



## **FAQ US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme Applications to National Institutes of Health**

**The guidance for this call was updated January 2017 following a review by HRB and SFI in conjunction with the Health & Social Care R&D Division in Northern Ireland. The scheme will now be open to the entire NIH remit, and HRB and SFI will co-fund the Republic of Ireland component of any successful projects on a 50:50 basis, simplifying the application process. As of January 2016, HRB is administering the programme on behalf of HRB and SFI and all queries should be directed to [USIreland@hrb.ie](mailto:USIreland@hrb.ie)**

**N.B.: For applications outside the health theme, please refer to the guidance on the SFI [website](#)**

### **GENERAL**

#### **1. What is the US-Ireland R&D Programme (NIH stream)?**

This is a programme where applicants from the United States (US), Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (RoI) collaborate to submit a single, joint “tri-partite” proposal in response to calls for proposals at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). There must be at least one applicant from each jurisdiction, with the US partner bearing responsibility for submission of the joint “tri-partite” proposal to their home agency, NIH. If approved for funding at NIH, the partner agencies in RoI fund the RoI investigator(s), the partner agencies in NI fund the NI-based investigator(s), and the US partner agency, NIH, funds the US investigator(s).

#### **2. Who are the partner agencies?**

The partner agency in the US is the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The partner agencies in RoI are Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Health Research Board (HRB). In Northern Ireland, the Health & Social Care R&D Division (HSC R&D) supports health-related projects, while the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI), and Invest Northern Ireland (InvestNI) support projects related to Sensors & Sensor Networks, Nanoscale Science & Engineering, Telecommunications, and Energy & Sustainability.

#### **3. Do US-Ireland R&D Partnership proposals have a competitive advantage with the NIH calls?**

US-Ireland R&D Partnership proposals compete head-to-head with 'non-US-Ireland partnership' proposals submitted to the same call. The competitive advantage comes from the additive nature of the collaboration as well as the leveraged non-exchequer funds. It is important for applicants to spell this out in the introduction to the proposal to ensure that NIH reviewers fully understand the intricacies of the process.

#### 4. Is the US-Ireland R&D Partnership call still open?

Yes, the call is open and is a rolling call, however, applications MUST be submitted to HRB *at least* 6 weeks in advance of the NIH deadline or, *if applicable*, the deadline at the US University's Research Office in advance of the NIH full proposal deadline.

For applications to the NIH, there is an additional mandatory "intention to submit" stage where a notification MUST be submitted *at least* 10 weeks in advance of the NIH deadline.

#### 5. When is the next NIH call deadline?

HRB/SFI has no control over the deadlines set by NIH. You are strongly advised to consult with your US partner for information on NIH call deadlines. The US partner makes the submission on behalf of the Northern Ireland & Republic of Ireland applicants and should therefore be familiar with NIH programmes and submission systems. Applications MUST be submitted to HRB *at least* 6 weeks in advance of the NIH deadline or, *if applicable*, the deadline at the US University's Research Office in advance of the NIH full proposal deadline. For applications to the NIH, there is an additional intention to submit stage where a notification MUST be submitted *at least* 10 weeks in advance of the NIH deadline.

The following are the upcoming NIH deadlines for *new submissions* to the R01 programme:

HRB Deadline for Receipt of Intention to Submit	HRB Deadline for Receipt of Draft tri-partite Proposal	NIH R01 Deadline (New submissions)
March 27 <sup>th</sup> 2017	April 24 <sup>th</sup> 2017	June 5 <sup>th</sup> 2017
July 27 <sup>th</sup> 2017	August 24 <sup>th</sup> 2017	October 5 <sup>th</sup> 2017

#### 6. Why do I have to submit a draft of the proposal to HRB/SFI in advance of the NIH deadline?

A draft of the "tri-partite" proposal for submission to the NIH must be submitted to HRB *at least* 6 weeks in advance of the NIH deadline. The purpose of this step is for HRB and SFI to ensure compliance of the research with remit, to assess the budget requested, and to confirm that the work proposed for each jurisdiction adds significant value so that the overall programme of research goes beyond what might be achieved by any one PI working alone supported only by national funding. If HRB/SFI agree to support the proposal, a funding commitment letter is provided to the applicant for inclusion in the full proposal to be submitted to NIH. This letter is also sent to the responsible person at NIH to indicate our commitment to this proposal should it be deemed fundable by the NIH peer-review process. Please ensure that all relevant appendices are included with the draft proposal. A parallel process operates in Northern Ireland.

