Emerging Investigator Awards for Health (EIA) 2022

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Call Launch: 02 June 2022

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1   General

1.1   How do I apply for the Emerging Investigator Awards for Health?

All applications must be made using the HRB online Grant E-Management System GEMS
https://grants.hrb.ie.

1.2   Have there been any changes to the last round of the EIA scheme?

Please reference Section 4 "*Summary of revisions to the 2022 round*" in the Scheme guidance notes.

2   Eligibility of Lead Applicant

2.1   Can a Lead Applicant submit more than one application?

No, only one application per Lead Applicant will be considered in this round.

2.2   I am a researcher working in Northern Ireland. Can I apply?

No. Lead Applicants must have the support of a HRB approved Host Institution (HI) which will
manage the award and where the research will be predominantly conducted if the application is
successful. There are currently no HRB approved HIs located in Northern Ireland.

2.3   I am currently working in a different sector, but I would like to move into health research. Can I apply?

Yes. Applicants working in disciplines outside of health research who wish to move into health
research are eligible to apply.

2.4   I am a postdoctoral researcher on a three-year contract. Can I apply?

Yes. Postdoctoral researchers, including Research Fellows, are not restricted in terms of the duration
of the contract on which they are employed. Only academics (e.g. lecturers and other Higher
Institution or research organisation staff) are restricted to the limitation of fixed term contracts of no
longer than 2 years post call close date (19th August 2021).

2.5   I am predominantly a postdoctoral researcher, but I also hold a permanent lecturing position for just two days a week (0.4FTE). Can I apply?

Yes. A person who is in permanent academic (or other) employment at an FTE of no more than
0.5FTE is eligible to apply on a part time basis only, with a minimum of 0.5FTE dedicated to the
award.

2.6   I am a health-related researcher with less than four years postdoctoral experience, can I apply?

No, you must demonstrate at least four years of active research experience (excluding periods of
research inactivity (eg statutory leave) and/or flexible work arrangements). The four years of active

research experience does not need to be consecutive and, as such, can be a combination of FTEs (Full-time equivalent) and durations, all of which must add up to a minimum of 48 months at 1.0 FTE. You must have defended your PhD thesis in 2017 or before. If you defended your thesis in 2017 you must have taken up a Postdoctoral position by December 2017 and have no periods of research inactivity (career breaks/statutory leave etc) from that time.

2.7 I am a health and care professional in practice can I apply?

No, the EIA scheme now targets academic health researchers only. The Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards (ECSA) scheme mirrors the EIA and targets health and care practitioners involved in health research who are ready to transition towards research independence. Professionals in practice should apply to the ECSA scheme. Further details of the ECSA scheme can be found here: Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards (ECSA) 2020 (Next call due in 2022) (hrb.ie)

2.8 I am a research assistant with a PhD; and I am on a contract of over two years in duration. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Research Assistants on fixed term contracts are research based rather than academia based and, as such, are not subject to the two-year maximum contract rule applied to academics and research organisation staff members.

2.9 Is there any upper limit of years active research experience post-PhD?

No, there is no upper limit of active post PhD research in this EIA round. However, although there is no upper limit of the number of years researchers are expected to have spent in postdoctoral positions prior to application, this scheme is not targeted towards individuals who have already established research independence.

2.10 Does a Lead Applicant need to have last author publications?

There is no minimum number of publications required for eligibility. However, Lead Applicants must be able to demonstrate their contribution to scientific knowledge and the potential to become an independent investigator by describing up to five research outputs that are most relevant to this application. It is expected that Lead Applicants would have several peer-reviewed publications and other research outputs.

2.11 If the Lead Applicant has a fixed-term Academic contract of a duration of more than two years, can they apply?

No. Lead Applicants must not hold a fixed-term position (academic or other) with a contracted end date equal to or later than two years from the deadline of this call (19 August 2021). **This restriction does not apply to postdoctoral researchers**.

2.12 If the Lead Applicant is currently supervising other researchers, are they eligible to apply?

Lead Applicants are ineligible to apply if they are supervising **Postdoctoral researchers or PhD/Clinical fellows/Masters by research** <u>who are supported through an award secured by the Lead applicant as PI</u>.

Additionally, where a Lead Applicant has acted or is acting as the past, or present, primary supervisor or sponsor of an early career scholarship or fellowship (e.g. PhD, postdoctoral researcher) awarded to another individual, they are ineligible to apply.

Supervision of researchers outside of the two criteria outlined above will not render a Lead Applicant ineligible. Where an applicant has secured a relatively small award in their own name which has supported, for example, research assistants for a limited period of time this would not render them ineligible as this does not constitute them having built their own research team as PI.

