

Irish Research Council No-Cost Extension Policy

What is a no-cost extension and when can it be facilitated?

A no-cost extension occurs when the duration of an award is extended beyond its original End Date without any additional funds being granted. It is the Irish Research Council's (the Council's) policy to facilitate such an extension to a grant in the following cases:

1. Eligible direct research costs

Postgraduate and postdoctoral awardees may apply for a no-cost extension of their awards, if they have not spent their total eligible research expenses by the time of the original End Date of the award and can justify that the use of the remaining funds beyond the original End Date is necessary or beneficial to the completion of the project.

2. No-cost extension of Principal Investigator-led projects

The Council may agree to the extension of a PI-led grant where it is demonstrated that such will ensure the completion of the funded project in line with the agreed objectives and deliverables of that project.

Conditions for no-cost extensions to be granted

- Where a no-cost extension and a **budget reallocation** are sought, this request form may be completed to seek approval of both.
- No-cost extensions may be granted for a **total period of up to 12 months** for all awards with a duration of over 12 months. In the case of awards of 12 months or less, no-cost extensions may be granted for a **total period of up to 6 months**. However, **the duration of an NCE will be granted at the Council's discretion**, on a case-by-case basis.
- No-cost extensions of eligible direct research costs may not affect the **final report due date**; in such circumstances, the **financial report due date** will be amended to reflect the extension.
- Please note that these time limits do not apply in cases of parental/maternity leave, adoptive leave, carer's leave and prolonged sick leave. For these, please refer to the forthcoming policy on Leave for Parents and the suspension of awards policy and associated forms.
- Awardees who have extended the end date of their award due to an eligible career break or suspension (parental/maternity leave, adoptive leave, carer's leave, prolonged sick leave and internships) may also avail of a no-cost extension as it relates to their awards, regardless of the length of their leave.
- A request for a no-cost extension must be made by the award holder on the appropriate form **no less than 2 months** before the original End Date of the award, and ahead of the extension taking place.

- No-cost extensions of eligible direct research costs and of PI-led projects **must be justified** by the award holder, who must demonstrate to the Council why it is required to ensure completion of the previously agreed project within the funds already available. As noted above, the final decision on the duration of the NCE will be made at the Council's discretion.
- Please note that not all schemes allow No-Cost Extensions. Terms and Conditions and grant agreements may be prescriptive in some cases, and these should be consulted in the first instance. **Where a contradiction exists between the present policy and Terms and Conditions, the Terms and Conditions (for the year the awardee applied to the scheme) take precedence.**

No-cost extension process

1. The award holder must complete the No-Cost extension form, including:
 - The **new End Date** of the award;
 - The **rationale** for the proposed no-cost extension;
 - Where changes to animal licences, ethics or any other approvals are involved as a result of the no-cost extension, details should be provided on the form;
 - Detail of any associated **budget reallocation(s)**, if applicable;
 - A current financial statement, and the **new project budget**, if applicable.
2. The form(s) must be signed by both the Host Institution's Research Office and Finance Office. It should also be signed by the awardee's Academic Supervisor/Mentor, Enterprise/Employment Mentor, and Strategic Funding Partner, if applicable.
3. The completed and signed form(s) must be returned to the relevant Council Programme Manager/Research Support Officer associated with the grant, using the relevant Programme email address.
4. Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis, by the Council. Once the request has been reviewed, the award holder and Host institution will be notified of the decision by email. **Receipt of a request from the award holder does not in itself guarantee approval of a no-cost extension.**
5. Approved extension will be followed by the issue of a **Letter of Variation** to the Host Institution, outlining the change(s) to the original terms of the award and the **new End Date of the award**. The process is deemed complete once the letter is signed by the Host Institution and returned to the Council.

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