Taighde Éireann Research Ireland

NEW FOUNDATIONS SCHEME 2025

in partnership with:

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Irish Aid);
The Department of Education and Youth;
The Department of Children, Disability and Equality;
The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht;
The Policing and Community Safety Authority;
The Heritage Council;
The Electoral Commission (An Coimisiún Toghcháin)

CALL DOCUMENT

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais, Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

Irish Aid
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

An Roinn Leanaí, Míchumais agus Comhionannais
Department of Children, Disability and Equality

An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta
Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

An Roinn Oideachais agus Óige
Department of Education and Youth

Cistithe ag
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

An Coimisiún Toghcháin
The Electoral Commission

PCSA
Údarás Póilíneachta & Sábháilteachta Pobail
Policing & Community Safety Authority

Terms of Reference

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of this document, it is provided for information purposes only and as a guide to expected developments. It is not intended, and should not be relied upon, as any form of warranty, representation, undertaking, contractual, or other commitment binding in law upon Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland ("Research Ireland"), the Government of Ireland, or any of their respective servants or agents. Research Ireland Grant Conditions (to include General Terms and Conditions and Letters of Offer) shall govern the administration of Research Ireland grants and awards to the exclusion of this and any other oral, written, or recorded statement. All responses to this Call for Submission of Proposals will be treated in confidence and no information contained therein will be communicated to any third party without the written permission of the applicant except insofar as is specifically required for the consideration and evaluation of the proposal or as may be required under law, including the Research and Innovation Act 2024 and the Freedom of Information Acts 1997, (Amendment) 2003 and 2014.

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1. Overview of the scheme

The New Foundations Scheme enables eligible researchers to pursue research, networking or dissemination activities within and across the diversity of disciplines. The scheme provides support for:

- research actions;
- the development of networks and consortia;
- conference and workshop development; and
- capacity building for interdisciplinary collaboration.

Since 2015, over 280 community, voluntary and charity organisations have engaged across our programmes. This vibrant sector plays an important role in supporting different groups in society, including the more vulnerable or marginalised. Through partnerships with researchers, diverse community organisations can bring new evidence and insights to enhance their services and impact for those that need them.

The New Foundations scheme also includes strands supported by government departments and agencies. In each of the past seven years, a dedicated strand of the call has provided opportunities for researchers to work on important areas of policy, including global development, our shared island, crime, creativity and children. The collaboration between researchers and policymakers represented in these awards aligns with the ambitions of *Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy* to strengthen evidence-based policymaking and deliver enhanced outcomes for citizens and society.

2. Strand descriptions

This year, the call features two open strands together with six strands run in partnership with government departments and agencies, and the civil society sector. These eight strands are summarised below with further detail included in the appendices.

Strand	Title	Funder	Description	Further information	Maximum award amount	Duration
Strand 1a	Enhancing Civic Society	Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland	Supporting small, discrete collaborative projects between researchers and civic society groups in the community and voluntary sector	Appendix 1	€12,000	9 or 12 months
Strand 1c	Interdisciplinary Research Networking Awards	Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland	An interdisciplinary research networking strand building capacity for research to solve societal problems and challenges relating to the green transition, digital transition, demographic change and societal shocks.	Appendix 2	€10,000	9 or 12 months
Strand 4b	Education for Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development New Foundations Awards	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Irish Aid); Department of Children, Disability, and Equality; Department of Education and Youth	Supporting research, networking and collaboration for the purpose of enhancing understanding and influence attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4.7. This includes issues such as equity, poverty reduction, economic growth, social exclusion, hunger, and climate change. Research can be of a global, national or local level as action is	Appendix 3	€10,000	12 months

			needed across all levels of society from early years through to adult education.			
Strand 10	Exploring Policing and Community Safety New Foundations Award	The Policing and Community Safety Authority	Supporting research that seeks to bring the needs or experiences of communities to life in a manner that contributes to enhancing relations between An Garda Síochána and communities.	Appendix 4	€20,000	9 months
Strand 11	Valuing Volunteering	The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht	Supporting research to provide an evidence-base on the economic value and impact of volunteering on Irish society.	Appendix 5	€25,000	12 months
Strand 15	Social Enterprise Impact, Green Transition and Legal Form, New Foundations Award	The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht	Supporting pioneering research on social enterprise in Ireland, towards developing mechanisms to measure the social and economic impact of social enterprises across the full spectrum of social enterprise in line with Trading for Impact - the current National Social Enterprise Policy and international best practice.	Appendix 6	€20,000	9 months

Strand 17	The Heritage Council New Foundations Award	The Heritage Council	Supporting research and innovation in all aspects of built, cultural and natural heritage and the application of emerging technologies in heritage contexts.	Appendix 7	€10,000	9 months
Strand 18	Fostering democratic engagement amongst communities experiencing barriers and disengagement, in partnership with The Electoral Commission (An Coimisiún Toghcháin)	The Electoral Commission (An Coimisiún Toghcháin)	Supporting collaborative research on the factors that lead to electoral dis-engagement and the types of interventions which are effective in encouraging engagement.	Appendix 8	€15,000	9-12 months

Strands 4b, 10, 11, 15, 17 and 18 are funded by a government department, agency or independent statutory body, and, accordingly, there will be a strong partnership in place for the duration of the research and in the dissemination of the results. New Foundations awards are led by an individual principal investigator (PI) who is named in the application. Applicants are encouraged to integrate intersectoral partnership across the project lifecycle from design stage through to dissemination.

The various strands aim to foster 'engaged research'. In the Campus Engage report, Engaged Research Framework, this is described as 'a wide range of research approaches and methodologies that share a common interest in collaboration with societal partners. Engaged research aims to improve, understand, or investigate an issue of public interest or concern, including societal challenges and sustainable development goals. It is advanced *with* community partners rather than for them'.

3. Key dates

Call open	Monday 9th June 2025
Briefing Webinar	June 2025
FAQ deadline	Thursday 10th July 2025 (4pm Irish Time)
Applicant deadline	Thursday 17th July 2025 (4pm Irish Time)
Endorsement deadline	Thursday 24th of July 2025 (4pm Irish Time)
Outcome	October 2025
Project Start Date	December 2025

4. Eligibility

On 25 September 2024, the Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland Board approved an interim Eligible Research Body Policy for the agency. The policy is guided by the Research & Innovation Act 2024, which provides for the establishment and functions of Research Ireland. Although the Act refers to the Eligible Research Body as 'the applicant', for the purpose of this call, the applicant will be deemed to be the individual submitting an application on behalf of the Eligible Research Body.

4.1 Eligibility for all strands

- Applicants must be based at an Eligible Research Body.
- Applicants must hold a doctoral degree.
- Eligible applicants must, on the call deadline, hold a contract of sufficient duration with an Eligible Research Body to carry out the proposed research from the project start date until the project end date.
- Applicants may only make **one application** to the scheme in a given year.
- Current New Foundations grant holders are eligible provided their proposal is clearly distinct from their current New Foundations grant.

- While postgraduate scholars are not eligible to apply, their involvement in proposed projects is encouraged.
- Note there are additional eligibility criteria specific to each strand (see appendices), and the research project must address the required thematic focus of the respective strand.

5. General Application Conditions

5.1 General Application Conditions

The lead applicant and any co-PIs must be in a position to devote adequate time to the management and realisation of the project. The PIs are advised that, by submitting an application in their own name, **they personally undertake to develop the project,** with due attention and viable commitments of time and without sub-contracting the project to another party or parties. In addition, the requirements set out by the funder for each strand are part of the general rules of this scheme.

