

Research Ireland - Defence Innovation Challenge 2026

Call Document

Version: June 30, 2026

KEY DATES

• Call Launch	29 July 2026
• SESAME Open for Applications	29 July 2026
• Webinar	20 August 2026*
• Open Day(s)	September 2026 (Exact dates TBC)*
• Application Deadline	29 October 2026
• Funding Decision	December 2026
• Award Start Date	1 March 2027
• Prize Award Start Date	1 April 2028

* See Call website for more information.

Terms of Reference

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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 2024² and the Freedom of Information Acts 1997, (Amendment) 2003 and 2014.

¹ Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland (“Research Ireland”) is the national research and innovation funding agency which was established on 1 August 2024. Research Ireland amalgamates the activities of the Irish Research Council and Science Foundation Ireland.

² <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2024/act/15/enacted/en/html>

The Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge 2026, developed in partnership with the Irish Department of Defence and the Defence Forces, aims to support research projects that address existing and emerging defence challenges in Ireland. The programme will facilitate the development of new solutions across space-enabled situational awareness and security, land-based defence and emergency response, defence capability development, societal resilience for national emergencies, and disruptive ideas aligned with broader Defence priorities. It will also foster collaboration and capacity building opportunities between Defence and the Irish research community.

The Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge 2026 highlights five challenges to focus collaborative engagement and research activity. The solutions, and underlying technologies proposed, should be innovative and advance the state of the art. They should be informed by the current needs of Defence.

- **Challenge Area 1:** Advancing Situational Awareness and Security through Space-Based Systems
- **Challenge Area 2:** Strengthening Land-Based Defence and Emergency Responses
- **Challenge Area 3:** Enhancing Defence Capability Development
- **Challenge Area 4:** Building Public Trust and Preparedness for National Emergencies
- **Challenge Area 5:** Disruptive Ideas

The programme will implement the phased funding structure of Research Ireland`s Challenge funding model and comprise three phases: Concept, Seed and Prize Award. Following application review, successful teams will initially be awarded €20k to undertake team building, challenge/solution scoping and validation activities over four months. At the conclusion of the Concept Phase, the project progress will be reviewed to determine those most competitive to progress to the Seed Phase. Teams that progress to the Seed Phase will have access to up to €200k to further validate and develop their proposed solutions over nine months. These finalists will compete for an overall Prize Award of €1M.

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1 Challenge Funding at Research Ireland

Challenge funding is a solution-focused approach that directs research activities at specific, often complex, problems in order to create societal impact. It operates through a stage-gated funding model, combining grants, defined timelines and incentive prizes. Competitive processes are used to identify and advance the most impactful solutions. Research Ireland's approach to challenge funding places strong emphasis on:

- i. **Inter and Transdisciplinary Teams**, reflecting the need to combine expertise from across a wide range of disciplines in an interdisciplinary way to address complex societal challenges that cannot be solved through a single disciplinary lens;
- ii. **Engagement and Validation** with stakeholders, beneficiaries and end-users of research to understand the nature and boundaries of specific problems, in testing assumptions and co-creating solutions;
- iii. **Impact Pathways** demonstrating efficient adaptation of approaches that will lead to socially and economically relevant outcomes and which will translate research outputs to real-world benefits.

2 Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge 2026

2.1 Background and Objectives

The Defence Research, Technology and Innovation office (RTI) drives the development of a resilient and forward-looking innovation culture across Defence. Its purpose is to enhance Defence capabilities while delivering wider societal value through a sustainable and strategically aligned research, technology, and innovation framework.

The RTI Office works to build a dynamic Defence innovation ecosystem spanning Government, Higher Education Institutions, and industry partners—including SMEs and start-ups—to support the delivery of defence capabilities. It leads the establishment of robust RTI structures and governance frameworks to strengthen applied research, technology foresight, and challenge-led innovation.

