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| **2025 Enterprise Fellowship Programme – Partnership Stream**  **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**  **23/05/2025** |
| FAQs will be published every Thursday until 6 July 2025 or as necessary.  New questions will be marked \*\*New\*\*  Updated questions will be marked \*\*Updated\*\*  Questions are grouped under the following headings:   1. Eligibility 2. Applying to the programme 3. Conditions of award   If you do not find the answer to your query in the call documentation, you should contact the research office in your proposed institution which will provide information and clarification on the call. Research offices can send any queries they are unable to clarify to [schemes@researchireland.ie](mailto:schemes@researchireland.ie). |
| 1. **ELIGIBILITY** |
| **Q: The Academic Supervisor is a founder of the Enterprise Partner but the Enterprise Mentor is not affiliated with this university. Is it sufficient for the applicant to include this information in the relevant section of the application form?** |
| The application form for the Enterprise Partnership Scheme Postgraduate contains a declaration question to prevent conflict of interest, it can be viewed in the indicative form on the website and reads as follows:  **Is there any potential conflict of interest between the applicant, enterprise partner, enterprise mentor or academic supervisor?** A conflict of interest arises when an individual holds a direct or indirect personal interest which, in the opinion of a reasonably informed and well-advised person, is sufficient to call into question the independence, impartiality and objectivity that the individual is obliged to exercise in the performance of his/her duties. Conflicts of interest may be financial, non-financial or both. For example, if your academic supervisor is the founder of the Enterprise Partner. |
| **Q: Can St James’s Hospital be an Enterprise Partner for an EPS Postdoctoral Fellowship if the Enterprise Mentor is full time staff of SJH and holds a non-salaried honorary/adjunct position with the university?** |
| Yes, the nominated enterprise mentor can have an existing connection to the hosting institution provided that the connection does not pose a conflict of interest. The Enterprise mentor must also be an employee of the enterprise.  As above, a conflict of interest arises when an individual holds a direct or indirect personal interest which, in the opinion of a reasonably informed and well-advised person, is sufficient to call into question the independence, impartiality and objectivity that the individual is obliged to exercise in the performance of his/her duties. Conflicts of interest may be financial, non-financial or both. For example, if your academic supervisor is the founder of the Enterprise Partner. |
| **Q: Are we eligible to apply to this enterprise programme?, if we submit another for Research Ireland's Fellowship programme.** |
| Yes, however if successful in both applications only one fellowship may be accepted. |
| **Can we apply to both streams?** |
| No |
| **Q: In the Partnership Stream it states that this call is open to Postdoctoral researchers who are not currently under contract or who’s contract will end before this Grant begins. Does that mean that current postdocs who have a valid contract until summer 2026, for example, are not eligible?** |
| In such a case the Postdoc can apply for the partnership stream, but if successful, they will need to be in a position to start the Enterprise Fellowship award within 6 months of the notification period (end of November). |
| **Q: What do you mean when you say late PhD students should be 6 month to completion. Can one looking to submit the thesis for examination in January Submit?**  **For the partnership stream, can you please advise on what RI uses to define PhD completion? Is this the point of Viva completion, hard bound thesis submission, or graduation?** |
| In order to be eligible as a late-stage PhD, you must be in the final year of your PhD and within 6 months of your intended soft bound submission date at the application close deadline. If successful, in order to accept an award offer you must have submitted your Hardbound Thesis and be able to start your postdoc within 6 months of the award offer (intended to issue in November 2025) |
| **Q: Can a University in Ireland be an enterprise partner for the partnership stream?** |
| No |
| **Q: Re eligibility for Partnership scheme does the applicant need to currently have a formal research position or relationship with a research institution ie prior to the award?** |
| No, as long as the research body is willing to support your application this is sufficient. However, you must also have the support of an academic mentor, who is a full-time employee of the Research Body and eligible to act as a Postdoctoral Mentor. |
| **Q: Can a current EP employee apply for the partnership scheme if their contract is fixed term and could transfer to HEI employment for the award?** |
| Yes, they must no longer work for the Enterprise partner and be full-time employed by the Research Body as a postdoc as of the award start date. |
| **Q: Could a foreign university be an enterprise for the partnership stream?** |
| No |
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| 1. **APPLYING TO THE PROGRAMME** |
| **Q: Is it permissible for a current Research Ireland Postdoctoral Fellow to apply for an EPS Postdoctoral Fellowship with the same Academic Mentor?** |
| A: Yes, it can be the same Academic Mentor. |
| **Q: Is it OK to have the same person (from Enterprise) as co-supervisor and Industry Mentor?** |
| A: No, the co-supervisor should ideally be a member of academic staff, and they cannot be the named industry mentor. |
| **Q: Would you confirm that we can use the same application which was submitted in October to the GoI scheme as there could be a lot of duplication between the two.** |