5.2 Number of applications per applicant

Applicants may only submit one application to New Foundations 2025

5.3 State aid and Research Ireland Grant funding

As per Research Ireland's Grant Conditions, all Research Ireland funding granted is subject to, and must be compliant with, State aid legislation based on Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).[1]

Namely, research activities undertaken as part of a Grant awarded under the Research Ireland New Foundations Scheme, and agreed to subject to Research Ireland's Grant Conditions, must be "non-economic" in nature and be designed to ensure that any funding received does not, directly or indirectly, give rise to the granting of State aid.

Where a proposed programme of research involves collaboration with an 'undertaking'[2] or industry party, the activities must comply with the definition of "effective collaboration" and the conditions relating to the allocation between the parties of the results and/or intellectual property rights arising from the collaboration as per the 2022 Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2022/C 414/01) (the "Framework"[3]). Research Ireland has set out guidance to support how the programme of research or project is developed and undertaken in accordance with these conditions.[4]

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[1] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016XC0719(05)&from=EN
[2] The concept of an "undertaking" under EU competition law rules is an entity that is engaged in an "economic activity" regardless of its legal status or the way that it is financed. An activity is economic in nature when it involves offering goods or services on a market.
[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2022.414.01.0001.01.ENG
[4] https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/state-aid/

Applicants are advised to seek independent legal advice in advance of applying to Research Ireland for funding where further clarification is sought.

5.4 Research Ireland's External Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2023-2028

Research Ireland is committed to building equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within the Irish research and innovation sector. The Agency recognises that excellent research stems from diverse and inclusive teams, which reflect our society and the communities we serve. As such, Research Ireland aspires to proactively lead in driving the EDI agenda forward through the research and research teams that it funds.

In Research Ireland's External Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2023-2028[5], increasing the number of women and members of Historically Underserved Communities[6] in Applicant Teams are key objectives. As such, women and members of Historically Underserved Communities are strongly encouraged to apply to this programme.

Gender data fields on Research Ireland's Grants and Awards Management System, have been expanded to encompass more inclusive gender identifiers. These expanded gender identifier fields support those objectives described in Research Ireland's External EDI Strategy, which aims to be a key driver of an inclusive research culture, lead in minimising barriers to participation in the research endeavour and ensure that its investment reflects the input of researchers that are representative of society, and thus the outputs are relevant to society. Gender data gathered will inform the diversity of the applicant group. It will help to inform future iterations of this and similar programme calls. The data gathered will also inform how we can best improve the representation of other Historically Underserved Communities, including individuals from underrepresented genders, in our portfolio of grants awarded.

Furthermore, as part of its EDI Strategy, Research Ireland also aims to increase awareness of the sex and gender dimension in research, by requesting that researchers demonstrate that they have considered any potential biological sex and/or socio-cultural gender aspects in their proposed research programme.

5.5 San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

Research Ireland is a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)[7] and, as such, is aligning its review and evaluation processes with DORA principles. Research Ireland has reinforced its commitment to the core principles by joining DORA as a member[8]. To this end, all types of research output are recognised, and Research Ireland is committed to assessing the quality and impact of research through means other

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[5] https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/gender/
[6] For the purposes of this Strategy, Historically Underserved Community encompasses a broad and diverse range of historically marginalised groups including but not limited to the nine protected grounds established in the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 and socioeconomic status.
[7] https://sfdora.org/read/
[8] Contributor level membership.

than journal-based indicators/metrics and research performance-based indicators/metrics such as impact factors and H-index. In the spirit of supporting open research and as a signatory to Ireland's National Action Plan for Open Research 2022-2030[9] and a signatory of Plan S[10], Research Ireland will also consider a commitment to making data and other types of research open and accessible. To complement these activities and further reinforce Research Ireland's commitment to the overarching objectives of the Narrative CV, Research Ireland is a signatory to the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment[11] and is a member of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)[12].

6. Applying to the scheme

All applications must be submitted and endorsed via Research Ireland's Smart Simple application system on or before the stated deadlines. Please refer to the guide for applicants for assistance with SmartSimple and creating and submitting an application, which is available on the New Foundations web page.

For the following strands, applications to New Foundations should have an appropriate project partner(s):

Strand Number	Strand Detail	Letter of support Y/N	Note
Strand 1a	This must be a civic society partner with a CHY number that is registered with the Charities Regulator.	Y	Applicants to strand 1a must include the name and endorsement of the civic society partner as part of the application. The signed endorsement form must be uploaded to SmartSimple with the application using the template endorsement form available on our website.
Strand 1c	The PI can be from any discipline and must apply for funding along with a named applicant (Co-PI) from another discipline.	Y	Applicants to strand 1c must include the name of the Co-PI as part of the application. There is a requirement to upload a signed letter of endorsement from the Co-PI's host institution as part of the application.

[9] National Action Plan | National Open Research Forum (norf.ie)
[10] https://www.coalition-s.org/
[11] https://coara.eu/app/uploads/2022/09/2022_07_19_rra_agreement_final.pdf
[12] https://coara.eu/

Strand 4b	This must be an organisation that provides a contribution to the proposed activities such as advice, support, networking, or acting in an advisory or facilitating capacity. Partners/relevant network of practitioners may be statutory, non-statutory or voluntary organisations involved in developing, promoting or delivering the project	N	Applicants to strand 4b must include the name of the relevant network of practitioners as part of the application. There is no requirement to upload a signed endorsement form as part of the application.
Strand 10	This must be an organisation that provides a contribution to the proposed activities such as advice, support, networking, or acting in an advisory or facilitating capacity. Partners may be statutory, non-statutory or voluntary organisations involved in developing, promoting or delivering the project.	N	
Strand 11	No project partner required	N	
Strand 15	No project partner required	N	
Strand 17	No project partner required	N	
Strand 18	This must be a civic society partner with a CHY number that is registered with the Charities Regulator.	Y	Applicants to Strand 18 must include the name and endorsement of the civic society partner as part of the application. The signed endorsement form must be uploaded to SmartSimple with the application using the template endorsement form available on our website.

The terms of any partnership should be determined early, and relevant written agreements should be in place prior to the onset of the award. Consideration should be given to issues such as relative roles and responsibilities and governance arrangements when establishing partnership agreements.

An application will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding if:

- it has not been submitted via the online system by the stated deadline
- it has not been endorsed by the applicant's higher education institution by the stated deadline
- it is incomplete or exceeds the word limit
- it is not within the remit of the scheme
- it includes additional materials other than those requested
- it includes materials in a format other than those requested
- it is in a language other than English or Irish[13]
- the applicant does not meet the relevant eligibility criteria for the scheme
- the applicant submits more than one application to the scheme
- the research project as proposed in the application does not meet the relevant eligibility criteria and thematic focus of the specific strand to which it has been submitted
- any section of it has been plagiarised
- any information supplied is false, misleading or unverifiable with appropriate documentation
- the research project as proposed in the application has previously been funded in full, or in part, by Research Ireland
- canvassing on behalf of applicants occurs

For reasons of transparency and fairness to all applicants, Research Ireland will not enter into written or telephone correspondence with any individual about the assessment process or their eligibility to apply.

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 newfoundations@researchireland.ie. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and answers will be posted on the New Foundations webpage, starting from the week after the call opening and ending a week before the call deadline.

7. Budget

Grants are not intended to substitute or augment funds available under national and international programmatic research actions.

