Research Ireland Infrastructure Programme 2025 FAQs

Timeline and Process

1. When will Research Ireland issue invitations to submit full proposals after Expressions of Interest are assessed?

Eligible applicants will be invited to submit full proposals following internal assessment of Expressions of Interest. This invitation will be communicated by 30th June 2025.

2. Will slides from the webinar be shared?

Yes, the recorded webinar is available on the Infrastructure Programme page.

Eligibility

3. Does every research body have to submit a cover sheet for all Expressions of Interest before the deadline?

Yes, it is mandatory for the research body to provide a cover sheet. After receiving the cover sheet, Research Ireland will invite applicants to submit their Expression of Interest via Microsoft Forms. The process requires adequate time for facilitation, and Research Ireland will send the Microsoft Forms links promptly upon receipt of the cover sheet.

4. Does every research body need to submit a letter of support?

It is mandatory for the lead research body to submit a letter of support. Additionally, collaborating research bodies who will have key users must also submit letters of support.

5. Is a Research Ireland Frontiers for the Future Award Co-Principal Investigator eligible to lead a Research Ireland Infrastructure application?

Yes, Co-Principal Investigators from Frontiers for the Future awards can serve as lead applicants on Research Infrastructure applications. The applicant must hold, or have held, a significant peer-reviewed, independent research grant or award, typically a multi-annual grant of three years or more duration that provides support for research costs and may support salaries and/or stipends of staff/team members in addition to the applicant.

6. Are collaborations across STEM and Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines permissible, and are AHSS academics eligible as lead applicants?

Yes. Any collaboration should be within the Research Ireland Infrastructure programme remit. Please refer to the programme objectives and programme remit in the call document.

7. **Can researchers who did not win their current research grant but have been managing or executing it be considered eligible?**

The eligibility criteria require that applicants must hold or have held the research grant themselves. Acting as a manager or executor of a grant won by another investigator would not satisfy the eligibility requirements.

8. **Does the applicant need to be a Principal Investigator on an independent research grant which would cover the period of infrastructure implementation, or is it sufficient if they are work package leaders but not project Principal Investigators?**

Applicants are advised to consult the detailed eligibility criteria outlined in Section 2.5 of the call document. This section specifies that applicants must currently hold, or have previously held, a significant peer-reviewed, independent research grant or award. Please note that individuals who have served solely as work package leaders on certain grants are not eligible to apply to the Infrastructure 2025 Call. If there is any uncertainty regarding eligibility, applicants are encouraged to contact the Infrastructure Programme Team. The team will assess eligibility on a case-by-case basis.

Budget and Cost Share

9. **Is the cost share of 10% a blanket requirement that applies to every call?**

The 10% cost share relates specifically to this Research Infrastructure call, and was included in previous SFI Infrastructure calls

10. **Can you provide a numerical example of cash cost share combined with in-kind cost share to cover an infrastructure grant?**

An example is available on the [Research Ireland Infrastructure Programme website](#). The 10% cash cost share is calculated as a percentage of the funding requested from Research Ireland, rather than as a percentage of the total infrastructure cost.

11. **Is the 10% cost share a percentage of the total cost or cost after discount?**

The percentage of cash cost share is calculated as a percentage of the total direct costs (including VAT) of the infrastructure request to Research Ireland. For example, if the total cost of the Research Infrastructure is €2,200,000 and the Research Ireland budget request is €2,000,000, the 10% cost share would be €200,000. The cost share can be more than 10% but never less than 10%.

12. Can the trade-in or sale of existing equipment be used as cash cost-share?

Cash through the sale of fully depreciated equipment may be used as a cash contribution. However, Section 21.3 of Research Ireland's General Terms and Conditions states that Research Ireland permits the research body to sell any Research Ireland-funded programme asset but with prior written consent. The research body is permitted to treat receipts from the sale as income of the research programme and must notify Research Ireland.

13. Can salaries for staff from an international infrastructure grant be considered as part of the 10% institutional cash cost-share?

This represents an in-kind contribution. Applicants would need to find additional cash cost share to meet the 10% cash requirement. Such arrangements should be discussed directly with Research Ireland to ensure compliance with funding requirements.

14. Is there a minimum for in-kind vendor contribution?

No, there is no minimum requirement for in-kind contribution.

Procurement and Compliance

15. If the proposed infrastructure is only available from one vendor, is it acceptable to provide only one quotation?

Infrastructure must be acquired in line with procurement rules. If only one supplier exists, the onus would be on the applicant to prove sole supplier status. Research Ireland acknowledges that some equipment may have specific technical capabilities making it unique and possibly only available from one supplier. In such cases, clear justification should be provided demonstrating that there is only one supplier.

16. Could you clarify the rationale for requiring detailed environmental and procurement plans for scientific equipment funding?

