

ARC HUB Accelerating Research to Commercialisation

Handbook



Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by the
European Union



Tionól Réigiúnach
An Tuaiscirt & An Iarthair
Northern & Western
Regional Assembly



Fondúireacht Eolaíochta Éireann
Dá bhfuil romhainn
Science Foundation Ireland
For what's next

Summary

The aim of the SFI ARC (Accelerating Research to Commercialisation) Hub Programme is to establish a new model for regional innovation and entrepreneurial training, that will catalyse a step-change in the translation of cutting-edge publicly-funded research toward impact at a regional level. The SFI ARC Hub Programme will enhance and accelerate the commercialisation of research to create new products, processes and services. The realisation of the programme will be through the establishment of regional SFI ARC Hubs focused on specific thematic areas that will be aligned with the respective regional strategic priorities and the ‘National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation 2022-2027’ (S3). **The aim of this particular SFI ARC Hub call is to establish a Hub in the Northern and Western (NW) Region of Ireland.**

The SFI ARC Hub Programme is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union under two European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Regional Programmes - the Southern, Eastern and Midland Regional Programme 2021-2027 and the Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021-2027. The ERDF aims to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion across all European regions.

The SFI ARC Hub, as a distributed consortium of Research Bodies, will create a regional ecosystem focused on optimising research translation and training future entrepreneurs through establishing new academic networks and bringing together stakeholders, while leveraging existing supports, as appropriate.

Objectives

The SFI ARC Hub Programme will support the following ERDF objectives:

- > **Policy Objective 1:** A more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and regional ICT connectivity.
- > **Specific Objective:** Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies.

Primary objectives of SFI’s ARC Hub programme are:

- > To drive regional development by accelerating novel, cutting-edge research, towards commercial impact readiness, in areas aligned with Ireland’s Smart Specialisation Strategy.
- > To develop a cohort of entrepreneurial scientists and engineers with the skills to realise commercial opportunities from research activities.
- > To enhance and accelerate the translation of research to impact through the commercialisation process.
- > To successfully transition SFI-funded research projects into existing national and international closer-to-market supports, as appropriate.

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Hub Structure

The SFI ARC Hub will be led by a Hub Director (Lead Applicant) with support from a group of Co-PIs (Co-Applicants). Research and commercialisation activities will be supported by an Operations Team. The team will undertake activities such as agile project management, administration, scouting and business development, marketing, promotion of ARC Hub and communications. Their active and expert management of the research portfolio will ensure that projects are shaped for success from the earliest stages of the R&D pathway.

The SFI ARC Hub award will include a translational research budget, which will be used to support researchers who have identified novel research opportunities that can be accelerated towards rapid commercial impact.

At application stage, it is expected that the SFI ARC Hub applicants will present a programme of research that has strong potential for commercialisation and provides assurance of the level of demand for a Hub in the proposed thematic area, as well as the potential for impact and achievement of the performance indicators. In addition to those projects approved as part of the application for funding, the translational research budget awarded to the Hub may support follow-on funding for successful projects, as well as being used to supporting new research projects with potential for commercialisation identified during the lifetime of the Hub.

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Geographic Regions Covered

The SFI ARC Hub for this call will be funded under the Northern & Western Regional Programme (covering Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo, Cavan, Monaghan, Donegal, Leitrim). **The SFI ARC Hub will be hosted by a lead Research Body located in the Northern & Western Region, but it will be multi-site and can involve collaboration with other Research Bodies both in the Regional Programme area and in other Regional Programme areas in the Republic of Ireland.**



Regional Priorities / Thematic Areas

As an ERDF co-funded operation, the SFI ARC Hub must operate in a specific thematic area aligned with the existing and emerging sectoral areas of strength (as outlined below) as identified in Ireland's Smart Specialisation Strategy. Applicants will be expected to articulate how the proposed Hub aligns with a priority sector for the Northern and Western region, as well as the potential to benefit the region through economic development and innovation diffusion.

Northern and Western Region

Sectoral Strengths and Emerging Areas of Opportunity

- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering
- AgriFood and AgriTech
- Audiovisual /Creative
- ICT and ICT services
- Life Sciences, MedTech and Medical Devices
- Marine and Blue Economy
- Renewable Energy, Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainability

Who can apply?

The SFI ARC Hub will be led by a Hub Director (Lead Applicant) located in the host Research Body of the Hub, with support from a group of Co-PIs (Co-Applicants). The Hub Director and Co-PIs are expected to be experienced researchers with strong track records in research, particularly in the proposed thematic area, in leadership (including large-scale initiatives), and in entrepreneurship and commercialisation. The Hub will be hosted by a lead Research Body located in the Northern and Western regional programme area, but it will be multi-site and can involve collaboration with other Research Bodies both in the programme area and in other programme areas in the Republic of Ireland.

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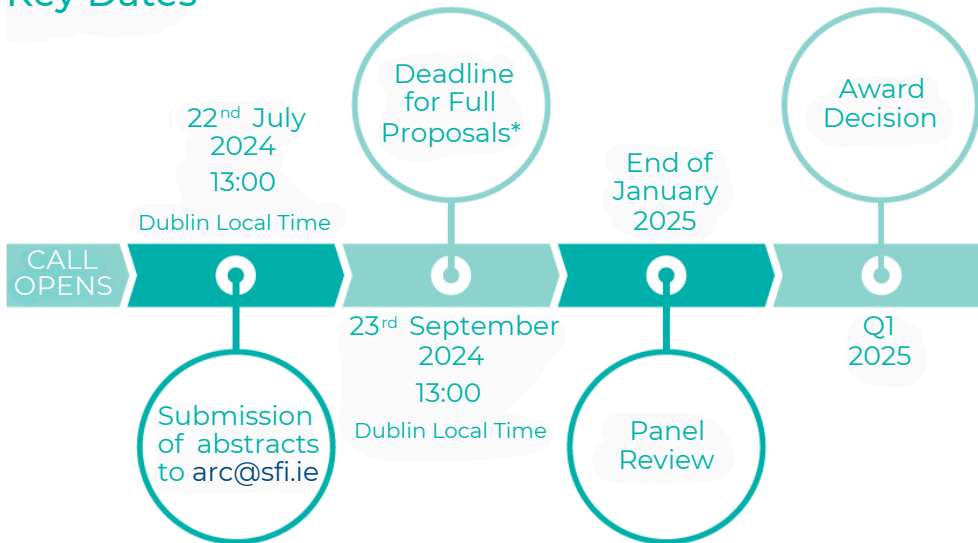


Funding

The budget for this initiative is €26.67 million (excluding overheads), which has been provided by the Government of Ireland and the European Union and is available through the ERDF Northern & Western Regional Programme. It will fund a single SFI ARC Hub in the Northern & Western Region over a period of 54 months.

Funding is timebound such that awards will begin in 2025 and run to 2029.

Key Dates



*Any full proposals submitted where an abstract has not been provided will be rejected without review.

For more information on the ARC Hub programme, please visit www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-arc-hub-programme/

Applicants are advised that they should consult the call documents for all details and eligibility criteria in advance of preparing an application.

All applicants must comply with the relevant EU and ERDF regulations as outlined in the Call Document and with the national law. Failure to do so will render the application ineligible for funding.

For any further queries, please contact the Enterprise Partnerships Team at arc@sfi.ie



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