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[13] Applicants submitting Irish language applications are invited to submit an English language translation to newfoundations@researchireland.ie. Should an English translation not be provided by the applicant, Research Ireland may provide a translation to the assessors.

Only eligible direct costs as set out in the table below will be considered. All costs sought must be sufficiently detailed and justified in the proposed budget. Value for money is a criterion in the assessment process. All expenses must be incurred within the lifetime of the project. Where fully justified, costs for partner involvement can be included on the award in accordance with Eligible Research Body institutional rules and with relevant local employment practices. Please refer to the Research Ireland Interim Grant Budget Policy [14] and the guidance provided below:

Travel	Requests for travel e.g. conference attendance (provide details of name and location where possible), and accommodation should provide details of the number and duration of trips proposed. Travel, accommodation and subsistence, where required, **will only be permitted on a vouched basis**. Requests for travel, accommodation and subsistence should be in line with institutional norms. Every effort must be made to ensure that air travel, where used, is economical. Business class travel is not an allowable cost.
Materials and Consumables (maximum of €1,000)	An outline of all consumables that will be used during the course of the research should be provided alongside a detailed justification for all costs, e.g: • books and journals • archival research costs • software • pay-as-you-go access to national research infrastructure Research Ireland fully endorses the principle of open research, noting its important role in promoting the exchange of knowledge and the dissemination of research findings. Requirements related to open research are outlined in Research Ireland's <u>Open Research policy</u>. **Please note that equipment is not an eligible direct cost under this scheme.**
Training	Expenditure to be incurred as a result of general and/or specialist disciplinary skill training can be included.
Dissemination	Research dissemination is a vital component of the New Foundations scheme. Accordingly, it is expected that the budget will reflect costs associated with the dissemination of research e.g. leaflets, reports, websites and other knowledge exchange activities.

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[14] https://www.researchireland.ie/about/policies/

Staff costs in lead applicant's ERB (or in case of strand 1c, the co-PI's ERB)	All staff costs must be specified and fully justified. **Teaching buyout/teaching replacement** costs for the PI (and in case of strand 1c, the co-PI) are an eligible direct cost and may be pro rata. These are used to alleviate the awardee's commitments and to facilitate their participation as a PI. Costs may be requested to facilitate the reallocation of existing commitments of the PI and, in case of strand 1c, the co-PI, (e.g., teaching) in order that they can devote appropriate time and effort to successfully completing the award. A value equal to point 1 on the Research Ireland salary scale for Postdoctoral Researchers may be charged to the project to facilitate the PI/co-PI's leadership of the project. As part of the reporting requirements, the awardee will be required to report on how the replacement costs have been allocated. **Recruitment of staff** must be done openly, through public advertisement. Institutional rates should be used for all staff costs sought. The salary requested must include provisions for PRSI, and Employer Pension Contribution, if applicable. PhD stipends are not an eligible cost. **Please note: PI salary (and co-PI salary for strand 1c) are not eligible costs.** **Salary costs are not eligible for partners based outside of the lead applicant's ERB or in the case of strand 1c, the co-PI's ERB.**
Other	Where not covered by the categories above, and relevant to the viability of the research, other costs can be considered. All costs must be specified and fully justified. These could include consultancy costs, costs for contracting services for the research project, costs for event organisation to include stakeholders and participants, etc.

7.1 Pension costs

In the context of budgeting for the 2025 call, applicants are requested to use Research Ireland Team Member Salary Scales These scales include pension costs in the calculation of employment costs for Postdoctoral Researchers and Research Assistants.

Research Ireland continue to include the 20% pension provision in the Research Ireland Team Member salary scales which are used by the research bodies in preparing budget submissions.

For SPS posts funded on Research Ireland awards (where the pension contribution is zero) the pension budget should be ringfenced and not used for any other charges unless specifically approved by Research Ireland in advance.

This pension matter is subject to ongoing discussions with DFHERIS, DPER, Research Ireland and IUA. Research Ireland will keep research bodies informed of any changes to this pension treatment.

8. Preparing a proposal

Sex and Gender Dimension in Research Statement (max. 250 words). In accordance with the Research Ireland External Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy[15], all applicants must complete a statement articulating the consideration of biological sex and/or social gender variables in their research programme. Please consult the Guidance for Applicants on Ethical and Scientific Issues[16] for resources on how to address the sex and/or gender dimension of research in your grant.

Do not include information on how you have addressed gender equality, diversity, and inclusion in your research team/environment; this should be addressed in the body of the proposal, as appropriate.

To complete this section, please consider the following questions:

1. Is sex as a biological variable taken into account in the research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings?

2. Is gender as a socio-cultural factor taken into account in the research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings?

If the answer is yes, please describe how sex and/or gender considerations will be integrated into your research proposal.

If no, please explain why sex and/or gender are not applicable to your research proposal.

The Gender Toolkit in EU-funded research, aims to give the research community practical tools to integrate gender aspects into their research, including gender equality (equal outcomes for women and men) and integration of sex/gender analysis in research content.

Where the applicant is involved in the organisation of conferences, networking or dissemination activities connected with their research project, due regard should be given to gender balance within panel(s).

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[15] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/gender/
[16] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/ethical-and-scientific-issues/

8.1 Ethical statement

Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland is committed to the maintenance of high ethical standards in the research that it funds. It is the responsibility of the Research Body to ensure that the proposed research shall comply with ethical principles and relevant national, EU and international legislation including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols. Grant recipients should adhere to the recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their discipline(s), as well as to ethical standards as documented in the different various national, sectoral, or institutional Codes of Ethics.

The host institution must have in place clear ethical guidelines and assurance procedures designed to manage research under its direction. The host institution and grant recipients must ensure that the research complies with all national and international regulation requirements governing the use of sensitive materials or processes: for example, radioactive isotopes, ionising radiation, laboratory animals or other animals, pathogenic organisms, genetically manipulated organisms, toxic and hazardous substances, and research on human subjects and human embryos. The aforementioned examples do not constitute an exhaustive list.

Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland is unable to award funding for research activity under any of the following prohibited areas:
a) human cloning for reproductive purposes;
b) genetic modification of human beings that could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be funded);
c) creation of, or use of, human embryos or human embryonic stem cells/tissues for the purpose of research, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Common ethical issues include:
a) the involvement of children, patients, vulnerable populations;
b) the use of human embryonic stem cells;
c) privacy and data protection issues;
d) research on animals and non-human primates.

Where a grant recipient research proposal requires approval by the Host Institution Ethics Committee or equivalent, written evidence of such ethical approval is required by Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland within three months of the commencement date of the grant.

Applicants are advised to consult this [Guidance for Applicants on Ethical and Scientific Issues](#), before completing the ethics self-assessment.

If access to archival material in private custodianship or archival material with restricted access is required for the project, written evidence of appropriate permission to consult such

material must be furnished to Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland at the Grant acceptance stage.

8.2 FAQs

Any queries relating to this Call Document, or the operation of the scheme generally, **should be submitted to the relevant Research Office/Officer of the Eligible Research Body in the first instance.** In the interest of transparency and fairness to all applicants, Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland will not discuss queries over the telephone. A list of all queries not resolved by the Research Office should then be submitted as a batch to newfoundations@researchireland.ie by the designated Research Officer within an Eligible Research Body. The FAQ document on the New Foundations webpage will be updated on a weekly basis until the FAQ deadline.

