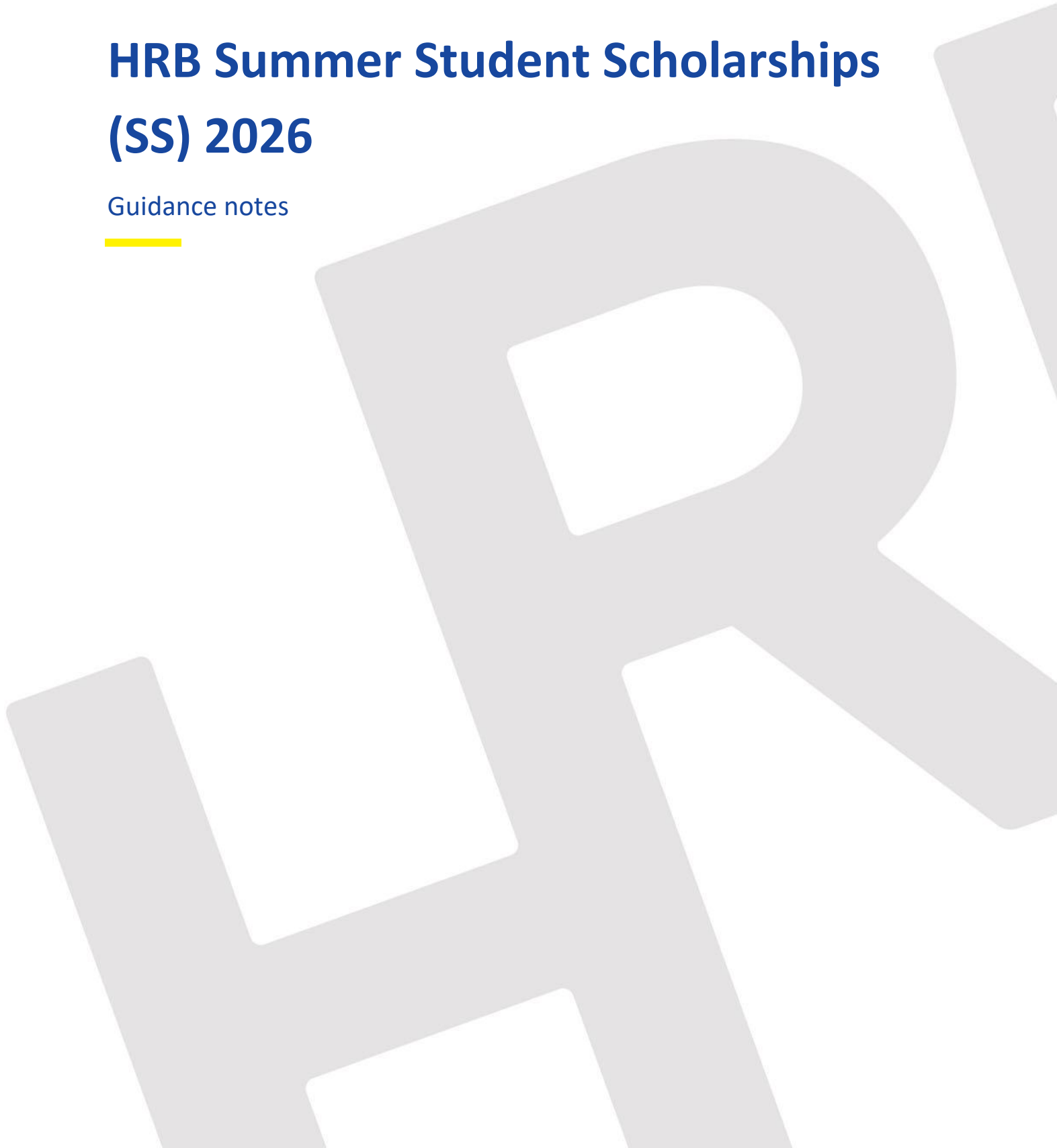


HRB Summer Student Scholarships (SS) 2026

Guidance notes



Guidance notes

Key dates & times	
Application open	29 September 2025
Application closing date	27 November 2025 @13:00

Applications 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 and timeline listed above.

**Prior to final submission to the HRB, all applications must first be reviewed and approved within GEMS by the authorised approver at the host institution (HI) as listed in the application form. It is critical therefore that applicants leave sufficient time in the process for the Research Office (or equivalent) in their nominated HI to review, seek clarifications and approve applications prior to the final submission date. This may involve being aware of and complying with any internal HI deadlines for review and approval, distinct from the HRB deadline.*

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1 Introduction

The Health Research Board (HRB) Strategic Business Plan 2021-2025 sets out our mission to support research that improves people's health, promotes evidence informed care and creates solutions to societal challenges. To achieve this, we lead and support excellent research, and we generate relevant knowledge and promote its application in policy and practice. This is enabled by the support of researchers and talent in health research across the different stages of their career.

In line with its strategic objectives the HRB is now inviting applications for the Summer Student Scholarships 2026. The scholarship scheme offers undergraduates studying in a health-related or other relevant areas (e.g., statistics, social sciences, informatics, management sciences, engineering) an opportunity to undertake a health or social care research project and to work with researchers in high-quality research environments to gain research experience at an early stage in their career.

2 Objectives

The objective of this scholarship scheme is to foster an interest in health and social care research in **undergraduate students**. Each student will be given an opportunity to gain practical research experience and an understanding of research processes, techniques, and methodologies by conducting a small research project.

Students must independently identify a suitable supervisor in their area of interest and work closely with them to develop a proposal to submit to the HRB. This offers a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to experience the grant application process. The HRB will assess the suitability of the supervisors in terms of research qualifications and track record to ensure that all summer students have a positive research experience. While the academic supervisor is an integral part of the process, the student is the lead applicant and holder of the HRB student scholarship funding.

