2023 Research Ireland Centres Call
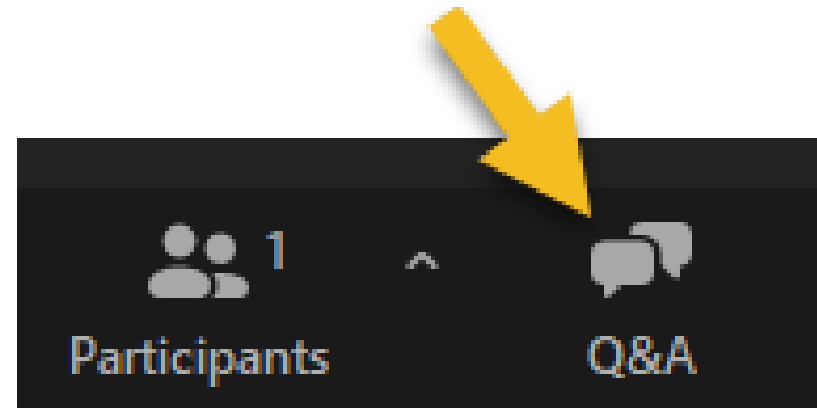
Open for **collaboration**

Full Proposal Information Webinar

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21st October 2024

Webinar Details

- This webinar consists of a presentation with key information on the Full Proposal stage, followed by answers to submitted questions.

- Submit questions via the Q&A function on Zoom. You can submit questions throughout the presentation.

- Webinar recording and slides will be available on the call webpage in coming days: www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-research-centres

- FAQ will be updated with any significant or outstanding questions. Any further questions welcome: centres@researchireland.ie

Presentation overview

1. Timeline	2. Proposal title	3. Budget request
4. PhD stipend	5. Programme document	7. Team changes from Pre-Proposal
6. Letters of support	8. Evaluation process	9. Q&A

Timeline

- Full Proposal opens on SESAME: 9th October 2024

- Full Proposal webinar: 21st October 2024

- Deadline for submission of Full Proposal: 26th February 2025, 13:00

- Reviewer comments sent to Lead Applicant: 4th June 2025

- Deadline for Applicant Response: 18th June 2025, 13:00

- Interview Panel Review: Mid-September 2025

- Funding Decision: Expected December 2025

Proposal title

- Applicants must replace SFI / Science Foundation Ireland with **Research Ireland**.

- **Please note:**   In some cases this would result in:
    "Research Ireland Research Centre for ...." ❌

    In such cases please remove the second "Research":
    "Research Ireland Centre for......." ✅

- Reminder – Any name should be considered **temporary**, and final Centre branding is to be discussed and agreed with the funder prior to grant start date.

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Proposal budget request

- Research Ireland expects to fund a **range of Centre sizes**.

- Proposal scale should be:
    - Optimised to the **research capacity** in the domain proposed
    - In line with **excellence** of the proposal
    - Streamlined and deliver **value for money**
    - **Coherent** across the proposed Centre

- **Note:** Applicants may modify their budget between Pre- and Full Proposal stages. However, **this must result in the same or lower total budget**.

- **NB:** An error was spotted in the Full Proposal budget template. A new version of the template was updated on 17th October 2024. **Please ensure that you are using the correct version.**

PhD stipend

- Research Ireland welcomes the announcement in the Budget of an increase in the PhD stipend rate.

- We are currently working with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to finalise plans for how this increase will be implemented.

- Research Ireland expects to make an announcement on this by the end of October 2024.

Programme Document – Table of Centre PIs

- A table for Centre PIs has been added to the Applicant Team section.

- This has been added for maximum clarity on the composition of the proposed team.

- This table will not count towards maximum page count for the section.

- Do not add further information or columns to the table.

Centre Principal Investigators (PIs)		
Centre PI Full Name	Centre PI Institution	Centre PI Research Theme

Team changes between Pre- and Full Proposal

- Important that there is **consistency** between the proposal that was reviewed at Pre-Proposal stage, and that reviewed at Full Proposal stage.