8.3 Research Ireland Policies and Positions

In addition to complying with the [Grant Conditions, inclusive of those stipulated in the Letter of Offer and Research Ireland's Grant General Terms & Conditions](#), applicants are expected to be familiar and consult with Research Ireland policies/positions and with all relevant national policies when preparing their application to any Research Ireland programme. All members involved in the funded research should be apprised of the following non-exhaustive list of relevant policies. Please note that some policies are being updated to reflect the expanded remit of Research Ireland and in the interim, the existing polices of the legacy agencies should be followed.
- Animal Usage
- Research Integrity
- Maternity Supplement
- Appeals Process
- Child Protection
- Data Protection Policy
- Open Research
- Data Management
- Grant Budget Policy

As noted, Research Ireland's policies are under development and will be added to the Research Ireland [website](#) once finalised. For information on other policies:

- Visit https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/ if grant was formerly with Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
- Visit https://research.ie/about-us/policies/ if grant was formerly with the Irish Research Council (IRC)

For any questions concerning Research Ireland, SFI or IRC policies, please email researchpolicy@researchireland.ie.

9. Evaluation process

Research Ireland is committed to rigorous peer review of its funding programmes in line with international best practice. As such, all eligible applications will be internationally peer reviewed. The assessors will evaluate applications on the basis of the materials supplied, arrive at an overall judgement of standard and make final recommendations to Research Ireland. All awards will be made on the basis of excellence.

Qualitative feedback will not be provided to applicants under this scheme. Quantitative feedback will be provided upon request.

All applications will be evaluated under four criteria as outlined in the below table:

Criteria	Description	Maximum score
Quality of proposal and applicant	This includes: • To what extent is the proposal original, innovative and significant in the context of relevant research? • To what extent does the applicant's research track record, outputs to date and relevant skills match the proposal? • To what extent is the proposal relevant to the strand topic? • Have the relevant ethical and sex/gender dimension issues been considered?	40
Impact and outcomes	What is the value of the planned outputs, outcomes and deliverables, e.g.: • the development of conferences, workshops or networking and collaboration activities • the quality, engagement and merits of the proposed partnerships or networks • the contribution of the proposal towards future research funding applications or opportunities • the clarity, quality and innovativeness of plans for public dissemination of research outputs and/or promotion of academic research within and across the diversity of disciplines The impact of the proposal should be demonstrated by applicants. A range of impact categories for	40

	consideration are listed in the Campus Engage guide [Engaged Research Planning for Impact](#)	
Project management and implementation	Is the proposal feasible and credible, i.e. are the practical arrangements implementable, coordinated and manageable?	10
Value for money	Is the funding sought eligible, justified and good value for money?	10

Appendix 1

Strand 1a: Enhancing Civic Society

Funded by Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland
Awards will be 9 or 12 months in duration
€12,000 max award amount

Background

Ireland faces key social, environmental and economic challenges, the complexity and scale of which have been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis and geopolitical conflict. A number of challenges are specific to Ireland, whilst others are shared with other nations in Europe and globally. The various challenges we share as nations are well-articulated, particularly in the form of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Horizon Europe has integrated societal challenges as a key pillar of the framework, in continuation of the Horizon 2020 approach.

Ireland has a cross-governmental challenge-based approach through the National Planning Framework (Ireland 2040) and the associated National Development Plan. The framework sets out ten national strategic outcomes, the achievements of which are necessary to ensure prosperity, equality, a sustainable future, and protection of our natural environment. As stated in the framework, there is strong alignment between the national strategic outcomes and the Sustainable Development Goals; there is also a strong relationship between the national strategic outcomes and Horizon Europe societal challenges.

The achievement of national goals will be challenging in themselves and will require an unprecedented level of collaboration and coordination both within the State and on an interjurisdictional basis. Given the myriad agencies that will be at the 'coal-face' in implementation of the National Development Plan, major opportunities for researchers to form new connections and links will emerge, regionally and locally, and in doing so will further demonstrate the value of the Irish research system as a national resource.

Excellent research across all disciplines has a major role to play in developing new knowledge and evidence, which policy and decision-makers and practitioners can utilise to guide action and interventions on the path to successfully achieving national societal challenges. *Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy* highlights the importance of strengthening evidence-based policymaking and aims to make the public research and innovation system more accessible to policy makers. Maximising the contribution of the research system in this regard requires a strong emphasis on building robust mechanisms to ensure the exchange of knowledge between policy and practice environments, including building the necessary relationships with the public sector, civil society, or elsewhere, to support this process.

Strand description

This strand will support small, discrete collaborative projects within a national context between researchers and civic society partners. The civic society partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the [Charities Regulator](#).

Civic society partners are not required to financially contribute to the project. This may however be a feature of some proposals, where appropriate. The charity and researcher will work out an agreement between them where both parties are satisfied. This is additional funding to the award provided by Research Ireland and would not be governed by our terms and conditions, rather it is at the discretion of the civic society partner. The Research Body must ensure that any agreement it enters into with a third party does not impede its ability to comply with Research Ireland's Grant Conditions, inclusive of those stipulated in the Letter of Offer and its Grant General Terms & Conditions

A civic society partner can support more than one application to the New Foundations strand 1a provided the research projects proposed are clearly distinct. Please note that, in the event that more than two proposals per civic society partner under Strand 1a are deemed fundable, Research Ireland will only be in a position to fund the two top-ranked proposals per civic society partner under this strand.

The objectives of this strand are to:

- Develop networks between academia and civic society partners in the community and voluntary sector
- Encourage knowledge exchange between these groups
- Develop expertise to support the engagement of civic society partners
- Develop networks between academia and civic society partners
- Develop expertise to support the work of these organisations within the higher education community

Civic society partners interested in participating in this strand must collaborate with an eligible researcher. Those seeking to participate in the scheme can send a description of their organisation and potential area for collaboration along with contact details to newfoundations@researchireland.ie. They will then be added to an updated spreadsheet and posted on the New Foundations webpage. These details should be submitted as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for a partnering researcher to submit a proposal.

Applications to this strand should develop a research idea or project, test a concept or theory, and/or develop partnerships through activities. Applications should clearly indicate why the project is important and how it speaks to the issues and concerns of the civic society partner with a focus on national collaboration.

It is a condition of acceptance of strand 1a awards that the awardee will contribute details of project outputs for dissemination activities and/or publications undertaken jointly by Research Ireland.

Outputs

- Grant recipients will be required to submit a final report to Research Ireland on completion of the project. Research Ireland will provide a final report template in advance of the project end date.

Strand 1c: Interdisciplinary Research Networking Awards

Funded by Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland
Up to five awards will be made under this strand
Awards will be 9 or 12 months in duration
€10,000 max award amount

Background

Ireland faces key social, environmental and economic challenges, the complexity and scale of which have been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic, technological change, demographic change, the energy crisis, geopolitical conflict and other societal shocks. A number of challenges are specific to Ireland, whilst others are shared with other nations in Europe and globally. The various challenges we share as nations are well-articulated, particularly in the form of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Horizon Europe has integrated societal challenges as a key pillar of the framework, in continuation of the Horizon 2020 approach and Research Ireland's COALESCE Scheme is the flagship all-disciplinary scheme for funding Irish applied research. Policy makers in Ireland and the EU seek to develop new approaches to the green transition, the digital transition, demographic change and societal shocks that are informed by evidence-based research findings and recommendations.

An important steppingstone for many researchers, for accessing funding under schemes such as COALESCE, is the need for funding opportunities such as the role New Foundations has in the research landscape in providing seed funding for small-scale research actions; the development of networks, consortia and workshops; and creative approaches to the communication of scientific concepts or complex societal challenges for a lay audience.

