Research Collaborative in Quality and Patient Safety

Pre-application Guidance Notes 2021

Key Dates

Call open to applicants	**4 May 2021**
Closing date for application	**10 June 2021**

Pre-applications should be sent electronically to RCQPS at rcqps@rcpi.ie no later than 12 pm on 10 June 2021

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1. Background

The Research Collaborative in Quality and Patient Safety (RCQPS) is a collaborative initiative between the Health Research Board (HRB), the Health Service Executive, The National Quality Improvement Team (HSE NQI Team) and the Royal College of Physicians Ireland (RCPI) established in 2013 to advance nationally relevant research in the area of quality and patient safety (QPS). This award scheme is co-funded by the HRB and the HSE NQI Team. RCPI manage the application and peer review process and the HRB manage funded projects.

The model used for this scheme involves research questions being formulated by knowledge users and engaging knowledge users in the research process from idea formulation to dissemination and implementation. Once a research question has been identified knowledge users will work together with research teams to develop their proposal.

This model has been proposed as the most likely to ensure that research findings are relevant and responsive and can influence decision making in the health and social care system[1],[2]. A **knowledge user** is defined as one in a position of authority to influence and/or make decisions about health policy or the delivery of services and can act to ensure that the findings of the research will be translated to influence decision making and change within their (or other) organisations. The knowledge user may be a clinical care programme lead, a professional body lead, a health-system manager, policy-maker, health professional or clinician who is in a position to make significant changes to policy or practice. Knowledge user organisations may be Government departments, agencies, hospitals, local government, voluntary organisations, research charities, patient/consumer groups or other organisations involved in making decisions regarding the management, structuring and/or delivery of practice or policy in the Irish health and social care system.

Quality in healthcare includes a number of domains: patient centred, safety, effectiveness, equity, timeliness, efficiency, sustainability and health and wellbeing.

The HSE's Framework for Improving Quality, defines Quality Improvement (QI) as the combined and unceasing efforts of everyone – healthcare professionals, patients and their families, researchers, commissioners, providers and educators – to make the changes that will lead to:

- ✓ Better patient outcomes
- ✓ Better experience of care
- ✓ Continued development and supporting of staff in delivering quality of care

RCQPS provides **<u>themes</u> of national priority in the area of QPS** under which applicants should focus their proposed research questions.

The RCQPS is now inviting pre-applications from research teams consisting of knowledge users and academic researchers to conduct high quality prioritised research in the area of QPS that will create

[1] See Sibbald et al. (2014). Research funder required research partnerships: a qualitative inquiry. Implementation Science, 9:176.

[2] Rycroft-Malone et al. (2015) Collective action for knowledge mobilisation: a realistic evaluation of the Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC), Health Services and Delivery Research, Vol 3; No 44. http://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hsdr/volume-3/issue-44

knowledge and evidence for the national health system. Innovative and traditional methods suited to the research question are welcomed, particularly those compatible with a QI approach.

2. The 2021 Theme

In 2021, applications are invited under the following theme:

Using a Quality Improvement approach to design novel interventions, systems or processes to deliver care based on the needs that have arisen from the direct or indirect impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in Irish health and social care at one of the following levels:

- service delivery level (e.g. older persons and frailty)
- healthcare organisation level (e.g. Patient and public involvement, staff wellbeing, trust and autonomy of teams)
- population level (e.g. mental health, children's development, public health)

In your application you are asked to demonstrate how you intend to use Quality Improvement and Patient Safety science and methodologies in your research

3. Aims and Objectives

The overarching **aim** of the RCQPS Awards is to support high quality research projects where knowledge users and academic researchers collaborate to focus on QPS research questions that are determined by the **documented evidence needs** of the Irish health care system. Research findings from awards need to have a strong potential to be implemented after the end of grant.

Note: Documented needs relate to the research priorities or needs of the knowledge user. The proposed research should be explicitly linked to the documented evidence needs of the knowledge user's organisation/s and this should be made clear in the application. It is the responsibility of the knowledge user applicant to clearly define what these are and to make the case for their importance.

The **objectives** of RCQPS Awards are to:

1. Facilitate high quality QPS research of issues of national priority with the potential to make a real difference to the Irish health service
2. Enhance collaboration between healthcare and research communities.

4. Scope

This scheme supports clearly defined QPS research projects of up to 24 months duration where the findings from the **research will have a direct impact on the decision making of the knowledge user's organisation/s**. The research question should fit with the QPS theme identified and be relevant to national health priorities. Applications that use methodologies considered novel for the area of QPS are particularly welcome. Examples include, but are not limited to, the use of anthropological and ethnographical research methods.

The proposed research should be explicitly linked to the documented evidence needs of the knowledge user organisation/s and it must be clear from the application how the knowledge user/s is integrated throughout the research process. The research question must be able to be answered by the research partnership and the application should include a clear and concise knowledge translation plan that will highlight how the research findings will be applied by the knowledge user organisation/s.

