visibility of the researcher concerned. This concept is of particular relevance for those holding ERC awards, which require the recipient to spend only a certain fraction of their time working within an EU Member State or Associated Country, and which may also involve a partner organisation, to which a fraction of the ERC funds may be apportioned, where deemed necessary or appropriate.

Joint appointments proposed through this call must be meaningful and beneficial arrangements in which both the institution in Ireland and the corresponding institution outside of Ireland will host the award holder for a significant portion of the five-year period of funding. Full proposals to this call will require detailed planning and scheduling of the applicant’s time over the duration of the award; it will be mandatory to

¹¹ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/eligibility-related-information/index.xml>

¹² [Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group \(2012\)](#)

¹³ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Research-Priority-Areas-2018-to-2023.pdf>

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provide a plan in which the applicant will demonstrate an intention to be located within the Irish host Research Body for **at least 40% of their time**. This figure is considered an absolute minimum to allow a viable programme of research to be carried out and for the award holder to demonstrate the level of influence and leadership that is expected of an SFI Research Professor; ideally, applicants will allocate more than the minimum time to the Irish host Research Body. Teams funded through this award may include a senior researcher (i.e., a Senior Research Fellow), who would be expected to lead the team and ensure smooth progress during those periods where the Research Professor is fulfilling obligations at the overseas institution.

Importantly, applicants seeking to utilise this call to support a joint appointment must have appropriate funding in both of the countries in which they will be based; **funding awarded through this call may only be used to support teams and activities based in the Irish host Research Body**. In line with the rules concerning the mobility of ERC grants, applicants taking up a joint appointment may either choose to move their ERC grant to the Irish host Research Body or may leave the award at the original host institution. Should the former option be chosen, **it is essential that alternative funding is in place to support work being carried out outside of Ireland**.

When considering an application concerning a proposed joint appointment, the indicated time commitment may be taken into account where awards are made; appropriate justification for funding requests that are in excess of the amount that would be proportional to the time being committed must be **strongly justified** (see Section 4.3 for more details).

Joint appointments may only proceed where agreements have been reached on the commitments being made to both institutions involved. Agreement must also be reached by both institutions on the mechanism by which intellectual property (IP) rights will be managed, and thus how maximum impact will be generated; this agreement must be compliant with Irish regulations (see also Section 5.6).

3 Economic and Societal Impact

Each year the Irish Government spends in the region of €750M on scientific research, training and development. As with all public spending, it is necessary to demonstrate and articulate the potential impact and benefits of scientific research.

For the SFI Research Professorship Programme, proposals will not only need to demonstrate scientific excellence, but must also clearly articulate the potential for economic and societal impact arising from the recruitment of the applicant. Applicants should be aware that proposals that are not seen to have the potential to deliver impact, or which have not successfully articulated how this impact can be delivered, will not be funded through this programme, **regardless of scientific excellence**.

3.1 Defining Impact

Impact can be described as *the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to the economy and society*. Impact embraces the diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations by:

- Powering an innovative and enterprising economy
- Creating high-value jobs
- Attracting, developing and nurturing businesses, scientists and talented people
- Increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy
- Enhancing quality of life, health and creative output
- Developing the country's international reputation
- Educating and training the population

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- Solving major national and global problems and challenges, such as food security and world hunger, climate change, energy security, ageing population, rural sustainability, and other sustainability challenges

3.2 Measuring and Assessing Impact

SFI recognises that some research projects may have immediate impact, whereas other projects may take much longer to achieve impact. For example, an output such as a filed patent is unlikely to create significant impact until the patent is licensed to develop a product, which can then generate revenue and jobs. The adoption of a project output such as a new standard or protocol could improve the performance of an existing business, which could also impact revenue and jobs. The discovery of a new treatment or medical device will have obvious health impacts, as well as potential economic benefits. Researchers applying to the SFI Research Professorship Programme have an obligation to articulate how and when they believe their proposed research programme will deliver impact on Ireland's economy and society in the Impact Statement section of the application (see below).

Reviewers will be asked to assess the potential impact and the likelihood of the delivery of that impact, as described in the Impact Statement. The relevant impact review criterion is:

- *Quality, credibility and relevance of the impact statement, including the likelihood, scale and value of societal and/or economic effects on Ireland*

3.3 Impact Statement

Applicants must supply an impact statement that should articulate the planned and potential impact of the proposed research. SFI recognises that impact can take time and, in many cases, is unforeseen; as such, it is not possible to predict all impacts at the time of submission.

The impact statement should be as specific as possible and should provide information that external reviewers will find helpful in assessing the potential impact of the proposed research activity. Appropriate plans, milestones and deliverables associated with the potential impact may also be indicated. Plans to utilise appropriate SFI and other funding sources to assist with achieving impact should be included if relevant. However, considering that impact is a key review criterion, applicants are advised to make full use of the space provided to make a strong, unambiguous, and **realistic** impact case with appropriate emphasis and an objective view on how long it may require for the potential impact to be fully realised.

Applicants are encouraged to consult *Agenda 2020*, *Innovation 2020* and the *Project Ireland 2040* strategy documents before writing their impact statement.¹⁴ For more information and guidance on how to successfully articulate impact, detailed information and a dedicated webinar can be found on the SFI website.¹⁵ Applicants are advised to refer to this information in advance of preparing the Impact Statement in an application.

Applicants intending to hold a joint appointment must illustrate how this arrangement will affect and/or enhance the likely impact of the research programme given the planned amount of time spent at the Irish host Research Body.

The impact statement should be written primarily in lay, non-technical language. It should be as specific and comprehensive as possible, and it should describe potential economic and societal impacts by answering the following overarching questions:

¹⁴ <http://npf.ie/>

¹⁵ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management/research-impact/>

- **Who will benefit from this research?**
- **What plans will you put in place to increase the chances of economic and societal impacts from the proposed research?**
- **Over what timeframe might the benefits from this research be realised?**

In order to best describe the possible impacts in an impact statement, the following points should also be considered:

- What is the potential impact of the proposed research on the development of Ireland's industry, economy, competitiveness and development?
- Are there potential international beneficiaries or collaborations with international industry or partner organisations?
- Is an Endowed Chair being proposed? If so, how will such an endowment yield additional impact(s)?
- The Research Professorship Programme encourages industry collaborations where appropriate to the topic of the research. How will the Industry Collaborators contribute to increased impact? What supports/contributions are they offering? Have routes to commercialisation been considered?
- With whom might you partner to increase the likelihood of potential impacts? It may be valuable to include one or more Industry Collaborators in your application. Letters of support must be provided if Industry Collaborators are included. The letters should provide full details of the intended intellectual input and, where relevant, the level of financial (cash, in-kind, or both) contribution to the research programme. Industry letters of support that do not originate from officially listed Industry Collaborators will be removed from the proposal, as will letters from listed Collaborators that merely provide theoretical or general support without specifically describing a meaningful and impactful contribution to the proposal.
- How will the proposed research impact on the education, training and career of students and research team members? Will there be infrastructural benefits for further research and education (e.g., facilities and instrumentation)? Applicants should note that all SFI Research Professorship Programme grants will offer training opportunities of some degree, therefore it is important to highlight the added value from the training provided under your award; for example, highlight where past researchers/students have found employment in industry.
- Highlight industrial interest in past/current research (e.g., consultancy, projects funded, collaborative publications, licenses granted, companies formed, VC funding, problems solved, etc.).
- How will the potential impacts of your research best be realised?
- What benchmarks or metrics can be applied to clearly demonstrate in the future that the various impacts outlined in the impact statement are both realistic and achievable?
- How will the proposed research impact on society and the quality of life for Ireland's citizens?
- If relevant, how will the proposed research impact on the natural and built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result?
- If relevant, describe how your research will impact policy or public service?
- Are there potential beneficiaries within the private sector, public sector, third-level sector or any others (e.g., professional or practitioner groups, charities or patient groups)?