Following completion of the scholarship, the student is expected to have successfully completed the short research project described in their application.

3 Scope

The objective of this scholarship scheme is to foster an interest in health and social care research in **undergraduate students**. The student must be planning to work on a health and/or social care-related project, with a suitably qualified supervisor who is experienced in this area.

Successful applicants will undertake the scholarship on a full-time basis for a minimum of six and a maximum of eight weeks during the summer of 2026.

The research project must be conducted in one of the three research areas supported by the HRB: **patient-oriented research, health services research and/or population health research** (see Appendix II for definitions).

The scholarship will not fund:

- Basic biomedical research (basic biomedical research is defined as ‘research conducted to increase the knowledge base and understanding of the physical, chemical and functional mechanisms of life processes and disease but not directed at solving any particular biomedical problem in humans or animals’).
- Research involving cell lines, animals, or their tissue that do not constitute pre-clinical research (see appendix II for a definition of pre-clinical research in the context of this scheme).
- Applications which are solely literature reviews, audits, surveys, needs assessments or technology developments (although these elements may be part of an integrated research study).
- Applications which are solely or predominately developing the infrastructure for biobanking, databases or patient registers without a predominant research element.
- Applications which are solely or predominately health service developments without a predominant research element. The HRB will not fund the cost of providing the service itself, only the research element.
- Research intended to create human embryos solely for the purposes of research or for the purposes of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer. Applications from individuals applying for, holding, or employed under a research grant from the tobacco industry¹.
- Applications from individuals applying for, holding, or employed under funding received from the alcohol industry and related actors².

3.1 Ethical and/or animal licence approvals

Research Ethics Committee (REC) approval is required for all research work funded by the HRB that involves human participants, human material (including tissue) or animals.

Applicants and supervisors should allow sufficient time to obtain ethical approval and/or animal licenses. The process to apply to an ethics committee can delay the start of the summer project so it is highly recommended to think carefully about the suitability of a summer project and the relevant documentation required prior to start the scholarship. It is suggested that ethical approval and/or animal licenses are sought in **parallel with submission of an application** to the HRB as the approvals **must be** in place before the start of the scholarship. If this is needed for your project, you need to provide a declaration to that effect to the HRB before you begin work.

¹ Any company, entity, or organisation involved in the development, production, promotion, marketing, or sale of tobacco in any country of the world. The term also includes any companies that are a subsidiary or a holding company or affiliate of the above. This also includes e-cigarette companies and non-tobacco related companies which are fully or partially owned by the tobacco industry.

² Including social aspects/public relations organisations (SAPROs) funded by alcohol companies or trade associations in which such companies are members.

4 Funding available, duration and start date

The scholarship will fund the undergraduate at a **rate of €400 per week** for a period of **six to eight weeks**. The scholarship does not provide additional funding for project resources or consumables. The HRB will contact the host institutions with the names of successful applicants. The host institutions will arrange payment to the student for the time period of the project and will invoice the HRB for the award amount upon completion of the project. All successful students should liaise with the host institutions well in advance of starting work on their project.

The earliest start date of the scholarship is 2 June 2026.

Please note that only students registered in full time undergraduate degrees are eligible to receive the award on a tax-free basis and for students registered in part time undergraduate courses the award will be subject to tax at the normal rate.

5 Eligibility criteria

Where the lead applicant, project, supervisor, and/or sponsor fails to meet the eligibility criteria listed below, the application will be deemed ineligible and will not progress any further. Applicants and host institutions will be informed accordingly.

5.1 Lead applicant (student)

For the purposes of this scheme, the student, termed the 'lead applicant', is responsible for preparing the application with support from their supervisor and sponsor, where applicable.

The following eligibility criteria for lead applicants apply:

- The student must be studying full-time or part-time, in a relevant discipline at a third level institute in the island of Ireland at undergraduate level.
- All applicants must be able to undertake the scholarship on a full-time basis for a minimum of six and a maximum of eight weeks during the summer of 2026.
- The student must have the support of an appropriate, suitably qualified supervisor (as detailed in section 5.3 Academic supervisor) who is affiliated with a HRB approved host institution.
- The HRB approved host institution of the supervisor must agree to administer the grant.
- Each student can only make one application to this scholarship scheme in this round. Where two applications are received from the same applicant both will be deemed ineligible.
- Previous SS applicants who were awarded a SS award but had to withdraw are still eligible to re-apply again another year. If you have previously completed a SS award you cannot apply again.

The Lead applicants **must not**:

1. Be in the first or final year of their NFQ Level 8 degree course.
2. Be in the final year of the undergraduate component of a degree course which includes an optional, additional or integrated year or more for further level 9 or 10 qualification such as MSc MPharm or PhD.
3. Have previously conducted a PhD and/or MSc by research.
4. Have worked as a research assistant, research technician or any role with experience of 8 weeks full time equivalent or more of active research.
5. Have undertaken any research project equal to or longer than 8 weeks consecutively, in a full-time capacity including HRB or other summer student scholarships.

Please contact the HRB if you are unsure of your eligibility.

Please note that the HRB will not allow successful awards to be deferred to future years. Each successful award must be completed in the year the grant was awarded.

5.2 Research project

The proposed project **must**:

1. Be within the scope of patient-oriented research (POR), health services research (HSR) and/or population health research (PHR) as outlined in Section 3 and defined in Appendix I.
2. Be between 6 and 8 weeks in duration.
3. Have a project plan which aligns to the 6 – 8 weeks duration.
4. The research project must be conducted **on site**, either at the HRB approved host institution of the supervisor or at a health agency. **Remote projects will not be funded by the HRB.**

5.3 Academic supervisor

Supervision by a suitably qualified individual with a research track record and who is affiliated with a HRB approved HI what is an essential element of this application.

