



**COALESC**E Research Fund  
**Collaborative Alliances for Societal Challenges**

in partnership with

Department of Foreign Affairs – Irish Aid  
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (National Monuments Service),  
in partnership with the Heritage Council

## CALL DOCUMENT 2024

*The Irish Research Council reserves the right to amend this call document.*



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland



**An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,  
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta**  
Department of Further and Higher Education,  
Research, Innovation and Science



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha**  
Department of Foreign Affairs

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council



**An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta**  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage

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## 1. Overview of the scheme

The mission of the Irish Research Council (IRC) is to support excellence in research talent, knowledge, and engagement, including by responding to emerging research and societal challenges and proactively assisting stakeholders to address complex issues. The [IRC's Strategic Plan 2020-2024](#) seeks to position the IRC as a partner of choice nationally and internationally to support excellent research that addresses the challenges of our time. It also emphasises the importance attached by the IRC to facilitating the sharing of research and innovations to the maximum extent possible. Government and policymakers, enterprise and civil society are all key stakeholders with whom strong relationships with researchers are key. The COALESCE programme (Collaborative Alliances for Societal Challenges) is a key driver supporting progress on the strategic priorities.

Since the scheme was introduced, there have been a number of developments in the research landscape. The transition from Horizon 2020 to Horizon Europe continues the focus on challenges and mission-orientated research, while in May 2022, the national strategy for research and innovation, [Impact 2030](#) was published. COALESCE strongly aligns with the mission focus at European level and also with a number of core objectives within Impact 2030 such as enhancing the links between the research system and public policy; fostering interdisciplinary research; and a challenge-based focus. The various challenges we face, nationally and internationally, are well-articulated in the form of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), incorporating 17 goals.

Ireland has a cross-governmental challenge-based approach through the [National Planning Framework \(Ireland 2040\)](#) and the associated [National Development Plan](#). The framework sets out 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs, see [Appendix 1](#)), the achievements of which are necessary to ensure prosperity, equality, a sustainable future, and protection of our natural environment. Impact 2030 outlines some of the key economic and societal challenges facing Ireland, including climate change and the need for decarbonisation; economic transformation fuelled by technological and other change; greater international competition and geopolitical instability; increased mobility of talent; and the need to build societal resilience. Research is essential to address these and other challenges, and to achieve the aims of the National Development Plan.

The achievement of national or global goals will be challenging in themselves and will require an unprecedented level of collaboration and coordination both within the State and on an interjurisdictional basis. Given the myriad agencies that will be at the 'coalface' in implementation of national plans, major opportunities for researchers to form new connections and links will emerge, regionally and locally, and, in doing so, will further demonstrate the value of the Irish research system as a national resource.

Excellent research across all disciplines has a major role to play in developing new knowledge and evidence, which policymakers and practitioners can utilise to guide action and interventions on the path to successfully achieving national or international societal

challenges. Maximising the contribution of the research system in this regard requires a strong emphasis on building robust mechanisms to ensure the transmission and integration of knowledge and evidence into the policy and practice environment, including building the necessary relationships with the public sector, civil society, or elsewhere, to support this process.

## **2. Strand descriptions**

COALESCE seeks to fund excellent research addressing national and European/global national challenges as set out in the challenge frameworks now in place. This year, COALESCE features an open strand together with two strands run in partnership with government departments and agencies. These three strands are summarised below with further detail included in the appendices.

Strand	Title	Funder	Description	Further information	Maximum award amount	Duration
Strand 1L	INSTAR+	National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in partnership with the Heritage Council	Providing opportunities to fully realise the potential of Ireland's archaeological record, transforming our understanding of how Ireland's society has evolved. The main objective of INSTAR+ will be to ensure that the large amounts of archaeological work, previously undertaken in the context of development-led excavations, is translated into knowledge about Ireland's past.	Appendix 2	€220,000	24 months
Strand 2A	Strand 2A Open call for interdisciplinary research	Irish Research Council	Open call for interdisciplinary research addressing national or global societal challenges, led by AHSS PI with STEM co-PI		€220,000	24 months
Strand 2B	Better World Awards 2024	Department of Foreign Affairs (Irish Aid)	Providing opportunities for new collaborations between researchers in Ireland and researchers in eligible partner countries, based around excellent research projects aligned to the policy priorities set out in <a href="#">A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development</a> .	Appendix 4	€350,000	36 months

Strands 1L and 2B are each funded by a government department or agency, and, accordingly, there will be requirements in place to produce updates on the progress of and outcomes of the research for the strategic funding partner. Applicants are also encouraged to integrate intersectoral partnership across the project lifecycle, from design stage through to dissemination.

## **COALESCE Strand 2**

Strand 2 has been designed to support the development of interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration/capacity in the context of national or global challenges. Awardees will expand their research activities and will build the sustainability of their research agenda through enhanced competitiveness for future success in European or international collaborative funding programmes, including Horizon Europe.

Strand 2 will support researchers to form new connections and to consolidate existing national and international knowledge networks as part of a challenge-based approach. A challenge-based approach will bring together resources and knowledge across different fields, technologies, and disciplines, including social sciences and the humanities, and indeed beyond academia, into new sectors.

Lead applicants for Strand 2A will be AHSS researchers, with a STEM co-PI. **The PI will be required to upload a statement (1 page PDF) outlining their track record (if any) in collaborating with the co-PI, together with a case for why the two parties are a good fit for the proposed project.**

Strand 2B is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, addressing research collaboration and capacity building between Ireland and target global south countries. The lead applicant will be based in an eligible Irish HEI/RPO, with a co-PI from one of the target countries. **The PI will be required to upload a statement (1 page PDF) outlining their track record (if any) in collaborating with the co-PI, together with a case for why the two parties are a good fit for the proposed project.**

## **Objectives of Strand 2A**

Strand 2A is an open strand funded by the Irish Research Council and seeks to fund projects aligning to national challenge frameworks and/or the UN Sustainable Development Agenda (see Appendices 1 and 6). The specific objectives of Strand 2A are as follows:

- To cultivate excellent interdisciplinary research addressing national or global societal challenges – in so doing, bringing value to Ireland and/or internationally.
- To enhance collaboration between researchers in Ireland and policymakers and/or civil society, nationally or internationally.

- To support the development of capacity in the research system for interdisciplinary and challenge-based collaboration.
- Through capacity-building, to boost the success rate of Irish researchers in applications to Horizon Europe.
- To support the development of AHSS research leadership within an interdisciplinary context.
- To provide new opportunities for early-career researchers, under the guidance of the Principal Investigator (applicant) to develop skills and experience in intersectoral and interdisciplinary research collaboration.

### Research for Impact

The various strands aim to foster ‘engaged research’. In the Campus Engage [Engaged Research Framework](#) this is described as “a wide range of research approaches and methodologies that share a common interest in collaboration with societal partners. Engaged research aims to improve, understand, or investigate an issue of public interest or concern, including societal challenges and sustainable development goals. It is advanced with societal partners rather than for them. Societal partners include service users, product users, policymakers, civil and civic society organisations, industry partners, members of the public, and other relevant stakeholders.”

Taking an engaged research approach, from the design of the research proposal, and throughout its implementation, can lead to [highly impactful research](#) that benefits society in a variety of ways.

### 3. Key dates

Call open	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 4pm (Irish time)
FAQ deadline	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2023 at 4pm (Irish time)
Applicant deadline	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 4pm (Irish time)
RO Endorsement deadline	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 4pm (Irish time)
Outcome	May 2024

### 4. Eligibility

#### 4.1 Eligibility for Strand 1L

In order to be eligible to apply for Strand 1L, the applicant must:

- Be a Principal Investigator (PI) who holds a contract of sufficient duration with an [eligible HEI or RPO](#) to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until project end.