This scheme will not fund:

- Proposals that do not fall under the QPS themes identified for this call.
- Proposals that are solely literature reviews, audits, surveys, needs assessments or technology development (although these elements may be part of an integrated research study).
- Applications from individuals applying for, holding, or employed under a research grant from the tobacco industry.
- Applications which are solely **or** predominately health service developments/evaluations without inclusion of a substantive research element that aims to identify, develop or implement opportunities to improve the service/programme;
- Applications which are solely **or** predominately developing the infrastructure for biobanking, databases or patient registers.

Where an application is outside the scope of the scheme, the application will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted for review.

5. Funding Available and Award Duration

RCQPS awards provide funding up to a maximum award value of **€280,000** (inclusive of overheads) for projects of up to 24 months. Quality permitting, 2 awards will be funded.

The award will offer research related costs including salary-related costs, running costs (including small items of equipment), FAIR data management costs, dissemination costs and overhead contribution (based on the HRB Policy on Overhead Use). The budget requested, and award duration must reflect the scale and nature of the proposed research, and reviewers will thoroughly assess the level of funds and timeframe requested when reviewing the proposal.

Note: RCQPS Awards do not fund the salary and related costs of tenured academic staff within research institutions (including buy out from teaching time etc.).

6. Eligibility Criteria of Applicant Team

Pre-applications should be made on behalf of a team which is made up of researchers and knowledge users. This is a requirement of the scheme. The applicant team should designate a Lead Applicant from the research team and the knowledge user team.

The applicant team must demonstrate clearly that the appropriate and relevant partners are involved in order to achieve the objectives set out in these Guidance Notes and the objectives of the research proposal.

6.1 Lead Applicant – Researcher

The Lead Applicant Researcher will serve as the primary point of contact for the RCPI/HRB during the review process and on the award, if successful. The Lead Applicant will be responsible for the scientific and technical direction of the research programme. He/she has primary fiduciary responsibility and accountability for carrying out the research within the funding limits awarded and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the HRB.

The Lead Applicant **must**:

- Hold a post (permanent or a contract that covers the duration of the award) in a HRB recognised Host institution in the Republic of Ireland (the "Host Institution") as an independent investigator. For clinicians, an adjunct position in a HRB recognised Host Institution is acceptable, **OR**
- Be an individual who will be recognised by the Host Institution upon receipt of the RCQPS award as an independent investigator who will have a dedicated office and research space for the duration of award, for which he/she will be fully responsible. The Lead Applicant does not necessarily need to be employed by the Host Institution at the time of the application submission.

The Lead Applicant **must** show evidence of achievement as an independent researcher in his/her chosen research field by:

a) Demonstrating a record of research output, with at least three publications of original research in peer reviewed journals. Where appropriate, they should also provide evidence of other outputs such as published book chapters, reports to government and/or any other relevant outputs that have resulted in a significant impact in their field.
b) Demonstrating record of independence by showing that they have secured at least one peer-reviewed research grant for a research project/s, as either the Lead Applicant or a Co-Applicant. Funding received for travel to seminars/conferences and/or small personal bursaries will not be considered in this regard.
c) Show evidence that they possess the capability and authority to manage and supervise the research team.

Only one application per Lead Applicant to this scheme will be considered. Where an applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria, the application will be deemed ineligible and will not be accepted for review. The RCQPS will contact the Lead Applicant in the event that this situation arises.

6.2 Lead Applicant – Knowledge User

What is a Knowledge user?

A knowledge user is defined as one in a position of authority to influence and/or make decisions about health policy or the delivery of services and can act to ensure that the findings of the research will be translated to influence decision making and change within their (or other) organisations. The Knowledge user will have identified the QPS research question that needs addressing. The knowledge user may be a clinical care programme lead, a professional body lead, health-system manager, policy-maker, health professional or clinician who is in a position to make significant changes to policy or practice. Knowledge user organisations may be Government departments, agencies, hospitals, local government, voluntary organisations, research charities, patient/consumer groups or other organisations involved in making decisions regarding the management, structuring and/or delivery of practice or policy in the Irish health and social care system.

Lead Applicant Knowledge User

While there may be one or more knowledge user organisations involved, the Lead Applicant-Knowledge User should provide details on the strategic relevance of the project in the context of national priorities and in the context of the knowledge users listed in the application. They should describe how the question was formulated, refined and agreed, describe how their roles and position will enable them to influence change and action, summarise what prior experience (if any) they have of working with researchers, their plans for collaboration throughout the research process and the time and resources they are committing to the project.