4 Programme Details

In addition to demonstrating the exceptional quality of the applicant, most, if not all of the following conditions must also be demonstrated as part of an SFI Research Professorship Programme proposal:

4.1 Applicant

- There is an urgency and timeliness in recruiting the applicant; in particular, the SFI Research Professorship Programme mechanism may be used as part of a targeted strategic recruitment process for a Professorial Chair (or similar research leadership position);

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- The applicant is currently active and productive in an academic or industrial setting, and can demonstrate that sustained or upward research productivity is likely;
- The applicant's research must clearly advance the strategic research plan of the nominating Research Body.

4.2 Research Body

The host Research Body must also demonstrate their commitment to recruiting the applicant by, for example:

- Stating their intention to offer the identified applicant a full professorship that will continue after the funding provided through this application, if successful, expires; it is expected that this will be a full-time permanent appointment. Applications may seek to leverage private funding from industry sources or individual donors (for example, an Endowed Chair);
- Providing the physical infrastructure and support services appropriate for a world-leading researcher;
- Offering the identified applicant a leadership role in, for example, a major SFI investment (e.g., in an SFI-funded Research Centre, etc.; see section 5.11);
- Providing applicants who hold ERC awards with the required facilities and infrastructure to successfully move their ERC-funded activities to the new host institution, where applicable.

The nature and extent of these commitments **must** be explicitly stated at the Expression-of-Interest stage.

4.3 Funding

SFI Research Professorship Programme awards may be **up to €1M direct costs per annum** and are of a **duration of five years**; however, the maximum award available **will be dependent** upon whether the applicant is an **active** ERC award holder. For those seeking a joint appointment, the maximum funding available **may be dependent** upon the intended time commitment to the Irish host institution (see below).

Funding will support the research programme costs of the SFI Research Professor and their research group. Relevant research expenses include personnel, consumables, equipment and travel. In addition to the direct costs, SFI also makes an indirect or overhead contribution to the host Research Body, which is reflected as a percentage of the direct costs (excluding equipment). General overheads should not be included in the requested budget and are payable as a contribution to the Research Body for the indirect costs of hosting SFI-funded research programmes. Overhead contributions are intended to enable the Research Body to develop internationally competitive research infrastructure and support services.

Applicants with active ERC awards:

For an ERC award to be considered "*active*", the award will be expected to have, **at least**, 12 months remaining (not including extensions) at the time of submission of an Expression of Interest to this call. Applicants with active ERC awards are entitled to apply for funding up to the maximum of **€5M direct costs for a five-year award**, where they intend to move full-time to an Irish host institution.

Those applicants seeking to take up a joint appointment are obliged to indicate their proposed time commitment to the Irish host institution over the period of their SFI Research Professorship Programme award. The plans described in the Full Proposal should sensibly and accurately reflect the time being committed, and the percentage time commitment may be taken into account by SFI where awards are made. Applicants intending to take up a joint appointment are *expected* to request a budget that **reasonably reflects the intended time commitment to the Irish host institution**; requested budgets that are clearly in excess of the expected level of proportionality must be **strongly justified**. Note that the time commitment to the Irish host institution **may not be lower than 40%**; a commitment in the range of 40% to 60% is expected but may be higher with appropriate justification.

Applicants not holding active ERC awards:

Applicants that do not hold an **active** ERC award (which includes former ERC awardees whose award has expired, or those with awards with less than 12 months to run at the time of submission of an Expression of Interest; extensions are **not** taken into consideration) are entitled to apply for funding of up to **€3M direct costs for a five-year award**, where they intend to move full-time to an Irish host institution. Joint appointments are **not** permitted through this programme where applicants **do not hold an active ERC award**.

Additional Support for SFI Research Professors winning ERC awards:

An objective of this call (see Section 1.1) is to increase Ireland's success in ERC funding schemes. All recipients of SFI Research Professorship awards will be highly competitive in ERC calls, and awardees that do not hold active ERC grants are expected to seek additional funding from the ERC over the period of their SFI-funded award. Similarly, awardees holding active ERC grants are encouraged to seek further support from the ERC at an appropriate time. Where an SFI Research Professor is working under a joint appointment, **it is strongly desired** that the host institution for future ERC applications will be **the same institution** that hosts the SFI award.

The host institutions of SFI Research Professors who are successful in winning additional funding through the ERC Advanced Grant or ERC Synergy Grant schemes will be entitled to apply for additional overhead support **at a maximum level of €500,000**. The funding provided is analogous to that which is offered through the **SFI ERC Support Programme** but is available at a higher level than would otherwise be the case for researchers winning ERC grants at Irish host institutions (usually €150,000). For cases where an SFI Research Professor succeeds in winning an ERC Consolidator Grant, the overhead support available will be **at a maximum level of €400,000**. It is **not** envisaged that SFI Research Professors will be eligible to apply for ERC Starting Grants. The additional support is available to the host institutions of all SFI Research Professors who win ERC grants, **including those holding a joint appointment**, but the ERC award **must** be hosted at the same institution as the SFI Research Professorship award for applications for additional support to be eligible.

Please refer to the SFI ERC Support Programme call document for instructions on how host institutions may apply for the additional overhead support, and for rules on eligible ERC awards.⁸

5 Application Process

In advance of an invitation to submit a Full Proposal to the SFI Research Professorship Programme, the host Research Body is required to prepare an **Expression of Interest (Eoi)**. This takes the form of two separate parts, which are referred to as **Eoi I** and **Eoi II**. Eoi I will describe the targeted research area in which the host Research Body is looking to hire a new Research Professor and will explain why it essential to recruit in this specific area at this particular time from a strategic perspective (both locally and nationally). Eoi II will explain how the candidate being proposed by the Research Body, and the research that will be carried out following their recruitment, will optimally meet the requirements that are described in Eoi I. In addition, it will provide details of the recruitment package to be offered by the Research Body and a detailed CV for the candidate. Where candidates are active ERC award holders, the CV **must** include brief details on the relevant ERC award (i.e., the title of the project, the award start/end dates, the ERC panel applied to, etc.).

In addition to the Eoi documentation, the host Research Body is also required to submit **a signed letter from the candidate named in Eoi II (Candidate Letter)**. The letter should outline the reasons that have led the candidate to consider a move to the Research Body specifically, and to Ireland in general. The letter should also articulate the level of commitment that has been made by both parties at the time of submitting the Eoi (i.e., whether institutional appointment processes have commenced or been completed, and whether a contract of employment has already been negotiated and/or signed). **Importantly, for those candidates seeking to take up a joint appointment, the letter must provide the rationale for choosing such an approach**. Eoi submissions that do not include a Candidate Letter will not be reviewed, and the candidate will not be invited to submit a Full Proposal.

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Full proposals will only be considered by SFI following the assessment of an EoI and a Candidate Letter, and only after an invitation has been sent to the relevant Research Body. Full proposals may only be submitted through SESAME, SFI's grants and awards management system.

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

Once you have been registered by your research office, **you will receive an email** containing your:

- **Username**
- **Password**
- **SFI PIN number**
- **SESAME website address**

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

The SESAME system is accessed using the following Internet address:

<https://grants.sfi.ie>

Please see the **SESAME Researcher User Guide** for more detailed information.¹⁶

Please note that submission of an application to the SFI Research Professorship Programme may affect your eligibility to submit to other SFI programmes – please refer to the appropriate call documents. **For certain SFI programmes, individuals may only be under active review for one programme at any one time** – these programmes include, but are not limited to: SFI IvP/ICA, SFI CDA, SFI SIRG, SFI Future Research Leaders, and the SFI Research Professorship Programme. If an applicant or co-applicant submits more than one proposal to an open SFI programme, the second submission will be withdrawn without review.