#### 7. Where can I find information on eligible calls within the NIH? Which calls in NIH are open to the US-Ireland programme?

See link here for details of Institutes - [NIH - Information on Institutes](#)

Please also see [the link for the 2014 SFI-NIH organised webinar on the NIH grants process](#)

#### 8. I'm an applicant based in Ireland, how can I find out about potential partners or research areas in the NIH?

RePORT - [www.report.nih.gov](http://www.report.nih.gov) - provides access to reports, data, and analyses of NIH research activities, including information on NIH expenditures and the results of NIH supported research.

REPORTER - [projectreporter.nih.gov](http://projectreporter.nih.gov) - a research repository of NIH-funded research projects and provides access to publications and patents resulting from that funding.

**9. I'm an applicant based in the States – how do I go about finding research partners in the Republic of Ireland & Northern Ireland?**

Please contact the HRB and or/check the SFI research database on the SFI [website](#).

**10. Can anyone apply to this programme?**

No, there are a number of eligibility criteria which you must meet, please consult the call guidance document Section 6.

**11. What are the eligibility criteria for a co-applicant?**

The **eligibility criteria for co-applicants are the same as for the lead applicant** – see question above. Please note only one US-Ireland application per applicant may be under review by HRB/SFI/NIH at any one time.

**12. I'm an applicant from Northern Ireland, where can I find further information on the US-Ireland programme?**

Please see links - [DEL NI - Further Information on US-Ireland programme](#), [HSC R&D - Further information on US-Ireland Programme](#)

**INTENTION TO SUBMIT FORM**

**1. Who needs to complete the Intention to Submit form?**

If you are applying to the NIH, you are required to send a mandatory "Intention to Submit" form to [USIreland@hrb.ie](mailto:USIreland@hrb.ie) at least 10 weeks in advance of the NIH deadline. Please see further information at [HRB](#) and on [the SFI website](#)

**2. Do all lead applicants and co-applicants have to complete the Intention to Submit form if applying to the NIH?**

Yes, **all lead and co-applicants** in both Republic of Ireland (ROI) & Northern Ireland (NI) have to complete an 'Intention to submit' form which must be submitted by the Research Office to the relevant funding agency. For example, if there is more than one ROI applicant proposing to participate in a US-Ireland proposal to the NIH, the Intention to Submit form to HRB must include relevant details for all such applicants. Submission of the Intention to Submit Form is mandatory for all applications to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

**3. I'm applying to the NIH under the sensors theme linked to health – do I need to submit an Intention to Submit form?**

Yes – for any application to the NIH, a mandatory intent to submit form is required at least 10 weeks prior to the NIH deadline. Draft proposals to the NIH will only be accepted from applicants who have submitted an intention to submit form no later than 10 weeks in advance of the full proposal deadline at NIH.

**4. What needs to be included in the scientific abstract in the Intention to submit form?**

Please refer to the guidance document for further information.

## **PLANNING GRANT**

### **1. What is the US-Ireland planning grant?**

The US-Ireland planning grant facilitates the RoI & NI applicants to travel to the US to meet with their US counterpart and develop a proposal for submission to the NIH under the US-Ireland R&D partnership programme.

### **2. How long does it take to review a planning grant application?**

Please allow a minimum of 4 weeks for a decision.

### **3. What do I need to include in the planning grant application?**

Please refer to the planning grant guidance document.

### **4. Can a person in the RoI research team, who is not the lead applicant, be included in the planning grant application to travel to the planning meeting in addition to the lead RoI applicant?**

It may be possible for a team member/collaborator to be included on the planning grant application, in addition to the lead applicant but a *very strong justification* will need to be provided in the planning grant application. If awarded, the lead applicant must travel to the planning meeting – this cannot be delegated to a collaborator/team member.

### **5. If I am planning a US-Ireland submission to the NIH, do I need to submit the mandatory Intention to submit form prior to submitting a planning grant application?**

Yes the intention to submit is required prior to a planning grant submission for applications to the NIH.

