

HRB Annual Reports 2024

Guidance Notes

January 2024



Key Dates & Times	
AR 2024 Request Date	31 January 2024
AR 2024 Submission Deadline	31 March 2024 at 13:00

Annual Reports must be completed and submitted through the HRB online Grant E-Management System (GEMS) (<https://grants.hrb.ie>), and this system will close automatically at the stated deadline listed above. Please read the “Detailed guidance on the Annual Report 2024 Form”, appended to this document prior to completing the progress report form.

1 Introduction

In accordance with the provisions of Clause 5 of the HRB General Terms and Conditions for Research Awards; the Annual Report 2024 is now being requested for active HRB Grants.

Annual Reports 2024 are requested for all HRB funded awards with a start date prior to 01 September 2023, including grants that are temporarily suspended, but excluding awards with an end date on or before 31 May 2024. Some grants such as infrastructure grants, those that are milestone based or those undergoing Interim Reviews, will have different reporting timelines and may not have an Annual Report due at this time.

2 Reporting Period

The reporting period is from the start date of the Grant until 31 December 2023.

3 Annual Report 2024 Process

Annual Reports 2024 should be completed and submitted online via the HRB Grant E-Management System (GEMS) (<https://grants.hrb.ie>).

The deadline for submission of completed online reports is Friday 31 March 2024 at 13:00

A report form for each individual Grant is available to each Principal Investigator via their GEMS account. Host Institution representatives should liaise with each Principal Investigator for the report to be completed as required.

Each Host Institution can now nominate a single administrator who will have access to online GEMS Annual Report forms due from their Institution.

Section 7: The Financial Progress Report must be completed by the Host Institution Finance Office on the excel template provided, certified and uploaded to the relevant Annual Report form on GEMS.

It is still the case that only the Principal Investigator can submit the form and it cannot be submitted until all mandatory attachments are uploaded. Please see Appendix 1 for further details.

4 Accessing HRB Grant E-Management System (GEMS)

4.1 Principal Investigators should go to <https://grants.hrb.ie> and log in using their existing GEMS accounts using their registered email address and password, as shown in Figure 1.

If you have difficulty accessing your existing GEMS account, you must contact HRB as soon as possible after receiving the request email from us.

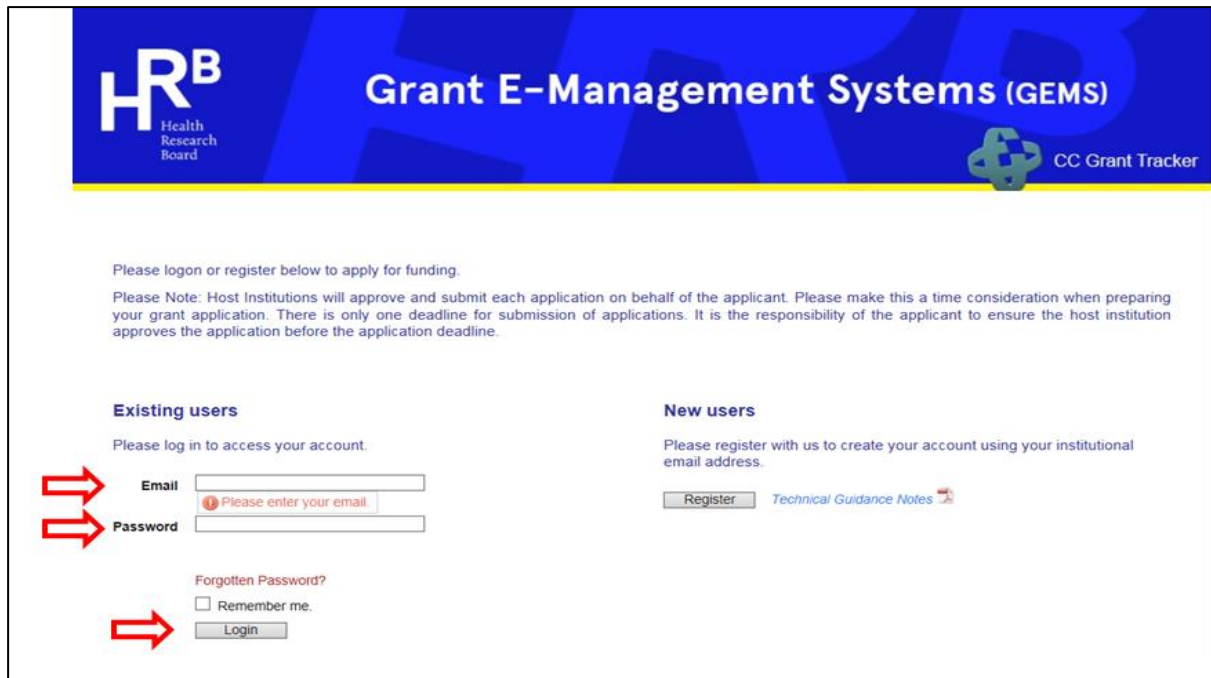


Figure 1: GEMS log in screen

4.2 Once logged on you should see a list of your active Grants at the bottom of the home screen, as shown in Figure 2. Click the link beside the Grant for which an Annual Report 2024 has been requested.