In strand 1c, it is envisaged researchers will use this opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary research, as well as availing of this opportunity in building networks that they can then carry onto further applications while building up their record and reputation. As such this strand encourages both new and existing collaborations between two principal investigators from different disciplines (a PI and a Co-PI), in order to build research teams with capacity to tackle societal challenges that require interdisciplinary knowledge, methodologies and experience.

Strand description

This strand provides a unique opportunity to make interdisciplinary research networking connections, building capacity for research to solve societal problems and challenges, specifically the green transition, the digital transition, demographic change and societal shocks.

Applicants from all AHSS and STEM disciplines are encouraged to apply. The strand is open to either AHSS or STEM leadership, with any combination of an AHSS and STEM co-partnership. The PI must name a Co-PI on their application who will add their expertise to specifically target interdisciplinary research addressing national societal challenge. Research Ireland welcomes applications from an AHSS-led or STEM-led applicant. Evidence of an existing partnership between the PI and Co-PI is not a prerequisite to applying to the scheme and as such, this strand offers the opportunity for new partnership and consortia building however existing pairing between disciplines can be built on also.

Team members may reside in different institutions or the same institution, further lending the opportunity to researchers to build partnerships outside their own departments and/or institutions and affording researchers the opportunity to bridge academic and policy realms so to have a greater impact on the public and for widening academic engagement. Both the PI and the co-PI must be based at an Eligible Research Body.

Funding will be provided by Research Ireland to the lead PI's Eligible Research Body and will be governed by the Research Ireland Grant condition Research Ireland Grant Conditions (to include General Terms and Conditions and Letters of Offer). The lead PI and their host institution are responsible in making sure the correct Data Sharing Agreements and interinstitutional agreements are in place with the institution of the Co-PI.

A Co-PI can only support **one** application to the New Foundations strand 1c.

The objectives of this strand are to:

- Develop interdisciplinary networks to solve societal challenges
- Encourage knowledge exchange between these networks
- A challenge-based focus which can widen the kinds of impact that Irish research can have beyond research solving problems which are very technical or industrial-focused to research that solves problems that are at the very heart of how we live and interact as human beings.
- Develop the PI and Co-PI's track record and networks to apply for other larger awards

Applications to this strand should develop a research idea or project, test a concept or theory, and/or develop partnerships through activities. The focus of the research will be to address societal challenges relating to the green transition, the digital transition, demographic change or societal shocks, with a view to developing evidence-based policy advice. Applications should clearly indicate why the project is important and how the interdisciplinary aspect will bring added value to the project.

It is a condition of acceptance of strand 1c awards that the awardee will contribute details of project outputs for dissemination activities and/or publications undertaken jointly by Research Ireland.

Outputs

- Grant recipients will be required to submit a final report to Research Ireland on completion of the project. Research Ireland will provide a final report template in advance of the project end date.

- Grant recipients will be required to provide a policy brief (5-10 pages) to Research Ireland on completion of the project, outlining recommendations for policymakers with respect to the societal challenge that they choose to address in the research proposal.

Appendix 3

Strand 4b: Education for Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development New Foundations Awards

Funded by The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Irish Aid), the Department of Education and Youth, and the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality
Up to 7 awards will be made under this strand
Awards will be 12 months in duration
€10,000 max award amount

This strand will support implementation of both the [Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education Strategy (2021-2025)](#) and [the Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development – ESD to 2030](#). Irish Aid defines Global Citizenship Education as a life-long educational process, which aims to increase public awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. By challenging stereotypes and encouraging independent thinking, GCE helps people to critically explore how global justice issues interlink with their everyday lives and how they can act to build a better world. This is particularly important in an increasingly globalized world faced with immense challenges, such as the effects of climate change, the COVID 19 pandemic, conflict in Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza and other locations across the globe, entrenched poverty and growing inequality, as well as misinformation-fuelled radicalization.

[The Global Citizenship Education strategy](#) is underpinned by the Code of Good Practice for Development Education (IDEA 2019) and covers a wide range of global themes including global poverty and hunger, migration, conflict, climate change, human rights and inequality.

The strand will also support implementation of the Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development – ESD to 2030. ESD spans the continuum of education from early learning and care to third level research and beyond. ESD to 2030 will aim to ensure that, "all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development." (SDG 4.7).

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education are closely linked, sharing a focus on global justice, solidarity and interconnectedness as well as focusing on both the local and global dimensions of issues affecting the people and planet. Global Citizenship Education is sometimes called Development Education. At least one grant will be awarded for projects focused on GCE/ ESD in the Early Learning and Care sector.

The objectives of this Strand are to support research actions; develop networks and consortia; support conference and workshop development; and build capacity for interdisciplinary collaboration. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Department of Education and Youth (DEY) and Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) are particularly interested in funding partnerships between researchers and practitioners in both formal, non-formal and informal education as well as partnerships between academia and other sectors, including civil society and private sector actors.

Applicants will need to demonstrate they have coordinated with the relevant networks of practitioners such as the Irish Development Education Association, the Irish Environmental Network, Early Learning and Care Stakeholder Forum, Education and Training Boards as appropriate, in planning the research in order to ensure co-ordination across the sector, to encourage dialogue and to support linkages and synergies.

Research projects should focus on GCE/ESD in both formal and non-formal education from early years to adult education on one or more of the following themes:

• Building capacity of teachers, educators and other practitioners at all levels of education, including youth workers and people working in the further education and training / adult and community education sectors.
• Supporting whole provider/ whole school/whole of institution approaches.
• Innovative solutions including use of new technologies to support teaching and learning.
• Engaging with new learners and audiences of all ages including empowering and mobilising youth, engaging with marginalised communities, and building links with diverse sectors including the private sector.
• The learning outcomes of GCE/ESD related interventions in both formal, non-formal and informal education with a focus on GCE/ESD approaches that bring about social and behavioural chance for transformative action.

Proposals must be directly related to one or more of the themes outlined above.

Outputs

• Grant recipients will be required to submit to Research Ireland a progress report 6 months after the award commences and a final report on completion of the project. Research Ireland will provide templates for these two reports.

• Grant recipients will be required to submit a short report (15-20 pages) and a presentation on the outcomes of the project to DFAT (Irish Aid), DEY and DCDE on completion of the project.

Appendix 4

Strand 10: Exploring Policing and Community Safety

Funded by the Policing and Community Safety Authority
This award will be 9 months in duration
€20,000 max award amount

Background

"The concept of community safety is about people being safe and feeling safe in their own community. At the heart of this policy is the principle that every community has the right to be and feel safe in order to thrive and flourish."[17] Community safety is by its nature, a broad concept, potentially encompassing any policies, initiatives and programmes that might impact on a given community's sense of safety or actual safety.[18]

The concept of a community safety model for policing came to the fore in Ireland following recommendations made by the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland (CoFPI). The Report of the Commission stressed that while crime is a top priority for police, in practice the majority of police time is spent on harm prevention – providing services to people with mental health and addiction conditions, homeless people, children, elderly and others at risk. It recommended that this broader concept of community safety needs to be embedded in legislation.

The Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 ('Act'), which was commenced in April 2025, provides for a community safety-oriented approach in several respects including:

- That the prevention of harm is a specific statutory objective of An Garda Síochána;
- Public service bodies have a statutory obligation in performing their functions to *"…take all reasonable steps to improve community safety, including through the prevention of crime and through the prevention of harm to individuals, in particular those who are vulnerable or at risk"*[19].
- Provision for a new framework at national and local level to improve community safety including the establishment of:
  - A National Steering Group and a National Office for Community Safety;
  - Local Community Safety Partnerships, replacing the existing Joint Policing Committees;

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[17] Department of Justice (October 2022) *Community Safety Policy Paper*.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Section 118 (1) of the PSCS Act 2024.

- These new structures are designed to increase focus on increased cooperation, collaboration and coordination between various State agencies and other public service bodies in relation to improving community safety;
- The establishment of the Policing and Community Safety Authority with a role in overseeing An Garda Síochána's performance in relation to policing and community safety, including its activities aimed at preventing crime and preventing harm to people at risk.

Strand description

In light of the relevance of community safety to the work of the newly established Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA), the PCSA wishes to support a collaborative project between researchers and community organisations to inform evidence-based policy and strategies in relation to policing and community safety. The objectives of this Strand are to support research actions; develop networks and consortia; and build capacity for community and academic collaboration at community level.

The project can focus on any theme relevant to policing and community safety, which could include any of the following:
- Community collaborations with artists and creative practitioners to develop creative approaches to enhancing community voices, particularly amongst seldom heard communities;
- The use of existing data sets or the development of survey methodologies to assist in developing data informed approaches to community safety;
- Evidence-based initiatives for reducing fear of crime, improving feelings of safety, tackling anti-social behaviour, or building confidence and trust in An Garda Síochána at community level;
- Innovative approaches to improving multiagency work either locally or nationally to enhance community safety;
- Innovative approaches to co-designing policing and community initiatives, for example, through enhancing engagement with local community guards, members of the community and the local council, or via the development of researcher and community collaborations or networks;
- Engaging people with lived experience of addiction, mental health problems or homelessness in the new community safety policy process;
- Developing and piloting methodologies to capture the experience of policing among minority groups;
- Collaborative or co-designed approaches to tackling specific crimes and community safety issues, such as online safety, the policing of local demonstrations and flashpoint issues, gender-based violence and other relevant areas.

While the PCSA is open to a wide range of thematic and methodological approaches, applications need to clearly demonstrate how the project speaks to issues and concerns

around policing and community safety in the context of the national and local policy landscape.

Applications should also demonstrate strong evidence of collaboration (across disciplines or universities, and/or involving guards or local communities).

Outputs

- The grant recipient will be required to submit to Research Ireland a progress report 6 months after the award commences and a final report on completion of the project. Research Ireland will provide templates for these two reports.

- The grant recipient will be required to submit a short report (15-20 pages) on the outcomes of the project to the PCSA on completion of the project. In the case of an arts-based project, specific alternative deliverables may be agreed with successful applicants.

Appendix 5

Strand 11: 'Valuing Volunteering'

Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht
One award will be made under this strand
Award will be 12 months in duration
€25,000 max award amount

The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) was established in July 2017 to provide a renewed and consolidated focus on rural and community development in Ireland.

The Department's Mission is "to promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland". In line with this mission, a key objective of the Department is to develop a strong policy framework and provide a full range of appropriate supports to improve the capability of organisations that deliver services to individuals and communities, tackle social issues, and contribute to a fairer and more inclusive society.

The Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht recognises that volunteers play a critical role in Irish society, delivering a wide range of activities in our communities, both formally and informally.

Ireland's first National Volunteering Strategy was approved by Government and launched in December 2020. It is a whole of government framework to support the voluntary sector. Its purpose is to recognise, support and promote the unique value and contribution volunteers make to Irish society.

The Strategy comprises a suite of policy and strategic initiatives led by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht to support volunteers, their representative groups and a range of not-for-profit organisations in community development, local development, social enterprise, and community and voluntary sectors.

The National Volunteering Strategy is focused on five Strategic Objectives:
1. Increasing Diversity
2. A Sustained Volunteer Environment
3. Value Volunteering
4. International Volunteering and
5. Policy Coherence

The policy sets out a series of 56 commitments on the part of Government and key stakeholders across the objectives outlined above, for the development of volunteering over the period 2021 to 2025, and beyond.

Proposals must be directly related to the theme outlined below

In partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, this strand seeks to fund a proposal aimed at part-fulfilling <u>Action 48</u> of the National Volunteering Strategy 2021-2025.

The project will be 12 months duration, with a maximum value of €25,000.

Action 48 of the National Volunteering Strategy is to:

"Commission an evidence-based report on the economic and social value and impact of volunteering on our economy."

While research on the social and economic value of specific voluntary activities has been published, there is currently no comprehensive analysis of the economic impact of volunteering in Ireland. Research sought under this strand will therefore focus on exploring the economic value and impact of volunteering in Ireland, gathering together existing research and/or using existing/new models to generate new data, thereby contributing to overall understanding of the area.

The objective of this Strand is to develop a comprehensive analysis of the economic value and impact of volunteering on the Irish economy.

Research proposals setting out the approach to be taken to conducting a comprehensive national literature review on the economic value of volunteering in Ireland are sought in this regard.

The Department is open to proposals seeking to examine the impact of volunteering on the Irish economy, and/or of the economic impact of volunteering on Irish society, incorporating analysis of quantitative and qualitative impacts where possible/appropriate. Proposals may also incorporate international comparisons, exploring international estimates of the economic value of volunteering, or using international models to generate new Irish data on the area.

Proposals must include the development of a report outlining key findings, which also delivers an executive summary.

Outputs

- The grant recipient will be required to submit a progress report after 3 months, 6 months and a final report following the completion of the project to Research Ireland. Research Ireland will provide templates for these reports.

- The grant recipient will be required to submit a short report (15-20 pages) on the outcomes of the project, including a short executive summary, to the DRCDG on completion of the project.

- The grant recipient will be required to provide a mid-way presentation on progress to date to the DRCDG.

Appendix 6

Strand 15: Social Enterprise Impact, Green Transition and Legal Form, New Foundations Award

Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht
Up to 2 awards will be made under this strand
Awards will be 9 months in duration
€20,000 max award amount

Introduction

The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) was established in July 2017 to provide a renewed and consolidated focus on rural and community development in Ireland. The Department's mission is "to promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland". In line with this mission, a key objective of the Department is to develop a strong policy framework and provide a full range of appropriate supports to improve the capability of organisations that deliver services to individuals and communities, tackle social issues, and contribute to a fairer and more inclusive society. Social enterprise comes within the policy remit of DRCDG.

Objectives of the DRCD

[Trading for Impact National Social Enterprise Policy 2024 - 2027](#) was launched in July 2024, and lays out a policy framework with 57 concrete actions under 5 core objectives in order to grow and sustain the social enterprise sector in Ireland over its lifetime. The new policy has a number of actions which define areas on which research is required to deliver on its policy objectives.

The main purpose of the Department's New Foundations Scheme is to support pioneering research on social enterprise in Ireland. In partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, this strand seeks to fulfil one (or more) of the following three policy commitments in the new policy, where research is required to deliver on policy objectives. Up to two awards will be made.

1. Undertake a research project to identify best practices in Social Impact Measurement.

2. Undertake research to better understand the potential or actual contribution / impact made by social enterprises in delivering on green transition / climate action targets.