6.3 Co-Applicants

Co-Applicants will be asked to select whether they are a **Researcher, Knowledge User** or a **PPI Contributor co-applicant** for the purpose of the proposed research. Up to a maximum of 10 Co-Applicants can be included.

A Co-Applicant has a well-defined, critical and substantial role in the conduct and steering of the proposed research. Co-Applicants from outside of the Republic of Ireland are welcome where this is appropriately justified in terms of added value for the project. A Co-Applicant may receive funding for items such as running costs and personnel but cannot receive support towards his/her own salary if they are in salaried positions. However, Co-applicants can request their own salary, depending on their role and percentage of time dedicated to the research for the duration of the award if they are contract/independent investigators.

Note: It is not mandatory to have 10 Co-Applicants, but this is to allow for flexibility should this be appropriate.

The terms of any co-proposal should be determined early and relevant written agreements should be in place prior to the onset of the project. Consideration should be given to issues such as relative responsibilities, governance arrangements, intellectual property rights, reporting and access to data and samples when establishing co-proposal agreements.

6.3.1 Public and Patient and Carer Involvement (PPI)

What is PPI?

The RCQPS promotes the active involvement of members of the public, patients and carers in the research that we fund[3]. Public, Patient and Carer Involvement (PPI) is research carried out 'with' or 'by' members of the public rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them[4]. PPI, as defined here, is distinct from and additional to activities which raise awareness, share knowledge and create a dialogue with the public and it is also distinct from recruitment of patients/members of the public/carers as participants in research.

PPI represents an active partnership between members of the public, patients and carers, and researchers in the research process. This can include, for example, involvement in the choice of research topics, assisting in the design, advising throughout or at particular decision points of the research project or in carrying out the research.

PPI contributors should be actively involved and part of decision making. Involving members of the public in research can improve quality and relevance. It can:

- Provide a different perspective - even if you are an expert in your field, your knowledge and experience will be different to the experience of someone who is using the service or living with a health condition.
- Make the language and content of information such as questionnaires and information leaflets clear and accessible.
- Help to ensure that the methods proposed for the study are acceptable and sensitive to the situations of potential research participants.
- Help to ensure that the research uses outcomes that are important to the public.
- Identify a wider set of research topics than if health or social care professionals had worked alone.
- Help you increase participation in your research by making it more acceptable to potential participants.

In addition to improving relevance and quality of research, it ensures that research is influenced by broader principles of citizenship, accountability and transparency. PPI is an ethos as well as a practice. It should be context-specific and should aim to ensure that all voices are heard. Where members of the public, patients or carers are involved, they must be compensated for their time and contributions.

In the application, you are asked to describe any public involvement in your research throughout the various stages of identifying and prioritising the research question, the research design, conduct, analysis, and dissemination. We recognise that the nature and extent of active public involvement is likely to vary depending on the context of each study or award. PPI contributors should be named as Co-Applicants where justified by their level of involvement.

We strongly advise that you consult with your Host Institution who may be able to provide guidance and support on PPI in research.

[3] https://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/public-and-patient-involvement-in-research/

[4] https://www.nihr.ac.uk/patients-carers-and-the-public/i-want-to-help-with-research/

6.4 Collaborators

An official collaborator is an individual or an organisation who will have an integral and discrete role in delivering the research activities and is eligible to request funding from the award when properly justified. Named collaborators may include investigators or organisations from outside the Republic of Ireland, but an individual or organisation should **only** be named as Collaborator if they are providing specific contributions (either direct or indirect) to the activities. A collaborator may provide training, supply samples or kits, provide access to specific equipment, specialist staff time, staff placements, trials advice or support, access to data and/or patients, instruments or protocols, industry know-how, or may act in an advisory capacity. Collaborators can come from a range of backgrounds, for example academia, the private sector, a healthcare organisation, the charity sector or a patient group **(up to a maximum of 10 Collaborators can be listed)**.

Note: It not mandatory to have 10 Collaborators, but this is to allow for flexibility should this seem appropriate.

If access to samples, vulnerable population groups, data, databases or a link to an existing national or international study (e.g. an existing cohort or longitudinal study) are an integral part of the proposed project, evidence of commitment and access must be demonstrated by having the Data Controller or key Gatekeeper of a study included as a Collaborator.

The terms of any collaboration should be determined early, and relevant written agreements should be put in place prior to the onset of the project. Consideration should be given to issues such as responsibilities, governance arrangements, intellectual property rights, reporting and access to data and samples when working up collaboration agreements.

The applicant team will be asked to describe any such agreements that they have entered into to facilitate their partnership working. RCQPS and the HRB advise that consideration should be given to issues such as relative responsibilities, governance arrangements, ownership and copyright, access and sharing of data and samples etc when working up partnership proposals.