### **6. I'm the RoI partner and I've submitted my planning grant application – what about my NI partner?**

If both the RoI and NI partners are proposing to travel to the United States to a planning meeting and are requesting travel funds under the US-Ireland planning grant call, then both the RoI & NI partners need to apply for planning grant applications to their own funding agencies. It is not possible for the RoI agency to cover the travel costs of the NI partner and vice versa. The planning grant applications should be submitted simultaneously to the RoI & NI funding agencies, and at least four weeks is required by the agencies for review of these planning grant applications. It is not a requirement that both partners travel to the US, one partner can travel from Ireland however it may be more beneficial to the collaboration to have all partners around the table when developing the final proposal for the US-Ireland R&D Partnership programme.

### **7. Can I use the planning grant to visit partners after I've submitted the draft proposal to HRB/SFI?**

No, this is not possible. The US-Ireland planning grant has been designed '*to enable prospective Irish applicants to the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme, to travel to the US in order to develop specific projects with US collaborators for identified programmes under the NSF and NIH auspices.*' The requirement for travel funding to develop specific projects under the US-Ireland planning grant programme (with visit dates after the submitted proposal to HRB/SFI) is then no longer considered to be necessary. Such applications will be returned without review.

## **8. How does the NI partner submit their US-Ireland planning grant application?**

Please see the link here for details on how Northern Ireland partners can apply for the US-Ireland planning grant - [DEL NI Further Information for applicants from Northern Ireland](#)

## **FULL PROPOSAL**

### **1. What research areas are covered under the US-Ireland programme?**

The scheme is now open to **funding projects across the entirety of the NIH remit**. This means that for this scheme SFI will now consider research outside their [remit](#) , and HRB will open up beyond patient-oriented, population health and health services research remits.

### **2. What is the maximum funding request to HRB/SFI?**

The budget for full applications from applicants in the Republic of Ireland has been increased to €700K **direct costs**. SFI/HRB also make an indirect or overhead contribution to the host Research Body, which is reflected as a percentage of the direct costs (30% excluding equipment). Overheads are payable as a contribution to the research body for the indirect costs of hosting SFI/HRB-funded research programmes and are intended to enable the research body to develop internationally competitive research infrastructure and support services.

### **3. Does HRB/SFI fund the salary of lead or co-PI?**

HRB/SFI does not fund the salary of grant applicant/co-applicant. Please see page 21 of the call document for further details.

### **4. Where can I find more information about eligible costs for budget requests?**

Please refer to page 21 of the guidance document for further information.

### **5. Do both SFI & HRB have to agree approval before a proposal can be submitted to NIH?**

Both agencies have to review and support the tri-partite proposal.

### **6. Are overheads included in the budget?**

Only direct costs of up to a maximum of €700k should be detailed in the requested budget. The **overhead should not be included within the RoI budget request**; for successful projects overheads will be applied at time of contract. HRB and SFI will contribute to the indirect costs of the research through an overhead payment of 30% of direct costs excluding equipment.

### **7. Are certain costs ineligible?**

The following costs are ineligible and will not be funded: training courses/workshops for funded research personnel, inflationary increases, cost of electronic journals, contingency or miscellaneous costs, replacement teaching costs, clinical time buyout, entertainment costs, technology transfer or patent costs, legal fees, relocation costs, International collaborator research costs, or membership fees

Costs falling within the [overhead contribution](#) such as office space, software licenses not specific to the proposed work, waste disposal fees, contribution to the cost of gases etc. should **not** be requested within the budget.

### **8. How do I submit to HRB/SFI?**

Convert all requested documents (see Section 8 guidance call document) to a single pdf (only the cover sheet with signatures should be scanned) and submit by email to [usireland@hrb.ie](mailto:usireland@hrb.ie)

### **9. What happens if I don't submit all documents as required by HRB by the 6 week deadline?**

Incomplete documents will be returned without review. Applications received after the 6 week deadline prior to NIH submission will be returned without review.

### **10. I'm a researcher who has an Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation award (CFTD) for 300k am I eligible to apply to the US-Ireland programme?**

Unfortunately Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund Technology Development (CFTD) awards do not satisfy the eligibility criteria for an internationally peer reviewed research award as these awards do not solely engage international peer reviewers.

### **11. Can the partner in Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland be an SME/ industry?**

No the ROI and NI partners have to be based at an eligible Research Institution (refer to call guidance document for a list of eligible Research Institutions).

