An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Horizon Europe Partnerships

European Research Area Networks (ERANETS)

Call Guidelines for Irish Applicants

Research and Codex Division
Call Guidelines for Irish Applicants
(Version 2.0)

All responses to European Research Area Networks Research Calls will be treated in confidence. Personal data collected from Call proposals will be processed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations. The purpose of the collection and processing of this data is the management, payment, and verification of Call applications. Data will be shared externally with our software provider, Fluent Technology. The Department may elect, where necessary, to share relevant information with collaborating partners and relevant funding institutions.

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DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Comment	Date
1.0	First Edition	March 2022
1.01	Specific change to Sections 4 “Eligible RPOs” (p. 6) and 5 “Funding Rules” (p. 7), includes: Addition of a new eligible RPO; and an update to the annual stipend amount for postgraduate students.	December 2023
2.0	General changes made to the document to revise and update text to reflect new Horizon Europe Partnerships, as appropriate.	February 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of DAFM's commitment to strengthening European research collaborations under Horizon Europe (HEU), the department contributes to a range of strategic research initiatives under DAFM's International Outreach Research Strand to engage at the EU-level on the challenges, actions and goals identified across the European Union and those that are common to Ireland's national policy priorities.

Horizon Partnerships and European Research Area Networks (or ERANETs) play a crucial role in advancing agri-food research and addressing the complex challenges faced by the agriculture and food sectors. From 2024, over the next period of the Horizon Europe Programme, Partnerships will begin to replace the research and innovation activities of the ERANETs (established under Horizon 2020).

The Partnerships under HEU bring together diverse stakeholders, including researchers, farmers, industry experts, policymakers, and consumers, to collaboratively tackle issues related to sustainable agriculture, food production, and food security. By pooling resources, expertise, and knowledge, Horizon Partnerships enable the development of innovative solutions that improve agricultural practices, enhance crop productivity, and promote sustainable food systems.

International research and innovation Calls launched under these Partnerships are funded by participating member state research funding bodies and, include top-up EU co-funding in selected areas with high European added value.

Competitive research calls are open to Irish scientists and researchers from eligible Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) to develop collaborative research proposals with research partners from at least three other Member States or Associated Countries. They also provide opportunities for researchers to participate in scientific exchange between collaborating research institutions to enhance their technical and professional training and development.

Once submitted, research proposal applications are peer reviewed through a rigorous evaluation process, with the research partners of successful projects being funded by their national funding organisation. This the *nationality principle* means that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) will fund Irish research partners in a particular international project consortium.

DAFM provides support and funding to research activities in the agri-food-forest-bioeconomy areas that are undertaken in conjunction with other EU Member States, the EU Commission and sometimes can include third-party countries or organisations,

such as New Zealand, the UK or the Global Research Alliance. In addition, other national funders may also be involved in the co-funding of such research calls with DAFM, for example Teagasc, the Health Research Board (HRB) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

2. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

These guidelines are for Irish applicants and contain detailed guidance for submitting applications to European Research Calls that will be funded by DAFM.

This guidance document should be read in conjunction with the central Call Document and the Ireland's National Annex which sets out specific requirements for Irish applicants seeking grant-aid from DAFM.

3. NATIONAL ANNEX OF THE CENTRAL CALL DOCUMENT

The National Annex for Ireland of the Central Call Documentation holds specific requirements for proposals that will be submitted by Irish applicants under the relevant research Call. The requirements include the:

- National Contact Point
- Funding
- National Eligibility Criteria
- Call Priorities

Please Note: If necessary further information may be provided in the National Annex as required or is relevant to the research Call, and as such it is important to read the specific requirements for each Call as set out in the National Annex of the Central Call Documentation.

3.1 National Contact Point

Contact information for the specific national contact point(s) in DAFM will be provided in the central call documentation for each call.

The general contact email for DAFM is: Research@agriculture.gov.ie

3.2 Funding

Details on funding by DAFM will be provided to Irish applicants in the National Annex of the Central Call Document. Information will be provided on the following:

- The total funding commitment made to the Call by DAFM
- The maximum grant funding per project.

