Researchfish FAQ November 2024

Draft Frequently Asked Questions section for the HRB website on Researchfish & reporting. This will be treated as a live document and will be updated on a regular basis.

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1. What is Researchfish and how is it being used at the Health Research Board?

Researchfish is an online outcomes and impact tracking platform [https://researchfish.com/researchfish/], operated by Elsevier publishing. Funders such as the Wellcome Trust, UKRI and British Heart Foundation use Researchfish to assess the impact of the research projects they fund. From January 2024, the Health Research Board will be using Researchfish for all its funded projects, to track their outputs, outcomes and impact over time. Researchfish will allow PIs to easily report on outcomes, and to link their portfolio of research projects.

2. Why has the HRB partnered with Researchfish?

The value of HRB's current research funding commitment is in the region of €200 million. As this is public money, there is an onus on the HRB to account to government and other stakeholders, including the public, for the funds it allocates and the returns on the research that it supports. Therefore, it is imperative that the HRB measures the extent to which this portfolio of funding is achieving the HRB mission and delivering the intended benefits. This is achieved through its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities. A new Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Plan, approved by the HRB Board in May 2023, pointed to the need for an evaluation tool that would enable HRB to collect longitudinal output, outcome and impact data from our investments to learn from and communicate the impact of our funding. The move to Researchfish is a part of a wider plan at HRB to streamline reporting for grants and lower the burden for grant holders whilst discharging our responsibility as a public body to effectively demonstrate accountability for public money.

3. What do PIs and award recipients need to do?

HRB will require award recipients to submit outcomes information to the Researchfish platform on an annual basis, during a submission period. To do this, PIs will need to create a Researchfish account and complete an outcomes report. While Researchfish allows for real-time updating of outputs and outcomes and researchers are encouraged to update their report throughout the year, there will be a specific 6-week window every year where researchers will need to 'submit' their information on the platform. PIs will need to report their outputs, outcomes and impacts on Researchfish on an annual basis, up to 5 years after an HRB award has concluded.

4. When is the next submission period?

The next Researchfish submission period is from **27th January to 17th March 2025**. Researchers will need to log on to Researchfish and submit their report by 12pm on Monday 17th March 2025, when submission will close. All awards that have ended since **1 January 2020** and those that are active on or before **1 September 2024** will be required to submit a report via Researchfish during the January 2024 submission period.

5. How and when will I be contacted about my upcoming submission?

HRB and Researchfish will send emails alerting PIs of the upcoming submission period in December 2024. The emails will be sent to the address associated with your HRB award and will include instructions for setting up your Researchfish account.

6. How do I create a Researchfish account?

To create a Researchfish user account, you must receive an invitation email from Researchfish to set up your account. If you are required to submit a report in the January 2025 submission period, you will receive an email from Researchfish inviting you to set up your account. If you cannot find your original invitation email, a new invitation can be requested by following the steps in Invitation Help [link https://eval.researchfish.com/helpwiz/invite] in the Help and Support [link https://eval.researchfish.com/helpwiz] section of the Researchfish website.

7. How do I submit a report on Researchfish?

A video guide to submitting a report on Researchfish is available here [https://eval.researchfish.com/help-videos].

8. Is it mandatory for PIs to submit outcomes for their awards?

Generally, yes, but please see HRB's communications about your specific awards. HRB will indicate to you whether a submission is mandatory or optional for each award you hold.

9. Why have I been asked to report on my award that has already ended?

HRB will commit to collecting data on outcomes and impacts generated from awards for up to five years after an award has ended. This is because HRB recognises that many outcomes and impacts materialise years after an award has ended and not capturing this data would mean Researchers do not have the opportunity to present a full picture of the impact generated through HRB investment.

10. Do I need to submit if there are no new outcomes to report?

All researchers will need to submit a report annually. However, where there are no new outcomes to submit you can select the "not applicable this year" for any mandatory questions.

If you feel it is unlikely that there will be further outcomes from your award, please email your HRB point of contact to discuss closing out your award.

11. What if PIs are absent/unable to submit during the submission period?

HRB may grant a one-year exemption from completing a Researchfish return for PIs who are unable to complete a return. Common reasons for exemptions include:

- Parental leave
- Long term sick leave
- Maternity Leave
- Fieldwork where no internet access will be available

If this applies to you, please notify your HRB contact as soon as possible. Exemptions will only be applied if you are unable to complete for the full duration of the submission period. Please note that Researchfish allows for PIs to delegate completion of the report to members of their team. While a

team member may enter information to Researchfish, it is only the PI who is authorised to finally submit the information.