- Have been awarded their doctoral degree no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022. For this condition, the date of graduation (conferral) should be taken into account.\*
- **Note: If currently funded under an IRC PI-led award, the applicant's existing award must finish by the project start date in 2024.\*\***

\* If you have not yet graduated, you must have all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including the submission of the hardbound corrected thesis within the required timeline.

**\*\* This is without prejudice to future policy on applicants' eligibility to COALESCE.**

The experience and expertise of the applicant is an evaluation criterion under Strand 1L. Further details can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

**Please note that co-PIs are not permitted under Strand 1L.**

#### 4.2 Eligibility for Strand 2A

In order to be eligible to apply for Strand 2A, the applicant must be:

- From any AHSS discipline (see **Annex A** with call documentation [here](#)); and may apply for funding along with a named applicant from any STEM discipline (see **Annex B**).
- An AHSS Principal Investigator (PI) who holds a contract of sufficient duration with [an eligible HEI or RPO](#) to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until project end.

#### **WITH**

- A mandatory and named STEM Co-PI (co-applicant) who holds a contract of sufficient duration with an [eligible HEI or RPO](#) to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until project end.

#### **Both AHSS Lead PI and STEM Co-PI must:**

- Have been awarded their doctoral degrees no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022. For this condition, the date of graduation (conferral) should be taken into account. \*
- **Note: If currently funded under an IRC PI-led award, the applicant's existing award must finish by the project start date in 2024.\*\***

\* If you have not yet graduated, you must have all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including the submission of the hardbound corrected thesis within the required timeline.

**\*\*This is without prejudice to future policy on applicants' eligibility to COALESCE.**

The experience and expertise of the applicants is an evaluation criterion under Strand 2A. Further details can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

**Please note that the PI will be required to upload a statement (1 page PDF) outlining their track record (if any) in collaborating with the co-PI, together with a case for why the two parties are a good fit for the proposed project.**

#### 4.3 Eligibility for Strand 2B

In order to be eligible to apply for Strand 2B, the applicant must be:

- A lead Principal Investigator (PI) who holds a contract of sufficient duration with an [eligible HEI or RPO](#) to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until project end date.

#### **WITH**

- A mandatory and named Co-PI (co-applicant) employed by an HEI or research-performing organisation (RPO) in one of the Department of Foreign Affairs' partner countries and who will be in a position to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until the project end date.
- The RPO in the partner country must be a publicly funded or not-for-profit higher education/research institution. In exceptional circumstances, other RPOs will be considered. The RPO must have the capacity and infrastructure to support the research, should be research active and be able to demonstrate the standard of academic rigour required for a large research project.

The lead applicant will:

- Be at least five years post-PhD, **or**, if the applicant is 3 years post-PhD and has won a New Foundations grant (DFA Strand), the applicant will be deemed eligible. The lead PI will have been awarded the doctoral degree no later than 31st of May 2018 [or 31st of May 2020 with a New Foundations award]. For this condition, the date of graduation (conferral) should be taken into account.
- Applicants who are eligible under the latter caveat will need to demonstrate that they have the skills and experience to manage a project of this scale.
- Have experience of collaboration within research consortia with an international development focus and/or international project.
- Have a track record in research under one or more of the DFA themes for this strand.
- Not be in receipt of any other IRC funding at the proposed start date, with the exception of New Foundations and/or Ulysses or similar travel award(s).

**The co-applicant will, at minimum:**

- Be at least three years post PhD (or possess equivalent research qualifications/experience). The co-PI will have been awarded the doctoral degree no later than 31st of May 2020. For this condition, the date of graduation (conferral) should be taken into account.
- Have experience of international research collaboration with an international development focus and/or international project/s.
- Have a track record in research under one or more of the DFA themes for this strand.

The experience and expertise of the applicants is an evaluation criterion under Strand 2B. Further details can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

**Please note that the PI will be required to upload a statement (1 page PDF) outlining their track record (if any) in collaborating with the co-PI, together with a case for why the two parties are a good fit for the proposed project.**

## **5. General Application Conditions**

### **5.1 Collaboration Statement**

Applicants under Strand 2A and Strand 2B are required to upload a statement (1 page PDF) outlining their track record and previous history (if any) in collaborating with the co-PI, together with a case for why the two parties are a good fit for the proposed project and how the collaboration will benefit the two parties or provide opportunity for further collaboration or capacity building in the research area.

Furthermore, the statement should outline the Co-PI's intention to participate in the project, their role in the project and their commitment to same.

### **5.2 Time Commitment**

The lead applicant and any co-PIs must be in a position to devote adequate time to the management and realisation of the project. The PIs are advised that, by submitting an application in their own name, **they personally undertake to develop the project**, with due attention and viable commitments of time and without sub-contracting the project to another party or parties. In addition, the requirements set out by the Strategic Funding Partners are part of the general rules of this scheme.

### **5.3 Number of applications per applicant**

Applicants may only submit one application to COALESCE 2024.

## 6. Important information for Strand 2A and Strand 2B applications

The min-max personnel costs for the lead HEI and partner HEI/RPO under Strand 2A and Strand 2B are as follows:

Personnel Costs Strand 2A (Inc. Overhead 25%)	
AHSS lead HEI	STEM co-PI HEI
Min 30% - Max 70%	Min 30% - Max 70%
Personnel Costs Strand 2B (Inc. Overhead 25%)	
Lead HEI	Partner RPO co-PI
Min 30% - Max 70%	Min 30% - Max 70%

The maintenance of the minimum 30% personnel costs will be the responsibility of the lead HEI.

**Only one application per lead applicant on any strand is permitted.**

**Only one application per named co-PI on Strand 2A and Strand 2B is permitted.**

## 7. Eligible Items of Expenditure/Costs

### 7.1 General Conditions

All costs sought under an application must be detailed and justified. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that any costs sought are necessary to carry out the proposed research programme and that such facilities are not available to the researcher(s) via any other means. Demonstration of value for money is an important consideration under the evaluation and assessment process. Applicants should confirm their budget calculations and seek guidance from their Research Office when preparing their budget to ensure all calculations are correct and adhere to the eligible costs set out below and in accordance with their institutional guidelines and policies. Overheads can be requested up to a maximum rate of 25% (of direct costs less equipment).

The budget for staff costs as proposed in the application must be clearly justified. The recruitment of staff (e.g., research assistants, postdoctoral researchers) must be done openly, through public advertisement. Staff must be recruited for the specific project and awarded topic only. Recruitment of staff can commence before the start date of the project and costs for recruitment can be charged to the project (outside the official start date) with the prior approval of the IRC.

Strand 1L and 2A applications may include provision for team membership of researchers from institutions and organisations that fall outside the eligible institutions, including both national and international participation. However, only collaboration costs (not personnel costs) may be allocated to such institutions/organisations and the

added value of such costs must be **strongly** demonstrated. **Costs for subsistence and accommodation may be requested; however, honoraria such as vouchers are deemed an ineligible research expense.** For a Strand 2A application, only the AHSS lead PI and STEM Co-PI are required to be named specifically.