2.13 I have received a peer-reviewed research grant, am I eligible to apply?

A Lead Applicant is ineligible if they have received an award in Ireland or abroad targeting the career stage of transitioning towards research independence or other peer review research grants **which support research staff**.

Fellowships, scholarships and/or peer reviewed research grants secured by the Lead Applicant as PI, **which do not support research staff**, will not render the Lead Applicant ineligible (see 2.7 above).

2.14 If I am eligible at the time of application submission but my situation changes before the final outcome will my application be withdrawn?

No. Eligibility applies to the EIA pre-application stage submission date only. Basically, if you are eligible at the submission date then your application is eligible for the whole process. Should your situation change after the 19th August 2021 but before the end of the EIA 2022 review process you should let the HRB know, however, your application will not be withdrawn.

3   Mentor, Co-Applicants, and Collaborators

Please note that full information on the Mentor and Co-applicants are required at pre-application stage. Collaborator information is not required at pre-application stage and as such collaborator information is not requested in the EIA Pre-application form, however you are advised to start identifying key collaborators early in the process.

3.1   Can the mentor be my current supervisor?

It is strongly advised that the mentor would not be the current supervisor of the Lead Applicant, and preferably would not be based in the same Department as the Lead Applicant. This is to facilitate an appropriate balance between the supporting and guiding role of the mentor, and the independence to be achieved by the Lead Applicant in terms of the mentorship arrangements. If proposing your current supervisor/sponsor as your Mentor you must properly justify your choice. It is feasible that your current Mentor could be named as your additional (local) mentor if appropriate.

3.2   Can the Mentor also be a Co-applicant?

Yes, the Mentor can also be a designated Co-applicant when properly justified by their specific role on the project.

3.3   Is the Mentor required to approve my application before I can submit it?

No, but the Mentor does need to approve their own participation on the application and complete the Mentor section.

3.4   Can all applicants have an additional Mentor?

Yes. There is no restriction in terms of who can or cannot include an additional Mentor.

3.5   Can a Co-applicant receive payment for their role on the project?

For the purposes of this scheme a Co-applicant cannot receive salary through the award unless they are not in a salaried role. Co-applicants not in a salaried role may draw salary from the award where this is highly justified in terms of the requirements from the programme of research.

3.6   Can a Co-applicant receive funding through the award?

Where justified, a Co-Applicant may receive funding for items such as running costs and personnel.

3.7   How many Co-applicants can I have?

The maximum number of Co-applicants is five. Where the Mentor is also designated a Co-applicant, you can add up to four additional Co-applicants.

3.8   What is the difference between Co-applicants and Collaborators?

A Co-Applicant has a well-defined, critical and substantial role in the conduct and steering of the proposed research. Each Co-Applicant must confirm their participation and is invited to view the application form online. An official Collaborator is an individual or an organisation who will have an integral and discrete role in delivering the research activities. Named collaborators provide specific contributions (either direct or indirect) to the project activities.

The Lead Applicant is best placed to determine whether a contributor should be a named Co-applicant or a Collaborator on the award. Please reference page 12 of the Guidance Notes for more information on Co-applicants and Collaborators.

3.9   Can a Co-applicant/Collaborator be from outside Ireland?

Yes, Co-applicants and/or Collaborators from outside Ireland are welcome where the nature of the research makes this necessary.

3.10 Do the Co-applicants have to approve my application before I can submit it?

No, Co-applicants need to approve their participation on the application and complete their own section in the form.

3.11 Will the HRB pay for visits to and from Co-applicants/Collaborators?

Yes, visits to and from Co-applicants/Collaborators where justified may be included in the application budget under running costs.

3.12 Is a Collaborator agreement form needed?

At full application stage you are required to submit a signed collaboration agreement form for each collaborator included in the proposal. These forms must be uploaded and submitted with the full application. No collaborator information (or form) is required at Pre-application stage.

3.13 Can a Collaborator be from private enterprise?

Yes, a collaborator may be from private enterprise. Collaborators from private enterprise are encouraged where they add value to the project for example in terms of access to expertise, technologies and/or reagents. The HRB does not have the capacity to broker these arrangements. The terms of the collaboration should be determined early, and relevant agreements must be in place prior to the beginning of the research programme. Consideration should be given to issues such as relative responsibilities, governance arrangements, intellectual property rights, reporting and access to data and samples.

3.14 Can a Collaborator receive payment for their role in the project?

Yes, collaborators are eligible to receive funding from the award when properly detailed and justified in the application.

4   Scope

Please carefully read pages 5 & 6 and Appendix I of the guidance notes.