12. My award isn't shown on my Researchfish account?

Awards are added to Researchfish by the HRB on a rolling basis. As such, a new award may not appear in the system immediately. Alternatively, your award may be listed against a different individual (e.g. a previous PI). Contact evaluation@hrb.ie if you cannot see an award that you are expecting to see among your Researchfish records. Likewise, if, the details relating to an award/grant associated with your account are incorrect, you should contact evaluation@hrb.ie in the first instance, as Researchfish are unable to change award details. If you have issues with the Researchfish system, please contact support@researchfish.com

13. How will Health Research Board use this data?

HRB will use data provided through the Researchfish platform to facilitate greater oversight and governance of HRB investments and report upstream and outwards on the impact of HRB investment. Researchfish data will be used to report at a scheme, cohort or portfolio level but will not be used to monitor individual awards. Researchfish impact data will be used for activities such as:

- Demonstrating **accountability for** public money by identifying and communicating the value of HRB's contribution to the Health Research ecosystem in Ireland.
- Allowing the HRB to **advocate** for more funding in health research in areas that need it the most.
- **Allocating** resources to schemes and portfolios in an evidence informed manner, generating positive societal and economic outcomes.

14. Do Award holders need to submit an Annual Report if they have submitted a Researchfish report?

Yes, HRB award holders will need to submit an Annual Report in addition to the Researchfish report. Annual Reports 2025 will be followed as per the usual process, including the submission of a financial report. While the Annual Report focuses on **monitoring** the delivery of an award in relation to scientific progress, Researchfish collects important **evaluation** information on outputs, outcomes and impacts generated from the HRB award.

15. I have already submitted an HRB End of Grant Survey Report. Why do I need to submit another Researchfish report?

Award holders who have completed their HRB award and have submitted an End of Grant report may still need to submit a Researchfish report. (If your award ended on or after 01/01/2020). However, in these cases, we are only asking you to report on any **additional** outputs, outcomes and impacts that have generated from your HRB award <u>since</u> your End of Grant submission. You do not need to re-submit information already submitted to the HRB via an End of Grant Survey. We are

aware that outputs, outcomes and impacts from Health Research projects take time to materialise and therefore, this is an opportunity to capture any development on your award since your last submission to the HRB.

16. **How is Researchfish different from the HRB End of Grant report that award holders participated in previously?**

The HRB End of Grant report was completed by all award holders who had an HRB award finish in the preceding year. Questions in the report were built based on the Buxton and Hanney Payback framework. Award holders were asked to complete this End of Grant report just once, capturing a snapshot of outputs, outcomes and impact generated by the HRB award at the point of reporting. Researchfish now replaces the HRB End of Grant report. Award holders will be asked to submit information on outputs, outcomes and impacts generated from their award every year and up to five years after their award has ended. Reporting every year will ensure that award holders can record information as and when an output or outcome has occurred, instead of reporting in bulk after the award has ended. Reporting for up to 5 years after an award has ended will ensure that any important outcomes and impacts generated from the HRB award are captured for longitudinal analysis of impact. Further, Researchfish integrates with external data sources to allow data to be imported or re-used if it exists elsewhere, to reduce the amount of manual entry and where possible enhance the data, which wasn't possible with the previous End of Grant Report.

17. **Are there any awards that are not required to submit a Researchfish report in the 25th January-17th March submission period?**
The following awards are not required to submit a Researchfish report within the first submission period-
    - Awards that ended before 01/01/2020
    - Awards that started after 01/09/2024
    - Summer Scholarship Awards
    - Conference and Events Scheme Awards
    - Awards for which HRB isn't the lead agency

18. **Is Researchfish GDPR compliant?**
Researchfish is GDPR compliant. Please click on the links below for more information related to data processing-
Privacy Policy | Elsevier Legal
Cookie Notice | Elsevier Legal
Terms of Use | Researchfish
Accessibility Statement | Researchfish

19. **Further Resources**

- Researchfish online help centre [link https://eval.researchfish.com/helpwiz]

- Researchfish User Guide For Researchers [link https://rf-downloads.s3.amazonaws.com/RF-PI-UserGuide-2022.pdf]

20. Contacts

- Support@researchfish.com

- Evaluation@hrb.ie