Each lead applicant must include an academic supervisor who is key in providing the student with a positive research experience. The supervisor guides the student during the scholarship period so that they acquire the necessary skills to conduct the research project. Therefore, the HRB emphasises that supervisors have the relevant expertise and experience.

The academic supervisor **must demonstrate adherence to three requirements**:

1. Have appropriate research experience by having at least:

- **One peer-reviewed, original research publication**, typically as leading or senior author. If the individual is not the leading author, then their contribution to the published research

must be clearly outlined to demonstrate they played a significant role and contribution to that project.

AND

- **(A) Two other research outputs** which can be a combination of other peer-reviewed publications (not necessary as leading or senior author) and/or other research outputs³.

OR

- **(B) One independently peer-reviewed research grant as Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator or Co-Applicant of a minimum value of €100,000.** This includes individual career development grant such as PhD scholarships or postdoctoral fellowships. The name of the grant, funding source, funding value awarded, and duration must be provided.

AND

2. Be research active by having:

- **One peer-reviewed, original research publication published in the last three years which is relevant to the proposed research project in this SS application.** This may be the same publication as under point 1.

AND

3. Fulfil the following criteria:

- Have a **contract of employment for the duration** of the proposed project and have secured the **support of their institution**.
- Be **personally affiliated with a HRB approved HI**. A personal affiliation in this context is defined by either being employed by or holding an honorary position in the HI. Individuals who are employed in a health agency/health institution, which is affiliated with a higher institution, will not be accepted as academic supervisors. These individuals can act as a health agency sponsors only.
- Be **in situ with the student at the host institution or health agency**. If the student will be based in a health agency with which the academic supervisor is **not affiliated**, a health agency sponsor must be appointed.
- Only support **one student application** in this round.

³ Published book chapters, reports to government, research data and datasets, research materials, databases, audio/video products, national and/or international reports, patents, models and protocols, software production, evidence of influence on health policy and practice, outreach and/or knowledge translation activities, media coverage or other relevant activities and/or any other relevant outputs that have resulted in a significant impact in their field.

5.4 Health agency sponsor

If the research project is based within a health agency (such as a hospital, charity or a community care setting), a **health agency sponsor** based in that setting is required **in addition to the academic supervisor**. The inclusion of a health agency sponsor is to ensure that the student is well supported, will work under good supervision at all times, and has the necessary local and digital accesses. In cases where the academic supervisor is also affiliated with the health agency, and will be in situ with the student, a health agency sponsor is not required.

For the purposes of this call a health agency is defined as an organisation that provides and/or supports healthcare in the island of Ireland. Additionally, in order to host a HRB summer student the health agency must be involved in health-related research activities.

6 Host institution

The HI approves and submits the application on behalf of the student. The HI must be the higher education institution where the academic sponsor is based. List of HRB approved institutions can be found on the HRB website⁴. The HI will administer the scholarship in line with the terms and conditions set out by HRB.

Hospitals (including teaching hospitals affiliated to a higher education institution) or other health agencies cannot be included as the HI.

This call is open for HIs from Northern Ireland.

7 Application, review process and assessment criteria

7.1 Grant E-Management System (GEMS)

Applications must be completed and submitted through the HRB online Grant Electronic-Management System (GEMS) (<https://grants.hrb.ie>)

The application must have been reviewed and approved by the signatory approver at the research office (or equivalent) in the HI before it is submitted to the HRB. Therefore, applicants should ensure that they give the signatory approver sufficient time before the scheme closing date to review the application and approve it on GEMS. Please note that many HIs specify internal deadlines for this procedure.

GEMS will close applications for this scheme automatically on 27 November 2025 at 13:00.

7.2 Overview of the application process

Step 1: Lead applicants open the application, select the host institution, and invite the academic supervisor and health agency sponsor, where applicable

⁴ <https://www.hrb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/List-of-Approved-HRB-Host-Institutions.pdf>

- The lead applicant (student) is the person applying for the scholarship; they create and complete the application with the support of their supervisor.
- The lead applicant must first register on GEMS. Once registered you will and receive an email to confirm registration and login details. This is a once off process which creates a GEMS account for the user. If already registered on the GEMS system, you should use your previously used login details to access the system.
- The lead applicant must select the HI as part of the application process. The system will automatically include the contact details of authorised signatories within the selected HI. The applicant should be aware that once a HI is chosen for the application, a notification will be made available which should be sent to them for approval.
- The lead applicant adds the supervisors to an application and when a supervisor is added, GEMS will automatically email them to invite their participation.
- The supervisor can decide whether to accept or reject their inclusion. Should they accept, they can manage their details and supervisorship information, edit the application form and give their consent to the application being submitted.
- Only the supervisor can access and populate the supervisor section of the application form.

Step 2: Validation of the application prior to submission

- Prior to validation of the application by the lead applicant, the academic supervisor is required to approve the application.
- When the supervisor has approved the application, and the form is completed, it must be validated by the lead applicant.
- This validation process on GEMS highlights any mandatory fields have not been completed and allows these to be corrected before the application is submitted to the HI for approval.

Step 3: Signatory at host institution and submission of the application

- Once the application is validated by the lead applicant (including the approval by the supervisor), the lead applicant must submit the application.
- Submitting the application will trigger an automatically notification to the Dean of Research (or equivalent authorised signatory) in the nominated HI via GEMS.
- The HI notification informs them that their approval is requested and provides them with access to a PDF version of the application form for checking.
- The Dean of Research or authorised signatory approves or rejects the application.
- If the Dean of Research rejects the application, it is returned to the lead applicant for further clarification/revision. In this instance the lead applicant must make any required adjustments or clarifications before resubmitting the application. This step can be repeated as many times as is necessary until the signatory ultimately approves the application.

