Collaborative Research Network for Mental Health 2025

Frequently Asked Questions

General

How do I apply for the Collaborative Research Network for Mental Health?

All applications must be made using the HRB online Grant E-Management System GEMS. Applicants are strongly advised to carefully read the Guidance Notes prior to application.

The Lead Applicant must create the application, but it can then be jointly completed with the named Co-Leads and Co-Applicants. Once the Lead Applicant starts the application, they will be asked to go through a check list of mandatory 'Yes/No' questions prior to completing the form. In order to continue with the application, the Lead Applicant must satisfy the conditions of the check list on GEMS.

How does the submission process work on GEMS?

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) at the Host Institution. It is critical therefore that Lead Applicant Researcher leaves 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 are the closing dates for submission of applications?

All applications must be submitted to the HRB on GEMS by 30th May 2025 at 13:00

Applicant/Eligibility

Does a Lead Applicant have to have previous peer reviewed funding?

Yes**,** the Lead Applicant must demonstrate research independence through securing at least one peer-reviewed research grant for a research project/s as the Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant; Funding received for travel to seminars/conferences and/or small personal bursaries will not be considered in this regard.

Can a Lead Applicant in a tenured academic post request a salary?

No, the salary or benefits of academic staff within research institutions (including buy out from teaching time etc.) that are already in receipt of salary or benefits will not be funded. If a Lead Applicant-Researcher who is in an academic post requests salary, the application will be deemed ineligible.

If an applicant has a joint contract with the HSE and an academic institution, can they still apply?

Yes, applicants with a joint contract with the HSE and an academic institution are eligible to apply.

Is a Network Manager required?

Yes, a Network Manager must form part of the network for the duration of the award as a minimum requirement; these costs should be included in the budget if they are not funded from alternate sources.

Co-Applicants and Collaborators

Can a post doctorate researcher be a Co-Applicant?

Yes, a post doctorate researcher may be a Co-Applicant.

Can a Co-Applicant/Collaborator be from outside Ireland?

Yes, Co-applicants/Collaborators from outside the Republic of Ireland are welcome.

Is a Collaborator Agreement Form needed?

Yes, a Collaborator Agreement Form must be signed by each Collaborator and uploaded with your application. You can download the form on GEMS.

What is Public, Patient and Carer Involvement (PPI)?

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.

Funding

How much can I apply for?

The HRB will provide funding up to a maximum of €1,000,000 (inclusive of overheads) over 60 months for a single collaborative research network.

How do I determine what gross salary to pay?

Applicants should use the IUA website scales for the most up-to-date recommended salary scales for academic researchers (http://www.iua.ie/research-innovation/researcher-salary-scales/). Pay scales used and the level and point on the scale must be stated and justified. For appointment of Research Fellows or Senior Research Fellows evidence of position must be provided at point of award. Applicants should include annual pay increments for staff and related costs (pension contribution, employer's PRSI contribution, and overhead contribution) in the budget. For employees who are not academic researchers the relevant pay scales should be used for their profession. Please note employee pension contribution of 5% has already been incorporated into the IUA gross salary figure.

Does the HRB pay pension contributions?

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 (an additional 5% employee contribution is part of the salary). 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. 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.

How is the overhead contribution calculated?

The HRB will contribute to the indirect costs through an overhead payment of up to 25% of Total Direct Modified Costs.

What costs are included in the overhead contribution?

The following costs are included in the overhead contribution: recruitment costs, bench fees, office space, software, contribution to gases, bacteriological media preparation fees, waste fees, bioinformatics access. A copy of the HRB overheads policy can be found at the following link: https://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/all-grant-policies/hrb-policy-on-usage-of-research-overheads/

Can I hire a consultant to carry out part of the project?

Yes, this cost should be included under Running Costs.

Can Co-Applicants who are based in another institute/organisation receive part of the budget/overheads?

The HRB will pay the award directly to the Host Institution. The Host Institution may provide Running Costs/Overheads to a Co-Applicant's institute and the arrangements for this should be agreed between the two institutes.

Does HRB support costs related to FAIR Data Management?

Yes, you should include costs related to data-related and data management activities in line with best practice of data management and stewardship and the FAIR principles incurred during the lifetime of the project.

What type of FAIR Data Management costs can be included?

The HRB will support costs with:

- People – staff time per hour for data collection, anonymisation, management/ stewardship support, training, etc.

- Storage and computation – cloud storage, domain hosting charge

- Data access – secondary data access, costs for preparing data for sharing (e.g. anonymisation)

- Deposition and reuse – costs for depositing research data and metadata in an open access data repository, defining semantic models, making data linkable, choosing the licence, defining metadata for dataset, deploying/publishing

- Others – when properly justified

Note that the HRB is currently not covering the cost of long-term preservation of data, and that this list is not exhaustive and aims to provide examples only of eligible costs.

Supporting Documents

What documents should be uploaded with my application form?

The following documents must be uploaded to complete the application:

Mandatory documents:

- Objectives and Deliverables Gantt Chart

- Organogram

If applicable:

- Lead Applicant, HI Letter of Support

- Collaboration Agreement Form(s) – required for all collaborators

- Project Description Support file – A maximum of 5 figures which can be a combination of images, graphs, tables, scales, instruments, or surveys

- Project Description Support File

Co-Funding Commitment Letter

Who needs to provide Host Institution Letters of Support?

Host Institution Letters of Support need to be provided for Lead Applicants in a contract position.

Do Co-Applicants have to sign-off the application?

Each Co-Applicant is invited to view the application form online and approve content prior to submission.

Do I need to provide an Infrastructure Agreement Form (IAF)?

Applications availing of the advice, research design, data management services and/or other forms of support from a Clinical Research Facility/Centre (CRF/CRC), other infrastructure beyond the personnel and capacity within the applicant team are required to provide additional information detailing the scope and nature of the engagement.

Submission

How will I know that my application has been successfully submitted?

Once the Host Institution 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 you have submitted your application, you cannot edit or unsubmit it.

Review Process

Will public review be part of the review process?

Yes, public reviewers will be included to assess the quality of PPI in the proposal. They will provide comments and a rating but not a score. For short-listed applications, the public review comments and rating will be shared with the review panel for discussion. PPI will not be a standalone assessment criterion, but the review panel will be asked to consider PPI as relates to any of the assessment criteria.