A core objective of the office is to promote and embed a research-driven and innovation-oriented mindset throughout Defence, ensuring that opportunities for technological advancement and modernisation are identified, evaluated, and leveraged effectively. The RTI Office also aligns Defence activity with the wider national research and innovation ecosystem, ensuring Defence can both contribute to and benefit from existing national initiatives.

Working in parallel with the Capability Development Unit and EU Industry Engagement Unit, the RTI Office supports the co-evolution of research, innovation, and capability planning to maximise the overall effectiveness and readiness of the Defence Forces.

In support of the shared objective to deliver positive impact for Irish society through research and innovation, Research Ireland and Defence have partnered to co-design and launch the Research Ireland–Defence Innovation Challenge 2026. This marks the third iteration of the programme, building on the success of the ongoing collaboration between the two organisations.

Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge 2026 provides researchers with an opportunity to work with the Irish Defence Forces to address a new set of strategically important challenges with strong positive societal impact potential for Ireland.

The overarching ambition of the Research Ireland -Defence Innovation Challenge 2026 is to support the development of new solutions aligned with national defence policy that also have potential to deliver significant positive societal impact in Ireland.

The specific objectives of the programme are to:

- Support the development, acceleration, and adoption of innovative solutions aligned with Defence missions and capability needs;
- Foster collaboration between Defence, researchers and Research Performing Organisations (RPOs).
- Increase awareness of the critical role of research in addressing Defence capability requirements.

2.2 Challenge Areas

Challenge Area 1: Advancing Situational Awareness and Security through Space-Based Systems

Context: Space-enabled data and services are increasingly important to infrastructure protection, environmental monitoring, maritime awareness, communications resilience and national security. Satellite imagery, positioning, timing, communications and other space-derived capabilities can support better understanding of events across land, sea, air, cyber and critical infrastructure domains³. At the same time, growing reliance on space-enabled systems creates vulnerabilities, including disruption, spoofing, jamming, cyberattack, data integrity risks and loss of service.

³ [White Paper on Defence Programme Status Report May 2024](#)

Objective: This Challenge seeks to support **novel solutions that enable Ireland to respond to opportunities and challenges arising from rapidly evolving space-based and geospatial systems**. Applicants are invited to propose innovative approaches that will leverage space-enabled and geospatial capabilities to strengthen monitoring, analysis and service resilience for defence and civil contexts.

Execution: Proposed approaches may combine satellite, airborne, maritime, terrestrial, environmental, cyber, open-source or operational data to improve detection, monitoring and geospatial analysis. Areas of interest may include geospatial change detection; anomaly detection; space-supported cyber security; maintaining continuity of positioning, navigation, timing and communications services; maritime and coastal awareness; monitoring of subsea and offshore infrastructure; and accessible tools that allow non-specialist users to interpret space-derived information. Especially compelling approaches will consider the technical, operational, legal, ethical, governance and human factors involved in using space-enabled evidence in time-sensitive decisions.

Challenge Area 2: Strengthening Land-Based Defence and Emergency Responses

Context: Land-based emergencies are often complex, high-risk, and rapidly evolving. They may involve hazardous environments, infrastructure disruption, large-scale incidents, or humanitarian needs requiring evacuation, search and rescue, casualty recovery, and the safe extraction of personnel from critical situations. These events can also disrupt essential services, logistics, and communications, and may disproportionately affect isolated or vulnerable communities. Effective response requires coordinated national arrangements, including Defence Forces support to civil authorities and close collaboration across emergency services, government departments, voluntary organisations, and local communities to ensure resilience, continuity of services, and protection of life.⁴

In this context, this Challenge seeks **innovative solutions to strengthen Defence Forces' operational capabilities in land-based settings, with a particular focus on supporting national-level emergency responses**. Proposed solutions should enable effective action in complex and high-risk environments, enhance situational awareness and coordination, and contribute to resilience, continuity of essential services, and the protection of life across dual-use contexts.