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

5.1 Submission of an Expression of Interest and Candidate Letter

Research Bodies wishing to recruit through the SFI Research Professorship Programme must first submit a two-part Expression of Interest (EoI) and a Candidate Letter. The first part (EoI I) will be evaluated to determine the eligibility and appropriateness of the intended position for an SFI Research Professorship Programme award. The second part (EoI II) will be evaluated to appraise the calibre and suitability of the candidate identified by the Research Body to fill the role in question, the suitability of the recruitment package that will be offered to the candidate, and the strength of the host Research Body's financial and infrastructural commitment to the candidate. The Candidate Letter, **signed by the candidate only**, will be evaluated on its ability to successfully outline the candidate's commitment to moving from his/her current position to the post being described in the EoI, and on the demonstrable progress made by both the candidate and the Research Body in planning the candidate's move to his/her new post in Ireland.

¹⁶ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management-system/>

The EoI and Candidate Letter must be submitted by email to researchprof@sfi.ie by the Research Office of the proposed host Research Body. EoI I, EoI II and the Candidate Letter should be submitted together in a single PDF document, and must include the following information:

EoI I:

- A description of the targeted area in which the Research Body is seeking to recruit and the nature of the position to be filled, including the leadership or potential directorship component of the envisaged post; proposed roles in **SFI Research Centres** should be detailed (max. 1 page);
- A justification of the importance and timeliness of filling this position to the host Research Body's strategic plan and how the targeted area aligns to national strategic priorities (max. 1 page).

EoI II:

- An explanation by the Research Body of how the selected candidate and his/her research focus will optimally fill the role outlined in EoI I, taking into consideration the criteria outlined in Section 2 of this Call Document (max. 1 page);
- Details of the recruitment package to be offered to the candidate by the host Research Body, including the financial and infrastructural commitments provided by the Research Body both during and after the SFI Research Professorship Programme award (max. 1 page);
- The candidate's CV, which should include an outline of education, training, qualifications (including year of PhD) and professional experience; a list of selected publications, patents and previous funding; and any other relevant information. Holders of active ERC awards must provide brief details on the relevant award, as detailed above (**max. 6 pages**; the template provided in Appendix A for Full Proposals may be used and modified to provide this information, as necessary).

Candidate Letter:

- A statement of the candidate's commitment to moving to the new host Research Body in Ireland from his/her current position, **including any planning for a joint appointment or an Endowed Chair**, where relevant (max. 1 page);
- An indication of the steps that have already been taken, and the commitments that have been made by both the candidate and the host Research Body, to ensure a successful transition to the new host Research Body following the successful review of a Full Proposal to the SFI Research Professorship Programme (max. 1 page).

SFI reserves the right to seek further detail and clarification as part of the EoI evaluation process.

5.2 Submission of a Full Proposal

Submission of a Full Proposal to the SFI Research Professorship Programme is **by invitation only**. SFI will only accept a Full Proposal where the Candidate Letter provides reassurance that appropriate plans have been put in place by the candidate and the host Research Body. Full Proposals must be submitted to SFI **no later than four months** after receipt of an invitation; failure to submit a Full Proposal within this period may lead to the invitation being rescinded.

SFI would generally expect the host Research Body to have completed its institutional appointment processes prior to submission of a Full Proposal and to have offered the candidate a professorial-level position. A letter outlining whether the applicant has already accepted the position of Research Professor within the institution, or the situation that exists should this not be the case, forms a component of a Full Proposal submission.

Full Proposals must be submitted online through SESAME to SFI by the Research Office of the applicant's host Research Body.

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

Full Proposal submission requirements:

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

Applications not adhering to these requirements, or with incomplete content, will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted for review.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that eligible proposals are received by SFI within four months of the invitation from SFI. In order to safeguard against ineligibility, applicants are reminded to adhere rigorously to the guidelines in the call documentation and to review the proposal document prior to submission in SESAME.

Applications cannot be withdrawn and subsequently modified for resubmission in the same call.

5.3 ORCID ID

ORCID provides a unique identifier for all researchers, which can then be linked to their different research works across different platforms.¹⁷ There are a number of benefits to creating an ORCID iD, which include the following:

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

As part of the integration of SESAME with ORCID, it is possible for researchers to import publication data from ORCID directly into their SESAME Research Profile. Applicants are required to link their SESAME Research Profiles to an ORCID iD **before an application can be submitted**.

¹⁷ <http://orcid.org/>

5.4 Proposal Summary

- **Proposal Title (max. 30 words)**
The proposal title should clearly convey the nature of the research to be undertaken and should not contain confidential details, given that the titles of funded proposals are published by SFI.
- **Duration of Award Requested**
SFI Research Professorship Programme awards are funded for a period of **60 months**.
- **Priority Area and Alignment**
Applicants should select one of the 14 Refreshed Priority Areas from the drop-down menu as the **Primary Priority Area**, which best describes the proposed research. It is also possible to detail **Secondary Priority Areas** that the research will be relevant to. Alternatively, applicants may select “Other”; in this case, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed research will be of significant industrial relevance and strong economic impact. In all cases, the applicant must justify the alignment of the proposed research (max. 250 words) to the selected Priority Area(s), or must describe the industrial relevance and economic impact, as applicable. This statement will be used to determine the eligibility of the application.
- **Research Area (Primary)**
Applicants should select a primary SFI research area from the drop-down menu, which best describes the proposed research.
- **Research Area (Secondary)**
Applicants should select a secondary SFI research area from the drop-down menu, which in combination with the primary SFI research area already selected best describes the proposed research.
- **Use of Animals**
Applicants must indicate whether animals are to be involved in any of the research planned in their proposal. Selecting “Yes” in the drop-down menu will provide access to a downloadable Ethical Issues Table, which is also shown in the *SFI Guidance for Applicants on Ethical and Scientific Issues*.¹⁸
- **Research Involving Human Participants, Biological Material or Identifiable Data**
Applicants must indicate whether their research programme will involve human participants, human biological material or the use of identifiable (or potentially identifiable) human data. Selecting “Yes” in the drop-down menu will provide access to a downloadable Ethical Issues Table, which is also shown in the *SFI Guidance for Applicants on Ethical and Scientific Issues*.¹⁸

Ethical Issues:

All applicants, in particular those expecting to carry out research involving the use of animals, human participants, biological material or identifiable (or potentially identifiable) data, are required to complete an Ethical Issues Table, which forms part of the application. The Research Programme section must include a description of the proposed research and methodology relating to the intended animal-and/or human-based studies. Guidance on the ethical and scientific issues in carrying out such studies is provided on the SFI website.¹⁸ SFI will require evidence that relevant ethical and regulatory approval has been granted for studies involving human or animal subjects prior to an award commencing. In exceptional cases where such research may not commence until a later stage of an award, SFI may permit submission of ethical and regulatory approvals following the award start date but prior to commencement of the research involving animal and/or human subjects.

¹⁸ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/ethical-and-scientific-issues/>

Clinical Trials:

SFI permits early-stage regulated clinical trials (Phase I or combined Phase I/II) and investigations through the SFI Research Professorship Programme only where a successful candidate also becomes a Lead Investigator or Co-Lead Investigator within an SFI Research Centre. More information can be found on the SFI website.¹⁸

- **Alignment to SFI Legal Remit (max. 250 words)**
This section must be used to describe how the proposed research aligns to SFI's legal remit, as defined in Section 1. This statement will be used to determine the eligibility of the application.
- **Ethical Issues**
All applicants are required to answer the questions related to ethical issues (see Section 5.6).