- The lead applicant may follow the progress of the HI approval process on the grant summary page in GEMS.
- When the HI signatory has approved the application, it is automatically submitted through GEMS to the HRB.
- Upon submission a grant application number is assigned to the application, and a confirmation email is sent to the lead applicant and Dean of Research.

More detailed information on the application process can be found in the GEMS Technical Guidance Notes, which can be accessed on the GEMS system when registered, or on the HRB website (www.hrb.ie/grants). Further information is provided in appendix I - Detailed guidance on the application form.

Eligibility assessment

In the first step, HRB staff will assess all submitted applications for eligibility and suitability for funding. The three eligibility criteria are:

- Eligibility of the lead applicant (student) (see section 5.1).
- Eligibility of the research project (see section 5.2).
- Suitability of the supervisor and supervision arrangements (see section 5.3).

Randomisation of the funding decision

In the second step, each eligible submitted application will be assigned a reference number, which will be then entered into a random number generator software. The software will randomly select applications until the target number of awards is reached.

The randomisation process will be conducted in the presence of **two independent observers** from the HRB approved Institutions Research Officers Group. This will ensure transparency and fairness in the process.

Approval and outcome

Once the randomisation and eligibility processes are completed, the outcome is then presented for approval to HRB Executive Team.

After approval, lead applicants and host institutions are informed of the outcomes, with applications classified as:

- a) Funded and eligible
- b) Not funded and eligible
- c) Ineligible

It is envisaged that applicants will be informed of the outcome in late-February 2026.

8 Timeframe

Date	
29 September 2025	Call opening
27 November 2025 @13:00	Call closing
December-January 2026	Eligibility check
Early to mid-February 2026	Selection process via randomisation
Late February 2026	Following HRB Executive Team approval of the process and recommendations, applicants and HIs will be notified of the outcome.
02 June 2026	Students begin working on the research project on a date agreed with the supervisor and sponsor (if applicable). The earliest start date is Tuesday, 2 June 2026 to allow completion of the project and submission of reports in advance of the next academic year.
11 September 2026	Students must complete all project work by Friday, 11 September 2026 .

9 HRB contact

If you have any queries regarding this scholarship scheme, please contact us:

Dr Marta Pisarska

e summerstudents@hrb.ie

The HRB reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet the terms of this call. The HRB's Policy on Appeals on funding decisions is available at

<https://www.hrb.ie/wpcontent/uploads/2024/09/HRB-Policy-on-Appeals-2.pdf>.

Appendix I: Detailed guidance on the application form

All applications are to be submitted via the GEMS online application system. Only registered users of the GEMS system can apply for grants. In order to submit an online application to the HRB, applicants are required to register at the following address: <https://grants.hrb.ie>.

Please refer to the **GEMS technical guidance notes**⁵ (available on the left-hand side column of your GEMs profile) for further information.

The **lead applicant** (student) creates the application and completes it with the support of the supervisor and a sponsor (if applicable).

- The lead applicant can register on GEMS, and they will receive an email to confirm their registration and log in details. The lead applicant can then add information on their contact and CV details in the 'Manage my details' section of GEMS.
- Lead applicants previously registered on GEMS can login to GEMS and update any information regarding their contact and CV details in the 'Manage my details' section of their GEMS profile.

Once logged in to GEMS applicants are taken directly to the homepage which is the starting point to create a new grant application. The applicant will be asked to complete a check list of mandatory questions. In order to access the application form, the lead applicant must satisfy the conditions of this check list:

Lead applicant	
Have you read the guidance notes for the SS 2026 call, including all eligibility criteria and do you confirm that, to the best of your knowledge your application meets all eligibility requirements?	Yes/No
Do you confirm that to the best of your knowledge your project is within the scope of patient-oriented research (POR), health services research (HSR) and/or population health research (PHR) as outlined in Section 3 of the guidance notes and defined in appendix II?	Yes/No
Are you aware that you need to allow sufficient time in the application process for your supervisor to access the application, complete the supervisor section and review and approve your final application through the GEMS system, before it can be validated by you and submitted to the host institution for their approval?	Yes/No
Are you clear about the role of the authorized signatory in the nominated host institution and are you aware that you need to build sufficient time into the application process for the host institution to access, review and approve your final application for submission to the HRB through the GEMS system?	Yes/No

Consent	
By submitting this application, I consent to the use of my data for assessment of my application; monitoring of successful grants; and evaluation of HRB's approach to funding and investment in research, in line with HRB policies and as detailed in the SS 2026 call guidance notes.	Yes/No

⁵ <https://research.ie/assets/uploads/2020/05/CCGT-Grant-Application-System-Technical-Guidance-Notes.pdf>

The lead applicant will be then able to start the application. Further details for completing each of the main sections of the application form are provided below.

Host institution and signatory notification

Host institution

For the purposes of contracting, payment, and management of the grant, HRB funds can only be awarded to HRB approved host institutions. For the purposes of this call, the host institution must be a HRB approved institution of the academic supervisor. Hospitals (including teaching hospitals affiliated to a higher education institution) or other health agencies cannot be included as the host institutions. Please see the list of HRB approved host institutions [here](#).

This call is open for host institutions from the Republic of Ireland and from the Northern Ireland.

In GEMS you will be asked to identify a HRB approved host institution and type it in full (do not use acronyms such as UCD, TCD, NUIG). Once you have entered the first 3-4 characters of the host institution, you will be assisted with auto-select options. It is important that the host institution name is entered accurately and in full as an incorrect entry may result in delays in attaining host institution approvals.