Note: You are only required to complete and submit reports for Grants for which you have received an email request from HRB. There may be other grants listed here if you are a *Co-Applicant* on other active awards, but these can be ignored. If you require any clarification on this, please contact HRB.

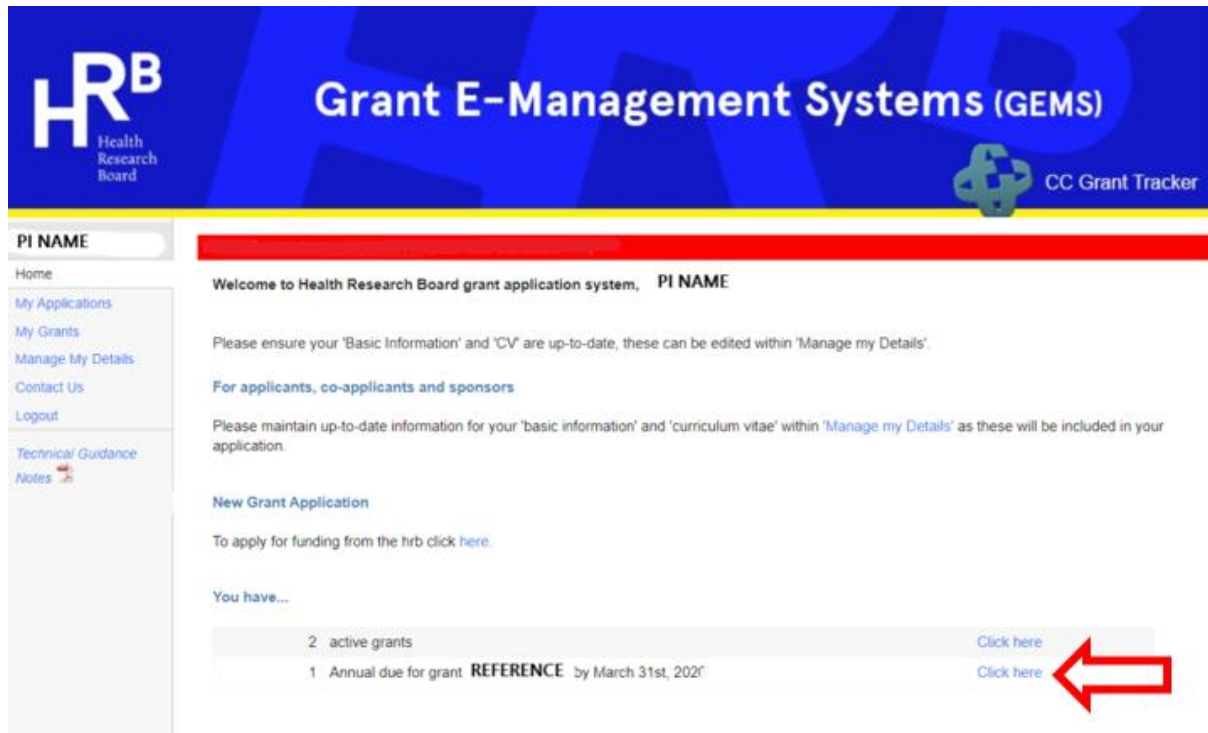


Figure 2: GEMS portal home screen

4.3 On the next page, details of your Grant will be shown. At the bottom of the page there will be links to the Annual Report form. Click on either link as shown in Figure 3, both will bring you to the same destination.



Figure 3: Links to Annual Report form

4.4 On the next page, click the Edit button on the right-hand side as shown in Figure 4.

Note: If you do not see the Edit button, you will not have access to edit the form. Check to make sure you are in the correct Grant for which you are the **Principal Investigator**.



Figure 4: GEMS Progress Report access link

4.5 If you have not already done so, you will be asked to read and accept the HRB Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions.