5.5 Lead Applicant Details

- **Location of Applicant at the Time of Submission**
Indicate the location (country) of the applicant at the time of submission (i.e., the country from which the applicant intends to relocate to Ireland from).
- **Joint Appointment**
Applicants should state whether their application is submitted as part of a planned joint appointment with an institution in which an active ERC award is based.
- **Time Commitment to Irish Host Research Body**
Applicants must indicate the proposed time commitment to the Irish host Research Body where a joint appointment is planned. The time commitment to the Irish host Research Body **may not be lower than 40%**, and a commitment of 40% to 60% is generally expected. The figure added in this section provides an indication of the planned commitment to being located within Ireland, rather than the proposed amount of working time allocated to the planned research activities (see below).
- **Time Commitment to Project**
Applicants should indicate the time commitment to the proposed research project as a percentage of their **total working time, irrespective of location**. The time committed should reasonably reflect the amount of funding being requested.
- **Lead Applicant CV (upload; max. 6 pages)**
A CV of the Lead Applicant, using the template provided in Appendix A, must be completed and uploaded. The CV not only provides information about the applicant's education, employment record and research outputs, but also identifies up to five key achievements in research and impact.
- **Publications and Supervisory Experience**
Applicants must provide summary information on the total numbers of publications to date and also on their supervisory experience to date.
- **Collaborator Details**
Applicants must provide the name, contact information and other requested details of official Collaborator(s), if any, indicating whether they are based in academia or industry. CVs (max. 2 pages) for all Academic Collaborators **must** be uploaded. CVs may also be provided for Industry Collaborators; failure to provide Industry Collaborator CVs may disadvantage an application during the review process. A template is not provided for Collaborator CVs.

SFI recognises that applicants may have a prior relationship with an Industry Partner engaged in an application for funding to SFI (e.g., a decision-making role in company, such as being the CEO or a major shareholder in the company), which may be perceived as a conflict of interest. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, SFI requires that it is disclosed by the applicant to the Foundation and Research Body and is managed by the Research Body in accordance with the principles and mandates laid out in the document: *Inspiring Partnership - the National IP Protocol 2016*.¹⁹

Potential conflicts of interest with respect to Industry Partners named in the application should be directly declared within the applicant CV. Furthermore, the Host Research Body Letter of Support (see Section 5.11) should contain a description of the institutional policy regarding management of such conflicts.

5.6 Main Body of Proposal

- **Keywords (max. 15)**
These should be descriptors that best characterise the proposed research.
- **Scientific Abstract (max. 200 words)**
This should be a succinct and accurate summary of the proposed work when separated from the application. Confidential information should **not** be included in the Scientific Abstract.
- **Lay Abstract (max. 100 words)**
This should be a succinct and accurate summary in lay, non-technical language of the proposed work when separated from the application. Confidential information should **not** be included in the Lay Abstract.
- **Excellence in Leadership (max. 2 pages)**
This should provide a statement of the applicant's principal leadership achievements over their career to date. It should be clear from this statement that the applicant is well placed to occupy a position of senior leadership on an international stage.
- **Leadership Plan (max. 3 pages)**
A description should be provided of how the applicant will fill the identified gap in research leadership within the host Research Body. This should describe how the applicant will help to advance the international competitiveness of the host Research Body by fostering research excellence and new enterprising opportunities, how the appointee's vision for the Research Body will steer its progress, consistent with the strategic objectives of the Research Body, SFI and the national research agenda, and how the appointee's leadership plan will complement existing management structures and implement change where appropriate. Those applying as part of a planned joint appointment must indicate how their ability to act as a research leader will not be diminished (and will ideally be enhanced) through such an employment strategy.
- **Research Programme (max. 15 pages)**
Applicants are requested to provide sufficient detail for peer reviewers to comment on the quality of the ideas and proposed implementation. Applicants should aim to:
 - o Describe clearly and concisely the specific aims and objectives of the proposal. They should be coherent, well-planned and should be linked with real deliverables.
 - o Align the objectives of the programme of work with the strategic focus of the host Research Body, linking them with tangible deliverables.

¹⁹ <http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/ManagingIP/KTI-Protocol-2016.pdf>

- o Explain the background and significance of the proposed research – does the study address an important research problem? Is it strategically important to Ireland and the host institution? What is the current state of the art in this research field? Describe and explain how the proposed work, if successful, will advance the state of the art. The background section should reference the state of the art in this research field.
- o Ensure that the novelty of the approach is clearly explained, again with reference to the state of the art.
- o Describe the methodology within the proposed programme, which should be well developed. How the proposed methodology advances the current state of the art should be described in detail. Is the proposed scientific approach (including the competencies and activities of the team members) feasible and realistic?
- o Ensure that all ethical issues relating to the proposed research are appropriately considered (see below).

The application should also include:

- o Appropriate timelines, milestones and expected outputs for the proposed research (e.g., a Gantt chart), and the roles of the applicant, collaborators and team members in the work programme need to be clearly described.
 - o Relevant preliminary data, which may either take the form of a) supporting reference(s) from the applicant's previous research, or b) a summary of results where the data has yet to be published. In the latter case, this should be included within the 15-page research description as evidence that the applicant team has a track record in the field of the proposed research.
- **Research Programme References (max. 5 pages)**
Appropriate references and citations for the research programme should be provided.
 - **Impact Statement (max. 3 pages)**
The impact statement should be as specific as possible and provide information that reviewers will find helpful in assessing the potential impact of the proposed research activity. Appropriate milestones and deliverables associated with the potential impact should be indicated; short-term and longer-term impacts may be equally valuable – the applicant is expected to provide detail on the likely timeframe required to deliver on the described potential impact(s); see Section 3.3 for further details. Where appropriate for the topic of the research, industry collaborations and co-funding (cash or in-kind) should be discussed. In addition, applicants seeking a joint appointment should indicate how the potential impact of their research may be enhanced through employment at two institutions. Such applicants must also indicate that an agreement has been reached between both institutions on how IP rights will be managed over the duration of the award – SFI **must receive confirmation** that an agreement has been put in place before an award can commence, which is in line with the national IP regulations.¹⁹

5.7 Expired, Current and Pending Support of Applicants

The applicant must report on **expired, current** and **pending** funding:

- The applicant should include details of any financial support pending or received over the previous ten years. This should include competitive research funding received from funding agencies (international and national), charities, industry, etc. **Applicants with active ERC awards should highlight them within their list of funded awards.**
- The applicant must include details of any financial support from another body currently provided, or currently being sought. SFI will not support research programmes currently being funded by another source.

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- For each current and pending grant listed, the applicant should provide a brief description of the associated research. Applicants must also indicate their time commitment to these other projects, as a percentage their total working time.
- For pending grants, please include the expected decision date in the description box.
- For grants for which the applicant is/was contractually responsible (expired or current), the applicant must indicate the funding source, the value of the grant (€), the grant number, and the duration. The grant-specific website, where possible, should also be provided in the description box.
- For expired and current collaborative grants where the applicant is not the sole grant holder, indicate the funding source, whether the applicant is the Principal Investigator or co-Investigator, name the other partners on the grant, state the total value of the grant (€) and the amount of the grant (€) allocated in the applicant's name, state the grant number, and the duration. The grant-specific website, where possible, should also be provided.
- If the applicant is/was solely a collaborator on a collaborative research project, the grant should not be included here; only awards where the applicant is/was either the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator should be listed.
- The portion of research funding claimed in an applicant's name must be an accurate and a fair reflection of their responsibility in the projects listed and will be verifiable as such. SFI may conduct audits to verify such claims and reserves the right to reject proposals where the above principle of proportionality is not observed.
- This section of the proposal will be reviewed as part of the applicant's track record. Applicants with extremely large numbers of expired grants over the previous ten years may be selective with which funding grants to include in this section. The most prestigious grants and those most relevant to the proposed research should be included.