7. Host Institution

For the purposes of contracting, payment and management of the award, HRB-administered RCQPS funding can only be awarded to HRB approved Host Institutions. A HRB Host Institution is a research performing organisation that is approved by the HRB for the purpose of receiving and administering HRB grant funding and is responsible for compliance with all general and specific terms and conditions of awards. HRB Host Institution status is a requirement to submit an application under all of the HRB's award schemes. The **Host Institution for the award** is normally that of the **Lead Applicant Researcher** but it may be another organisation/institution designated by the research team, where it is clearly justified. In order to be eligible to apply for funding, an Institution must be an approved HRB Host Institution no later than two calendar months before the closing date of a call. A list of currently approved HRB Host Institutions and information on the application process for

research performing organisations to be approved as HRB Host Institutions can be found on the HRB website[5].

8. FAIR Data Management and Stewardship

Data management/stewardship plans (DMP) are nowadays widely accepted as part of good research practice. The HRB support open research[6] and open publishing directly through the HRB open research platform[7]. The HRB is now driving the making of research data **FAIR** (**F**indable, **A**ccessible, **I**nteroperable and **R**e-usable) in order to benefit science by increasing the re-use of data and by promoting transparency and accountability.

FAIR data principles[8] provide a guideline for those wishing to enhance the re-usability of their data holdings: these principles put specific emphasis on enhancing the ability of machines to automatically find and use the data, in addition to supporting its re-use by individuals. For researchers, the move to FAIR and open data, where applicable, means researchers should consider data management issues and find suitable data repositories at the research planning stage. Applicants will have to provide information about their plans for data management and data sharing at Full application stage.

9. General Data Protection Regulation

The **General Data Protection Regulation** (GDPR) came into force on 25 May 2018. As a result, the applicant team will be asked to **confirm you understand** that personal data provided as part of this application, including but not limited to CV information, may be shared with person(s) based outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) for the specific purpose of obtaining peer reviews of this application. International reviewers play a vital role in setting standards and in benchmarking our scientific community to enable them to operate in a global context. Individual peer reviewers are selected for their specific expertise in relation to submitted applications and can be based anywhere in the world.

Furthermore, by confirming participation, you will be asked to **confirm you understand** that the RCQPS uses the information you provide (regarding all applicant team members) to consider your application, contact you about your application, and if you are successful, to manage your grant throughout its lifetime in accordance with HRB general T&C for research awards. This will include contacting you with regards to monitoring of progress through written reporting and other means e.g. interim review. Information relevant to your application will be shared with the collaborating bodies - HRB, HSE NQI Team and RCPI. RCQPS and HRB will publish some basic information on successful awards including Lead Applicants (researcher and knowledge user), Host Institution, amount awarded and lay summary on our website and may highlight individual awards or researchers in more detail (with specific consent). RCQPS and HRB will also use the information you have provided to generate general statistics around our current funding portfolio, and to evaluate

[5] http://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/all-grant-policies/hrb-policy-on-approval-of-host-institutions/

[6] http://www.hrb.ie/funding/policies-and-principles/open-research/

[7] https://hrbopenresearch.org/

[8] https://www.nature.com/articles/sdata201618

our funding mechanisms and investment. After your grant has ended, RCQPS and HRB will continue to keep your information on file to allow us to evaluate the outcomes, outputs and impacts of the RCQPS investment in your research.

Please note that the RCQPS and HRB will also use information associated with *unsuccessful* applications for a number of the purposes outlined above such as generating general statistics around our current funding portfolio, and to evaluate our funding mechanisms and investment e.g. demographics of applicants, research areas of applicants. Similarly, we will use the information provided about people employed on awards to help evaluate our career support and capacity building initiatives.

To further understand why we collect the information we collect and what we do with that information, please see HRB Privacy[9] and Retention[10] Policies.

10. The Health Research Regulations

Following the implementation of GDPR a regulation for health research known as the Health Research Regulations 2018 (S.I. 314) has been implemented, with further amendments made in 2019 (S.I. 188) and 2021 (S.I. 18)[11]. These regulations outline the mandatory suitable and specific measures for the processing of personal data for the purposes of health research. They further set out that explicit consent is a mandatory safeguard that must be obtained from individuals when using their personal data for health research. Where it is not feasible to obtain explicit consent, an application for a consent declaration can be made to the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee [12].