If you wish to propose a host institution which is not on the HRB list, you are advised to consult this with your supervisor and contact the HRB at gemshelp@hrb.ie.

Note: In order to be eligible to apply for funding, an institution must have been approved as a HRB host institution no later than two calendar months before the closing date of a call, only pre-approved host institutions will appear in this list.

Signatory notification (within host institution)

Once the host institution is selected at the initial stages of application creation, this will allow the lead applicant(student) to notify the authorised signatory (Dean of Research or equivalent person authorised to endorse research grant applications for the host institution) in that host institution of the lead applicant's intention to submit an application to the SS 2026. The signatory's details are pre-populated in the system, so the applicant just needs to click 'Notify' within GEMS. We recommend that you notify the host institution signatory of your intention to apply as soon as possible in the application process. The signatory will receive an email from GEMS with the name and email details of the lead applicant and if they have any queries or clarifications, they can engage directly to resolve them with the lead applicant. The host institution signatory must confirm their willingness to participate as host institution for the application through GEMS and once they do this a PDF of the application will be available for them to review with a view to them ultimately approving the final version for submission to the HRB.

Once the lead applicant is ready to submit the application and the academic supervisor approved the application in GEMS, they must notify the Dean of Research (or equivalent authorized approver at the chosen host institution) via GEMS, who will then review and then approve or reject (if there are any issues) the application also via GEMS. A rejection will prompt the return of the application to the

lead applicant for revisions, whereas an approval will result in the submission of the application to the HRB. It is critical therefore that applicants leave 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.**

Once submitted, a grant application number will be assigned to the application, and a confirmation email will be sent to the lead applicant and Dean of Research. The lead applicant should be aware that once a host institution is chosen for the application, a notification will be generated and sent to them for approval.

The HRB GEMS online application form will request the following information:

1 Lead applicant (student) details

1.1 Full name and institution

Please provide the lead applicant's full name and the name of the third level institute where they are currently studying (institution).

This information will be automatically included in the application form. If this information requires updating, please edit the details in the 'Manage my details' section of your GEMS profile.

1.2 Degree course details

1.2.1 Please state the name and duration of the degree course you are currently undertaking and indicate which year of the course you are currently completing.

Name of the degree:

Degree:

Current year:

1.2.2 Are you a full-time or part time student in a relevant health/social care related discipline at a third level institute in the island of Ireland?

Yes/No

If **no**, you are not eligible to apply.

1.2.3 Are you in the first or final year of a level 8 NFQ degree course?

Yes/No

If **yes**, you are not eligible to apply.

1.2.4 Are you in the final year of the undergraduate component of a degree course which includes an optional or additional year or more for a further level 9 or 10 qualification, such as MSc, MPharm or PhD?

Yes/No

If **yes**, you are not eligible to apply.

1.3 Previous research experience

1.3.1 Have you previously undertaken any research project equal to or longer than eight weeks consecutively, in a full-time capacity including HRB or other summer student scholarships?

Yes/No

If **yes**, you are not eligible to apply.

1.3.2 Have you worked as a research assistant, research technician or any role with experience of eight weeks full time equivalent or more of active research?

Yes/No

If **yes**, you are not eligible to apply.

1.3.3 Have you previously conducted a PhD and/or MSc by research?

Yes/No

If **yes**, you are not eligible to apply.

1.4 Past submissions and other current applications

1.4.1 Have you previously applied to the HRB Summer Student Scholarship scheme?

Yes/No

If **yes**, please state the year of submission and outcome.

Please note: You are not eligible to apply if you have previously completed a HRB Summer Student Scholarship. However, if you were awarded HRB Summer Student Scholarship but withdrew prior to its commencement, you remain eligible.

1.4.2 Have you submitted or do you intend to submit an application to any other organisation to conduct a summer research project in 2026?

Yes/No

If **yes**, please give the name of the funding scheme(s), the name of the funding organisation(s) and date of expected outcome.

Please note: If your application to the HRB Summer Student Scholarship is successful, you may not concurrently hold a scholarship from another organisation.

1.4.3 Is this your only application to the HRB Summer Student Scholarship 2026 in this round?

Yes/No

If **no**, you are not eligible to submit this application.

1.4.4 Are you able to undertake the scholarship on a full-time basis for a minimum of six and a maximum of eight weeks during the summer of 2026?

Yes/No

If **no**, you are not eligible to submit this application.

2 Project details

2.1 Project title

Please 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. There is a **200 characters** maximum limit.

2.2 Project start date

Please indicate the proposed start date. The earliest start date is **Tuesday, 2 June 2026**. Your project work must be completed by **Friday, 11 September 2026**.

Please note: Your research project requires a completed approvals declaration form which must be submitted to the HRB **before** you begin your project. The approvals declaration form is to track your projects' research ethics approval/animal license, if required.

2.3 Scholarship duration and stipend

This scholarship offers a stipend of €400 per week for a minimum of six and a maximum of eight weeks. **Projects which are shorter than six weeks or longer than eight weeks will not be funded.**

In the drop-down box provided, please indicate the duration of your project. You must select between six and eight weeks. The total amount of funding for which you intend to apply will be automatically calculated based on the duration of your project.

2.4 Project abstract

This should be a succinct summary of the proposed research. This structured summary should clearly outline the background to the research, the aims, and hypotheses of the project. The objectives of the project and what the work is expected to establish should be described. It provides a clear synopsis of your application and should set the research application into context. The word limit is **300 words**.