Research funding may be added directly to the application or added from the applicant's profile (see the SESAME Researcher User Guide). If this section is left blank it will indicate that the applicant has NO expired, current or pending funding.

Please ensure that research funding added to the profile of the applicant has actually been included in the application.

The applicant must complete the textbox detailing potential overlap between current and pending funding and the proposed research in this application. For each current and pending grant listed above, the applicant must clearly indicate any scientific overlap with this application, based on the methodologies being employed and the stated objectives of the funded project(s).

5.8 Proposed Budget

SFI funding supports the research programme costs of the applicant and his/her research group. Eligible costs include:

- Contributions to salaries/stipends for staff hired specifically to carry out the research programme. Please consult the SFI website for more information on the **SFI Grant Budget Policy (GBP)**.²⁰
- Relevant research expenses, including equipment, consumables and travel.

²⁰ http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/budget-finance-related-policies/SFI-Grant-Budget-Policy_2016_July-url-updates.pdf

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- Access charges for the use of large items of infrastructure or testbed facilities may be requested in certain situations; see the GBP for details.

Funding under the SFI Research Professorship Programme may only be used to support the activities of applicants and their proposed teams within Irish host Research Bodies. Applicants seeking to apply under a planned joint appointment with an institution outside of Ireland must utilise alternative funding sources to carry out their activities at that institution.

SFI may carry out an audit to determine that its funding is being used in an appropriate manner in this regard. For example, it is not permissible for research funded through an SFI Research Professorship Programme award to exhibit significant scientific overlap with work already funded elsewhere through, for example, an ERC award.

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

The costs eligible for grant support under the SFI Research Professorship Programme are those costs which can, uniquely and unambiguously, be identified with the proposed research programme. Applicants must give details of all relevant costs, including staff, equipment, materials and travel. Ensure that the final total provided includes all direct costs requested from SFI. Costs that will be covered by industry partners should not be included. All grants are made directly to the host Research Body. Please also refer to the **SFI General Terms and Conditions**,²¹ and the GBP.

- **Staff: Salaries and Benefits**

SFI Research Professorship Programme grants do not fund the core salary or benefits of the applicant. Contributions to team-member salaries, and fees and stipends for postgraduate students (PhD and MSc by research) may be requested. Salary contributions for Collaborators are not permitted. All information required to complete the Staff section of the budget can be found in **Section 4.1** of the GBP and the associated **SFI Team Member Budget Scale**.²² Please note that the submission of an application by the host Research Body must only take place once salaries requested have been approved by the relevant Research Office.

- **Equipment**

All information required to complete the Equipment section of the budget can be found in **Section 4.2** of the GBP.

- **Materials and Consumables**

All information required to complete the Materials and Consumables section of the budget can be found in **Section 4.3** of the GBP. Where relevant, a list of current **SFI Approved Access Charge Plans** and associated key contacts is available.²³

- **Travel**

All information required to complete the Travel section of the budget can be found in **Section 4.4** of the GBP.

²¹ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/sfi-general-terms-and-conditions/index.xml>

²² http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/budget-finance-related-policies/1.-SFI-Team-member-scales_amendments_January-2018_Final.pdf

²³ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/budget-finance-related-policies/1-Approved-SFI-Access-Charges-17-01-18-web.pdf>

- **Ineligible Costs**

Under the SFI Research Professorship Programme, the salary of the applicant is **not** an eligible cost. Information regarding other ineligible costs can be found in **Section 5** of the GBP.

5.9 Budget Justification (max. 3 pages)

All information required to complete the Budget Justification can be found in **Section 7** of the GBP.

If cash and/or in-kind industry contributions have been agreed, provide details and describe how they complement the requested budget from SFI. Similarly, provide details of cash and/or in-kind contributions from international Academic Collaborators. Costs that will be covered through leveraging of funds from Industry or Academic Collaborators should not be included in the proposed budget.

Clear information should be provided where funding is to be apportioned to Collaborators. Please note that Collaborators based outside the Republic of Ireland or those not located within eligible Research Bodies in the Republic of Ireland are not eligible to receive funding through the SFI Research Professorship Programme.

If funding is sought for overseas services, this should be clearly justified and the rationale for carrying out this activity outside of Ireland must be explained.

If a joint appointment is being sought, the budget justification **must** demonstrate that the funding being requested is appropriate to the proposed time commitment to the Irish host Research Body and the research programme that will be carried out.

5.10 Infrastructure, Facilities, Services and Space Provided by the Research Body (max. 1 page)

The application must provide details on the infrastructure, facilities and space to be provided by the host Research Body. This should include details of the office, laboratory, computing, animal or other facilities as necessary, where the research will be carried out, including all of the equipment that will be available, but excluding equipment requested in this application. Indicate what IP/technology transfer services are provided by the Research Body. A letter of support from the host Research Body must be included (see Section 5.11).

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

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

- A letter of support from the **host Research Body of the applicant**, which should comment on the infrastructure and services available, as outlined by the Applicant (see Section 5.10). This letter should contain a brief description of the institutional policy regarding the management of conflicts of interest. Where a joint appointment is envisaged, the letter **must** indicate the plans put in place in conjunction with the relevant institution outside of Ireland to ensure that the applicant will have a successful period of employment at both institutions, and that the indicated time commitments to both institutions in the proposal have been accepted and will be honoured.
- A letter **outlining whether the applicant has already accepted the position of Research Professor within the host Research Body, or the situation that exists should this not be the case**. This letter must be signed by the applicant and the President, Provost, or Vice President for Research of the host Research Body.
- A letter of support from **each Academic and Industry Collaborator**. Letters from Academic Collaborators should provide full details of the intended intellectual and/or technical input to the proposal. In addition, Academic Collaborators seeking funds through the award must describe how these funds will be utilised. Letters from Industry Collaborators should provide full details of the intended intellectual input and, where relevant, the level of financial (cash and/or in-kind) contribution to the research programme. Similarly, letters of support from international Academic

Collaborators should provide details of any cash and/or in-kind contributions being offered. Letters of support from listed Collaborators that merely provide theoretical or general support without specifically describing a meaningful and impactful contribution to the proposal will be removed.

- Where the applicant will be offered a position in which there will be additional support from either an industry partner or a philanthropic organisation, **such that an Endowed Chair will be created**, a letter of support should be provided by an appropriate representative of the relevant industrial or philanthropic organisation. The letter should describe how the endowment will help with the progress of the applicant and team in their new location and should also indicate how any funding being provided will lead to reciprocal benefits for the donor organisation(s). Any activities envisaged by the endowing organisation in partnership with either the applicant or the host Research Body should be detailed in the letter.
- Where an applicant is seeking to take up a joint appointment, a letter of support should be provided **by an appropriate senior representative of the institution involved** (e.g., a Dean/Head of the relevant School or the Vice President for Research, or equivalent). The letter should demonstrate that the institution concerned is supportive of the applicant's plans for taking up a joint appointment, and should describe what measures are planned, or have already been put in place, to ensure that the applicant will carry out successful and meaningful work in both institutions. Where the applicant has not yet started working at the institution concerned, the letter should also indicate whether the applicant has already signed a contract of employment with the relevant institution and, if this is the case, provide the date that the applicant has agreed with the institution to commence employment. The letter should also indicate how the applicant's ERC-funded research will be managed under the proposed joint appointment.
- In cases where the applicant is expected to take up a senior role (e.g., a Principal Investigator) within an **SFI Research Centre**, the application should also include a letter from the **Director of the Research Centre** concerned, which describes how the Centre will benefit from including the applicant within the team and, where possible, provides specific details on the areas in which the applicant will make a significant contribution.