[9] https://www.hrb.ie/about/legal/privacy-policy/

[10] https://www.hrb.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/HRB_Document_retention_policy..docx

[11] http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2021/si/18/made/en/pdf

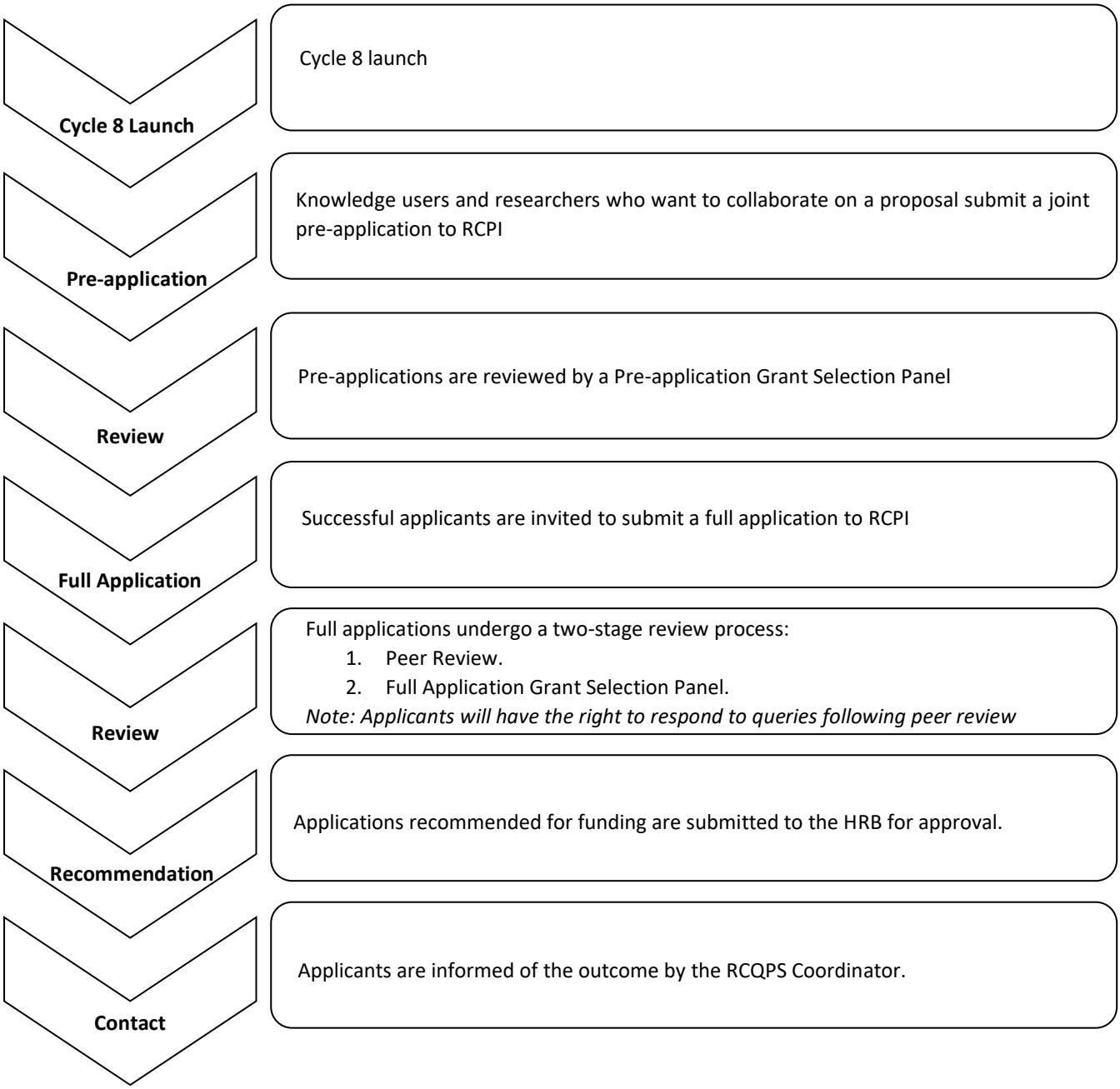
[12] https://hrcdc.ie/

11. Application Process

The RCQPS 2021 round will use a two-stage application process consisting of:

1. Open call for Pre-application **(Stage 1)**
    - Pre-application Grant Selection Panel review and shortlisting
2. Invitation of selected applicants to submit a Full Application **(Stage 2)**
    - Peer-review
    - Right to Reply
    - Full Application Grant Selection Panel review

11.1 Flow Chart of Complete RCQPS Application Process



12. Pre-application, Review Process, Gender Policy and Review Criteria

12.1 Pre- Application

Following the launch of the scheme, knowledge users and researchers interested in partaking in QPS research are invited to submit a joint pre-application. The pre-application form will focus on **(1)** the track record of the Lead Applicants (researcher and knowledge user), **(2)** details of the Research Team and **(3)** an outline of the research project focusing on the relevance of the proposed project to the theme and the potential for actionable knowledge. Pre-applications should be sent electronically to RCQPS at rcqps@rcpi.ie no later than 12pm on the closing date. For guidance in the pre-application format please consult:

1. **Appendix 1** of this document
2. **RCQPS Pre-Application Form**

12.2 Review Process

Pre-applications will be checked for eligibility of the Lead Applicants and alignment with the scope of the call and will be sent to a specially convened **Pre-application Grant Selection Panel** for analysis and comments. The pre-application grant selection panel will be composed of national and international experts. Panel members will be selected based on the range of disciplines, methodologies and expertise appropriate to the scheme.