3. Undertake research and/or analysis on social enterprise legal form/status in Ireland.

Detail

1. **Undertake a research project to identify best practices in Social Impact Measurement**

Stakeholders in Ireland have universally recognised the need for improved capacity for social enterprises to measure and communicate their social impact as reflected in recently published OECD and NESC reviews of social enterprise. Social impact measurement can demonstrate the value of a social enterprises work to the public, stakeholders and funding partners, and ensure intended objectives have been met.

Research for this action is encouraged towards:

- Developing mechanisms to measure the social and economic impact of social enterprises across the full spectrum of social enterprise in line with the current National Social Enterprise Policy and international best practice.
- Developing a framework / plan on how impact measurement might be more universally implemented across the full spectrum of social enterprise in Ireland in line with the current National Social Enterprise Policy and international best practice.

2. **Undertake research to better understand the potential or actual contribution / impact made by social enterprises operating in the areas of renewable materials or energy in delivering on green transition / climate action targets.**

The potential contribution of the social economy, including social enterprises, in fulfilling our climate goals and achieving the twin green and digital transition to a low carbon economy is recognised by the EU Transition Pathway for the Proximity and Social Economy. This highlights the potential of the social economy business models to build community resilience to climate events and drive the twin green and digital transition. The new national social enterprise policy also recognises this potential, in the line with the Government's circular economy policy. However, the extent to which social enterprises are delivering on, or could deliver on climate action targets is currently not well understood. More research in this area is required.

Research for this action is encouraged towards delivering research on the potential or actual contribution / impact made by social enterprises operating in the areas of renewable materials or energy in delivering on green transition / climate action targets.

3. **Undertake research and/or analysis on social enterprise legal form/status in Ireland.**

Social enterprises in Ireland do not take any specific legal form or legal status[20]. A variety of legal forms are adopted under the Companies Acts by social enterprises as well as under legislation governing co-operatives. Available data indicates that the most common legal

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[20]Legal form is the foundational legal structure adopted by an organisation (e.g. designated activity company, company limited by guarantee). Legal status can be adopted by a broad spectrum of legal forms based on their compliance with specific criteria.

form (75%) utilised is a company limited by guarantee (CLG)[21]. In addition, the majority of social enterprises report holding charitable status. Some stakeholders have reported that the initial choice of company form and charitable status may be driven by their greater capacity to access grant funding rather than the appropriate business need. This can have a knock-on effect on the later potential of the company to scale up.

A 2021 report Research on Legal Form for Social Enterprises[22] found that the argument for establishing a new and dedicated legal form for social enterprises was not sufficiently compelling, however more research is now required in this area.

Research for this action is encouraged towards:

Identifying the reasons social enterprises have for initially choosing a particular legal form or charitable status, and/or ascertaining the potential benefits and drawbacks of establishing a dedicated legal form for social enterprise.

Outputs

- Grant recipients will be required to submit to Research Ireland a progress report 6 months after the award commences and a final report on completion of the project. Research Ireland will provide templates for these two reports.

- Grant recipients will be required to submit a short report (15-20 pages) and a presentation on the outcomes of the project to DRCDG, on completion of the project.

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[21] Social Enterprises in Ireland – A Baseline Data Collection Exercise, DRCD, 2022: https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-rural-and-community-development-and-the-gaeltacht/publications/social-enterprises-in-ireland-a-baseline-data-collection-exercise/
[22] https://rethinkireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Research-on-Legal-Form-for-Social-Enterprises.pdf

Appendix 7

Strand 17: The Heritage Council New Foundations Awards

Funded by the Heritage Council
Award of 9 months in duration
€10,000 max award amount

Introduction

The Heritage Council was established under the Heritage Act, 1995. It is an independent body which has a statutory responsibility pursuant to section 6 of the Heritage Act, 1995, "to propose policies and priorities for the identification, protection, preservation and enhancement of the national heritage". National heritage is defined in the Act as including monuments, architectural heritage, wildlife habitats, geology, archaeological objects, flora, landscapes, heritage gardens and parks, heritage objects (museum objects and archives), fauna, wrecks and inland waterways.

The Heritage Council's strategic plan Our Place in Time (2023-2028) outlines a firm commitment to supporting research in all aspects of heritage. Research is key to maintaining a true evidence-based vision for the Heritage Council. Research will become an integral part of the Council's engagement with society, adding value and richness to all aspects of the Council's work.

Objectives of the strand:

Ireland has a rich and varied tangible and intangible heritage. This strand seeks to fund research and innovation in the broad arena of heritage science, encompassing the arts, humanities, social science, science and technology. It aims to foster and develop academic and civil society networks and to promote collaborative approaches to the challenges and opportunities facing the heritage sector.

The project can focus on any aspect of built, cultural and natural heritage broadly outlined in the thematic descriptions below:

1.	**Biodiversity** Following the 2019 declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency by the Irish Government, and the publication in 2024 of the fourth National Biodiversity Action Plan, the critical state of Ireland's natural habitats and species continue to demand attention. There is a pressing need for applied research to inform policy to mitigate these declines. Likewise, there is a continued need for long term monitoring of baseline data within and outside of designated areas, to direct and prioritise future research and conservation action.

This call aims to encourage research that can contribute to understanding, conserving and restoring Ireland's biodiversity in the face of climate change and other ongoing threats. It seeks to encourage multidisciplinary approaches that address the complex interplay between human activity, biodiversity and climate change, with the goal of developing effective conservation strategies and informing polices to protect Ireland's natural heritage for future generations.

Proposals under this theme could include

- The importance of ecological networks and high nature value farming practices
- Development and evaluation of specific conservation and restoration conservation strategies for important species and habitats
- Enhancement of the impact of citizen science in monitoring of biodiversity
- Assessing and addressing to the impacts of climate change on biodiversity
- Invasive alien species

The research outcomes should contribute to development of evidence-based policy and the development of best practice guidance for species and habitat monitoring, conservation and restoration.

2.	**Materials and Conservation**

Materials and Conservation

Physical heritage objects, whether in the form of moveable heritage (artefacts, manuscripts, paintings) or immoveable heritage (the historic built environment and archaeological sites), are composed of a range of materials which degrade or decay over time. Research under this theme should ideally seek innovative approaches to the repair and preservation of heritage materials through the application of novel methods and tools in conservation, archaeology and technical art history. This could include research on:

- Understanding material behaviour such as decay mechanisms and rates of decay in moveable collections (objects and archives), the built historic environment and archaeology.
- Examining past, present and future conservation treatments, with increased access to tools and technologies
- Developing new methods in the conservation of modern polymers, plastics and other non- 'traditional' materials.

3. Emerging technologies

Science and technology can be used to enhance the Ireland's heritage to the benefit of society. Whether through AI, digitisation, portable technologies, photogrammetry, lidar and other digital tools, heritage assets can be monitored, accessed, shared and disseminated to a growing online audience. Research under this theme could

- Explore the development of an effective digital infrastructure for sharing that connects higher education institutions (HEIs), national cultural institutions (NCIs), and galleries/libraries/archives/museums (GLAMs) for the benefit of all.
- Investigate potential of linked data and other shareable datasets to enhance online useability of cultural heritage.
- Investigate the challenges and/or opportunities of AI and digital heritage platforms.
- Examine long-term digital preservation of digital heritage assets
- Using remote sensing technologies, including satellite imagery and aerial photography, for mapping and monitoring Ireland's habitats, to develop methods for detecting land cover changes, assessing habitat quality, and identifying degradation risks, to offer insights for effective habitat conservation and restoration.

Proposals must be directly related to one or more of the themes outlined above.