## 7.2 Pension costs

The Government is continuing to examine the provisions of the Single Pension Scheme and the implications for research funders in relation to the provision of pension costs as part of the total employment costs of researchers. In the context of budgeting for the 2024 call and in order to ensure that budgets are complete, applicants are requested to include pension costs in the calculation of employment costs for postdoctoral researchers and research assistants. The IRC is keen to ensure long-term certainty for all stakeholders in relation to the pension funding of single pension scheme members, and HEIs/RPOs should note that further changes to guidance may occur when a definitive position is issued or confirmed by government. If such definitive guidance confirms that pensions are to be paid centrally the IRC will require any pension costs budgeted in each COALESCE proposal to be returned to the IRC. In this scenario no adjustment to overheads will be required

## 7.3 Strand 1L and 2A – Staffing and other eligible costs

Costs may include staff-replacement costs which facilitate participation in the project, but these must be clearly justified.

Staff Costs	
<b>Academic replacements (can be pro-rata)</b>	These are used to alleviate the awardee's commitments and to facilitate their participation as a principal investigator. Costs may be requested to facilitate the reallocation of existing commitments of the awardee (e.g., teaching) in order that they can devote appropriate time and effort to successfully completing the award. A value equal to point 1 on the IUA salary scale for postdoctoral researchers may be charged to the project to facilitate the awardee's leadership of the project. If the existing academic commitments of the awardee are fully replaced, this money can be charged to the project in order to recruit one whole-time person, e.g., a postdoctoral fellow, to discharge the awardee's commitments. As part of the reporting requirements, the awardee will be required to report on how the replacement costs have been allocated.
<b>Research Assistant (can be pro-rata)</b>	HEIs should use the institutional researcher salary scale for research assistants and postdoctoral researchers. These costs must be clearly justified in the application form. The salary requested must include provisions for PRSI, and Employer Pension Contribution, if

<b>Postdoctoral Researcher (can be pro-rata)</b>	applicable. As part of the award acceptance process, the Research Office must confirm that the requested salary is in line with the institutional researcher salary scale and provide documentary evidence.
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#### 7.4 Strand 1L and 2A - Eligible Research Expenses

All costings must be clearly justified. Only costs incurred during the lifetime of the award will be eligible.

<b>Cost Area and Guidance</b>	<b>Strand 1L</b>	<b>Strand 2A</b>
<b>Staff costs</b> See above for more detail.	Yes	Yes
<b>Travel costs</b> Costs for travel, subsistence and accommodation may be requested. Details on the number of trips, location, purpose and duration of the trips and the team members involved should be provided. Requests for travel and accommodation should be in line with institutional rates and norms for travel and accommodation. Business class travel is not an eligible cost.	Yes	Yes
<b>Collaboration</b> Costs to support the integration of policy-makers and other partners (national or international) in the proposed research project.	Up to a max. of <b>20%</b> of total project costs	Up to a max. of <b>10%</b> of total project costs
<b>Consumables</b> Non-IT equipment with a value of less than €2,000 can be included here.	Max. allowable: €2,000	Max. allowable: €2,000
<b>Access to research infrastructure</b> Only research infrastructure outside the host institution is valid for costs.	Yes	Yes

<p><b>Publications and research outputs, including:</b> Costs in respect of data management, archiving, digitisation, and open access storage.</p>	Yes	Yes
<p><b>Dissemination and Knowledge Exchange</b> Costs associated with the dissemination of the research, seminar/conference attendance (provide details of name and location where possible) and other channels of dissemination and material e.g., reports, website, etc. and other knowledge exchange activities.</p>	Yes	Yes
<p><b>Consultancy</b> Must be relevant and clearly justified.</p>	Up to a maximum of <b>€20,000</b>	Up to a maximum of <b>€10,000</b>
<p><b>Overheads</b> Overhead applies to all direct costs except equipment costs. Overheads are available in respect of direct costs incurred in both the Ireland-based and partner-based institution.</p>	Max. of 25%	Max. of 25%
<p><b>Equipment</b> Please provide details and justification for any items of equipment being sought. The IRC will pay particular attention to any equipment sought (e.g., laptops, voice recorders, etc.). Any such requests will require a strong rationale and an account of why such items might not be available to an applicant from any other source.</p>	Yes	Yes

## 7.5 Strand 2B – Staffing and other eligible costs

Costs may include staff-replacement costs which facilitate participation in the project, but these must be clearly justified. **The PI/institution in Ireland is responsible for the overall coordination of the project, including in the partner country, inclusive of the transfer of funds and the monitoring of expenditure.**

<b>Staff Costs - Ireland</b>	
<b>Academic replacements (Ireland-based PI only) (can be pro-rata)</b>	These are used to alleviate the awardee's commitments and to facilitate their participation as a principal investigator. Costs may be requested to facilitate the reallocation of existing commitments of the awardee (e.g., teaching) in order that they can devote appropriate time and effort to successfully completing the award. A value equal to point 1 on the IUA salary scale for postdoctoral researchers may be charged to the project to facilitate the awardee's leadership of the project. If the existing academic commitments of the awardee are fully replaced, this money can be charged to the project to recruit one whole-time person, e.g., a postdoctoral fellow, to discharge the awardee's commitments. As part of the reporting requirements, the awardee will be required to report on how the replacement costs have been allocated.
<b>Research Assistant (can be pro-rata)</b>  <b>Postdoctoral Researcher (can be pro-rata)</b>	HEIs should use the institutional researcher salary scale for research assistants and postdoctoral researchers. These costs must be clearly justified in the application form. The salary requested must include provisions for PRSI, and Employer Pension Contribution, if applicable. As part of the award acceptance process, the Research Office must confirm that the requested salary is in line with the institutional researcher salary scale and provide documentary evidence.

<b>Staff Costs – Partner Country</b>	
<b>Employment costs of co-PI</b>	Up to 50% of employment costs of the co-PI in the partner country can be sought. Costs sought must be fully justified and align with the proposed time commitment to the project from the co-PI applicant. Any employment costs sought for the co-PI must be in line with relevant local salary scales applicable to the career stage of the co-PI.



<p><b>Research Assistant (can be pro-rata)</b></p> <p><b>Postdoctoral Researcher (can be pro-rata)</b></p>	<p>Participating RPOs in partner countries can use their own institutional researcher salary scale for research assistants and postdoctoral researchers. These costs must be clearly justified in the application form.</p>
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## 7.6 Strand 2B - Eligible Research Costs

Strand 2B applications may include provision for team membership of researchers from institutions and organisations that fall outside the institutions of the PI and co-PI. However, only collaboration costs (not personnel costs) may be allocated to such institutions/organisations and the added value of such costs must be **strongly** demonstrated. Only costs incurred during the lifetime of the award will be eligible.