It is also important to note that, in addition to DAFM, other national funding bodies may also be involved in the funding commitment to such research calls, for example Teagasc, the Health Research Board (HRB) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Where there is more than one Irish funder, additional information will be provided on the following:

- The total funding commitment made to the call by the Irish funders and the respective total funding commitment of each funder.
- The maximum funding available per project from each funder and the total combined maximum funding per project, if applicable.
- Specific information related to funding rules of additional funders will be outlined (e.g. Walsh Scholarships as provided by Teagasc)
- Additional information or constraints for grant funding where there is a mix of funding from two or more Irish funders will be set out.

Further information on DAFM funding rules, such as eligible and non-eligible costs, are provided in Section 5.1 below. Given the frequent research co-funding to these research Calls by Teagasc, the specific Teagasc funding rules in respect of the Walsh Scholarship are also provided in Section 5.2 below.

Where appropriate, Irish applicants should also refer to the specific funding rules set out by funding bodies through their own websites or contained in the National Annex of the Central Call Documentation in respect to each specific research Call.

3.3 National Eligibility Criteria

In addition to the general eligibility criteria of the Call as set out in the Central Call documentation, proposals must also meet relevant National eligibility criteria that are set out in the National Annex.

Applications that do not adhere to both sets of criteria **will be deemed ineligible** and in such cases the application will not proceed further in the Call process.

The National eligibility criteria primarily concentrates on the following:

- The DAFM approved status of Irish Research Performing Organisations (RPOs), see section 4 below.

- The grant funding request by Irish RPOs is within the parameters set out in the funding section of the National Annex and the funding Rules as set out in section 5 below).
- The applicant addresses the scientific topic areas set out in the Central Call Document and, where applicable, addresses the relevant scientific topic areas related to the Call scope that are supported by DAFM as set out in the National Annex (see section 3.4 below).
- Avoid duplication of recent research work already undertaken or ongoing that incorporates the scope of the scientific topic areas in the Call.
- Closely aligns with relevant strategic research and innovation agendas or relevant national policy priorities and foresight documents that are identified in the National Annex of the Central Call Documentation.

3.4 Call Priorities

Applications seeking grant-aid from DAFM must be in line with the specified research topic areas related to the scope of the Central Call.

In certain cases, not all research topic areas of the scope of the Central Call may be supported by DAFM for funding, as such applicants can only apply for funding from DAFM in those areas that are supported by DAFM.

4. ELIGIBLE RESEARCH PERFORMING ORGANISATIONS

Only RPOs eligible for grant-aid under DAFM's Competitive Research Funding Programme can make applications and submit funding requests, either as partners or coordinators, under the Call.

RPOs eligible for grant-aid from DAFM are those institutions which fall within the meaning of Section One of the HEA Act, 1971 (Universities and Institutes of Technologies, etc.), plus Teagasc, the Marine Institute, Irish Cattle Breeding Federation, the National Botanic Gardens, Birdwatch Ireland and Indigo Rock Marine Research Station. Public RPOs based in Northern Ireland are not eligible for national funding.

Research Institutions must be an approved RPO at the time of the launch of the Call.

A project partner should be either a permanent member of staff at an eligible RPO or an experienced researcher with a PhD qualification contracted to work with an eligible RPO over the full duration of the project.

5. FUNDING RULES

Irish financial support for the Joint Call is being provided through the International Outreach Strand of the DAFM Competitive Research Funding Programme.

The scientific work must be completed within the duration specified under the Central Call Documentation (normally 3-years) in collaboration with the international partners to comply with the Central Call requirements as the overall collaborative transnational project will have to present a final report to the Call after the duration specified in the Central Call.

5.1 DAFM Funding

The grant rate may be up to 100% funding for eligible costs. Eligible costs are the costs necessarily incurred in carrying out the research project as described in the project proposal. Costs must fulfil the following conditions:

- Must be specific to the project work undertaken for the delivery of the tasks and milestones of the approved project.
- Be incurred during the approved timeframe of the project.
- Be recorded in separate financial accounts that will be maintained throughout the duration of the project and reported on as required.
- Evidence of all incurred costs must be maintained and available on request for verification and audit trail purposes.

