

**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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## **FAQs**

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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 is 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 **22<sup>nd</sup> January to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026**. Researchers will need to log on to Researchfish and submit their report by 12pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026, when submission will close. All awards that have ended since **1 January 2021** and those that are active on or before **1 September 2025** will be required to submit a report via Researchfish during the January 2026 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 between 27 November 2025 and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025. 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 2026 submission period, you will receive an email from Researchfish inviting you to set up your account between 27<sup>th</sup> November and 15<sup>th</sup> December. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 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. A more streamlined version of the HRB Annual Report is being developed for 2026 to ensure there is no duplication with Researchfish. Annual Reports 2026 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. How can I find out more information on the next Researchfish submission period?

HRB is hosting a virtual information session on **14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 from 3.30pm-4.30pm** for HRB grant holders, their team members and Host Institutions to provide more information on the Researchfish process and the next submission period. Please sign up at the links below to attend an information session relevant to you-

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/1gzG4HchTlCP43j0Omudyw>

**16. 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 01/01/2021). 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 since 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 output, outcomes and impacts from Health Research projects take time to materialize and therefore, this is an opportunity to capture any development on your award since your last submission to the HRB.

**17. 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 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.

**18. Are there any awards that are not required to submit a Researchfish report on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January-20<sup>th</sup> March submission period?**

The following awards are **not** required to submit a Researchfish report within the 2026 submission period-

- Awards that ended **before** 01/01/2021
- Awards that started **after** 01/09/2025
- Summer Scholarship Awards

- Conference and Events Scheme Awards
- Any grants for which HRB isn't the lead funder and doesn't manage the application process for

#### 19. 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](#)

#### 20. I accessed my Researchfish profile to update the outputs and outcomes I submitted last year, but I can't find the information I previously entered. Where can I locate my past submissions?

In ResearchFish the information you entered in a previous year is stored within your account and attached to each award. To find the information:

- Log in to Researchfish
- From the dashboard, select **"My awards"**.
- Click on the **Go to award** button, for the specific award you reported on last year.
- Within the awards page toggle through sections such as Publications, engagement activities, collaborations, policy influence. Anything you entered in previous years should already be listed here.

Researchfish rolls outputs forward automatically. You will only need to add new items or update existing ones.

If you'd like to **download** your previously submitted outcomes, please follow these steps:

1. Head to the "My Awards" page and select the relevant award.
2. Click on "Download Award and Outcome Data" on the subsequent page.
3. Choose to download a past submission.
4. This will generate a file that will be available after a few minutes in the "My Downloads" section.

#### 21. Where can I access the submission process tutorial video?

This video link demonstrates how PIs can submit their awards-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWQUosQ9aug>

## 22. What is the difference between team member access and delegate access?

Research staff can be added as a delegate or a team member on Researchfish to assist PIs with reporting. The difference between the two types of access is noted below-

**Team member access-** Allows research staff, co-investigators, or collaborators to add outputs and outcomes linked to **a specific grant that they have been provided access to**. They cannot submit the final report on behalf of the grant holder, and they cannot complete HRB's additional questions.

**Delegate access-** Provides broader administrative access to the PI's profile. Allows the delegate to add outputs and outcomes for **multiple grants that the PI manages**. They cannot submit the final report on behalf of the PI; however, they can complete HRB's additional questions.

Please see this link for more information

<https://youtu.be/PwwBHQwMCGY?si=VR9q5A95yupNYadP>.

## 23. What changes have been made to the new 'Additional Funder Questions' section?

The following updates have been made to the Additional Funder Questions section:

### Overview of Changes

The section previously titled "**HRB Other Important Outcomes and Impact**" has now been split into two separate questions:

#### 1. **"Summarising Impact of this Grant." (Mandatory for all grants)**

This new wording is intended to make the purpose of the question clearer and more aligned with the information we expect PIs to provide. Here, PIs are asked to summarise the impact of their HRB funded grant in their own words.

#### 2. **"Any Other Outputs and Outcomes."**

This section allows PIs to report any additional outputs or outcomes that do not fit within the standard Researchfish categories. It is especially useful for capturing outputs that may be unique to a specific scheme type, ensuring these contributions are fully recognised.

### Details of the New Changes

HRB Other Important Outcomes and Impact has now been changed to "Summarising Impact of this Grant."

A separate section has been introduced for "Any Other Outputs and Outcomes" as we want PIs to use this section to note any additional outputs or outcomes from this



grant that don't fit the main Researchfish categories. PIs can report on outputs that are perhaps unique to their scheme type.

**24. Are co-investigators and collaborators also required to submit reports?**

Only the Principal investigators/Grant holders are responsible for submitting the report. However, co-investigators and collaborators may be invited to contribute information within the Researchfish system.

**25. Can I update my outputs and outcomes after I have submitted my report?**

You cannot edit a report once it has been submitted, but you can add new outputs and outcomes in future submission periods, previously submitted information remains part of your funder's records. However, you can always reach out to us if there is something very important that have you missed and you would like to add in your report.

**Note:** Principal investigators have access to their Researchfish accounts all year round and can add or update outputs and outcomes at any time as they arise. Researchfish operates as a live record. The annual submission period simply provides a defined window for PIs to review, validate and formally submit their recorded information to the funder.

**26. How do I know which outputs and outcomes are relevant to my grant?**

Please include outputs and outcomes that can reasonably be attributed to the grants funding support. If a result is supported by multiple grants, you can attribute it to more than one award in Researchfish.

**27. 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>]

**28. Contacts**

- [Support@researchfish.com](mailto:Support@researchfish.com)
- [Evaluation@hrb.ie](mailto:Evaluation@hrb.ie)