Each pre-application will be assessed and scored according to the review criteria below. The panel will meet to discuss, review and rank all pre-applications. The panel will finalise scores and reach a consensus on prioritisation ranking. If consensus in ranking cannot be reached, the external QPS expert will have the casting decision.

A short feedback will be provided to all applicants upon completion of the review of pre-applications. Those successful at the pre-application phase will be invited to submit a full application. Guidance on full application will be provided in the Full Application Guidance Notes and the Full Application Form.

12.3 HRB Gender Policy

In line with international best practice, the **HRB Gender Policy**[13] recognises the responsibility the HRB has in supporting everyone to realise their full potential to ensure equality of opportunity and to maximise the quantity and the quality of research. To ensure fairness and equality to all applicants, each funding application received will be assessed as outlined in the call guidance documentation for that particular funding round. To ensure gender balance in decision-making, the HRB aims to reach the international best practice target of 40% of the under-represented gender in

[13] http://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/all-grant-policies/hrb-policy-on-gender-in-research-funding/

all HRB panels where possible. Gender will also be considered when appointing the position of Panel Chair.

12.4 Review Criteria

The following assessment criteria carry equal weight:

1. **Scientific criteria**
   - Does the project address a quality and patient safety priority in Ireland?
   - Will the research design and methodology answer the research question?
   - Is there evidence that the applicant team (knowledge users, researchers and PPI contributors) have developed a genuine partnership to deliver on the proposed project?
2. **Knowledge translation criterion**
   - Is there real potential for translation of the findings into policy and/or practice?

An assessment of your PPI approach may influence the assessment of any or all criteria depending on the nature of the proposed research.

13. Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest rules *are applied rigorously.* Where a conflict of interest exists, the reviewer is requested to inform the RCPI immediately so that an alternative reviewer may be appointed. International peer reviewers will not provide comments or scores on any application on which they have a conflict of interest.

Reviewers must adhere to high standards of integrity during the peer review process. They must respect the intellectual property of applicants and may not appropriate and use as their own, or disclose to any third party, ideas, concepts or data contained in the applications they review.

14. Appeals procedure

The HRB's procedure for appealing funding decisions is available at http://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/relevant-policies/

15. Timeframe for RCQPS Award Process

RCQPS Programme Launch Event	4 May 2021
Deadline for 'Pre-applications' from Knowledge Users and Researchers	10 June 2021
Pre-application Grant Selection Panel Review	13 July 2021
Invitation to submit Full Application	19 July 2021
Deadline for submission of Full Application	8 September 2021
Peer Review	13 October 2021
Right to Respond Deadline	27 October 2021
Full Application Grant Selection Panel Review	29 November 2021
Announcement of successful Research Proposal Applications	15 December 2021

Pre-application forms should be sent electronically to RCQPS at rcqps@rcpi.ie no later than 12pm on 10 June 2021

16. Contacts

For further information on the RCQPS Awards contact:
RCQPS Research Coordinator at **rcqps@rcpi.ie**

The RCQPS reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet the terms of this call.

Appendix I: Detailed Guidance on the Pre-application Form (RCQPS)

Lead Applicant Declaration

You are asked to sign a declaration stating your agreement to share personal data in application.

I understand that personal data provided as part of this application, including but not limited to CV information, may be shared with person(s) based outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) for the specific purpose of obtaining peer reviews of this application. Y/N

1. Host Institution and Signatory Notification

1.1 Host Institution

A *HRB Host Institution* is a research performing organisation that is approved by the HRB for the purpose of receiving and administering HRB grant funding and is responsible for compliance with all general and specific terms and conditions of awards. HRB Host Institution status is a requirement to submit an application under all of the HRB's award schemes. The **Host Institution for the award** is normally that of the **Lead Applicant Researcher** but it may be another organisation/institution designated by the research team, where it is clearly justified. In order to be eligible to apply for funding, an Institution must be an approved HRB Host Institution no later than two calendar months before the closing date of a call. Approved HRB Host Institutions are listed on the HRB website[14]. Information is available on the same webpage on the application process for research performing organisations to be approved as HRB Host Institutions.

2. Lead Applicant-Researcher, Lead Applicant-Knowledge User, Co-applicants and Collaborators details

2.1 Lead Applicant-Researcher's Details

Details are requested about the Lead Applicant-Researcher including their position and status (contract or permanent) and their supervisory experience. The Lead Applicant-Researcher's **contact and CV details** (Name, contact information, institution, present position, employment history, profession and membership of professional bodies) should be included as appendices.