Eligible costs will be allowed in the following categories

a) Staff Costs
b) Equipment
c) Travel & Subsistence
d) Consumables
e) Overheads
f) Other agreed costs

a) Staff Costs

Costs will be allowed for additional staff specifically hired to carry out work on the project including postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers, contract researchers, research assistants and research technicians. It excludes permanent staff employed by the institutions concerned.
DAFM's research funding programmes are focused on early-stage researchers. DAFM will fund contributions to salaries of staff contracted to work on the project,

commencing at the minimum point of the appropriate IUA/relevant pay scale. If there is no scale available, then the minimum point of the appropriate IUA scale should be used. Staffing must be commensurate with the scope and nature of the research involved and therefore in exceptional circumstances where it is well justified in the proposal, a more senior researcher can be considered at the minimum point of the appropriate scale and will be taken into account as part of the evaluation process.
DAFM will contribute a maximum of €6,000 towards the annual cost of postgraduate fees for up to four years (this is reduced accordingly where institutions charge reduced fees in final years). In addition, DAFM will fund postgraduate student stipends at a flat rate of €25,000 per annum for up to four years. Except in the case of Teagasc, the grant for both the fees and stipend is payable directly to the HEI at which a postgraduate student is registered. Please note that fees and stipends are two separate contributions from DAFM. The stipend *must not* be used to contribute to student fees under any circumstances.
Ordinarily DAFM funded students are registered in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that are within the scope of the 1971 Higher Education Authority (HEA) Act. In exceptional circumstances and only where there is no appropriate supervisory expertise in a specific discipline available in a HEI that is within the scope of the HEA Act, a student may be registered in a HEI in another jurisdiction provided it is well justified in the proposal. In this scenario the fees and stipend must be classified as an *'Other'* cost item on the relevant Budget spread sheet of the Irish-based RPO which is involved.

b) Equipment

Major items of equipment are not eligible for funding; however, a computer/laptop may be included in the budget if it can be shown to be necessary to the desk studies and otherwise unavailable. The estimated cost, including a breakdown of costs for individual items is required, however a possible supplier should not be named at this stage as all equipment must be acquired, in compliance with all National and EU procurement guidelines should the proposal be successful. The need for the proposed equipment and the associated cost will be assessed as part of the evaluation and contract negotiation processes and must be commensurate to the nature, size and scale of the project. It should be clear exactly what the equipment is, thus the use of brand names is discouraged. The location of the equipment should be clearly indicated. VAT should be applicable in accordance with the institution's accounting procedures.
The costs of durable equipment to be charged to the project shall be calculated according to the following formula: *[(A/B) x C x D]*

A. Period in months during which the durable equipment is used for the project after invoicing
B. Depreciation period for the durable equipment: 36 months for computer equipment and 60 months for all other items of equipment

C. Actual cost of the durable equipment
D. Percentage of usage of the durable equipment for the project

Leased equipment from external sources is not subject to depreciated calculations and thus full costs should be included directly

c) Travel and Subsistence

Travel and related subsistence costs for all approved personnel engaged in undertaking the project may be claimed. These costs must be specifically related to a specific identifiable project task and must be included on the RPO's budget sheet. Rates paid cannot exceed those for the Public Sector and airfares should be economy class. Travel and subsistence costs may also be claimed for Advisory Group members (including Stakeholder and Steering Groups) should such a group be deemed necessary/appropriate for a project. Conference fees, where relevant, should be included under this heading. Eligibility of expenses for any international guest speaker (not already identified in the approved project/budget) participating in a formal project dissemination event will be strictly subject to prior approval from DAFM. The majority of the T&S should be targeted at the contract researchers and post graduate students working on the project. In this context, the cost of travel to international conference, seminars etc. should be undertaken primarily by contract researchers and post graduate students specifically working on this proposal for which DAFM funding is being requested. Where more than one project member attends an international conference/seminar appropriate justification for any additional T&S claims shall be required by DAFM in the relevant Progress Report. The Travel and Subsistence (T&S) required for the project should be divided into home and foreign travel. The costs must be specifically related to a specific identifiable project task. The major conferences to be attended, the reasons for attending them and their location should be identified in the proposal. Other travel – to meetings, to collect samples etc, should be described. The information should be sufficiently detailed. The majority of the T&S should be targeted at the contract researchers and postgraduate students (including any Teagasc Walsh Scholars) working on the project. The foreign travel costs of non DAFM-funded staff or students, or non-Teagasc funded Walsh Scholar(s), named in the project will only be considered if they are consortium meetings or related symposia/dissemination events or if they are giving a presentation on the outputs of funded projects at an international conference.