<b>Cost Area and Guidance</b>	<b>Strand 2B</b>
<p><b>Staff costs</b> See above.</p>	Yes
<p><b>Travel costs</b> Costs for travel, subsistence and accommodation may be requested. Details on the number of trips, location, purpose and duration of the trips and the team members involved should be provided. Requests for travel and accommodation should be in line with institutional rates and norms for travel and accommodation. Business class travel is NOT an eligible cost.</p>	Yes
<p><b>Collaboration</b> Costs to support the integration of policy-makers, civil society, and other partners in the proposed research project, particularly in the partner country or countries.</p>	<p><b>Yes</b> <b>Max. of 10% of total project costs</b></p>
<p><b>Consumables</b> Non-IT equipment with a value of less than €1,000 can be included here.</p>	<p><b>Max. allowable: €5,000</b></p>
<p><b>Access to research infrastructure</b> Only research infrastructure outside the host institution is valid for costs.</p>	Yes
<p><b>Publications and research outputs, including:</b> Costs in respect of data management, archiving, digitisation, and open access storage.</p>	Yes
<p><b>Dissemination and Knowledge Exchange</b> Costs associated with the dissemination of the research, seminar/conference attendance (provide details of name and location where possible) and other channels of dissemination and material, e.g., reports, website, etc. and other knowledge exchange activities.</p>	Yes

<b>Consultancy</b> Must be relevant and clearly justified.	<b>Up to a maximum of €10,000</b>
<b>Overheads</b> Overhead applies to all direct costs except equipment costs. Overhead applies to institutions of both the PI in Ireland and the co-PI in the Irish Aid partner country.	Max. of 25%
<b>Equipment</b> Please provide details and justification for any items of equipment being sought. The IRC will pay particular attention to any equipment sought (e.g., laptops, voice recorders, etc.). Any such requests will require a strong rationale and an account of why such items might not be available to an applicant from any other source.	Yes

## 8. Preparing a Proposal

### 8.1 DORA Principles

With the adoption of the [San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment](#) (DORA) principles, and the IRC's commitment to the CoARA membership, the mention of Journal Impact Factors is no longer accepted, and the use of H-Index is discouraged among the field relevant bibliometric indicators that may be included as part of the publications track record. Instead, applicants are encouraged to briefly note the significance of the publications they have chosen to include in the track record.

- a) Research monograph(s) and any translations thereof;
- b) Granted patent(s);
- c) Invited presentations to internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools;
- d) Other forms of peer-reviewed recognition of achievement (prizes, awards, academy memberships).

Applicants are also invited to use the track record section of their application to outline their broader contribution to research through teaching, public engagement, academic administration, etc. Applicants may also provide a short narrative description of the scientific/scholarly importance of the research outputs submitted as part of the proposal.

## 8.2 Data management plans

In 2016, the European Commission adopted three goals for EU research and innovation policy: open science, open innovation, and open to the world. An important aspect of open science is a move towards open access to research results funded with public money. Facilitating access to those results encourages the re-use of research output. Science and research have always been open, but some of the processes for producing research and disseminating its results are not. It is now widely recognised that making research results more accessible to all societal actors contributes to better and more efficient science, and to greater innovation in the public and private sectors.

Applicants are required to address the data management needs of their research project. **As part of the application, applicants will furnish an outline Data Management Plan (DMP) appropriate to their project and, if successful, a detailed DMP will be submitted to the IRC along with the first progress report at six months.** If a DMP is not required, applicants must justify why this is so.

A DMP is a key element of good data management. A DMP describes the data management life cycle for the data to be collected, processed and/or generated by a research project. As part of making research data *findable, accessible, interoperable and re-usable* (FAIR), a DMP should include information on:

- the handling of research data during and after the end of the project;
- what data will be collected, processed and/or generated;
- which methodology and standards will be applied;
- whether data will be shared/made open access. If data cannot be made available, explain why;
- how data will be curated and preserved (including after the end of the project).

Further information on the [IRC's Open Access Policy](#) is contained below.

Applicants should be cognisant of the [General Data Protection Regulations \(GDPR\)](#) and funded proposals should meet the required standards in this regard. [Appendix 7](#) has links to further resources on DMPs and FAIR principles.

## 8.3 Ethical Statement

The IRC is committed to the maintenance of high ethical standards in the research that it funds. The proposed research shall comply with ethical principles and relevant national, EU and international legislation including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols. Awardees should adhere to the recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their discipline(s), as well as to ethical

standards as documented in the different various national, sectoral, or institutional Codes of Ethics.

The host institution must have in place clear ethical guidelines and assurance procedures designed to manage research under its direction. The host institution and awardee must ensure that the research complies with all national and international regulation requirements governing the use of sensitive materials or processes: for example, radioactive isotopes, ionising radiation, laboratory animals or other animals, pathogenic organisms, genetically manipulated organisms, toxic and hazardous substances, and research on human subjects and human embryos. The aforementioned examples do not constitute an exhaustive list.

The IRC is unable to award funding for research activity under any of the following prohibited areas:

- a) human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- b) genetic modification of human beings that could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be funded);
- c) creation of, or use of, human embryos or human embryonic stem cells/tissues for the purpose of research, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

The ethics self-assessment table serves to identify any ethical aspects of the proposed work and must be completed via the online application system, even if there are no issues (simply confirm that none of the ethical issues apply to the proposal). Please note that, if you answer YES to any of the questions, you are requested to provide an ethics self-assessment. The aim of the ethics self-assessment is to provide guidance for discussion of ethical issues that may arise in the proposal and to identify how the applicant will deal with the identified issues.

Common ethical issues include:

- a) the involvement of children, patients, vulnerable populations;
- b) the use of human embryonic stem cells;
- c) privacy and data protection issues;
- d) research on animals and non-human primates.

Ethical concerns also include the avoidance of any breach of research integrity, which means, in particular, avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other research misconduct.

Where an awardee's research proposal requires approval by the Host Institution Ethics Committee or equivalent, written evidence of such ethical approval is required by the IRC within six months of the commencement date of the award.

Applicants are advised to consult the Horizon Europe guidance document [How to complete your ethics self-assessment](#), before completing the ethics self-assessment.

If access to archival material in private custodianship or archival material with restricted access is required for the project, written evidence of appropriate permission to consult such material must be furnished to the IRC at the award acceptance stage.

#### 8.4 Sex / Gender Dimension Statement

An initiative arising from the [IRC's Gender Strategy](#) is the requirement for all applicants to demonstrate that they have given full consideration to whether there is a potential sex and/or gender dimension in their proposed research. Applicants should consult [Appendix 5](#) for further information.

Where applicants have indicated that there is no sex/gender dimension to their research, they will be asked to justify this assertion.

The integration of the sex-gender dimension in research is commonly mistaken for the integration of gender balance in research teams. These are two distinct matters, and the gender balance of a team should not be used to answer the sex-gender dimension in research question.

#### 8.5 Application process

An application will be submitted using the online IRC submission portal ([SmartSimple](#)) by the lead Principal Investigator. Prospective applicants who do not already have a user profile will need to create one before submitting an application. Please refer to the online **Guide for Applicants** which is available on the [IRC website](#). Guidance notes and system notes are available.

Applicants must inform the Research Office (or other appropriate office) of their institution of their intent to submit an application to the scheme. **Canvassing** by or on behalf of applicants will render an application automatically ineligible. When this occurs, the application will not proceed to the competition proper.

**Applications under Strand 2B will be accepted in English only. Applications under Strand 1L and Strand 2A will be accepted in either the Irish or the English language only.** In order to facilitate evaluation by the International Assessment Board in English, applicants submitting Irish language applications are invited to submit an English

language translation of their application. If an English translation is not provided by an applicant, the IRC will provide a translation to the International Assessment Board.

The IRC strongly encourages applicants to submit through the online system **well in advance** of the closing date for the competition on the day that the call closes. There is likely to be heavy traffic on the server, which may slow down the submission of your proposal. To prevent problems with heavy server traffic, do not wait until the final day of the call to submit your application. If you need to upload materials, allow the upload to fully complete.

## 8.6 FAQs

Any queries relating to this Call Document, or the operation of the scheme generally, should be submitted to the relevant Research Office/Officer of the HEI or RPO in the first instance. In the interest of transparency and fairness to all applicants, the IRC Executive will not discuss queries over the telephone.

A list of all queries not resolved by the Research Office should then be submitted as a batch to [projects@research.ie](mailto:projects@research.ie) by the designated Research Officer within [eligible institutions](#). The FAQ document on the IRC website will be updated on a weekly basis until the FAQ deadline.