Additional evidence of experience and expertise relevant to this application

Lead Applicant-Researcher's may also wish to include any additional experience or expertise that will support their application. For example, previous experience of working in collaboration with knowledge users to produce research or evidence for health, relevant QPS experience, evidence of how their research outcomes have been translated into areas of policy and/or practice or of links with other researchers (including those from other research disciplines), evidence of Patient Public Involvement in research that they have undertaken, recognised contributions to research for national need (if not apparent from other sections), and roles/responsibilities as a constructive and effective change agent. The word limit is **200 words**.

2.2 Lead Applicant-Knowledge User Details

Details are requested about the Lead Applicant-Knowledge User including their associated organisation, position and status (contract or permanent). The Lead Applicant - Knowledge User's

[14] http://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/all-grant-policies/hrb-policy-on-approval-of-host-institutions/

contact and CV details (Name, contact information, institution, present position, employment history, profession and membership of professional bodies) should be included as appendices.

Evidence of expertise and experience in influencing decision making

A knowledge user is defined as one in a position of authority to influence and/or make decisions about health policy or the delivery of services and that can act to ensure that the findings of the research will be translated to influence decision making and change within their (or other) organisations. Knowledge users should highlight their previous and current roles in influencing decision-making processes within their organization or other relevant organisations. They should also highlight their specific experiences and expertise for the Lead Applicant-Knowledge User role in relation to the proposed research. The word limit is **150 words**.

Additional evidence of experience and expertise relevant to this application

Lead Applicant-Knowledge User's may wish to include any additional experience or expertise that will support the application. For example, you may wish to include any relevant research experience/expertise, previous experience of working in collaboration or links with researchers to produce research or evidence for health, link, evidence of Patient Public Involvement in your knowledge user role, and roles/responsibilities as a constructive and effective change agent. If you have research expertise / experience you may wish to include relevant outputs such as publications, funding secured or other outputs. The word limit is **200 words**.

2.3 Co-Applicants' Details

The Lead Applicant Researcher can add up to 10 co-applicants to an application. Co-applicants can be either researchers, knowledge users or public and patient involvement (PPI) contributors. At the pre-application phase, a list of all proposed co-applicants should be provided.

2.4 Collaborators Details

The Lead Applicant Researcher can add up to 10 collaborators per application. At the pre-application phase, a list of all proposed collaborators should be provided.

3. Project Details

3.1 Project Title

You are asked to provide a title that clearly describes the research to which this application is related. This should be descriptive and concise and should reflect the aim of the project.

3.2 Project Abstract

This should be a succinct summary of the proposed research. This structured summary should outline the background to the research, the aims of the work, including the question to be addressed by the research, the plan of investigation and a summary of the potential impact on health and social care policy and/or practice. Ideally it provides a clear synopsis of your proposal and should set the research proposal in context. The word limit is **300 words**.

Please note that this section of the application form will be used as an overall summary, and therefore, should be a stand-alone section. Any abbreviations used elsewhere in the proposal should be defined here.

3.3 Relevance to QPS Theme

Please briefly describe how the project fits under the 2021 theme. Please note that the theme is described in Section 1 (Background) of this document. The word limit is **300 words**.

3.4 Keywords

Please enter up to **5 keywords** that specifically describe your research project.

3.5 Project Duration and Start Date

Please indicate the expected length of the proposed project in months (minimum duration of 12 months and maximum duration is 24 months) and the proposed start date.

4. Project Description

Please ensure that your pre-application is focused, and that sufficient evidence is provided to enable the pre-application grant selection panel members to reach a considered judgement as to the quality of your research proposal, its scientific merit and the potential impact of the project in an Irish context.

The Project Description should provide an overview under the following headings:

- Relevance and Knowledge Gap, Overall Aim and Brief Overview of Research Design and Methodological approach
- Impact Statement
- Knowledge Translation and Dissemination Plan
- References

4.1 Relevance and Knowledge Gap, Overall Aim, Research Design and Methodological Approach

Summarise the need for research in this area, and the rationale for the particular lines of research you plan to pursue. Include the importance of the proposed research for Ireland at a national level and describe the anticipated outputs, outcomes and impact of the proposed research. Provide a clear description of the problem to be addressed and explain why it is important and timely, especially in an Irish context. Explain how the research has the potential to address the knowledge gap within healthcare services or policy and how it will accelerate the translation of the findings to enable evidence informed decision making.

Please state the overall aim of the research project.

Summarise the proposed research plan including brief details of the general experimental approaches, study designs and techniques that will be used.

Note: in this section you must indicate how you intend to use Quality Improvement and Patient Safety science and methodologies in your research.

The word limit is **500 words.**

4.2 Impact statement

Summarise the impact from the proposed research to the knowledge user organisation(s). Include a clear statement of the relevance of the proposed research to quality and patient safety health priorities in Ireland and the impact that it will have on national clinical and/or population health and/or health services management in the short term (1-2 years).