Please note if the Walsh Scholarship is being sought, T&S amount for the studentship should be claimed from the DAFM budget.

d) Consumables

Items of consumables acquired for and used on the project may be allowed. All consumables should be necessary and directly related to the carrying out the work of the project and must be separately identifiable. A consumable is defined as an item which is used up / expires / is exhausted over the duration of the project. It does not include items such as laboratory coats, Personal Protective Equipment, general safety equipment, detergents, etc. – these should be met through the project's overheads. Consumables may be identified specifically (i.e. Petri dishes) or by category (i.e. microbiological culture consumables). Either way, an indication of the amount needed – which should relate to the information provided in the Task List – their use and justification for their cost is required.

Please note if the Walsh Scholarship is being sought, the consumables should be provided for in the DAFM budget table.

e) Overheads

DAFM will fund up to a maximum of 30% of the direct costs of scientific-type research not including equipment, sub-contracting and other agreed costs (maximum 25% for desk-based socio-economic/policy type analysis).

Please note if the Walsh Scholarship is being sought, the overhead should be provided for in the DAFM budget table.

f) Other agreed costs

DAFM Research Funding Programmes may agree to fund costs, which are relevant to approved projects and are not covered by the categories cited above. A description of what the 'Other' budget costs cover (e.g. software licences, warranties, specialised training course fees, external assistance etc.); the justification for those costs and their necessity to the project should be supplied.

Examples of **ineligible costs** include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Permanent staff costs
- Permanent staff networking activities, training and informal meetings
- Sick pay, redundancy payments, termination costs
- Legal fees
- Hospitality or other entertainment expenses, except such reasonable expenses accepted as wholly and exclusively required for the delivery of the tasks and milestones on the approved project
- Training of Temporary/Contract staff, that is not wholly and exclusively required for the delivery of the tasks and milestones on the approved project

- Office equipment and supplies (to include stationery, toner, printing and binding etc.)
- Technology Transfer or Patent costs
- Open access, Journal subscriptions and payments to journals for articles on research
- Membership to societies, institutes
- Repairs and maintenance to equipment
- Advertising and recruitment costs
- Contingency or miscellaneous expenses
- Car Tax / Insurance
- Safety Clothing (including gloves, laboratory coats, PPE, general safety equipment, detergents etc.)

Prospective applicants should note that:

a) The research team will be required to disseminate results / outputs of the project. However, dissemination activities should take account of the need to generate and/or protect any Intellectual Property (IP) arising from the research.
b) In disseminating research achievements, public RPOs should acknowledge that funding was provided by DAFM.
c) DAFM will publicise details of applications and awards made under this Call.
d) Information supplied to DAFM may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and in accordance with the conditions of that Act.

5.2 Teagasc Walsh Scholarship Funding

Where Teagasc funding is available under a research Call, this is available from Teagasc only in the form of a four-year Walsh Scholarship-funded PhD of €124,000 (€25,000/year stipend plus a maximum of €6,000/year fees). Requests for funding from the Walsh Scholarship programme can come from those institutions which fall within the meaning of Section One of the HEA Act, 1971 (Universities and Institutes of Technologies, etc.), or Teagasc.

Where proposals do not include a Teagasc staff member as an applicant, a Teagasc supervisor, who is a permanent member of staff, must be identified to co-supervise any Teagasc Walsh Scholarship PhD student. Any proposals must include the name of the Teagasc Co-Supervisor in the Budget Comments section and include a statement to confirm that the Teagasc staff member has given his/her approval to act as Co-Supervisor.

Calls under the European framework normally invite proposals for a up to a maximum of three-year projects, the scientific work must be completed within the first three years in collaboration with the international partners to comply with Central Call requirements as the overall collaborative international project will have to present a final report after three years. The fourth year is primarily for completion of the PhD and writing up of the thesis.

Please note that the Teagasc Walsh Scholarship Funding does not provide any funds toward travel and subsistence or consumables or attract an overhead charge. These costs should be provided for in the DAFM budget – see section 5.1 for details on DAFM costs allowable towards a Walsh Scholarship student and DAFM overhead rates.