For details of evaluation procedures and criteria for COALESCE, please see [Appendix 4](#).

## Appendix 1

### National Challenge framework: Ireland's National Strategic Outcomes

The Government describes the [National Planning Framework \(NPF\)](#) as its “high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for our people, and to protect and enhance our environment - from our villages to our cities, and everything around and in between” (p. 10).

“The NPF is a long-term Framework that sets out how Ireland can move away from the current, ‘business as usual’ pattern of development” (p. 20).

Ireland 2040 is predicated on “a shared set of goals for every community across the country. These goals are expressed in the Framework as National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs)” (p. 10). The COALESCE research fund adopts the set of National Strategic Outcomes to underpin a national challenge-based approach.

#### The NSOs are as follows:

1. Compact Growth
2. Regional Accessibility
3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
4. Sustainable Mobility
5. A Strong Economy
6. High Quality International Connectivity
7. Enhanced Amenity and Heritage
8. Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society
9. Sustainable Management of Water, Waste, and other Environmental Resources
10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health services

Overleaf is provided a contextual statement, drawn from the National Planning Framework, on each of the NSOs. Applicants should consult [Ireland 2040](#) and the National Development Plan for further information on each of the NSOs.





## National Strategic Outcomes 1-6



### Compact Growth

Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. All our urban settlements contain many potential development areas, centrally located and frequently publicly owned, that are suitable and capable of re-use to provide housing, jobs, amenities and services, but which need a streamlined and co-ordinated approach to their development, with investment in enabling infrastructure and supporting amenities, to realise their potential. Activating these strategic areas and achieving effective density and consolidation, rather than more sprawl of urban development, is a top priority.



### Enhanced Regional Accessibility

A co-priority is to enhance accessibility between key urban centres of population and their regions. This means ensuring that all regions and urban areas in the country have a high degree of accessibility to Dublin, as well as to each other. Not every route has to look east and so accessibility and connectivity between places like Cork and Limerick, to give one example, and through the Atlantic Economic Corridor to Galway as well as access to the North-West is essential.



### Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities

Rural areas play a key role in defining our identity, in driving our economy and our high-quality environment and must be a major part of our country's strategic development to 2040. In addition to the natural resource and food sector potential as traditional pillars of the rural economy, improved connectivity, broadband and rural economic development opportunities are emerging which offer the potential to ensure our countryside remains and strengthens as a living and working community.



### High-Quality International Connectivity

This is crucial for overall international competitiveness and addressing opportunities and challenges from Brexit through investment in our ports and airports in line with sectoral priorities already defined through National Ports Policy and National Aviation Policy and signature projects such as the second runway for Dublin Airport and the Port of Cork - Ringaskiddy Redevelopment.



### Sustainable Mobility

In line with Ireland's Climate Change mitigation plan, we need to progressively electrify our mobility systems moving away from polluting and carbon intensive propulsion systems to new technologies such as electric vehicles and introduction of electric and hybrid traction systems for public transport fleets, such that by 2040 our cities and towns will enjoy a cleaner, quieter environment free of combustion engine driven transport systems.



### A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills

This will depend on creating places that can foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. It can be achieved by building regional economic drivers and by supporting opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places. Delivering this outcome will require the coordination of growth and place making with investment in world class infrastructure, including digital connectivity, and in skills and talent to support economic competitiveness and enterprise growth.



## National Strategic Outcomes 7-10



### Enhanced Amenities and Heritage

This will ensure that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life. It will require investment in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, as well as recreational infrastructure. It also includes amenities in rural areas, such as national and forest parks, activity-based tourism and trails such as greenways, blueways and peatways. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place.



### Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society

The National Climate Policy Position establishes the national objective of achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050. This objective will shape investment choices over the coming decades in line with the National Mitigation Plan and the National Adaptation Framework. New energy systems and transmission grids will be necessary for a more distributed, renewables-focused energy generation system, harnessing both the considerable on-shore and off-shore potential from energy sources such as wind, wave and solar and connecting the richest sources of that energy to the major sources of demand.



### Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources

Ireland has abundant natural and environmental resources such as our water sources that are critical to our environmental and economic well-being into the future. Conserving and enhancing the quality of these resources will also become more important in a crowded and competitive world as well as our capacity to create beneficial uses from products previously considered as waste, creating circular economic benefits.



### Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services

Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful and competitive places. Compact, smart growth in urban areas and strong and stable rural communities will enable the enhanced and effective provision of a range of accessible services.

## Appendix 2

### Strand 1L: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

#### IRISH NATIONAL STRATEGIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH (INSTAR+) PROGRAMME 2024-2026

*Strand funded by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in partnership with the Heritage Council*

#### Introduction

In 2008, the Heritage Council and the then Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht launched the Irish National Strategic Archaeological Research (INSTAR) Programme. This was in response to a need identified for the state to support a competitive and collaborative archaeological research programme that would bring about transformative change in the quality of archaeological research.

Over subsequent years to 2014, INSTAR funded the completion of a number of research projects addressing key archaeological questions in areas such as Neolithic agriculture, ancient human remains and early medieval settlement, as well as building research capacity, and helping to respond to the issue of unpublished archaeological excavations.

The National Monuments Service (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage now seeks to launch a revitalised INSTAR programme, INSTAR+, in partnership with the Heritage Council and administered by the Irish Research Council under the COALESCE Research Fund. Applications for 24-month collaborative projects are invited from [Eligible Higher Education Institutions \(HEIs\) and Research-Performing Organisations \(RPOs\)](#).

The objective of the INSTAR+ awards is to fully realise the potential of Ireland's archaeological record, transforming our understanding of how Ireland's society has evolved. The main objective of INSTAR+ will be to ensure that the large amounts of archaeological work, previously undertaken in the context of development-led excavations, is translated into knowledge about Ireland's past.

#### Objectives of INSTAR+:

Aligning with the policy objectives of the National Monuments Service and the Heritage Council, INSTAR+ seeks to:

- contribute to a better understanding of Ireland's archaeological heritage by tackling key questions about our past.
- support the development of a better understanding of past societies in Ireland.

- ensure that the highest standards in archaeological research are achieved and are disseminated to a wide audience.
- encourage interdisciplinarity between archaeologists and practitioners from other disciplines to address crucial research questions and grow partnerships that could make an important contribution to understanding our past.
- attract researchers from other disciplines, for example, science and environmental research.
- encourage the creation of strategic partnerships and alliances in Irish archaeological research through increased cross-sectoral national and international collaboration.
- elicit proposals from researchers with a proven research track record in Irish research institutions working with at least one archaeological consultancy/SME. Partnerships with community groups, other state bodies and/or international partners will also be welcomed.
- a key difference in INSTAR+2021 and previous iterations of this programme is the need to involve community groups in project proposals, so as to increase public understanding of place and the significance of collections.
- cultivate and grow high-quality archaeological research in Ireland.
- support projects that require short- to medium-term funding.

INSTAR+ is based around the following themes:

1	Cultural Identity, Territories and Boundaries
2	Resources, Technology and Craft
3	Exchange and Trade
4	Religion and Ritual
5	Environment and Climate Change
6	Landscapes and Settlement
7	Archaeology and Contemporary Society

**Proposals must be directly related to one or more of the themes outlined above.**

Explanations of these themes are articulated in the Heritage Council’s 2007 [Research Needs in Irish Archaeology](#) document. A process of updating this document through the production of a national archaeological research framework will shortly commence, led by the Discovery Programme, working in partnership with the National Monuments Service, the Heritage Council, and the wider archaeological sector. It is anticipated that this will inform future research calls.