- Changes to Lead Applicant/Co-Applicants/Centre PIs should be made in **exceptional circumstances**. Examples:
  - In response to comments in the Pre-Proposal Panel Report.
  - Replacement of an individual who is no longer available.

- Changes **must be approved** by Research Ireland.

- Email centres@researchireland.ie as early as possible. Please do not leave this to close to the submission deadline.

Programme Document – Note on changes/comments from Pre-Proposal in response to Panel Report

- Please bear in mind the following note from the Guidance for Applicants document:

    Please specify any changes or comments in the Full Proposal programme document made in relation to feedback from the Pre-Proposal submission.

Letters of Support

- As detailed in the Full Proposal Guidance Document, the following three types of letter can be submitted:

    1. *From each industry partner.*
        Must include **commitment of cost share** for at least first 2 years (company contribution table).

    2. *From the Research Body of the Lead Applicant and each Co-Applicant.*
        Must include **all Lead/Co-Applicants** for that institution. No letters required for Centre PIs during the evaluation process.

    3. *From each organisation committing other non-exchequer contributions (e.g., philanthropic sources, charitable donations).*
        Must include a clear **commitment of cost share**.

Letters of Support

- Additional partnerships, collaborations, etc. that do not meet requirements for a letter of support can be **mentioned in relevant sections** of the programme document.

- This includes support or commitments from **Government Departments and Agencies**, which should not be submitted as letters of support. Research Ireland will be inviting input from such bodies through a cross-agency consultation.

- Please refer to the Guidance for Applicants (section 7.13) for full information on letter requirements.

Evaluation process

Postal Review

- **5-7 international experts**. Note that Full Proposal postal reviewers will be different to the Pre-Proposal reviewers.

- **Comments will be sent to Lead Applicant**.

Applicant Response

- Two weeks provided to submit max **1,600 word response, and one A4 page** (one side) upload for supporting info, such as diagrams, graphics, graphs, etc.

- Reviewers can **add comments and adjust scores** on basis of response.

Evaluation process

Full Proposal Interview (invitation only)

- A **maximum of ten proposals** that have demonstrated the highest level of excellence, based on the review criteria, will progress to interview.

- This will be carried out through the **following process**:

Overall 4.0
- Overall weighted average score ≥4.0

Each criterion 3.5
- Average score for each criterion ≥3.5

Tiebreakers
- If required.
- Order of tiebreakers listed in Full Proposal Guidance for Applicants.

Evaluation process

Full Proposal Interview (invitation only)

- Panel of high-level experts.

- Will include a presentation followed by Q&A, which includes a further opportunity to respond to any comments received. Further details on interview stage will be provided prior to that step.

- Interview Panel will prepare a **ranked list of fundable proposals**, a **report on each proposal**, and any **further comments to Research Ireland**, such as:
    - justification of budget requests,
    - strength of institutional leadership, coordination and support,
    - efficiencies that may be gained in relation to Operations Teams,
    - other inputs that the Panel considers relevant to the final decision.

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Evaluation process

Final Funding Decision

- Final funding decisions are at the sole and exclusive discretion of the **Board of Research Ireland**.

- **Will include consideration of factors including**:

  o Ranked list of fundable proposals prepared by Interview Panel.

  o Additional perspectives and comments of Interview Panel.

  o Strategic input from other national funders and government departments.

  o The objective of a collaborative, dynamic, cohesive and streamlined ecosystem of Centres in areas of national importance.

  o Past performance.

- Applicants should be mindful of the expectation that their proposal be distinct, and absent of significant overlaps with other proposals or funded entities.

Final points to note

- Conditions for funding may be stipulated, which could include funding a reduced budget, or modification of a proposal.

- It is essential to **read all documents thoroughly**, including the Call Document, Guidance for Applicants, and the Full proposal Guidance for Applicants. Requirements and processes are discussed in greater detail there.

- It is very important to submit a completed Full Proposal to the Research Office **well in advance of the deadline**.

- Further engagements are planned with Research Office representatives, and we will be in contact about these soon.

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Thank you

Slides and webinar recording will be uploaded to call webpage.

Consult the Centres programme call documents and FAQ.

Any further questions:

centres@researchireland.ie