### **12. If my draft proposal is approved by HRB/SFI – what are the next steps?**

If approved by HRB/SFI for submission to the NIH,

- an approval notification email will be sent by HRB to the applicant which includes a Funding Commitment Letter confirming HRB and SFI's support of the research, for inclusion in the full proposal submission to NIH or NSF, and possibly including changes to the budget the Funding Commitment Letter will be sent by HRB to the NIH
- The ROI applicant may need to submit a revised budget and signed cover sheet, if modifications have been made to the budget
- HRB requires a copy of the full proposal submission to NIH with official email confirmation including NIH proposal code

### **13. What is the Funding Commitment Letter or FCL?**

This is a letter of commitment from either the ROI or NI funding agencies confirming their support of the proposed research, and is to be included in the joint application to the NIH. The letter indicates the amount of funding committed by each jurisdiction to their applicant should the application be successful at the NIH review.

### **14. The title of the research proposal has changed - do I need to inform HRB or Northern Ireland funding agencies?**

Please ensure to inform HRB at [USireland@hrb.ie](mailto:USireland@hrb.ie) as soon as possible of any title change as the title is listed in the Funding Commitment Letter (see above) which needs to be accurate.

### **15. I received the scores from the NIH and it appears the application may not progress to the funding stage. My partners would now like to resubmit to the next NIH call. Do I need to resubmit to HRB?**

Yes, all resubmissions need to be reviewed by HRB/SFI to ensure there are no substantial changes to the research programme. Once it has been reviewed and if approved, a new Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) with details of the new call will be issued by HRB to the RoI PI. This should be included in the joint application to the NIH. Please submit the re-submission to HRB **6 weeks** in advance of the NIH or internal US university deadlines.

**16. The US partners have decided to submit to a different call or Funding Opportunity announcement at the NIH. This is different to the original call/programme details sent to HRB.**

This is a delayed submission and it will need to be reviewed by HRB/SFI to ensure there are no substantial changes. Once it has been reviewed and if approved, a new Funding Commitment Letter with details of the new Call will be issued by HRB to the RoI PI. This FCL should be included in the joint application to the NIH or NSF. Please submit this application to HRB **6 weeks** in advance of the NIH or internal US university deadlines.

**17. When do I need to send the resubmission/delayed application to HRB?**

All resubmissions and delayed applications are required to be submitted to HRB *at least 6 weeks* prior to any US partner institution/NIH submission deadline. This is the responsibility of the RoI partner and no early notifications of the outcome of the HRB/SFI review are possible.

**18. How do I find out about upcoming workshops or webinars promoting the US-Ireland programme?**

Please refer to the HRB and SFI websites.

**NIH Webinar organized by SFI June 2014 – Specific FAQs**

**1. Why would NIH fund researchers outside of the US? Does one have to establish that the concepts are truly unique in that they cannot be carried out by investigators in the US? (This question refers to applications submitted by overseas applicants directly to the NIH and not submitted under the US-Ireland programme)?**

Proposed research from foreign organizations should provide special opportunities for furthering research programs through the use of unusual talent, resources, populations, or environmental conditions in other countries that are not readily available in the U.S. or that augment existing U.S. resources.

**2. What are the typical success rates for NIH programmes?**

It depends on the Institute and program up to date statistics can be found at <https://report.nih.gov/>

**3. Is it a pre-requisite or merely a recommendation that the RoI and NI have previously collaborated on a project?**

This isn't a prerequisite, but it is likely to strengthen the proposal.

**4. Will US-Ireland R&D partnership applications be reviewed separately to standard US applications for the same call?**

There is no differentiation.

**5. The PIs of the 3 collaborators (US/RoI/NI) are encouraged to be quite senior and have received significant prior funding - this is actually somewhat restrictive in terms of who can apply from RoI/NI due to the smaller**

**size of the research communities here. Would applications with 2 senior collaborators and 1 junior collaborator from each region be considered?**

Applications with 2 senior collaborators and 1 junior collaborator will be considered. It is important to explain the role of each of the partners involved, their expertise in the proposed research, and hence the added value to the proposed research programme.

**6. Can you search on existing projects on a particular subject area which are linked to an active FOA?**

It is possible to search by topic and RePORTER will show you currently funded NIH projects.