Objective: Applicants are invited to submit proposals under one of the following two strands:

⁴ [Strategic Emergency Management \(SEM\) National Structures and Framework](#)

- a) Operational capabilities for emergency response within the Defence Forces: Develop and demonstrate novel approaches that enhance the Defence Forces' contribution to national emergency response, including improving planning, coordination, and operational effectiveness in support of civil authorities in dynamic and degraded conditions.
- b) Safe extraction of individuals from complex or high-risk environments: Develop and demonstrate innovative approaches that enable the safe and effective extraction of individuals from complex, constrained, or high-risk environments, including scenarios involving restricted access, damaged assets, or hazardous conditions across security and civil emergency contexts;

Execution: Especially compelling approaches will be practical in challenging operating environments, interoperable with existing response arrangements, and demonstrate strong consideration of deployability, safety, accessibility, environmental sustainability, and community needs.

Challenge Area 3: Enhancing Defence Capability Development

Context: Defence capability development requires the integration of strategic planning, Defence Forces requirements identification, capability assessment, acquisition planning and in-service learning across complex and evolving operational environments. Existing approaches often rely on multiple processes, data sources and stakeholder perspectives, making it difficult to maintain a coherent evidence base for decision-making and long-term capability planning.

Objective: This challenge seeks **innovative approaches that strengthen Defence capability development as an integrated, evidence-informed and adaptive process**. Applicants are invited to propose novel methods, tools, frameworks or systems that improve the ability of decision-makers to identify future Defence Forces capability needs, evaluate options, assess risks and opportunities, and support effective capability planning and delivery.

Execution: Proposals may consider aspects such as foresight, scenario analysis, requirements development, systems modelling, evidence synthesis, data integration, capability assessment, market intelligence, organisational learning, decision support, interoperability, innovation adoption, risk assessment and evaluation, governance and stakeholder engagement. Particularly compelling approaches will demonstrate how they support transparency, adaptability and informed decision-making across the capability lifecycle while remaining responsive to future operational and strategic needs.

Challenge Area 4: Building Public Trust and Preparedness for National Emergencies

Context: Major emergencies, security challenges and crises require public trust, effective communication, credible institutions and a shared understanding of roles across defence and civil authorities, emergency services, voluntary organisations and communities. Responding to such events demands levels of trust and cooperation that are rarely tested in Ireland. Ireland's national risk and emergency management frameworks, including the National Risk Assessment and Strategic Emergency Management National Structures and Framework ^{5 6} emphasise a whole-of-government approach, highlighting the importance of societal resilience, robust communication, and meaningful public engagement in anticipating, preparing for, and responding to complex and evolving risks.

Objective: This challenge seeks to support **solutions that strengthen public trust, enhance societal resilience and improve communication between authorities and communities before, during and after major emergencies, including how Defence support to civil authorities is understood and experienced across society**. Applicants are invited to propose novel approaches that enhance societal preparedness, strengthen trusted communication, and support effective engagement between authorities and communities in the context of major emergencies and security-related crises.

Execution: Proposed approaches may examine how risks are understood under conditions of uncertainty; how information flows are coordinated; how misinformation and disinformation influence public response; how Defence support to civil authorities is perceived; and how communities can be meaningfully engaged across all phases of an emergency. Especially compelling approaches will address the needs of diverse and vulnerable groups, and consider the ethical, legal, and societal factors that shape trust, inclusion, and preparedness in practice.

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate behavioural science approaches to strengthening public preparedness and resilience, including exploring how public information measures influence awareness, understanding and behaviour. Where appropriate, consideration may be given to the design and evaluation of impact measures to help identify opportunities for refinement, as well as to the development of population-wide initiatives with a view to fostering a mindset of preparedness and resilience across different age groups.