2.5 Description of the research project

Please provide a clear description of the research project including the background, aims and objectives, hypothesis, research design and methodology, data analysis and key outputs. Please include an estimated timeline for completion of the various elements of the research project. If your project is a part of a larger research programme, please describe your role in the project and the research activities which will be undertaken directly by you. The word limit is **500 words**.

2.5.1 Does the project plan align with your chosen scholarship duration (6, 7 or 8 weeks)?

Yes/No

If **no**, please revise your project plan and ensure it aligns with your scholarship duration.

2.6 Will this project be conducted on- site at the HRB approved host institution or health agency (i.e., not remotely)?

Yes/No

If **no**, you are ineligible to apply. Remote projects are not eligible.

2.7 Alignment of your project with the scope of SS 2026

2.7.1 Please select the research area that best describes your research project.

1. Patient-oriented research
2. Patient-oriented research – pre-clinical study
3. Health services research
4. Population health research

Please note: Definitions of research areas within the scope of this scheme can be found in appendix II of the SS 2026 guidance notes.

2.7.2 Please provide a brief and clear overview of how your proposed project aligns with the scope of SS 2026.

If your project is a pre-clinical study in the area of patient oriented research, you must also provide appropriate evidence setting out the case for the pre-clinical study and justify the choice of species in a manner which resembles the human condition in aetiology, pathophysiology, symptomatology and response to therapeutic intervention and describing how the pre-clinical study correlates and aligns with the planned future stages of the research study in humans as outlined under 'patient oriented research' in appendix II. The word limit is **100 words**.

2.8 References

Provide a list of any sources cited in Section 2 (up to a maximum of **five publications**) using the following format:

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

3 Student experience

Please list and briefly describe the most important training activities you will undertake during your research project, including the techniques and skills you expect learn and the experience you aim to gain. The word limit is **150 words**.

4 Ethical approval and use of animals

Research Ethics Committee (REC) approval is required for all research work funded by the HRB that involves human participants, human material (including tissue) or animals. If your application will be successful and such approvals are needed for your project, you be required to provide a declaration to that effect to the HRB **before you begin work**.

In the application form you will be required to indicate whether ethical approval and/or animal licences will be required for your project.

Applicants should allow sufficient time to obtain ethical approval and/or animal licenses. The process to apply to an ethics committee can delay the start of the summer project so it is highly recommended to think carefully about the suitability of a summer project and the relevant documentation required prior to start the scholarship. It is suggested that ethical approval and/or animal licenses are sought in **parallel with submission of an application** to the HRB as the approvals **must be** in place before the start of the scholarship.

An approvals declaration form will be provided to all successful applicants once the funding allocation process is completed.

5 Supervision

Applicants are required to have one suitably qualified academic supervisor. The academic supervisor must **fulfil eligibility criteria as outlined in Section 5.3 of the guidance notes**.

5.1 Academic supervisor - basic details

Within GEMS the application is initiated by the lead applicant (student). The supervisor must accept the invitation from the lead applicant in GEMS to act as supervisor and to access the application. Once the supervisor accepts the invitation, they can input details such as name, institution, present position, profession, degrees and qualifications and employment history via the "Manage my details" section of their own GEMS account. This information is automatically included in the application. Please note that **it is the responsibility of the lead applicant to ensure that the supervisor has completed the 'Manage my details' section of their own GEMS account**.

See the technical guidance notes available in the application form for more information.

Please note that supervisor eligibility checklist and section 5.2 of the application form are accessible only by the academic supervisor

Before completing section 5.2, the supervisor will be asked to review the supervisor eligibility criteria and confirm that they meet all of the requirements.

5.2 Academic supervisor research experience and supervisory arrangements

5.2.1 Appropriate research experience

Please provide the following:

- At least one, but no more than five, peer-reviewed, original research publications, typically as leading or senior author. If the individual is not the leading author, then their contribution to the published research must be clearly outlined to demonstrate they played a significant role and contribution to that project.

AND

- (A) Two other research outputs which can be a combination of other peer-reviewed publications (not necessary as leading or senior author) and/or other research outputs⁶.

OR

- (B) Please provide one independently peer-reviewed research grant as principal investigator or co-principal investigator or co-applicant of a minimum value of €100,000. This includes individual career development grant such as PhD scholarships or postdoctoral fellowships. You must provide the start date of your grant, duration of the grant, total grant value, name of the funding body, grant reference number, type and title of the grant and role of the applicant (principal investigator, co-principal investigator (co-lead), co-applicant or collaborator).

Please ensure that this question is answered correctly, as failure to do so may impact your eligibility.

5.2.2 Active engagement in research

Please provide a reference to one peer reviewed, original research publication published by you in the last three years which is relevant to the proposed research project in this SS application. This may be the same publication in Section 5.2.1 Appropriate research experience.

If relevant, you can provide details of three other research outputs² most relevant to the project.

Please ensure that this question is answered correctly, as failure to do so may impact your eligibility.

⁶ Published book chapters, reports to government, research data and datasets, research materials, databases, audio/video products, national and/or international reports, patents, models and protocols, software production, evidence of influence on health policy and practice, outreach and/or knowledge translation activities, media coverage or other relevant activities and/or any other relevant outputs that have resulted in a significant impact in their field.

5.2.3 Contract of employment

Are you permanently employed?

Yes/No

If **no**, please provide employment contract end date.

5.2.4 Host institution affiliation

Are you affiliated with a HRB approved host institution?

Yes/No

If **yes**, please include the name of the HI and describe the nature of your affiliation with, or role within the host institution. The word limit is **150 words**.

If **no**, you are not eligible to act as supervisor on this application.

5.2.5 SS 2026 applicant supervision

Is it the only SS 2026 summer student application on which you are listed as academic supervisor in this round?