Applicants are requested to note that a process for formally joining a Research Centre as a Principal Investigator must also be completed.²⁴ This is separate to, and not necessarily dependent upon, the outcome of an application to the SFI Research Professorship Programme and requires a written request to SFI from the Centre Director. The process of taking up such a role should be completed following the outcome of the application to this programme.

Additionally, letters from the **industry sector** are permissible where a prior or existing collaboration with the applicant can be identified. Such letters may be included to help support the case for recruitment of the applicant through the SFI Research Professorship Programme and **must** describe the nature of the collaboration that has taken place or is ongoing at the time of application.

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

5.12 Excluded Reviewers

Up to **three** individuals may be excluded from acting as reviewers for reasons of competition.

²⁴ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management/research-centres-award-management/process-for-changesadditi/>

5.13 View Proposal Prior To Submission

Before submission, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the proposal and to ensure that the specified word and page limits have been adhered to, and that any required supporting information (e.g., letters of support) are included.

5.14 Research Body Approval

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

- The eligibility of the applicant
- That the applicant will be, upon receipt of the grant, recognised as an employee of the Research Body for the duration of the grant
- That the requested budget, including salaries/stipends, equipment, travel and consumables, is in line with accepted institutional guidelines and appropriate to the intended time commitments
- The availability of infrastructure within the institution, as outlined by the applicant in the research proposal
- That the proposed research programme has not been funded by other sources
- That relevant ethical approval has been or will be sought and must be granted prior to the award commencing
- That the relevant licences will be in place at the time of award
- That the details provided in relation to the applicant's research funding history (i.e., current, pending or expired grants, as detailed in the application) are valid and accurate
- That permission from all team members and collaborators has been obtained, such that SFI may receive their personal information, and may process such data for the purpose of peer review

5.15 Applicant Agreement to Terms and Conditions

It should be noted that submission of an application represents an agreement to the SFI General Terms and Conditions.²¹ Applications that fail to comply with the above terms and conditions, or with requirements outlined in this call document, will not be eligible and will be withdrawn without review.

6 Proposal Review Procedure and Criteria

The submission of an application to SFI shall be construed as consent by the applicant to participate in the peer-review process. SFI reserves the right to withdraw applications without review where they do not meet the eligibility criteria.

6.1 Expression of Interest and Candidate Letter

EoI I, EoI II and the Candidate Letter will be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of the role identified by the Research Body and the suitability and commitment of the selected candidate for an SFI Research Professorship Programme award. SFI will review these documents through internal assessments and may also engage external reviewers, should this be deemed appropriate for the process. SFI may seek further details and clarifications prior to coming to a decision on whether an invitation to submit a Full Proposal will be sent. Should an invitation be sent, any feedback from the assessment of the EoIs and Candidate Letter that is provided to the host Research Body should be used to help develop the Full Proposal. Where a host Research Body is invited by SFI to proceed to the Full Proposal stage, the Research Body and the applicant should jointly develop the Full Proposal as outlined in this document.

The following criteria will be considered during the review of the EoI and the Candidate Letter:

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- *Justification of the need to create a new professorial position, at both the national level (e.g., alignment with areas of current national priority) and at the institutional level (e.g., to help with local strategic objectives)*
- *Quality and significance of the candidate's track record, and suitability to hold a senior position funded through the SFI Research Professorship Programme*
- *Appropriateness of the selected candidate for the position that the Research Body wishes to fill*
- *Level of planning and demonstrated commitment of the candidate and the host Research Body, including the recruitment package offered, the infrastructure being made available, and the progress already made in completing the recruitment of the candidate*

In addition, where candidates are intending to apply as part of a joint appointment, a further criterion will be applied:

- *Appropriateness of the planning, and clarity of the rationale for seeking to work in an Irish host Research Body as part of a joint appointment with an institution outside of Ireland*

6.2 Full Proposal

The assessment of the Full Proposal will be carried out using an external peer-review procedure. In accordance with such processes used to evaluate proposals submitted to SFI, invited Full Proposals will be forwarded to international scientific experts for evaluation. The applicant may specify up to three individuals who should not act as reviewers for the application due to the competitive and confidential nature of the research programme; SFI will not refer the application to any of these individuals. Otherwise, selection of reviewers shall be at the sole and exclusive discretion of SFI.

The reviews returned by the peer experts will be collated and forwarded to the applicant, who will be provided with a defined period of time to submit a response to the comments made (advanced notice of dates and guidelines relating to the response will be indicated to applicants). The applicant's response may be sent back to the expert reviewers, where deemed necessary and at the discretion of SFI, to obtain further clarification.

The following review criteria will be considered during the review of Full Proposals:

- *Quality, significance, and relevance of both the recent research record and the career achievements of the applicant, including their suitability to receive an SFI Research Professorship Programme award*
- *Quality, significance, and relevance of the proposed research programme and its potential contribution to the economic, scientific and educational development of Ireland*
- *Quality, credibility and relevance of the impact statement, including the likelihood, scale and value of societal and/or economic effects on Ireland*
- *Quality, significance, and relevance of the applicant's leadership plan and how it will complement existing management structures at the host Research Body.*

SFI may, where appropriate and at its expense, invite the applicant to meet with SFI representatives to discuss the applicant's future research plans. This meeting would occur at the host Research Body and would engage the applicant, SFI representatives, and the appropriate institutional sponsors (Heads of Department/School, Research Centre Director (if applicable), and VP for Research). **The final funding decisions are at the sole and exclusive discretion of SFI.**

SFI reserves the right to modify the review process. Applicants will be notified of any relevant modification to the review procedure.

6.3 SFI Reviewer Code of Conduct

Experts engaged by SFI are required to abide by the **SFI Reviewer Code of Conduct**.²⁵ Amongst other requirements, this includes operation in a confidential, fair, independent and equitable manner. Experts are required to confirm, in advance of carrying out their review(s), that they will do so in a confidential manner. The identity of experts who conduct the postal reviews shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed to the applicant. SFI shall not be liable for the release of information concerning proposals to third parties by those international experts involved in the peer-review process.

Adherence to the SFI Reviewer Code of Conduct also requires experts to immediately identify and declare where a conflict of interest exists or arises; in such cases, alternative reviewers will be appointed.

Reviewers must adhere to high standards of integrity during the peer-review process. They must not compromise the intellectual property integrity of the application and may not appropriate and use as their own, or disclose to any third party, ideas, concepts or data contained in the applications they review.

7 SFI Policies and Positions

In advance of applying to any SFI programme, applicants are expected to be familiar with all relevant national and SFI policies including, but not limited to, the following:

Clinical Trials – Research programmes that include clinical trials as part of the study (see Section 5.6) must adhere to the **SFI Clinical Trial and Clinical Investigation Policy**,¹⁸ as well as with the requirements set out by the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA).

Animal Usage – Applicants intending to use animals in their research projects are obliged to comply with the **SFI Use of Animals in Research Policy**,²⁶ and should also ensure that their studies are in line with the HRPAs' position on the use of animals in research.

Research Integrity – SFI places high importance on ensuring research integrity and endorses the **National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland**.²⁷ All applicants and institutions are expected to abide by this policy and the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity**.²⁸

Doctoral Education – For postgraduate students funded by SFI, the host Research Body is expected to adopt the principles, standards and good practice for doctoral education as described in the **National Framework for Doctoral Education (2015)**,²⁹ which SFI has endorsed.

Intellectual Property Management – Intellectual Property (IP) should be managed according to the policies set out in the Government publication: **Inspiring Partnership – the National IP Protocol 2016**.¹⁹ In cases where additional guidelines are specified by SFI they must also be followed. The IP arrangements are the responsibility of the Research Body and shall reflect the collaborative nature of the project, the level of cash and in-kind commitment made by the Industry Partner and compliance with State Aid Regulations.