Applications must contain an explicit and reasoned statement (within the Project Proposal document) of how the research relates to substantive area(s) of enquiry within one of the thematic areas. Applications of an interdisciplinary nature are welcome.

In addition to the standard reporting requirements outlined in the COALESCE Call Document, award-holders under this strand will be required to undertake:

- One bilateral meeting with NMS and Heritage Council per year;
- A larger dissemination event at the end of the project (with a range of colleagues/stakeholders);
- Organise a public event during Heritage Week.

The INSTAR+ awards have been designed to facilitate the clustering of archaeologists to carry out joint research activities in areas of strategic importance, while also giving the time and resources to attract and to cultivate strong sectoral and interdisciplinary partnerships between academic and private-sector archaeological stakeholders and local communities that can inform and enhance research programmes and wider knowledge.

Knowledge transfer and engagement with different sectors of the profession, and other disciplines, are vital in the development of the INSTAR+ awards.

**Projects involving large-scale archaeological excavations are not eligible for funding.**

Specifically targeted excavation carried out on a small scale to recover dating material, environmental samples or to answer key questions arising from previous works, if justified by a clear research context, will be considered. However, it should be noted that the primary focus of the INSTAR+ awards is not to fund additional excavations.

In the case of project proposals involving results from pre-development archaeological excavation, applicants must be able to demonstrate that the developer has fully complied with regulatory obligations in terms of submission of final excavation reports at the conclusion of the post-excavation process. Each applicant will be expected to indicate why any previously allocated post-excavation funding was not sufficient to complete the excavation report. A key aim in assessing applications that have derived from pre-development archaeological excavation will be in bringing added value to the data, putting it into a wider research context, synthesizing the results of excavations, and ensuring dissemination and not the completion basic post-excavation analysis.

Where appropriate, it is expected that the applicant will have the permission of the commissioning body, excavator(s), and/ or private company.

**Accessibility and Enjoyment**

Communication of knowledge gained is a key component of the INSTAR+ awards. Applicants will be asked to state how the research project will promote accessibility and enjoyment of our heritage throughout each project. This is to ensure that elements of new research are disseminated as widely as possible to local communities, media, and general readership publications. Accordingly, applicants must provide a dissemination and communication plan for research findings (e.g., to stakeholders including policy-makers, the research community, and the public). This should be included within the Project Proposal document. Applicants are advised to indicate specific plans to make all research outputs Open Access as swiftly as

possible; for publications, this will entail publishing in Open Access journals or placement of publications in Open Access Repositories.

### **Eligibility for Strand 1L**

Prospective applicants are advised to check [Section 4.1](#) in the Call Document to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria for this strand.

### **Application Requirements**

- Applicants must be able to show how the proposed research will develop their existing portfolio of research skills and expertise and inform their teaching or practice.
- Applicants must also demonstrate the value of their proposal to the policy and/or service communities. Please see section on eligible costs.

**The funded project must start in Q3 2024 and be completed in 24 months.**

### **Collaborative Applications**

Applicants are expected to reference research partnerships, from the following groups: the archaeological consultancy/SME sector, academic institutions on the island of Ireland, international academic and research bodies, State bodies and local community groups.

**Research consortia must be formed (i.e. three or more) from the following groups:**

- the archaeological consultancy sector,
- academic institutions on the island of Ireland,
- international academic and research bodies,
- State bodies,
- local community groups.

### **Outputs**

Successful applicants will be expected to consult with NMS/Heritage Council regarding the launch and dissemination of findings.

Awardees will produce a high-level research report (15–20 pages) for submission to the Irish Research Council and to the NMS/Heritage Council at the conclusion of the research. The report should be suitable for publication. Where relevant, the report should include consideration of the potential focus for and the value of further collaborative research. This is additional to standard progress-reporting requirements.

Applications are invited for:	
Time frame	24 months from commencement of project
Funding limit per project	Max €220,000 (including overheads at 25%)

## Appendix 3

### Strand 2B: Department of Foreign Affairs Better World Awards 2024

This strand is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs

#### Introduction:

- The Development Cooperation and Africa Division (DCAD) of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is responsible for the management of the Irish Government's programme of international development. Ireland's development cooperation and humanitarian assistance has been integral to our overall foreign policy for over 50 years.
- [\*Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025\*](#) sets out a plan to double Ireland's worldwide scope and impact by 2025. It outlines Ireland's ambition to play a continued leadership role in creating a more equal, peaceful, and sustainable world.
- The work that Irish Aid carries out in fighting global poverty and hunger and advancing human rights is integral to Ireland's policy for International Development, A Better World. The policy focuses on 4 key policy priorities, Reducing Humanitarian need, Climate Action, Strengthened Governance and Gender Equality. These priorities are framed by the SDGs and underpinned by a recognition of the needs of those furthest behind.

#### Requirements for COALESCE Research Fund 2024:

- The Programme seeks to cultivate and to grow high-quality development research capacity both in Ireland and eligible partner countries<sup>1</sup> in response to key societal challenges linked to one of the four policy priorities outlined in [\*A Better World, Ireland's Policy for International Development\*](#). It is designed to encourage interdisciplinary approaches for knowledge generation that will produce rigorous and influential evidence and learning, with a view to impacting at a societal level in partner countries, as part of the implementation of *A Better World*.
- The Programme seeks to elicit proposals from senior researchers with a proven research track record in development in established Irish research institutions, leading consortia that must comprise of at least one research institution in an eligible partner country, working with at least one Irish research institution. Proposals must demonstrate how they will build research capacity in the partner countries; the consortium's collective capacity to address a key challenge linked to one or more of

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<sup>1</sup> Any ODA-eligible country on the African continent; any ODA-eligible Small Island Developing State (SIDS); Vietnam; Palestine; Laos; Cambodia; Myanmar.



the SDGs; and the consortium's ability to generate new knowledge that contribute to at least one of the four policy priorities in *A Better World*.

The aims of the Programme in supporting this research funding scheme are to:

- provide opportunities for new collaborations between researchers in Ireland and researchers in eligible partner countries, based around excellent research projects aligned within one or more of the four policy priorities in *A Better World* and its overarching goal to reach those furthest behind first;
- enable the development of collaborative research capacity in the partner countries through partnerships with Irish researchers, and to use this capacity to leverage success in Horizon Europe;
- generate impact on global development policy, particularly within the policy community of the partner country and in line with *A Better World* priorities;
- enhance the contribution of the Irish research system to the sustainable development agenda;
- encourage a challenge-based approach to research, building national and collaborative capacity in this regard, with resulting outcomes for poor and vulnerable target groups.

This 'open call' for research proposals should consider how a strategic approach to dissemination and policy impact will be established from the outset, including the identification of key stakeholders and communication channels, in line with DFA's objective to increase policy uptake of research. In addition to the standard reporting requirements outlined in these Terms and Conditions, award-holders under this strand will be required to undertake one bilateral meeting with DCAD per year and a larger dissemination event at the end of the project (with a range of DFA colleagues/stakeholders).

The Programme has identified the following four policy priority areas, all of which come under the wider goal of **reaching those furthest behind first**:

- *Gender Equality*
- *Reduced Humanitarian Need*
- *Climate Action*
- *Strengthened Governance.*

Proposals must be directly related to the requirements outlined above.

The Programme requires that proposals made in response to the DFA strand 'open call' for non-predefined projects should demonstrate awareness of existing research in the area and outline how the proposal will build upon existing published research and other relevant national and international research.

### **Application Requirements**

Applicants must be able to show how the proposed research will develop their existing portfolio of research skills and expertise and inform their teaching or practice.