Yes/No

If **no**, you are not eligible to act as supervisor on this application.

5.2.6 Supervisory arrangements

Describe the planned approach for supervising the student and monitoring their progress during the scholarship. This should include information on the accessibility of the supervisor and the level and quality of supervision they will receive. The word limit is **200 words**.

Please note: Only *in situ* supervision is allowed during the scholarship.

5.3 Health agency

If the research project is to be conducted outside of the supervisor's HRB approved host institution in (e.g., in a charity/hospital), further information on the health agency is required.

If the supervisor is not affiliated with the chosen health agency or will not be *in situ* with the student, a suitable individual working in the agency must be nominated to act as a health agency sponsor and additional information must be provided, **including a letter of support from the health agency sponsor**. The inclusion of a health agency sponsor is to ensure that the student is well supported and working under good supervision at all times regardless of the setting.

In cases where the academic supervisor is also affiliated with the health agency and will be *in situ* with the student during the research project, additional health agency-based sponsor and letter of support are not required.

5.3.1 Will the student be based in a health agency?

Yes/No

If **no**, please, please provide the name of the HRB approved host institution where the research project will be conducted

If **yes**, please complete section 5.3.2.

5.3.2 Is the academic supervisor affiliated to the health agency?

Yes/No

If **yes**, please provide the name and address of the health agency and the current role of the academic supervisor within the agency and complete section 5.3.3.

If **no**, please complete section 5.4

5.3.3 Will the academic supervisor be in situ at the health agency with the student for the duration of the project?

If **yes**, the letter of support from health agency sponsor is not required.

If **no**, please complete section 5.4

5.4 Health agency sponsor details

5.4.1 Name and address of health agency

Please state the name and address of the health agency. Where the health agency has multiple locations, please include the address where the student will be based. Please include a health agency website link if available.

5.4.2 Name, job title and role of health agency sponsor

Please state the name and job title of the health agency sponsor and include details of their role in the health agency.

5.4.3 Arrangements for supervisory support

Please describe why the health agency sponsor was chosen and how will they complement the supervision of the student and the supervisory arrangements of the academic supervisor. The word limit is **150 words**.

5.4.4 Health agency letter of support

Please upload a letter of support from the health agency, on headed paper, outlining the health agency and health agency sponsor's commitment to the student and the project.

Documentation checklist

All sections of the GEMS application form must be completed.

The deadline for submission of complete applications is **27 November 2025** at 13:00 via GEMS.

It is critical that the student applying for the award, submits the application on **GEMS leaving 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.

1. After successful validation the lead applicant may submit the application. It will then be routed to the designated signatory at the host institution for their approval.
2. If a signatory rejects the application the lead applicant will be notified, along with any feedback the signatory has supplied.
3. The application can then be re-submitted; it will be returned to the signatory and will continue through the approval process as before.
4. On completion of the final approval by the host institution signatory, a grant application number is assigned to the application.
5. The application automatically gets submitted to the HRB through GEMS for consideration for funding.

Please ensure that all the relevant sections of the application form are completed. Ensure that the letter of support from health agency sponsor (if applicable) is clearly labelled and uploaded. Please note once the application is submitted it cannot be edited or unsubmitted. Please ensure that you retain a PDF copy of your application on file for your own records.

It is the **responsibility of the student to upload the supporting documentation when submitting to the host institution**. If the application is not approved by the HI and submitted to the HRB on time, fully completed, with the required support documents the application will be deemed ineligible without further review.

Appendix II: Definition of research areas within the scope of the scheme

The details below are not exhaustive but should serve as a useful guide to applicants in considering relevance and eligibility for this scheme. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt by HRB staff based on the criteria below.

Patient oriented research

Patient-oriented research (POR) is defined as research conducted with human subjects, or on material of human origin, such as tissues, specimens and cognitive phenomena. The research generally involves patients, samples and/or data from patients and other people who are not patients (e.g., healthy volunteers)

Under the POR remit, the HRB will consider research projects that involve pre-clinical studies, on the understanding that pre-clinical studies represent an important stage of research that occurs before testing in humans to find out if a drug, treatment or procedure is likely to be useful. Such studies gather data on efficacy, feasibility, toxicity, safety and supports patient eligibility criteria. They typically involve research using particular species of animals and in such cases the HRB will consider supporting animal work. However, appropriate evidence must be provided in the application setting out the case for the pre-clinical study, to justify the choice of species in a manner which resembles the human condition in aetiology, pathophysiology, symptomatology and response to therapeutic intervention and describing how the pre-clinical study correlates and aligns with the planned future stages of the research study in humans. In some pre-clinical studies, due to the species-specific nature of the clinical product (e.g., some vector-expressed human transgenes or human derived cellular products) testing in animals would not prove informative or appropriate so alternative in vitro pre-clinical studies models can be proposed, but again detailed justification must be provided.

Applications which begin with research activity to the right of the red in Figure 1 below may be considered within the POR remit.