Further information on the Walsh Scholarship Programme can be obtained from the Teagasc website at: Teagasc Walsh Scholarship Programme

6. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Proposal partners are requested to carefully consider the information published on the management of Intellectual Property (IP) by Knowledge Transfer Ireland and note that they must adhere to the current National IP Protocol.

Successful applicants are required to take necessary steps to:

a) Preserve and protect such intellectual property rights including, where appropriate, applying for patent registration; and
b) Actively exploit any discoveries, inventions or processes resulting from the research, by means of commercial licensing arrangements and otherwise.

Whenever possible, IP shall be managed for the benefit of enterprise development. Where relevant, researchers are required to discuss research outputs and potential IP with their Technology Transfer Office.

7. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION

The involvement of industry is encouraged on a self-financing basis subject to the need to respect the 'public good' nature of DAFM Research Funding Programmes and compliance with the National IP Protocol. Evidence of such industry engagement in a real and meaningful manner can help demonstrate the relevance and likely impact of the research work.

In cases where Industry is providing a funding contribution to research which involves IP issues, the National IP Protocol is particularly relevant. Further to these

requirements where a project is approved for funding in these circumstances DAFM will permit the commencement of a Collaborative Research Programme on the basis that:

- The lead Irish research participant provides the fully executed Consortium Agreement between the participating parties to DAFM following the date on which the first part of the funding is awarded by DAFM.

8. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

DAFM encourages appropriate stakeholder engagement (e.g. farmers, citizens, non-profit organisations etc) and knowledge transfer or exchange organisations throughout its research programmes which are designed to promote an open knowledge economy that fosters beneficial research outputs and impacts for industry, policy, the environment and society.

To maximise the impact and relevance of publicly funded research it is fundamental to consider and include the views of relevant stakeholders and their expectations in order to ensure that DAFM strategies/policies are developed with a full understanding of stakeholder needs, and, in turn, encourage increased public understanding of their scope to influence those policies.

9. GENDER EQUALITY

The principles of the EU gender mainstreaming policy apply to DAFM's Research Programmes and therefore participants will be required to report the ratio of males to females working on funded projects. Applicants are asked to be cognisant of the relevant recommendations of the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (pdf 2,888 kb) in framing proposals and in undertaking any funded research. Applicants may be asked to give evidence of action taken to promote and increase the numbers of females working in DAFM funded projects.

10. RESEARCH INTEGRITY & OPEN ACCESS

DAFM places high importance on ensuring research integrity and endorses the National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland (pdf 1,546 kb) which provides a robust framework to help achieve the highest standards of research integrity. Research funded in this Call should be compatible with the norms and best practices regarding research integrity set out in both this document and the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (pdf 3,001 kb).

Irish participants should adhere to DAFM's Policy on Open Access which aims to enhance the free circulation of knowledge, ultimately expediting innovation, whilst noting that protection of Intellectual Property must, in the first instance, take precedence over any form of publication and indeed open access deposition.

11. ETHICAL AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

11.1 Ethics

All investigators and research bodies must ensure that, before the research commences and during the full award period, all the necessary ethical, legal, data protection and regulatory requirements in order to conduct the research are met, and all the necessary licences and approvals have been obtained and remain valid for the duration when the research is undertaken.

Any research to be undertaken should be compliant with Health Products Regulatory Authority's (HPRA) requirements for researchers that are in place to protect and enhance public and animal health.

11.2 Health and Safety

Research bodies are responsible for ensuring that a healthy and safe working environment is provided for all individuals undertaking work associated with DAFM funded research.

12. APPROVAL FOR FUNDING AFTER THE CALL

Where Irish partnered projects receive a positive funding recommendation at the end of the Call evaluation process, the project partners must contact, directly, the Irish National Contact Point. DAFM will require a national application form to be completed via the DAFM online research portal system for any successful Irish based partners. This is a precursor to start the grant negotiation process leading to the issuing of contracts and the awarding of funding.

In addition to reporting requirements under the European Call, interim (at 6-months), annual scientific and financial and final reporting of the Irish lead work programme will be required via the online research portal system.