4.1   I'm not sure if my application fits with the scope of the call.

Guidance and details of the research areas covered can be found in Appendix I. If, after reading this, you are still unsure if your proposal is in scope for the scheme please contact the HRB for further guidance.

4.2   What is 'actionable knowledge'?

Actionable knowledge is research evidence which will inform healthcare practice and/or policy. The HRB aims to enhance the capability of researchers to conduct research across the continuum from knowledge creation to knowledge translation and implementation into policy and practice.

4.3   Can an assessment of an intervention be proposed as part of the EIA project?

No – initial testing of an intervention can be included as a small part of a project but cannot be the main bulk of the proposed research. Trialling of interventions has a dedicated HRB funding stream (Definitive Interventions and Feasibility awards (DIFA)) and, as such, other HRB awards do not support clinical trials or assessment of interventions.

5   Funding and duration

Please note no budget details are required at Pre-application stage. Further detail on the budget will be provided at full application stage.

5.1   Do I have to request salary through the award?

Salary must be requested to ensure the applicant has protected time to conduct the research if successful.

Salary can be requested as follows:

- on full time basis (1.0 FTE) for up to four years or

- on part-time basis with at least 0.5 FTE protected time for research, funded by the HRB for up to four years. Part-time arrangements may be requested for example where an awardee wishes to combine their EIA research project with other academic activities or if their preference is to work in a part-time capacity due to personal circumstances.

5.2   How much can I apply for?

Research related costs are capped at a maximum value of **€300K**. Research related costs do not include the salary and salary related costs of the Lead Applicant. The overhead contribution to the HI will be calculated by the HRB at award stage. Awards will have an upper limit **of approximately €800K** once overheads are included.

5.3   Can research staff or PhD students be hired under EIA funding?

Yes, research staff can be requested in line with the resourcing requirements of the project. A PhD candidate can be supported under an EIA award. Any PhDs supported on an EIA award must be registered in a Higher Institution in the Republic of Ireland where they will be based.

5.4   How much is reasonable to request for research dissemination?

Dissemination and knowledge exchange activities are capped at a **maximum of €15K** unless clearly justified by outreach or similar activities.

5.5   Should I include the overhead contribution in the budget?

No, the overhead contribution to the HI is an indirect cost associated with the award. The HRB will calculate the overhead contribution to the HI and include it in the budget at award stage, prior to contracting.

5.6   What is the duration of EIA awards?

EIA awards are 48 calendar months in duration for both full-time and part-time arrangements.

6   Supporting Documentation

6.1   Is there any additional documentation which should be uploaded with my Pre-application form?

Yes. At Pre-application stage a HI letter of support confirming the Lead applicant is not recognised by the HI as an independent researcher is required. This letter should be on headed paper and signed by the Dean of Research or an equivalent appropriate designate. The HI designate approving the application for submission to the HRB is an appropriate signatory of the Letter of Support at Pre-application stage.

7   Submission

7.1   What is the GEMS submission process?

Prior to final submission to the HRB, all applications must first be reviewed and approved within GEMS by the signatory approver at the research office (or equivalent) at the Host Institution. It is critical therefore that Lead Applicants leave sufficient time in the process for the Research Office (or equivalent) in their nominated Host Institution to review, seek clarifications and approve applications prior to the final submission date and time. This may involve being aware of and complying with any internal Host Institution deadlines for review and approval, distinct from the HRB deadline.

7.2   What is the closing date for submission of Pre-applications?

All Pre-applications must be submitted to the HRB using HRB GEMS by **Thursday, 19 August 2022 at 13:00.**

7.3   How will I know that my application has been successfully submitted?

Once the HI endorses your application it will be automatically submitted to the HRB to be considered for funding. A grant application reference number will be assigned to the application and you will receive a confirmation email.

7.4   I have submitted my application but have just realised I have amendments to make; can I amend the application?

No, once you have submitted your application, you cannot edit or un-submit it.

8   Pre-application Review

8.1   Would a career break or a period of statutory leave put me at a disadvantage in terms of the review?

No. The Lead Applicant and Research Team are assessed on their research outputs in terms of their time spent in active research. Therefore, adjustments will be made when assessing the outputs of applicants who have had periods of research inactivity due to, for example, statutory leave.

8.2   When will I know if I was shortlisted to submit a Full application?

A Review Panel will meet to discuss all eligible applications during the second week in October 2021. We plan to notify applicants of the outcome the following week. If shortlisted, your full application form will be available to populate, within your GEMS account, at that time.

8.3   Will I receive feedback from the panel?

Yes, all applicants will receive brief feedback on the Pre-application panel discussion.