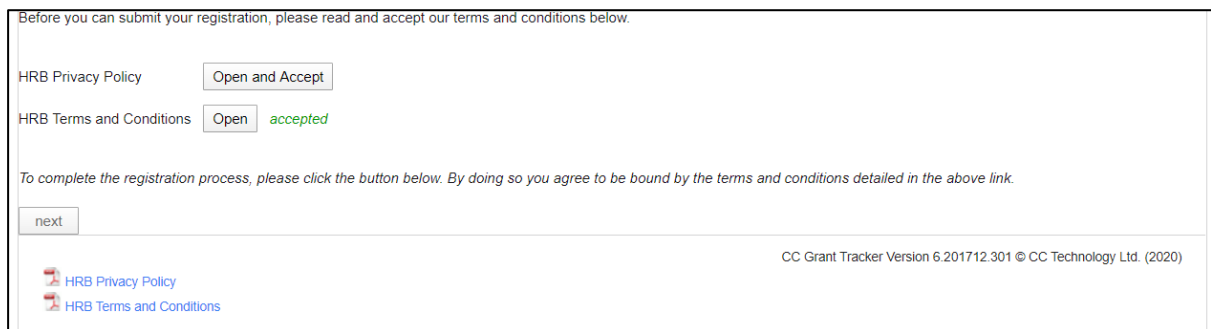


Figure 5: HRB Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions.

4.6 You will then be brought to the Introduction page for Annual Report 2024. Use the buttons at the top and bottom of the page to navigate through the form and save your entries.

Please read Appendix 1 “Detailed guidance on the Annual Report 2024 Form” for further information on each section.

The screenshot shows the 'Introduction' page of the HRB Annual Report 2024 form. At the top left, the word 'Introduction' is displayed. To its right are four buttons: 'Previous', 'Next', 'Save And Print', and 'Save And Close'. In the top right corner, the 'SYMPLECTIC Grant Tracker' logo is visible, along with three links: 'ORCID Privacy Policy', 'Terms and Conditions', and 'HRB Privacy Policy'. The main heading is 'HRB Annual Report 2024'. Below this, a paragraph states that the Annual Report 2024 is now to be submitted for the grant. The 'Reporting Period' is defined as from the start date of the grant until 31 December 2023. The 'Deadline' is set for Friday 29th March 2024 at 13:00. The 'Guidance' section contains three bullet points: 1) Read the Annual Report 2024 Guidance Notes before completing the form (click [here](#)). 2) Complete all sections as required. 3) Ensure all supporting documentation is uploaded as required.

Figure 6: Introduction page for Annual Report 2024 form

5 Contacts

For GEMS technical support, please contact gemshelp@hrb.ie

For any other queries in relation to Annual Reports, please contact:

Uchizi Msowoya, Evaluation Officer at umsowoya@hrb.ie

Appendix 1: Detailed Guidance Notes on Annual Report 2024 Form

Most Grants requiring Annual Reports 2024, will be assigned the Standard form template. The Standard form comprises of eight sections as detailed below. Other form templates for specific schemes such as SPHeRE, ICAT, ECSA, DIFA, TMRN and IRNM may have additional questions which are not covered in this document, but guidance is also provided on the online form.

Note: Word limits after each text box indicate the maximum number of words that the form will allow but they are not necessarily the requirement and answers should be kept as concise as possible.

Host Institution access to GEMS Annual Report 2024 form

Each Host Institution can now nominate a single administrator who will have access to online GEMS Annual Report forms due from their Institution. The name and email address of the administrator must be sent to HRB so that they can be given access to the reports.

The Host Institution administrator will have read/write access to the relevant forms. They will be able to upload completed document such as the Financial Progress Reports, but they will not be able to submit the Annual Reports. **It is still the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to submit the Annual Report for their Grant with all the mandatory documents uploaded before the deadline.**

Note: The system will flag through a pop-up warning if two people (i.e. Principal Investigator and Host Institution Administrator) are working on the same section of the Annual Report form at the same time. Either may choose to override this pop-up message and continue to enter data but it is advisable that they contact the other person directly to avoid losing data when applying the override function.

Section 1: Grant Details

Details in this section are automatically completed from the existing Grant record. Dates are in accordance with the Grant contract or latest Letter of Variation.

Note: If there is a variation request in progress for a No Cost Extension, the proposed dates of the extension will be shown here. This should not be taken as approval of the variation request until the Letter of Variation is issued.

Section 2: Research Team and Support Structures

2.1 Persons Financially Supported by the Grant

Principal Investigators are required to upload any outstanding Personnel Information Forms (PIF) for staff who are financially supported on the Grant. The PIF template can be downloaded from the “Managing personnel and approvals” section of HRB website: <https://www.hrb.ie/funding/manage-a-grant/grant-amendments-and-policies/>

Details are also requested for **any changes** to the personnel types hired on the grant from those requested in the original application and approved in the grant contract (or subsequently approved). i.e. if the original application stated a Research Assistant was due to be hired but a post-doctoral researcher was hired instead.