Applicants must also demonstrate the value of their proposal to the policy and/or service communities. Please see Section 3 for details on eligible costs.

**Please note that the PI will be required to upload a statement (1 page PDF) outlining their track record (if any) in collaborating with the co-PI, together with a case for why the two parties are a good fit for the proposed project.**

**The funded project must start in Q3 2024 and be completed in 36 months.**

Successful awardees will be expected to link with the Programme:

- A specified contact person will be nominated by DFA (Research Lead, Policy Unit, DCAD)
- DFA must be consulted with regard to the launch and dissemination of findings.
- Awardees must comply with acknowledgement requirements as set out by the [Irish Research Council](#) and DFA.
- Awardees must adhere to reporting requirements as outlined in the COALESCE Terms and Conditions. Reports will be prepared by the grant recipients who are conducting the research (as requested by the Irish Research Council) in a format agreed in advance with DFA and will include reference to all contributions received in the period under review in respect of the strategic partnership programme to confirm that there has been no duplication of funding.

To this end:

Applications are invited for:	
Time frame	36 months from commencement of project
Funding limit per project	Max €350,000 (including overheads at 25%)

## Appendix 4

### Evaluation Procedures and Criteria

All applications to the Scheme will be evaluated on a competitive basis under a two-stage process. Stage 1 will comprise of a remote peer-review assessment whereby applications will be sent for remote evaluation as part of a peer-review process. A shortlist of applications will proceed to Stage 2 and will be evaluated by an international assessment board (IAB) who will select proposals for funding.

The primary purpose of the IAB is to arrive at a *qualitative* ranking of the applications. The IAB will rank the applications on the basis of the information supplied and will arrive at an overall judgement of standard. All IAB members are subject to an agreed Code of Conduct.

Applications will be evaluated according to the following five-stage process:

1. Eligibility and adherence to Terms and Conditions;
2. Evaluation by peer review;
3. Pre-meeting evaluation of shortlisted applications by IAB members;
4. IAB meeting to qualitatively rank each application and determine suitability for funding;
5. Feedback to eligible applicants.

The IRC's decision on whether to award a grant under this Scheme shall be final. Applicants will be informed of the outcome in writing and anonymised feedback will be provided to all eligible applicants. The IRC Executive are precluded from discussing the results of the competition over the telephone.

### Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for each of the strands is set out below.

<b>Strand 1L Evaluation Criteria</b>		
<b>Evaluation Criterion</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Mark/100</b>
Quality of proposal	<p>Suitability of the proposal's concept and objectives in relation to the parameters of the strand, to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ the potential of the proposed research to inform policy in the partner strand theme;</li> <li>➤ the potential of the project to contribute to the future development of research in the topic area.</li> </ul> <p>Comprehensiveness and quality of the approach to be adopted, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ research methodology;</li> <li>➤ data management;</li> <li>➤ consideration of ethical and sex-gender issues;</li> <li>➤ limitations of the approach to be adopted.</li> </ul> <p>The experience and expertise of the applicant relevant to the proposed project including demonstration of a proven ability to carry out the work in an impartial and objective manner.</p>	45
Policy collaboration and impact	<p>Evidence of the identification and integration of key stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ engagement with relevant policy community;</li> <li>➤ national and/or international research partners;</li> <li>➤ strategic approach to collaboration, including in dissemination;</li> <li>➤ other resources committed by stakeholders/partners.</li> </ul>	25
Feasibility of the implementation and management of the proposed project	<p>Feasibility of project plan including timeline;</p> <p>Proposed management of the project including an ability to deliver key outputs on time, clarity of description of milestones and feasibility and suitability of timescales.</p>	20
Proposed cost and value for money	<p>Appropriate allocation of resources and demonstrated value for money to include a full description of costs, justification for these costs and a plan to ensure best use of resources.</p>	10

<b>Strand 2A Evaluation Criteria</b>		
<b>Evaluation Criterion</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Mark/100</b>
Quality of proposal	<p>Suitability of the proposal's concept in relation to the intention of the scheme, to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The significance and contribution of the proposed project to the specific field of research or research topic.</li> <li>➤ The interdisciplinary approach and its relevance to national and/or global challenges addressed by the proposal.</li> </ul> <p>Comprehensiveness and quality of the approach to be adopted including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ research methodology;</li> <li>➤ data management;</li> <li>➤ consideration of ethical and sex-gender issues;</li> <li>➤ limitations of the approach to be adopted.</li> </ul> <p>The experience and expertise of the applicants relevant to the proposed project including demonstration of a proven ability to carry out the work in an impartial and objective manner.</p>	45
Collaboration and impact	<p>Potential for further capacity-building (for example, consortia building on interdisciplinary projects for European funding programmes).</p> <p>Evidence of the integration of cross-sectoral collaboration, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ non-academic partners secured;</li> <li>➤ coherence, credibility of collaboration, innovative aspects;</li> <li>➤ co-funding from partners;</li> <li>➤ other resources committed by cross-sector partners.</li> </ul>	25
Feasibility of the implementation and management of the proposed project	<p>Feasibility of project plan including timeline;</p> <p>Proposed management of the project including an ability to deliver key outputs on time, clarity of description of milestones and feasibility and suitability of timescales.</p>	20

Proposed cost and value for money	Appropriate allocation of resources and demonstrated value for money to include a full description of costs, justification for these costs and a plan to ensure best use of resources.	10
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<b>Strand 2B Evaluation Criteria</b>		
<b>Evaluation Criterion</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Mark/100</b>
Quality of proposal, including policy impact	<p>Suitability of the proposal's concept in relation to the intention of the scheme, to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The significance and contribution of the proposed project to the chosen DFA thematic focus;</li> <li>➤ The potential of the project to contribute to the development of global development policy, particularly in partner country/ies.</li> </ul> <p>Comprehensiveness and quality of the approach to be adopted, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ research methodology;</li> <li>➤ data management;</li> <li>➤ consideration of ethical and sex-gender issues;</li> <li>➤ limitations of the approach to be adopted.</li> </ul> <p>The experience and expertise of the applicants relevant to the proposed project including demonstration of a proven ability to carry out the work in an impartial and objective manner.</p>	45
Collaboration and capacity	<p>Potential for the project to support enhanced research capacity in partner countries;</p> <p>Potential for the project to enhance global north-south partnership targeting future applications to FP9 and/or other international funding opportunities;</p> <p>Evidence of the integration of cross-sectoral policy or civil society partners.</p>	25
Feasibility of the implementation and management of the proposed project	<p>Feasibility of project plan including timeline;</p> <p>Proposed management of the project including an ability to deliver key outputs on time, clarity of description of milestones and feasibility and suitability of timescales.</p>	20
Proposed cost and value for money	<p>Appropriate allocation of resources and demonstrated value for money to include a full description of costs, justification for these costs and a plan to ensure best use of resources on a transnational basis.</p>	10

## Appendix 5

### Guidance on the Sex-Gender Dimension in Research Content

#### Introduction

Excellent research fully considers the potential biological sex and social gender dimensions as key analytical and explanatory variables. If relevant sex-gender issues are missed or poorly addressed, research results will be partial and potentially biased. Full consideration of the sex-gender dimension in research content is a requirement for all Irish Research Council awards and for Horizon Europe funding.

The following is provided to help applicants complete the Sex-Gender dimension statement in the application. This is taken from the Toolkit [Gender in EU-funded research](#), which aims to give the research community practical tools to integrate gender aspects into their research, including equal opportunities for women and men and the sex-gender dimension of research, thereby contributing to excellence in research. Please also refer to <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/> for examples of case studies in Science, Health & Medicine, Engineering and Environment.

