



The US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme

Some Guidelines and Tips
(NSF proposals)



Paul Hurley (paul.hurley@tyndall.ie)
Tyndall National Institute, University College Cork



- Setting up the US-Ireland Consortium
- Planning Visits
- Proposal writing and submission (SFI, DEL NI, Invest NI and NSF)
- Benefits of the US-Ireland Scheme

Setting up the US-Ireland Consortium

1. Make sure your research proposal ideas fall under the current remit of the US-Ireland collaboration scheme
(see <http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/open-calls/us-ireland-rd-partnership-programme.html>)
2. Look to build a partnership where the collaborators from the USA, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland bring *complementary* expertise and facilities
(*some overlap and expertise and facilities will be accepted , and may even be helpful in some cases, but aim primarily for complementary facilities and expertise as a starting point*)
3. An existing relationship between the partners, such as student exchanges or joint conference/journal papers, while not required, will be helpful.
4. Consider schemes - such as Cotutelle agreements - for joint PhD awards between the partners in the proposal.





Outline

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Planning Visits

1. If all partners have not visited each others Institutions, applying for a planning grant will prove very helpful in preparing the proposal and to allow all partners to have a more complete understanding of the facilities an expertise across the whole consortium.
2. A planning grant also serves as a check on the eligibility of the proposal area with the remit of the US Ireland programme
3. *When on planning visits – take photos of all the collaborators together! It may not be obvious why you need them – but they will come in handy*
4. The visit is designed to prepare the first draft of the proposal while all the partners are together.

SFI Webpage -

http://www.sfi.ie/assets/files/downloads/Funding/Funding%20Calls/us_ireland/2012/USIrI%20Planning%20Grant_1608_FINAL.pdf





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Proposal Writing I

- **Stay Calm and Start Early**
- Find the NSF program you plan to submit to, and start the planning process at least 12 months before the final submission date of the selected NSF call
- Note: The NSF does not have a specific program set aside for the US-Ireland R&D Collaboration, but the proposal must fall within the programme remit areas
 - Nanoscale Science & Engineering
 - Sensors & Sensor Networks
 - Telecommunications
 - Energy & Sustainability
 - Health

Pre-Submission Requirement:

SFI

- **SFI**
 - 6 weeks in advance of the NSF deadline
 - **Almost complete proposal ~ 8-10 pages**
 - Budget and Budget Justification for Republic of Ireland Applicants (and indicative budget for the Northern Ireland and USA partners)
 - An ‘Added Value’ appendix explaining the unique benefits of the partnership including Gantt charts and a multi PI management plan.
 - **Maximum budget is 350,000€**
 - This is used by SFI to generate the RoI Funding Commitment Letter to the Project in the event it is selected for funding by NSF
 - ***Look at this pre-submission as an advantage!*** Its always a rush getting a proposal ready for the deadline. Now you have a deadline 6 weeks in advance of the NSF deadline – which allows an extra 6 weeks for final additions, modifications and refinements before the final NSF submission deadline.

Pre-submission Requirement:

DEL NI & INVEST NI

- **DEL NI & INVEST NI**
 - 6 weeks in advance on NSF deadline
 - **Short proposal ~ 3 pages**
 - Budgets for all partners
 - DEL NI & INVEST NI review the proposal and if approved they will generate the NI Funding Commitment Letter to the Project
 - **Maximum budget = £320,000**
 - Small changes are allowed before final submission. (Final approved budget is indicated in the Funding Commitment Letter from DEL NI & INVEST NI)

Pre-submission Requirement:

- SFI and DEL NI/INVEST NI do not review the project technically/scientifically. This is done through the NSF peer review process

- SFI check that:
 - a) The proposal is within the remit of the programme,
 - b) the budget is justified,
 - c) that there is a proper balance between the research activities of the partners,
 - d) the overall quality of the proposal

Please review SFI Call Documents and FAQs as an initial step:

<http://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/open-calls/us-ireland-rd-partnership-programme.html>

DEL NI/Invest NI webpage:

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/further-and-higher-education/higher-education/role-structure-he-division/he-research-policy/us-ireland-partnership-2/us-ireland-rd-partnership-programme.htm>



NSF Proposal Writing I

- Must emphasise that the proposal is in response to the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme
- Note: The NSF probably have collaborative agreements with many countries
- The start of the proposal must stress the nature of this collaborative scheme
 - i.e., Single submission and single review process (through the NSF)
 - That if the NSF support the proposal - the funding from SFI and INVEST NI is already committed for the researchers in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. (Refer the reviewers to the SFI and INVEST NI Funding Commitment Letters in the supplemental information section of the NSF proposal) I would suggest that the above point should be made in the one page summary and in the first paragraph of the 15 page proposal.



NSF Proposal Writing II

- Make references to the US-Ireland scheme early in the proposal (*first paragraph*), so the reviewers can check the nature of this collaborative programme. I would suggest to reference:
 - 1) The NSF Dear Colleague Letter (Link)
 - <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2011/nsf11070/nsf11070.jsp>
 - 2) The recent MOU for the continuation of the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme and the extended research areas
 - http://www.nsf.gov/eng/general/US_Ireland_MOU.pdf
 - 3) The NSF web site link to the US Ireland Programme
 - <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2007/nsf07054/nsf07054.jsp>

NSF Proposal Writing III: Other Things to Include:

- A table showing the breakdown of the research activities between the USA, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (it should be well balanced across the 3 jurisdictions)
- Support letters from all Institutions (indicating commitment to the proposal)
- Facilities Document: all institutions
- Brief Justification of budget (all partners) **
- CV (NSF style): Include PIs and collaborators in the ROI and Northern Ireland
- Existing and pending funding (all PIs)
- The SFI and DEL NI/INVEST NI Funding Commitments Letters (make it easy for the reviewers – point them to the relevant page numbers for these important letters in the first reference to the US-Ireland scheme.

** Take care to allocate sufficient travel budget. This is more than for a typical project as PhD student and postdoc exchanges between partners are central to the success of the collaboration BUT ENSURE THAT THE BUDGET IS VERY WELL PLANNED AND JUSTIFIED



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Benefits of the Collaboration

- Avoids Duplication of Expertise and Facilities
- Opportunity to collaborate with world leading researchers in the USA
- Extend the International Reach and Awareness of Irish Research Institutions and Universities in the USA
- This type of project is more likely to attract press coverage and interest at a diplomatic level
- Joint Papers generally have more impact than single institution publications
- Exchanges of Students and Staff between the Partners
- Great for PhD students: both scientifically and culturally

Finally

From the perspective of one US-Ireland project completed



.. one underway



... and one about to start

It's a truly excellent scheme in all respects. If you would like more details, or would like to discuss a proposal you are planning, and feel that I could be of some help, please email me, and we can set up a phone call.

paul.hurley@tyndall.ie