

THCS Joint Transnational Call (2023)



Healthcare of the future

HRB Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ is specific to applicants based in Ireland and should be read in addition to the full call information: <https://www.thcspartnership.eu/funding/announcement-of-the-joint-transnational-call-for-proposals-healthcare-of-the-future-kl>

Eligibility

Q: Will HRB fund all research areas under this call?

A: Yes, HRB will fund all research areas that fall within the scope of this call. See the [core THCS call text](#) for full information on scope.

Q: Do Lead Applicants have to be permanent staff members?

A: No, contracted researchers and Adjunct Professors can apply. To be eligible, these applicants must provide a letter from the HI which:

- **Contracted researchers:** endorses their application, confirming they have the authority and resources allocated to hold and manage a grant under their particular status for the duration of the award.
- **Adjunct Professors:** confirms that the applicant has the authority and resources allocated to hold and manage a grant under their Adjunct status for at least the duration of the award.

This should be provided to eujointprogrammes@hrb.ie at time of submission. Please refer to the guidance notes, section 6 Host Institution for full detail on requirements for letters of support.

All **contracted researchers** must also have a contract with a Host Institution (HI) for the duration of the grant award or assure the HRB that they will be offered a contract for the period of the award if successful and this must be stated in their letter of support.

Q: Are Host Institutions in Northern Ireland able to participate?

A: This call is not open for HRB Host Institutions in Northern Ireland. As there are no UK funders participating in this call, participants based in these institutions must be self-funded collaborators. A maximum of two collaborators is allowed per consortium.

Q: What types of organisations can participate?

A: HRB can only fund [approved Host Institutions](#) (with the exception of Host Institutions based in Northern Ireland as noted above).

Other organisation types (listed here) in Ireland can only be included as external collaborators, not being able to receive any HRB funding: universities (or other higher education institutions) research and knowledge dissemination organisations, non-university public or private research and/or innovation organisations, hospitals or foundations or any healthcare providers, as well as commercial companies, particularly small and medium-size enterprises.

Q: May project participants be included in more than one application to this call?

A: Each applicant can submit only one application as coordinator but can be involved in multiple proposals as partner.

Budget preparation

Q: Does the contribution from HRB include pension costs and overheads?

A: Yes, the maximum HRB funding of €370,000, or €500,000 for coordinators, must include pension costs and overheads.

Q: What does the additional €130,000 funding for coordinators cover?

A: Consortium coordinators may request this funding. It will cover activities specifically incurred due to consortium coordination activity. This will not cover research-related costs (excludes equipment and consumables) but could cover costs such as salaries, travel and administration related to coordination as well as associated overheads. These costs should be clearly delineated in the budget submitted to HRB.

Q: Where there are two partners from different HRB Host Institutions in one consortium applying for HRB funds, is a separate budget required for each partner?

A: Yes, each partner must provide a budget that has been reviewed and approved by their host institution. The combined budget total must be within the maximum amount of €370,000 or €500,000 where one of the partners is the coordinator.

Q: Can Lead Applicants in contract positions request salary costs? *(added 19 May 2023)*

A: Yes, Lead applicants in contract positions may request salary support in line with their time commitment to the project. A letter of support must be provided as detailed in the question 'Do Lead Applicants have to be permanent staff members' (under Eligibility above)?

Permanent members of staff cannot request salary costs. As stated in the call guidance notes, the HRB does not provide funding for the salary or benefits of academic staff that are already in receipt of salary or benefits within research institutions.

Q: How should salaries be calculated?

A: For salaried personnel the following should be taken into account:

Gross Annual Salary (negotiated and agreed with host institution). Applicants should use the [IUA Researcher Salary Scales](#). Please apply a salary contingency of 3% per annum from 1st October 2024. Please note this contingency should be applied cumulatively on 1st October year on year.

For employees who are not academic researchers the relevant pay scales should be used for their profession. Please state the pay scale used and the level and point on the scale. This should be justified accordingly.

The employer's PRSI contribution is calculated at 11.05% of gross salary.