#### A summary from the ‘Toolkit Gender in EU-funded research’

**The best possible research validity:** Investing in a sex-gender-sensitive approach to the research content makes for higher quality and validity. If research takes into account the differences between men and women in the research population, the results will be more representative. General categories such as ‘people’, ‘patients’ or ‘users’ do not distinguish between men and women.

Research based on such categories may well draw partial conclusions based on partial data. For example, research on a new breast cancer treatment should include male patients, so as to draw a complete picture. Most basic research with animal models focuses on males to the exclusion of females (Zucker et al., 2010; Marts et al., 2004). Research on economic migrants cannot limit itself to male points of view if it wants to understand the whole migrant population.

#### How to consider the potential gender dimension and implications for your research

**Research ideas and hypotheses:** The relevance of sex-gender for and within the subject matter needs to be analysed and an assessment made of the state of knowledge in this respect. The formulation of hypotheses can draw upon previous research and existing literature. Indeed, the body of knowledge on sex-gender issues has been steadily growing over recent decades and can serve as interesting reference material to build new hypotheses for future research.

**Project design and research methodology:** While research methodologies may vary, they all strive to represent (aspects of) reality. Whenever this reality concerns humans, any sound methodology should differentiate between the sexes and take into account the men’s and women’s situations equally. Groups such as ‘citizens’, ‘patients’, ‘consumers’, ‘victims’ or ‘children’ are therefore too general as categories.



## Research implementation

**Data collection tools** (such as questionnaires and interview checklists) need to be gender-sensitive, use gender neutral language, and should make it possible to detect the different realities of men and women. This will help to avoid gender bias. For example, answers to be provided by the 'head of household' are not necessarily valid for all household members.

**Data analysis:** In most research concerning human subjects, data are routinely disaggregated by sex, which would logically lead to analyses according to sex. However, to date, this is still not common practice. Systematically taking sex as a central variable and analysing other variables with respect to it (e.g., sex and age, sex and income, sex and mobility, sex and labour) will provide significant and useful insights. Involving gender-balanced end-user groups in the course of the research is also a good way of guaranteeing the highest impact.

**Dissemination phase – reporting of data:** Collecting and analysing sex-gender-specific data is not enough if they are omitted from the published results. Sex-gender should be included in 'mainstream' publications as it is as much part of daily reality as any other variable studied. Specific dissemination actions (publications or events) for sex-gender findings can be considered. Institutions and departments that focus on gender should be included in the target groups for dissemination. Publications should use gender-neutral language.

## CHECKLIST FOR SEX-GENDER IN RESEARCH CONTENT

### Research ideas phase:

- If the research involves humans as research objects, has the relevance of sex-gender to the research topic been analysed?
- If the research does not directly involve humans, are the possibly differentiated relations of men and women to the research subject sufficiently clear?
- Have you reviewed literature and other sources relating to sex-gender differences in the research field?

### Proposal phase:

- Does the methodology ensure that (possible) sex-gender differences will be investigated: that sex-gender differentiated data will be collected and analysed throughout the research cycle and will be part of the final publication?
- Does the proposal explicitly and comprehensively explain how sex-gender issues will be handled (e.g. in a specific work package)?

- Have possibly differentiated outcomes and impacts of the research on women and men been considered?

**Research phase:**

- Are questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc. designed to unravel potentially relevant sex and/or gender differences in your data?
- Are the groups involved in the project (e.g. samples, testing groups) gender-balanced? Is data analysed according to the sex variable? Are other relevant variables analysed with respect to sex?

**Dissemination phase:**

- Do analyses present statistics, tables, figures, and descriptions that focus on the relevant sex-gender differences that came up in the course of the project?
- Are institutions, departments and journals that focus on gender included among the target groups for dissemination, along with mainstream research magazines? Have you considered a specific publication or event on sex-gender-related findings?

## Appendix 6

### The UN Sustainable Development Agenda

In 2015, the United Nations set 17 goals aiming to **end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all** as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years. Below are the Goals and a brief comment on what they relate to. Each Goal has several specific and complex targets. The Sustainable Development Goals expect everyone to get involved: governments, the private sector, civil society, and all people. More information is available [here](#), and the UN Resolution can be read [here](#).



#### **Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

Since 1990 the world has seen remarkable progress in reducing poverty. However, one in five people in developing regions still live on less than \$1.90 a day, and there are millions more who make little more than this daily amount, plus many people risk slipping back into poverty. This Goal aims at reducing poverty and inequality and eradicating extreme poverty.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>

#### **Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**

Globally, one in nine people in the world today (815 million) are undernourished. The food and agriculture sector can offer key solutions for development and is central for hunger and **poverty eradication. This Goal reflects on how we grow, share, and consume our food.**

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/>

#### **Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages is essential to sustainable development. This Goal focuses on reducing risks in children and maternal health and **HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.**

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/health/>

#### **Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. This Goal focuses on ensuring essential education for everyone, particularly children.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

**Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

**Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**

Clean, accessible water for all is essential for the world we want to live in. While there is sufficient water to cover the whole world's population needs, every year millions of people die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation, and hygiene.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/>

**Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all**

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Reducing the carbon intensity of energy is a key objective in long-term climate goals.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>

**Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

Roughly half the world's population still lives on the equivalent of about US\$2 a day. And in too many places, having a job doesn't guarantee the ability to escape from poverty. This Goal aims at rethinking economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/>

**Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**

Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. Growth in productivity and incomes, and improvements in health and education outcomes require investment in infrastructure.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/infrastructure-industrialization/>

**Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries**

There is a growing consensus that economic growth is not sufficient to reduce poverty if it is not inclusive and if it does not involve the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.

While income inequality between countries may have been reduced, inequality within countries has risen.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

**Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

The challenges cities face - such as congestion, lack of basic services, shortage of adequate housing and declining infrastructure - can be overcome in ways that allow them to continue to thrive and grow, while improving resource use and reducing pollution and poverty.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/>

**Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**

Sustainable consumption and production are about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs, and a better quality of life for all. This Goal focuses on producing and consuming water, food, and energy sustainably.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/>

**Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts:**

Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities, and countries dearly today and even more tomorrow.

To address climate change, countries adopted the [Paris Agreement](#) at the 21st Conference of the Parties (or “COP”) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris on 12 December 2015. In the agreement, all countries agreed to work to limit global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius, and given the grave risks, to strive for 1.5 degrees Celsius.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change-2/>

**Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development**

The world’s oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents, and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind. **Careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future.**

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/>

**Goal 15: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

Deforestation and desertification – caused by human activities and climate change – pose major challenges to sustainable development and have affected the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the fight against poverty.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/>

**Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels**

Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>

### **Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**

A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision, and shared goals that place people and the planet at the centre, are needed at the global, regional, national, and local level.

Urgent action is needed to mobilize, redirect, and unlock the transformative power of trillions of dollars of private resources to deliver on sustainable development objectives.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/>

## Appendix 7

### Resources on Data Management Plans and FAIR Principles

- [DMPonline](#), including [templates](#)
- [Science Europe \(2018\) Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management](#)
- [H2020 Programme \(2016\) Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020](#)
- [H2020 Programme \(2016\) Guidelines on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data in Horizon 2020.](#)
- [OpenAire](#) - The OpenAIRE2020 project
- [FAIR data principles FORCE 11](#)
- [ROAR](#) - Registry of Open Access Repositories
- [OpenDoar](#) – Directory of Open Access Repositories
- [Registry of Research Data Repositories](#)