Gender Strategy – Research should fully consider potential biological sex and socio-cultural gender dimensions as key analytical and explanatory variables. As articulated in the **SFI Gender Strategy**,³⁰ applicants

²⁵ http://www.sfi.ie/resources/Reviewer-Code-of-Conduct_March-2017.pdf

²⁶ http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SFI-Policy-on-the-Use-of-Animals-in-Research_June_2016.pdf

²⁷ <http://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrity-in-Ireland-2014.pdf>

²⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf

²⁹ http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/national_framework_for_doctoral_education_0.pdf

³⁰ <http://www.sfi.ie/resources/SFI-Gender-Strategy-2016-2020.pdf>

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are recommended to demonstrate that they have considered any potential sex/gender aspects in their proposed research programme.

Appeals Process – This policy establishes procedures and responsibilities for the appeal of the declination of a proposal by SFI.³¹

State Aid – All SFI funding granted under this call will be subject to, and must be compliant with, State Aid law. As such, proposals must be designed to ensure that any funding received from SFI does not, directly or indirectly, give rise to the granting of State Aid. Potential applicants are referred to the guidance provided by the European Commission in Section 2 of its **2014 Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/01)**.³² If in any doubt as to the interpretation or application of this guidance, potential applicants are advised to seek independent legal advice.

Child Protection – Where relevant, applicants and Research Bodies are required to comply with the provisions of the **Children First Act 2015**,³³ and the **National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017**.³⁴ It is the responsibility of the Research Body to ensure that they are compliant with all applicable law.

Data Protection Policy – **The General Data Protection Regulation** is a legal framework that sets out guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information of individuals within the European Union.³⁵ 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**.³⁶

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 Research Body and members of the Research 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 Research Body, the Principal Investigator, or any member of the Research 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 Research Body, the Principal Investigator or any member of the Research Team on its behalf.

Current SFI policies and positions will be reviewed on a regular basis; applicants are advised to consult the policy information in advance of submission of a proposal.

³¹ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/other/>

³² [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627(01)&from=EN)

³³ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf>

³⁴ http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Children_First_National_Guidance_2017.pdf

³⁵ <https://www.eugdpr.org/>

³⁶ <http://www.sfi.ie/privacy/>

8 Award Management

8.1 Reporting Requirements

The State has made a significant investment via SFI into scientific research and, as such, it is the responsibility of SFI to monitor the progress and outcomes of all the funding it administers. Therefore, all SFI award holders are required to report on emerging outputs and impacts for the duration of their awards and for up to five years beyond. The progress reporting requirements for awards made under the SFI Research Professorship Programme are inclusive of **Annual Reports**, completion of the annual stocktake of SFI **Research Outputs** (formerly referred to as the SFI Census) and the completion of a **Researcher Snapshot**.

The annual report is used to monitor progress of the individual awards against the overall objectives of the SFI Research Professorship Programme and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as set out in SFI's Strategic Plan, Agenda 2020. Each of the SFI Research Professorship Programme call objectives, with expected outputs, is discussed in turn below:

- **Objective:** *To provide a mechanism for recruiting world-leading researchers to Ireland's research institutions*
Expected Outcomes: The recipient of an SFI Research Professorship award will be world leading, as indicated by having a record of producing excellent scientific research with demonstrable or potential economic and societal impact. Additionally, SFI expects that Research Professors will attract and recruit the next generation of excellent researchers to their teams and provide the support and guidance to enable them to build exceptional careers in academia or industry.
- **Objective:** *To increase the number of current ERC awardees working in Ireland and to provide a strong platform for future ERC successes*
Expected Outcomes: SFI acknowledges the excellence of researchers funded by the ERC and a key target of SFI's Agenda 2020 is to increase the number of ERC grants made to researchers based in Ireland. The SFI Research Professorship Programme is designed to attract ERC applicants from abroad, with particular focus on individuals operating in areas of strategic importance to Ireland and those with a high likelihood of having both economic and societal impact. All ERC-funded awardees will be asked to report on the benefits of ERC funding to their SFI Research Professorship award.

It is SFI's expectation that winners of SFI Research Professorship Programme awards who are not active ERC awardees at the time of application, will go on to apply during the lifetime of their SFI award. Where applications to the ERC are made, SFI should be notified as part of the next annual report, providing an overview of the submission in the report and informing SFI of the outcome once known.

SFI Research Professors will be expected to have support from their host Research Body in Ireland in facilitating their (successful) bidding for funding from ERC and other H2020 schemes.

- **Objective:** *To allow excellent researchers to hold a joint appointment between institutions in Ireland and an institution abroad where an ERC award is based*
Expected Outcomes: The key purpose of the SFI Research Professorship programme is to attract world-leading research talent to Ireland. In addition, SFI is committed to supporting meaningful and beneficial collaborations between institutions in Ireland and abroad. Awardees who intend to take up international joint appointments are required to commit at least 40% of their time to their Irish Host Research Body where they are expected to demonstrate influence and leadership. SFI Research Professors on joint appointments will be asked to report on the division of their time between institutions and on the management of their research team in Ireland. SFI will require updates on the added benefits afforded to the award through the joint appointment, such as international

collaborations and training, staff exchanges, and the expansion of Ireland’s research capacity into new areas.

- **Objective:** *To drive challenge-based Disruptive Technology Initiatives to ensure that the Irish public gains substantial societal and economic benefits from high-risk, high-reward scientific research and innovation*

Expected Outcomes: SFI Research Professors and their teams are expected to be at the forefront of activities that have the potential to radically alter the way we work and live, and how businesses may operate and compete, by carrying out research that is highly innovative and ambitious. While appreciating that research supported directly through the SFI Research Professorship Programme can contribute to the creation of disruptive technologies, SFI will also empower its Research Professors to take leadership on a variety of challenge-based Disruptive Technology Initiatives. In their annual report, awardees are asked to report on disruptive research supported through the award and any impacts realised in addition to providing updates on the funding opportunities that they have pursued and secured to support additional challenge-based Disruptive Technology Initiatives.
- **Objective:** *To encourage institutions to appoint excellent female researchers in senior academic positions*

Expected Outcomes: SFI recognises the need to provide opportunities for senior female researchers within Ireland. The SFI Research Professorship Programme call will implement actions designed to encourage Research Bodies to appropriately consider the recruitment of female Research Professors. SFI is committed to removing and mitigating any factors that may limit the participation of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers, and to redressing the gender imbalance amongst SFI award holders, of which 25% are female (Source: SFI Research Outputs 2016). It is SFI’s expectation that its Research Professorship awardees will make significant contributions towards achieving its Agenda 2020 target of increasing the proportion of female award holders to 30% by 2020.
- **Objective:** *To increase the number of leadership roles held by Ireland-based PIs in major European initiatives, in particular those supported under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme*

Expected Outcomes: SFI expects that researchers based in Ireland will obtain research funding from as wide a range of sources as possible. This success is not only pertinent to the Irish Government, which has set a target of securing €1.25bn in research funding under Horizon 2020, it is also essential for meeting and exceeding targets set against relevant KPIs in Agenda 2020. Innovation 2020 notes that “our current engagement at EU level focuses on contributing to the creation of the European Research Area and on maximising Irish participation in Horizon 2020”. SFI’s expectation is that the high calibre of Research Professorship Programme awardees will allow them to compete successfully for funding in Horizon 2020, including the European Research Council (ERC). In their annual report, awardees are asked to report on the funding opportunities that they have pursued and won and also to report on the position held by the PI on successful awards. This will allow SFI to track this progress on an annual basis.
- **Objective:** *To add critical expertise and excellence to SFI Research Centres and other centres of scale*

Expected Outcomes: SFI strongly encourages Research Professors to establish themselves as key leaders within their host institutions and to engage with relevant SFI Research Centres by becoming a Research Centre collaborator, investigator, or by winning a Research Centre Spokes award.
- **Objective:** *To increase Ireland’s success in winning top-tier international prizes*

Expected Outcomes: Agenda 2020 also sets a clear target for an SFI-funded researcher to win a top-tier international prize by 2020. SFI’s expectation is that awards made under the SFI Research Professorship Programme will contribute significantly towards attaining this target and hence

awardees will be asked to report on all prestigious prizes or awards received during the reporting period.