Applications for funding will need to demonstrate that the project:
- Uses the FAIR principles (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability and Reusability) to ensure maximum value is realised from publicly funded research projects.
- Has collaborative potential with the stakeholders in the heritage sector
- Applicants are encouraged to adopt interdisciplinary approaches and collaborations between academic institutions, national and local government agencies, and community organisations.

Outputs

- The grant recipient will be required to submit a progress report after 6 months and final report after 12 months to Research Ireland. Research Ireland will provide a final report template in advance of the project end date.

- The grant recipient will submit a short report (15-20 pages) and presentation on the outcomes of the project to the Heritage Council, on completion of the project.

Appendix 8

Strand 18: Fostering democratic engagement amongst communities experiencing barriers and disengagement

Funded by the Electoral Commission (An Coimisiún Toghcháin)
Up to five awards will be made under this strand
Awards will be 9 - 12 months in duration
€15,000 max award amount

Introduction

A key statutory function of the Electoral Commission (An Coimisiún Toghcháin) is to encourage participation by the public in the electoral and democratic processes in the State. We aim to advance political equality in Ireland by ensuring that people are informed, engaged and empowered to participate and engage in electoral and democratic processes.[23]

An Coimisiún pursues this goal through a variety of methods from publicity campaigns, to increasing knowledge about the barriers to participation, to working with others to identify and advise on measures that enable and encourage participation (including addressing barriers identified). An Comisiún will also work with external stakeholders, providing support to design and implement educational and information programmes.

An Coimisiún is empowered and resourced under the *Electoral Reform Act 2022* to conduct research on electoral law and policy and matters relating to the discharge of its functions.

To achieve our goals, it is essential to better understand the factors that lead to disengagement and the types of interventions which are effective in encouraging engagement.

There exists a well-established body of literature in political science demonstrating how engagement with politics and electoral participation varies depending on socio-economic factors, with affluent and settled communities more likely to participate.[24] There is some evidence to suggest that this is also the case in Ireland and considerable evidence that

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[23] Low voter turnout is problematic for representative democracy, particularly if it raises questions about political equality i.e. if those who abstain from voting are systematically more representative of a certain demographic or section of society than another. Such a pattern can undermine representative democracy, leaving sections of society 'under-represented' and creating a cycle of disengagement and apathy.

[24] See Kostelka Filip and Blais Andre (2021) 'The generational and institutional sources of the global decline in voter turnout' *World Politics* 73:4. Pp. 629-667. The authors cite several earlier research articles including Dassonneville and Hooghe (2017)'Voter turnout decline and stratification' *Politics 37:2. Pp. 184-2000* and Lijphart A (1997) 'Unequal participation: democracy's unresolved dilemma' *American Political Science Review 91 no. 1 pp.1-14.*

younger people are less likely to vote in Ireland and internationally.[25] The evidence is also suggestive of intersectionality in non-participation. For example, younger people experiencing poor socio-economic outcomes are less likely than other young people to engage in the electoral process. And some people in society - e.g. people experiencing homelessness - or some groups in society - e.g. the traveller community - are disproportionately affected by socio-economic outcomes that are associated with low levels of participation in electoral politics.[26]

To explain non-voting, researchers tend to categorise the reasons into 'circumstantial' (unavailable/on holiday/work commitments), 'voluntary' (my vote does not count/won't make any difference/not interested in politics) or reasons associated with low social capital or political efficacy (where a person is interested in and willing to engage electoral participation, but has little experience or knowledge about voting and politics and lacks the capacity to gain it). The latter two categories are more indicative of disengagement from the electoral and democratic process.

The Call

In this strand, An Coimisiún will support **collaborative research projects between an eligible researcher (as per the New Foundations Scheme eligibility criteria) and a civil society partner**[27] which:

(a) Deepen understanding of what a successful community-led or educationalist-led intervention to foster democratic engagement looks like in the Irish context <u>and</u>
(b) Have a particular focus on geographical areas or sections of society where participation rates are low, and where reasons for not voting are likely to be related to disengagement or low political efficacy (described above).

Projects must be in line with **(a) <u>and</u> (b)** above, and the research will involve any one or more of the following actions:

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[25] For Ireland specifically, an overview of findings on turnout is given in Blais, Galais and Reidy (2017) 'In the line of duty: the moral basis of turnout in the 2011 election' in Marsh, Farrell and McElroy (2017) *A Conservative Revolution* Oxford: Oxford University Press and Cunningham and Marsh (2024) in Coakley, Gallagher, O'Malley and Reidy edrs., (2024) *Politics in the Republic of Ireland Abingdon & New York, Routledge.*

[26] CSO (2016) Census of Population 2016 – Profile 8: Irish Travellers, Ethnicity and Religion. CSO (2022) **Census of Population 2022** Profile 5 - Diversity, Migration, Ethnicity, Irish Travellers & Religion. The Seanad Public Consultation Committee (2020,24) concluded that 'discrimination, marginalisation and lack of representation in the political sphere has led to apathy towards engaging with politics among many in the Traveller community.' ESRI (December 2024) Understanding attitudes towards Travellers and Roma in Ireland. p. 2-3.

[27] The partner must be a charity with a CHY number and registered with the Charities Regulator, as per New Foundation Scheme requirements, **with a demonstrable interest in electoral and democratic processes.**

- Use evidence (either previously compiled[28] or compiled as part of the project) on the barriers to engagement to design or pilot targeted programmes which aim to promote engagement.
- Examines how people's lived experiences, and networks of contacts, influences the likelihood of voting and/or otherwise participating and the implications of this for interventions.
- Use evidence[29] to design and/or actively explore the potential of peer-to-peer programmes, leadership programmes, exchange programmes or similar initiatives to promote engagement including identifying the circumstances under which they are likely to be effective.
- Use evidence[30] to design or explore other strategies to address the barriers including identifying the circumstances under which they are likely to be effective e.g. mini-parliaments, mini consultative forums, mock elections.
- Identifying and mapping existing voter-engagement programmes in Ireland and drawing on the available evidence to evaluate their effectiveness.
- Use evidence[31] to design, or pilot, engagement initiatives which link political actors with disengaged communities.

An Coimisiún welcomes applications that make use of a wide variety of research techniques subject to the requirement that the research it supports is evidence based. Therein, applicants may propose projects that include qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both techniques. The work funded under this Strand falls under Strand D (Education, Public engagement and inclusion) and Strand E (Blue-sky, curiosity-driven research) of An Coimisiún's Research Programme.

Outputs

- The grant recipient will be required to submit to Research Ireland a progress report at 3 months and at 6 months after the award commences and a final report on completion of the project. Research Ireland will provide templates for these reports.

- The grant recipient will be required to submit a high-level report (15-20 pages) and a presentation on the outcomes of the project to An Coimisiún Toghcháin on completion of the project. The high-level report will set out the aim of the research, approach taken, methods used, key findings and their possible application in the context of An Coimisiún's objectives to encourage participation by the public in the electoral and democratic processes in the State. This report should be of publishable quality and will

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[28] For example, evidence presented in the literature on voter turnout and democratic engagement.

[29] An intervention which aims to have a certain causal effect (e.g. enhance voter turnout or people's engagement) should be based on evidence. Examples of evidence are information gleaned from analysis/evaluations of previous interventions or evidence which is used to elaborate a 'theory of change' on which the intervention is based.

[30] See footnote 28.

[31] See footnote 29.

be intended for dissemination purposes and to contribute to the An Coimisiún's Toghcháin's strategy.