Note: The full list of people financially supported on the Grant are not required in this section as these details should only be included in Section 7: Financial Progress Report.

2.2 Co-Applicants / Co-Investigators / Partners /Site Leads/Official Collaborators

Details are requested for **any changes to the current list of Co-Applicants / Co-Investigators / Partners /Site Leads/Official Collaborators**. These changes should be added to the table provided. The table will allow up to 10 names to be added.

Note: Principal Investigators may request that an individual be added as a Co-Investigator to replace a Co-Applicant who has withdrawn from the team, or in recognition of their substantial role on the award. However, Co-Investigators retrospectively added to a grant do not have the same eligibility status as a Co-Applicant in future HRB grant applications as they were not a part of the successful peer reviewed applicant team.

Please only include those changes that haven't been captured in a previous Annual Report submission to avoid duplication in reporting.

2.3 National and Local Partners

This section only applies to the National PPI Ignite Network award.

2.4 Management and/or governance arrangements

Details are requested for management or governance structures that were noted in the original application and/or the Grant contract. If your Grant does not require management or governance structures, this section does not need to be completed.

Section 3: Project Progress

3.1 Overall Progress

Principal Investigators must input research objectives and deliverables for the grant in the excel document attached, aligning with the original application or the latest Letter of Variation. Each entry in the table should include the name of the objective/work package/deliverable, its status reflecting the current level of progress, and a concise explanation justifying the chosen status.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Research Objectives	Deliverables	Progress Status	If progress status for this deliverable is on-going and behind schedule or delayed, please indicate main reasons for this. Otherwise, leave blank.	Please provide details of mitigation plans for delayed deliverables.	Did this objective vary significantly from the original scientific plan?	If yes, please explain how.
1	1.1					
	1.2					
	1.3					

Figure 7: Scientific Progress Reporting Template

- i. In the "Research Objectives" column, column A, enter the specific objectives (this could include goals, tasks or milestones) of your research or the research objective number, whichever applies to your award.
- ii. In the "Deliverables" column, column B, list the tangible outcomes or results expected from each research objective.
- iii. In the "Progress Status" column, column C, enter the current status of each deliverable. You will need to choose this from the drop-down menu. You can choose the most appropriate status from
 - **Achieved**
 - **on-going and on-schedule**
 - **on-going and behind schedule**
 - **Not started yet- delayed and**
 - **Not started yet- not due to start**

Note: Please only choose an option from the dropdown menu. Do not enter free text.

- iv. In column D, if a deliverable has been assigned the status of *on-going and behind schedule* or *delayed*, enter the main reasons for the delay. For deliverables assigned the status of *achieved*, *on-going and on-schedule* and *not started yet- not due to start*, please leave column D blank.
- v. In column E, provide details on how you plan to address or mitigate delays for those deliverables which have been assigned a status of *not started yet- delayed*. This could include additional resources, revised timelines, or any other corrective actions.
- vi. In column F, enter "Yes" or "No" to indicate if there were any variations in the delivery of objectives, compared to the original scientific plan.

Please Note: In line with the HRB Grant Conditions, significant changes to the project require prior HRB notification and approval. If you are indicating a major change to the project aims or research plans in **column F on the Excel template**, you should have previously received approval from the HRB for this change. If you have not requested approval for a significant change(s), you should not consider this as being approved but should await a response from the HRB.
- vii. In if you have indicated 'yes' in column F, please explain the nature of the variations in column G. If you have indicated 'no' in column F, please leave column G blank.

Important Note: Principal Investigators are encouraged to keep a copy of their Excel progress reporting template for their records. This Excel document will be used for all future Annual Reporting to facilitate easy tracking and reporting of progress throughout the grant period.

3.2 Gantt Chart

An updated Gantt Chart is a compulsory attachment for all Annual Reports. The Gantt Chart should be uploaded as a single document in the space provided. If required, a sample Gantt Chart template can be found in the sample resources section of the Grant Reporting page of our website.

3.3 KPI Report

An updated KPI (Key Performance Indicators) Report is only required for ESI, TMRN and PPI Ignite Network. If your Grant is not from one of the schemes listed, this section does not need to be completed.

3.4 Research Integrity Training

In accordance with the provisions of Clauses 7.2.9 of the Grant Conditions all members of the Team in receipt of salary or other financial support from the Budget are required to undertake Research Integrity Training.