- **Objective:** *To build reputation that helps to attract new partnerships with industry*
Expected Outcomes: A key objective of the Research Professorship Programme call is to foster and support these collaborations with industry and, as such, SFI's expectation is that Research Professorship Programme awardees will develop and/or further grow such relationships. Data gathered in support of this metric will enable SFI to report against the following KPI targets: 1) A measurable increase in joint funding instruments with key agencies and companies by 2020; and 2) Demonstrable increase in collaborations with Ireland's strategic partners by 2020. Awardees are asked to report on all industry engagements relevant to this award.
- **Objective:** *To maintain Ireland's top-20 position in international bibliometric rankings through an increase in the number and quality of journal publications*
Expected Outcomes: To date, SFI funding has produced high-quality, high-impact publications that have resulted in Ireland rising to be among the top 20 nations in international bibliometric rankings of repute. Agenda 2020 sets a target for Ireland to maintain its position in these rankings. SFI's expectation is that the grants made through the Research Professorship Programme will contribute significantly to this target. Awardees are asked to report on all refereed journal and conference publications and international presentations directly supported by the grant. This support must be acknowledged in all publications.
- **Objective:** *To increase the proportion of invention disclosures, patents, licences and spin-outs recorded by Enterprise Ireland that are directly linked to SFI-funded research*
Expected Outcomes: It is expected that research carried out by SFI Research Professors will result in excellent scientific research that has potential economic and societal impact. Awardees will be asked to report on all commercialisation outputs arising from this award, including the number of invention disclosures, patents, licences and spin-outs.

The SFI Grants and Awards Management System, SESAME, is the primary conduit for annual reporting. Research Professorship Programme awardees will be requested to submit their annual report by the 31st of January every year to report on activity during the previous calendar year (January – December). The Standard Report template, which is available on SESAME, must be used. An additional final report must be submitted (also using the Standard Report template) within three months of the expiration date of the award. In addition to the annual report, awardees are also obliged to keep their SESAME Researcher Profile updated as the SFI annual census data is drawn directly from the data entered into the Profile; this must also be updated and completed by 31st January every year. Reporting procedures are detailed on the SFI website,³⁷ and further assistance on using SESAME to prepare reports is available.¹⁶

The reporting requirements for awards made under the SFI Research Professorship Programme must be adhered to. 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.

8.2 Progress Site Reviews

Each recipient of an SFI Research Professorship award will be subject to progress review in the form of a site visit conducted by SFI with a panel of international peer reviewers during the period of the award. These progress reviews are typically held at the midway point of the award. The panel is asked to assess the progress and direction of the research, the quality of the team and partnerships, the management of the budget and the potential impact of the research programme. The commitment of the Research Body as outlined in the letter of support, in particular the teaching and non-research commitments of the PI, will be assessed. The

³⁷ <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/award-management/reporting-procedures/>

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outcome of such a review will be taken into consideration in the assessment of future applications to the Foundation. As stated in the SFI General Terms and Conditions,²¹ the Foundation reserves the right to terminate an award if, in the opinion of the Foundation, progress is not deemed to be satisfactory.

9 Further Information

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available on the SFI website.³⁸ For all additional queries please contact: researchprof@sfi.ie

³⁸ [http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-research-professorship/Research-Professor-FAQs-\(May-2018-update\).pdf](http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-research-professorship/Research-Professor-FAQs-(May-2018-update).pdf)

Appendix A: Applicant CV Template (max. 6 pages)

To be used for Full Proposal applications to the SFI Research Professorship Programme. Please note that the applicant's full research funding track record and supervisory details should be uploaded via SESAME and should **not** be included in this CV.

SECTION 1 – Applicant Details (max. 3 pages)

NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS

CAREER PROFILE (Education and Employment)

INNOVATION/COMMERCIALISATION ACTIVITY (e.g., relevant industry collaborations, invention disclosures, patents, spin-outs)

Please distinguish between patents applied for and under review, and those already granted. Furthermore, patents that are still active and those that have lapsed should be detailed as such.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (Research and Impact)

*Give details of **up to five** achievements that have provided significant impact or which have greatly influenced any field in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Any type of achievement may be included in this section, and applicants are encouraged to elaborate on the various ways in which they have influenced researchers and their disciplines, or demonstrated significant economic and/or societal impact(s). For each example, provide an outline of the stated achievement, what **specific** role was played by the applicant, and how the field and, where relevant, the wider community and society have benefitted or have been influenced as a result. References to published material may be added as required.*

SECTION 2 – Publication Details (max. 3 pages)

A. SENIOR-AUTHOR PUBLICATIONS

*Detail up to 10 senior-author (first, joint-first or last author) primary research publications, which will confirm, where relevant, that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements for publications for this programme. Refer to the appropriate section of this call document for details on senior-authorship requirements. **Note that publications where the applicant claims joint-first authorship will only be accepted as senior-author publications where the article clearly verifies this.***

B. OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Applicants should list any other publications (where they are a senior author or otherwise) that they wish to be considered as part of this application. Applicants should ensure that their primary research outputs are prioritised, but reviews, essays and other secondary research articles may also be listed.

Appendix B: Research Professorship Programme Full Proposal Checklist

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENTS
Proposal Summary	Title	Up to 30 words
	Duration of award requested	60 months
	Select 'Priority Area'/'other' option as appropriate	
	Justification of alignment with selected Priority Area and/or of significant industrial relevance and strong economic impact	Max. 250 words
	Research categorisation areas	
	Justification of alignment with SFI legal remit	Max. 250 words
Lead Applicant details	Location of applicant at time of submission	
	Joint appointment details	
	Time Commitment to Irish Host Research Body	Min, 40%; max. 100%
	Applicant percentage time commitment	
	Applicant CV – use template provided	Max. 6 pages
	Publication/supervisory details	
Collaborator(s) details	Name/contact details etc. of each official collaborator	
	CV for each official collaborator	Max. 2 pages
Main Body of Full Proposal	Keywords	Max. 15
	Scientific abstract	Max. 200 words
	Lay abstract	Max. 100 words
	Excellence in leadership	Max. 2 pages
	Leadership plan	Max. 3 pages
	Research programme description	Max. 15 pages
	Research programme references	Max. 5 pages
	Impact statement	Max. 3 pages
Expired, Current or Pending Support of Applicants	Details of current, pending and expired funding	
	Indicate scientific overlap	Max. 1000 words
Infrastructure	Infrastructure, facilities, services and space provided by HEI	Max. 1 page
Budget & Budget Justification	Details of all relevant costs	Budget Table
	Outline the justification for the requested costs	Max. 2 pages
Letters of Support	Host Research Body of the applicant	Max. 2 pages
	Applicant and research body (confirming status of position)	Max. 2 pages
	Official collaborators, including industry	Max. 2 pages
	Other letters (e.g., from Research Centre Director)	Max. 2 pages each
Excluded Reviewers	Up to 3 individuals may be excluded	

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

There is no system validation on multiple-upload file fields as the number of documents required may vary for each application

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