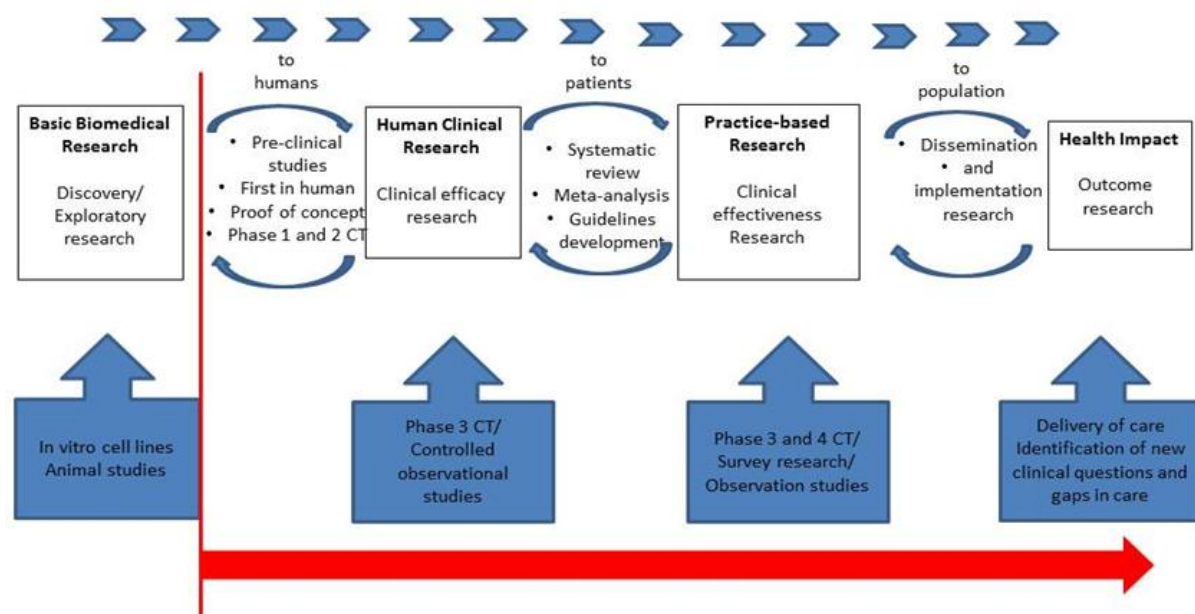


Figure 1: Continuum from research to impacts and outcomes

Population health research

Research with the goal of improving the health of the population, or of defined sub-populations, through a better understanding of the ways in which social, cultural, environmental, occupational and economic factors determine health status or through the identification of effective interventions for improving health status and reducing health inequalities.

The emphasis of applications submitted within this research area is on the prevention of disease, promotion of health and wellbeing and the reduction of inequalities in health. It focuses on the health of the whole population or on defined sub-groups and aims to generate evidence that is highly relevant to improving the health and wellbeing of the public.

Note: There is significant overlap between clinical medicine and population health approaches. For the purposes of this scheme, if you are submitting a science- or medically-driven proposal where the emphasis is on disease diagnosis, treatment or care of an individual or a patient group, you should choose the patient-oriented option as the research area for your proposal.

Applications submitted under the population research area should focus on issues such as:

- Macro-level socio-economic determinants of health (the influence of social and economic policies on health);
- Individual-level socio-economic determinants of health (the relationships between access to the resources of society such as housing, income, employment, food security and health);
- Individual behavioural/lifestyle factors such as smoking, nutrition, alcohol and substance abuse, physical activity and sexual behaviour and their impact on health;
- Occupational and environmental determinants;
- The health of populations over the lifecourse (e.g., Birth, child and adult development and ageing);
- Health of specific population groups (e.g. children and youth, people with disabilities, older adults, migrant populations);
- Gender issues and health;
- Health protection, promotion, health education and intervention programmes;
- Genetic epidemiology;
- Prevention and control;
- Monitoring and surveillance of population health.

Health services research

Research with the goal of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of health professionals and the health care system through changes to practice and policy. Health services research is a multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organisational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviours affect access to health care, the quality and cost of healthcare and ultimately health and well-being.

Applications submitted under this research area will focus on the planning, management, organisation, financing, purchasing and provision of health and social care services. Application address aspects of the quality of services, access and equity in provision, relevance and appropriateness to the needs of individuals and communities, effectiveness and efficiency, workforce capacity and capability issues and how services are experienced. Applications focusing on the three main dimensions of quality – patient safety, patient experience and effectiveness of care – are particularly welcome.

Applications focusing on issues such as the following are welcome:

- Access to services;
- Strategic management of waiting times;
- Health service planning;
- Health service delivery and organization;
- Integration of care;
- Evaluation of health services interventions;
- Delivery and organisation of hospital and primary health care;
- Community-based care (long-term care, home care);
- Chronic disease prevention and management;
- Citizen engagement;
- Health professional influences on health care;
- Public and private health care sectors;
- HR and financing of health services;
- Health policy and systems management;
- Health ethics and law;
- Health informatics;
- Pharmacoepidemiology;
- Quality of life and quality of care;
- Health systems and policy.

Appendix III: HRB funding policies and procedures

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 through the HRB online grant management system GEMS 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 for the HRB 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 HRB 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 regard to monitoring of progress through written reporting and other means e.g., interim review. We will publish some basic information on successful awards including PI, HI, amount awarded and lay summary on our website and may highlight individual awards or researchers in more detail (with specific consent). We will also use the information you have provided to generate general statistics around our current funding portfolio, and to evaluate our funding mechanisms and investment. After your grant has ended, we will continue to keep your information on file (in accordance with HRB policies) to allow us to evaluate the outcomes, outputs and impacts of HRB investment in your research.

Please note that we 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.

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)⁷. 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 Committee⁸.

⁷ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2021/si/18/made/en/pdf>

⁸ <https://hrcdc.ie/>

Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest rules *are applied rigorously*. Where a conflict of interest exists, the reviewer is requested to inform the HRB 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.

Appeals procedure

The HRB's Policy on Appeals highlights the procedure for appealing ineligibility decisions and funding decisions in funding schemes is available at <https://www.hrb.ie/funding/grant-management/grant-policies/>

Privacy policy and retention policy

To understand why we collect the information we collect and what we do with that information, please see our Privacy⁹ and Retention Policies¹⁰.

⁹ <https://www.hrb.ie/about/legal/privacy-policy/>

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