Collaborative Doctoral Awards in Patient-focused Research 2019
Pre-application stage
Frequently Asked Questions

Lead Applicant/Eligibility

Can a Lead Applicant (LA) submit more than one application?
No, only one application per Lead Applicant will be considered in this round.

Can a Lead Applicant be from outside the RoI?
No, the LA must be working in one of the HRB Host Institutions and preferably affiliated to a higher education Institution within the Republic of Ireland.

Can the application include a Co-Lead Applicant?
Yes, however, please note that a Co-Lead Applicant must fulfill all of the same eligibility criteria as required for the Lead Applicant. Lead Applicant eligibility criteria can be found on pages 11 and 12 of the guidance notes.

Can the Co-Lead Applicant be from Northern Ireland?
Yes, the Co-Lead could be based in NI if highly justified in terms of an all island, collaborative initiate.

Can an individual be listed as Lead Applicant in one application and as Core Partner in another?
There is no specific rule against this. However, if both applications are invited to submit a full application, clarification of this individual's time commitment and their specific role as core partner would be required.

Core Partners and Associated Partners

How many Core Partners can be included in one application?
Each application requires a minimum of 5 Core Partners. A maximum of 10 Core Partners is permitted.

How many Associated Partners can be included in one application?
We would expect a maximum number of 10 associated partners in each programme, however more can be proposed when properly justified.

Can Core Partners who are based in another institute receive part of the budget/overheads?
The HRB will pay the award directly to the Host Institution. The Host Institution may then provide running costs/overheads to a core partner's institute, the arrangements of which should be agreed between the two institutes.

Can an Associated Partner receive payment for their role in the project?
Yes, they are eligible to receive funding from the award when properly detailed and justified in the application.

Is a Partner Agreement Form needed?
Not at the pre-application stage, however, a Partner Agreement Form must be completed for each of the Associated Partners included in the full application.

Scope

I'm not sure if my application fits with the scope of the call. What is the definition of Patient-focused research (as per the remit of this funding programme)?
A definition of Patient-focused Research can be found on page 8 of the guidance notes. Although applications may incorporate components of health services research and/or population health relevant to patient-focused research, the work programme should focus on clinical questions (spanning all professions) with direct patient contact. This can include, for example, intervention studies, clinical trials and the use of primary patient samples. It is notable that Patient-focussed research does not include the use of pre-clinical study methodology such as, for example, cell lines or *in vivo* models.

If you are still unsure about scope please contact the HRB for further guidance.

Is it acceptable to have one clinical trial that will train, for example, 4 PhD trainees each focussing on a different theme or area over a 5 year period?
Different students could research different research questions aligned with a single trial as long as the trial itself was consistently and continuously directed by a suitably qualified person. However, the integrity of the trial itself should not be compromised in the event that one or all of the students should not complete their PhD studies. This approach would require experienced research leadership from the team.

Doctoral Programme

Can trainees register in institutions outside the RoI?
No, trainees must register with an eligible institution in the RoI. However, where properly justified, extended periods of time for international or inter-sectoral placements/collaborations may be proposed. In these instances a justification must be provided to clarify the arrangements for the trainee in terms of the cohort-based approach and the structured training.

Training Elements in the Doctoral Programme

Structured training programmes
If an Institution has a structured doctoral programme in existence and modules are already developed, is it expected that these would be leveraged and maybe tweaked to be specific in terms of the programme being proposed?

Yes, we do not expect than new modules are created for one cohort of three to five trainees. Therefore, training courses and modules already in place should be used when possible. Additional training courses/modules need to be identified for each trainee depending on specific research, methodological or professional needs.

Funding

Is any budgetary information required at pre-application stage?

No, budgetary information is not required at pre-application stage. The requested funding at full application stage can include costs such as trainee salary/stipend, PhD student fees (EU rate only), research running costs, travel costs for knowledge exchange/dissemination, training costs, administration & management and overheads. A full overview of eligible budgetary costs can be found on page 10 of the guidance notes.

What gross salary can I claim for trainees?
Each trainee can be supported with a salary and related cost <u>or</u> a stipend depending on their educational backgrounds, professional experience and career stage as follows:

- A contribution to gross salary costs (inclusive of employee's pension contribution) up to a maximum amount of Level 3, point 1 of the most up to date IUA scale **or**
- A stipend of €18,000.

Are overheads included within the €1.5 million threshold?
Yes, up to 30% of the Total Modified Direct Costs for clinical or lab based research or 25% for desk based research should be included within the €1.5M funding limit.

How is the overhead contribution calculated?
The overhead allowance is 30% for lab based research or 25% for desk based research of total direct modified costs (TDMC), which excludes student fees and equipment..

What costs are included in the overhead contribution?
The overhead contribution includes costs such as: recruitment costs, bench fees, office space, software, contribution to gases, bacteriological media preparation fees, waste fees, bioinformatics access. A comprehensive outline of eligible overhead costs can be found in the HRB overheads policy at the following link: **Health Research Board: Use of Research Overheads**

Can I hire a consultant to carry out part of the project?
Yes, this cost should be included under running costs.

<u>Supporting Documentation</u>

What documents should be uploaded with my application form?
There are no mandatory support documents to be uploaded and submitted. However, you may upload a support document to the training programme if you wish.

Do I need to upload a signature page with my application?
No, online application approval is now required. As part of the new online application process you will be asked to select the **Dean of Research or equivalent person** authorised to endorse research grant applications for your Host Institution. Their approval is necessary to enable submission of the application to the HRB. **Please note that as part of the online system the Host Institutions will approve and submit each application on behalf of the applicant.**

When the application is submitted for approval online, an email notification is sent to the selected signatory informing them that their approval is requested. The signatory may then approve the application or reject with amendments. If a signatory rejects the application the Lead Applicant will be notified, along with any feedback the signatory has supplied. The application can then be amended and re-submitted; it will be returned to the signatory and continues through the approval process as before. Once the signatory approves the application it is submitted automatically to the HRB to be considered for funding. A grant application number will be assigned to the application and a confirmation email will be sent to the Lead Applicant.

Submission

What is the 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) of your Host Institution (see Appendix V of Guidance Notes). 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. This may involve being aware of and complying with any internal Host Institution deadlines for review and approval, distinct from the HRB deadline.

What is the closing date for submission of applications?
All pre-applications must be submitted to the HRB by the Host Institution's Research Office, using HRB GEMS by **Thursday, 10 January at 13.00**.

How will I know that my application has been successfully submitted?
Once the HI endorses your application it will be sent automatically to the HRB to be considered for funding. A grant application number will be assigned to the application and you will receive a confirmation email.

I have submitted my application but have just realised I have amendments to make; can I amend the application?
No, once your application has been submitted to the HRB you cannot edit it or re-submit it.