Principal Investigators must provide training details for **each member of their team** who is financially supported by their Grant.

Note: If you have previously submitted this information on an annual report for the same award, there is no need to report again. In those cases, only report for any new team members.

Section 4: Research Career Awards

This section is only applicable to certain research awards- CDA, ARPP, CSF, EIA, ECS, RL. If your Grant is not from one of the schemes listed on the form, this section does not need to be completed.

4.1 Research and Professional Development

Details are requested for the key research and professional development activities and deliverables that have been undertaken **during the award to date** in terms of your training and professional development plan. Please also include training details for other members of your team, if applicable.

4.2 Training Plan for Gantt Chart

The updated Gantt Chart included with this report should also include a section for training activities during this award.

4.3 HRB-funded PI with protected time for research activity (if applicable)

This section of the report is only applicable to awards which have protected time for research.

4.4 Sponsorship and mentorship arrangements

This section only applies to certain research career awards. If your Grant is not from one of the schemes listed on the form, this section does not need to be completed.

Section 5: KTA Funding

Details are required for any Grants that have previously been awarded supplementary funding via the Knowledge Translation Awards (KTA). If your Grant does not have a KTA award associated with it, this section does not need to be completed.

Section 6: Approval Declaration

A certified Approval Declaration is a compulsory attachment for all Annual Reports 2024.

The Approval Declaration is a declaration of regulatory approvals required for the grant as defined in the latest version of the HRB General Terms and Conditions for Research Awards <https://www.hrb.ie/funding/manage-a-grant/grant-terms-and-conditions/>

A certified Approval Declaration is a compulsory attachment which must be submitted with this Annual Report. No payment or further payment of the Grant shall be made until HRB receives an up-to-date Approvals Declaration confirming that regulatory approvals are in place or confirmation in writing that the Grant Funded Activities which requires regulatory approval shall not begin until such approvals are in place.

The Approval Declaration should be completed on the Word template provided and certified by both the Principal Investigator and Authorised Signatory at Research Office (or equivalent) in Host Institution. The template should be downloaded from GEMS, completed, and certified before being uploaded in the space provided.

Note: It is no longer necessary to provide copies of approval letters/notifications along with your Approvals Declaration.

6.1 Clinical Trials

This section of the report only applies to those grants that have a clinical trial.

Section 7: Financial Progress Report

A certified Financial Progress Report is a compulsory attachment for all Annual Reports 2024. Each Host Institution can now nominate a single administrator who will have access to online GEMS Annual Report forms due from their Institution. It is still the case that only the Principal Investigator can submit the form. ([See note on page 7 of this document](#))
The Financial Progress Report must be completed by the Host Institution Finance Office on the excel template provided and uploaded to the relevant annual report form on GEMS. This template will be emailed to each Host Institution Finance Office and is also downloadable from GEMS.

Two versions of the completed Financial Progress Report must be submitted for the Annual Report to be valid:

1. A fully completed excel file with all sheets filled out including a copy of the General Ledger (GL) listing for the reporting period i.e., from the start date until 31 December 2023.
2. A Certified Financial Progress Report as a PDF file.

It is the responsibility of the Host Institution Finance Office to certify and upload the completed versions of the Financial Progress Report to the relevant Annual Report form on GEMS so they can be submitted online by the Principal Investigator with the rest of the report.

Note: HRB will not accept Financial Progress Reports that are not submitted via GEMS or any reports submitted on modified templates that have not been provided by HRB.

Section 8: Feedback to HRB

In the final section, Principal Investigators are asked to provide us with any feedback you have from using the online reporting function.

Supporting Documents

This section will show all attachments that have been uploaded for the Annual Report 2024. Principal Investigators must ensure that all compulsory documents have been attached to the report in order for it to be valid for submission.

Note: HRB will not accept reports without compulsory attachments such as the updated Gantt Chart, Scientific Progress Report, Approval Declaration, Financial Progress Report and other scheme specific attachments. These reports will be returned to you without review.

Validation & Submission of Annual Reports

Principal Investigators must ensure that all mandatory fields and validation checks have been completed before the form can be submitted.

Once the form has reached its 100% completion, a Submit Form button will appear on the Validation summary page, where the Principal Investigator can submit the Annual Report. If you require any clarification on this, please contact HRB.

The deadline for submission of completed online reports is **Friday 31 March 2024 at 13:00**.

Once submitted, a HRB staff member will acknowledge receipt of each report and having reviewed the content, they will revert to the Principal Investigator and Host Institution to confirm satisfactory progress or to request additional information/documentation if required.