This statement should be specific and provide information that the external reviewers will find helpful in assessing the potential impact of the proposed research. Impact statements should be written primarily in plain English and cover potential impacts in terms of who will benefit from this research as well as how they will benefit. The word limit is **150 words.**

4.3 Knowledge Translation and Dissemination Plan

The proposed research should be explicitly linked to the documented evidence needs of the knowledge user organisation/s and it must be clear from the application how the knowledge user/s is integrated throughout the research process. The question/s must be able to be answered by the research partnership and the application should include a clear and concise **outline of the knowledge translation plan** that will highlight how the research findings will be applied by the knowledge user organisation/s. The word limit is **150 words.**

4.4 References

A full description of the Publications cited in the Project Description should be provided. You can enter a maximum of 10 publications. Please enter references in the same format.

For example, the following format may be used:

Gallagher PA, Shoemaker JA, Wei X, Brockhoff-Schwegel CA, Creed JT. Extraction and detection of arsenicals in seaweed via accelerated solvent extraction with ion chromatographic separation and ICP-MS detection. Fresenius J Anal Chem. 2001 Jan 1;369(1):71-80. PMID: 11210234.

For book and printed source citations:

Farrell M, Gerada C and Marsden J (2000) *External review of drug services for the Eastern Health Board.* London: National Addiction Centre.

5. Details of Research Team

5.1 Lead Applicant-Researcher

Outline the role of the Lead Applicant-Researcher in this project on a day-to-day basis including the amount of time to be dedicated to working on this project, either as a percentage or a proportion of a full time equivalent (FTE). The word limit is **100 words**.

5.2 Lead Applicant- Knowledge user

Outline the role of the Knowledge User Lead Applicant in this project on a day-to-day basis including the amount of time to be dedicated to working on this project, either as a percentage or a proportion of a full time equivalent (FTE). The Lead Applicant-Knowledge user must describe how their role and position will enable them to influence change and action arising from the research proposed. The word limit is **100 words.**

5.3 Co-Applicant's Role

For each co-applicant please outline their role in the project. The word limit is **50 words**.

5.4 Collaborator's Role

For each collaborator please outline their role in the project. The word limit is **50 words**.

5.5 Personnel

Please give details of all personnel to be funded through this project and describe what aspects of the proposed research they will be involved in.

6. Submission of Applications

Submission deadline for 2021 pre-applications: 10 June 2021

Completed applications should be sent to rcqps@rcpi.ie by 12pm on the date above.

Appendix II: Resources/Useful Links

DATA COLLECTIONS

The catalogue of national health and social care data collections in Ireland**:**
https://www.hiqa.ie/areas-we-work/health-information/data-collections

LIBRARIES

The Cochrane Library: online collection of databases in medicine and other healthcare specialties which summarise and interpret the results of medical research.

www.thecochranelibrary.com

The Campbell Collaboration: promotes positive social and economic change through the production and use of systematic reviews and other evidence synthesis for evidence-based policy and practice

https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/

The Campbell Collaboration UK & Ireland: hub at Queens University Belfast

https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CampbellUKIreland/

EQUATOR Network Library for health research reporting: an international initiative that seeks to improve reliability and value of health research literature by promoting transparent and accurate reporting of research studies

http://www.equator-network.org/resource-centre/library-of-health-research-reporting/

RESEARCH PRIORITIES & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH

INVOLVE UK website for resources on Public and Patient Involvement in research

http://www.invo.org.uk

Patient-Centred Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

http://www.pcori.org

Public Involvement Impact Assessment Framework (Assess the impacts of involving members of the public in their research in diverse fields from health care to local history.)

http://piiaf.org.uk/

European Patient Forum Value + Handbook (For Project Co-ordinators, Leaders and Promoters On Meaningful Patient Involvement)

http://www.eu-patient.eu/globalassets/projects/valueplus/doc_epf_handbook.pdf

The James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnerships

http://www.lindalliance.org/Patient_Clinician_Partnerships.asp

GENDER/SEX ISSUES IN RESEARCH

Examples of case studies in Health & Medicine where gender/sex matters in research
http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/case-studies-medicine.html

Gender Toolkit in EU-funded research for examples and guidance

http://www.yellowwindow.be/genderinresearch/downloads/YW2009_GenderToolKit_Module1.pdf

IMPACT

The Economic and Social Research Council UK'S Impact Toolkit includes information on developing impact strategies, promoting knowledge exchange and public engagement and communicating effectively with key stakeholders. https://esrc.ukri.org/research/impact-toolkit/

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION RESOURCES

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research: Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning

https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45321.html

Training Institute for Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health: Open Access Course

https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/is/training-education/TIDIRC-open-access