| A: No, the application for this programme must be co-designed with an Enterprise Partner and as such the research project submitted to GOI would need to be reviewed and revised to align to the terms of an Effective Collaboration. |
| **Q: A potential applicant for the EPS has asked whether it's possible to have 2 enterprise partners. This query has actually come via one of the enterprise partner who has links with both companies.** |
| A: There can only be one primary enterprise partner. The other partner could potentially be involved in the research, and contribute to the fees via the primary enterprise partner, but this arrangement would need to be agreed independently. |
| **Q: Is their support for identifying industry partner?**  **Is there an example list of former/potential partner organisations?** |
| There is a list of Enterprise partners who are open to partnering with a potential applicant listed on the website. This list is not exhaustive list, and partner not listed here are also eligible to apply. If a partner would like to be included on this list, they must complete the form here: <https://forms.office.com/e/bybTW7am2D>  A list of pervious partners can be found on the former IRC Awardee Database: <https://research.ie/awardees/> |
| **Q: On page 5 of the call document for the partnership stream: Second point of section 4, it is stated that the partner is expected to contribute 22000-27500 euro towards the fellow's salary. Could you please clarify this?** |
| The partnership stream covers the annual salary of the postdoc and includes €5000 for research expenses. Research Ireland covers 2/3’s of the total cost and the Enterprise partner provides a cash contribution to cover the remainder. The variation in the Enterprise Partners contribution relates to the cost of the salary, i.e. which point on the Research Ireland Salary Scale the postdoc positions themselves. |
| **Q: Is there an example list of former/potential partner organisations?** |
| Please visit the awardee database on the former IRC website for examples of current and former Enterprise partners: <https://research.ie/awardees/> |
| **Q: Is it important for the applicant for partnership scheme to be a full-time position holder at the HEI?** |
| The applicant to the partnership stream does not need to be employed at the HEI at the time of application but will need to take up a full-time role if successful. Part-time awards are not supported in this stream. |
| **Q: Partnership stream: In the absence of the opportunity for a waiver for civil society organisations, do you have any suggestions or guidance for how CSOs can fund a partnership? Are there additional sources of funding they could apply for, and is this advised/ permitted?** |
| There are no additional Research Ireland funds to support the Enterprise Partners contribution to the award. The partner will also be required to confirm their solvency and ability to make the payments before the award is granted. |
| **Q: I know that you can use the same project as submitted to the IRC Postdoc Fellowship for the Partnership Scheme (formerly EPS), but do there have to be substantial changes? Thanks!** |
| There will need to be changes which reflect the collaborative nature of the award. The original GOI project would need to be discussed with the Enterprise partner to ensure the goals reflect a mutual benefit for all parties and that the project meets the criteria for an effective collaboration. |
| **Q: For Partnership scheme, does the research body chosen need to be different from the one we are currently affiliated with?** |
| No |
| **Q: For the Partnership Scheme, page 6 of the Call document mentions that ‘all applicants must be affiliated with an eligible research body’ - how formal does this affiliation need to be for applicants with a PhD obtained abroad? Thank you.** |
| No this section refers to the fact that the application will need to be endorsed by a Research Body and the applicant should engage with the Research Office in their intended Body before starting their application. There is no requirement for a previous relationship, studentship or employment with the Research Body for this stream. |
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| 1. **CONDITIONS OF AWARD** |
| **Q: Do you foresee a cap on the duration of research visits to the partnering enterprise under the Partnership Scheme?** |
| Yes, the fellow is expected to carry out their research in the Research Body, though visits to the Enterprise are allowed. |
| **Q: Can the Partnership Fellowship be deferred before the start date due to unforeseen circumstances?** |
| Deferrals to the start date are granted on a case by case basis, primarily in the case of parental leave and illness. |
| **Q: would you also mind confirming the earliest start date for the Partnership Scheme project please? I thought an earlier slide said Deb 2026, but this seemed quite late?** |
| The earliest start date for the Partnership Stream is December 2025 |
| **Q: It states that the company should contribute one-third of the project's cash funding. May I ask how does this work? Does the industry partner provide one-third of the total project cost upfront (with supporting evidence), after which the funding agency provides the remaining two-thirds?** |
| The Research Body will invoice the Enterprise Partner for their cash contribution to the award, this can be done on an annual basis or as arranged with the Research Body. |
| \*\*New\*\* **Q: Can you tell me please,**  **a) to whom does the Enterprise Partner transfer their portion of the funds? Is it Research Ireland, or the successful HEI?**  **b) would 100% of their contribution be due at the beginning of the project, or is there flexibility around payments - to be detailed in the collaboration agreement should the application be successful?** |
| The 2025 awards will be seeing a change in payment structure and the Enterprise partners will now pay the contribution directly to the HEI. The schedule of payment can be agreed between the partner and HEI and yes please do note it in the collaboration agreement. |