The European Commission and Irish Government have adopted a package of measures and legislative proposals to boost green procurement, sustainable growth, and help Ireland make the transition towards a more circular economy. The respective procurement departments in higher education institutions should be able to assist with this requirement.

17. Does the grant cover site preparation and installation costs of equipment?

Installation costs are envisaged to be those normally provided by the equipment supplier when installing the specific piece of equipment. Rewiring, replumbing, or sound proofing would fall under building refurbishment costs and hence be deemed ineligible. Research Ireland does not fund building or construction costs, but we would like a timeline of planning permission requirements and installation works included in the implementation plan.

18. **Are import custom duties for equipment by non-European Union suppliers eligible costs where required?**

Yes, import customs duties from non-European Union suppliers are eligible costs.

Access and Usage

19. **Can research partners be based outside Ireland?**

Yes, research partners may be based outside Ireland.

20. **If multiple European Union partners are involved, would European Union or national research bodies have more value?**

Research Ireland encourages multiple key users at national and European levels.

21. **What commitments are required from collaborating partners?**

Financial commitments are required from cost share partners. However, no commitments are required from key users.

22. **Can industry access the infrastructure, and what are the compliance requirements?**

Where industry accesses the Research Ireland-funded research infrastructure under a contract or rental agreement, these types of commercial activity may only comprise a maximum of 20% of the annual capacity for the Research Ireland-funded research infrastructure and must be charged at the full market rate (referred to as "the 80:20 rule"). The market rate for industry access should reflect the open market price that a company could achieve after shopping around for the best available rate.

Technical and Implementation

23. **Will it be possible to submit the Microsoft Form on behalf of a Principal Investigator, or must it come from a specific email address?**

Yes, a separate request should be made to Research Ireland if that is the case.

24. **Does the grant cover retrofitting or refurbishing an existing building or room to support the infrastructure programme?**

Buildings, construction, or refurbishment costs are ineligible costs. However, installation costs that are normally provided by the equipment supplier are eligible. This distinction is important for applicants to understand when preparing their budgets.

25. **If the desired infrastructure is available in multiple institutions in Ireland, can cost implications and long turnaround times justify applying for similar infrastructure for regular usage?**

It is possible in principle to seek infrastructure that already exists in Ireland. However, it will be incumbent on the applicant to make a strong case for the need to acquire another equivalent piece of equipment, considering factors such as accessibility, capacity, and research requirements.

26. **Can cloud computing services be included as an eligible cost in this call?**

Data infrastructure may be eligible under the Research Infrastructure call. However, it is not possible for Research Ireland to determine whether a particular concept or potential proposal would be eligible until the submission stage, when the proposal can be assessed against the call remit.

27. **Are software installation costs for infrastructure covered?**

Yes, software costs are eligible. Software licence requests are covered for up to two years in line with service and maintenance costs.

28. **For cluster applicants, do the individual items need to be closely related to each other?**

Multiple items of equipment can be grouped together to reach the €550,000 total cost threshold, provided they contribute to a single, shared infrastructure request such as a testbed or distributed cluster.

Data Management and Intellectual Property

29. Who owns the intellectual property generated by the research?

This should be discussed with the Technology Transfer Office. The infrastructure submission and subsequent use of the infrastructure are two different considerations. If a funded piece of infrastructure contributes to the generation of technologies, the user of the infrastructure should discuss intellectual property and other related issues with their Technology Transfer Office.

30. Is a template for the Principal Investigator profile or curriculum vitae required?

This programme does not require a curriculum vitae.

Review Process

31. Can the score be modified after the applicant response phase?

The applicant response will be assessed as part of the review process and may affect how a proposal is ranked.

32. Are suites of equipment reviewed more or less favourably than single pieces of equipment in terms of impact potential?

No, there is no difference in how a proposal with a single infrastructure item is reviewed compared to a proposal containing multiple infrastructure items.

General Information

33. Do personnel to manage the equipment need to be recruited on a full-time basis?

The dedicated staff member must be a full-time staff member. However, they can dedicate part of their time to managing the proposed infrastructure rather than working exclusively on infrastructure management.

34. What is the total budget available for the call?

It is not usual practice to provide a definitive figure on the budget for an Infrastructure call, as Research Ireland continues to make efforts to increase the budget whilst the call is open, thus allowing support for as many proposals as possible. The most recent SFI Research Infrastructure call (2023) had a final budget of approximately €39 million as an example of the scale of previous calls. The 2025 call may have a budget greater or lower than this figure, and Research Ireland will endeavour to ensure that the budget is as large as possible.

35. Is there a list of all the equipment that was awarded under previous Research Infrastructure call?

Information about previous awards can be found in Research Ireland's award announcements here - https://www.sfi.ie/research-news/news/transformative-research/ and https://www.researchireland.ie/news/minister-lawless-research-infrastructure-investment/

For additional queries, please contact infrastructure@researchireland.ie.