Pension provision up to a **maximum** of 20% of gross salary will be paid to the host institution to enable compliance with the Employment Control Framework (in addition employees will have to contribute 5% of their salary towards pension). The level of employer contribution should be in accordance with the model adopted by the host institution. If applicable, state the amount of employer contribution based on the pro rata salary and note the % of pro rata salary used to calculate this for reference. Exceptions apply where Circular letter 6/2007 applies.¹

Q: What is the overhead rate on an award successfully funded through this scheme?

A: The overhead payment is 25% of Total Direct Modified Costs (TDMC) for desk-based research and 30% for lab-based research. TDMC excludes student fees, equipment and capital building costs. The rate (25% or 30%) should be selected based on the primary activity of the project and applied at a flat rate across the project. Please see [HRB Policy Usage of Research Overheads](#).

Q: Can equipment be funded in this call?

A: Small items of equipment, not exceeding €10,000, can be included in the budget. Only equipment purchases that are directly required for the research and are deemed not to be easily accessible elsewhere in Ireland are appropriate. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.

Q: Are there any ineligible costs?

A: The following are examples of ineligible costs: external training courses/workshops, inflationary increases, cost of electronic journals, maintenance contracts on equipment, hospitality and entertainment costs, technology transfer or patent costs, conference costs, journal subscriptions, relocation expenses.

¹ Circular Letter 6/2007 states that the pensions contribution of all Public Health Service employees who, on or after 1 June 2007, are granted secondments or periods of special leave with pay to enable them take up appointments with other organisations, including other Public Health Sector organisations, will be increased to 25% of gross pensionable pay. The rate of 25% of gross pensionable pay referred to in this context is the pension contributions to be paid by the body to which the employee is seconded – it does not include any pension contributions which employees make themselves. Where no such arrangements are in place, the HRB will not be liable for costs.

Submission

Q: Are signature pages/letters of support required by the HRB at application stage?

A: There are two cases where signatures are required:

- In cases where the Lead Applicant is not a permanent member of staff, a letter must be provided from the HI which endorses the application. For details, please see the corresponding question relating to the Lead Applicant in the Eligibility section above.
- At submission participants from institutions in Ireland will be asked to submit supplementary budgetary information to the HRB, which will justify the HRB funds requested. In addition applicants will be requested to clarify the specific deliverables for the partner from Ireland, including their role in the development of a Data Management Plan.

This will expedite contract negotiations with the HRB and monitoring of the award in the case of successful consortia with applicants from Ireland.

A template requesting this further information will be provided by the HRB after submission (or before, upon request).

Assessment and Decision-making

Q: Since prioritisation will be assessed internationally and multiple funders are involved in each project, how are decisions made?

A: Projects will be funded if:

- The project is considered of sufficient quality to be funded by the peer review panel. Availability of funds is not considered in making this decision.
- All relevant funders have sufficient budget remaining to cover all consortium partners. For this call, there is also some additional gap-filling funding which will help to fund projects where funders have run out of budget.

Projects are ranked by the peer review panel and higher ranked projects are prioritised for funding first. This means that when funds are depleted, no further projects can be funded, irrespective of whether they have been deemed of sufficient quality to be funded.

Post-award

Q: Where will intellectual property generated by the project reside?

A: The management of Intellectual Property (IP) is the responsibility of the host institution in line with the National IP protocol. If more than one research body is involved, a joint IP agreement should be in place between the relevant institutions. In the absence of a joint agreement, the management of any IP remains the responsibility of the host institution.

Q: Do I have to submit a Data Management Plan to the HRB if I am not the coordinator?

A: As per the HRB policy on [Management and Sharing of Research Data](#), the HRB requests a Data Management Plan (DMP) for all HRB awards. The DMP developed by the consortium can be used, once there is sufficient detail on how the data will be shared/managed etc. for the partner based in Ireland.

Q: What reports are required?

A: In addition to consortium reporting requirements (as stated in the main call text), the HRB will request reports (e.g., annual reports) from Principle Investigators based in Ireland.