Challenge Area 5: Disruptive Ideas

⁵ [National Risk Assessment 2024 - Overview of Strategic Risks](#)

⁶ [Strategic Emergency Management National Structures and Framework](#)

Applicants intending to submit a proposal under the Disruptive Ideas Challenge must email challenges@researchireland.ie by 17:00 on 31 August 2026 to notify their intention to apply.

This notification should include the information outlined below. This step will enable the Programme Team to assess the availability of a Defence Subject Matter Expert to support both the pre-application engagement stage and, if awarded, the project. The intention to apply will not be assessed as part of the application review process.

Subject Line: Intention to Apply_Disruptive Ideas_Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge 2026

Proposal Title:

Names of Lead and Co-Lead PIs and affiliations:

Disruptive Ideas Area (see Areas in Section 2.2 in Call Document):

Description of Proposal Concept (maximum 100 words):

The Research Ireland - Defence Innovation Challenge also welcomes proposals that include innovative ideas that may not align directly with the Challenge areas 1-4 outlined above. In such cases, applicants are invited to consider broader areas of interest to Defence (outlined below) and, through engagement with Defence stakeholders and the relevant civil, community, policy, enterprise or public-sector users, submit proposals for disruptive, radical or novel approaches to address specific challenges in these areas. Proposals may address technologies, methods, policies, practices, behaviours, institutions, cultures or forms of collaboration.

The areas of interest under the Disruptive Ideas theme include:

- **Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Adaptation**, including but not limited to:
 - Robust, portable, and efficient renewable and hybrid energy solutions to support operations in remote or infrastructure-constrained environments.
 - Sustainable materials, circular design, and low-impact deployable infrastructure suitable for temporary or rapidly established operational settings.
 - Environmental sensing and monitoring capabilities to support situational awareness and risk assessment.
 - Approaches to climate adaptation, extreme weather preparedness, and environmental risk communication in support of national emergency response.
- **Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)**, including but not limited to:

- Resilient, secure, and adaptive communications systems to support operations in dynamic or degraded environments.
 - Data-driven and intelligent systems for situational awareness and decision support.
 - Digital and cyber-physical technologies to enhance planning, training, and operational effectiveness.
 - Advanced computing and networked systems to enable real-time data exchange and interoperability.
 - Secure, trusted, and ethical approaches to data use and emerging technologies, including consideration of legal, societal, and governance implications.
- **Personnel Wellbeing, Training and Organisational Development**, including but not limited to:
 - Approaches to support physical and mental wellbeing in demanding operational environments.
 - Advanced training and learning methods to enhance preparedness and performance.
 - Human-centred design and human factors approaches to improve equipment, systems, workflows, and operational interfaces.
 - Organisational capability, innovation adoption, and culture development to support continuous improvement and adaptability.
- **Medical Technologies and Health Systems**, including but not limited to:
 - Innovative approaches to diagnostics, care delivery, and health system support in remote, resource-constrained, or high-risk environments.
 - Digital health solutions, including telehealth, telemedicine, and remote triage systems, to support timely and coordinated care.
 - Wearable and portable technologies for monitoring health status, physical performance, and physiological indicators.
 - Advanced medical technologies and approaches to support treatment and care in challenging conditions.

3 Programme Structure and Funding

The Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge comprises three phases: **Concept**, **Seed** and **Prize** (Figure 1).

Applications to the programme can request up to €220,000 in total direct costs over a duration of 13 months. Applications will be reviewed by a Panel of independent international reviewers. Ten teams⁷ will be funded with up to €20k each for the Concept Phase over four months.

⁷Research Ireland reserves the right to fund a greater or fewer number of teams at either phase depending on quality and budget availability.

Following a rigorous Panel review, it is envisaged that five teams deemed competitive and whose projects demonstrate high impact potential may progress to the Seed Phase to unlock further funding of up to €200k for the next nine months. Upon completion of the Seed Phase, teams will compete for the Challenge Prize Award of up to €1M over 12 months.

Please refer to [Section 5](#) for detailed information on the review process and evaluation criteria.

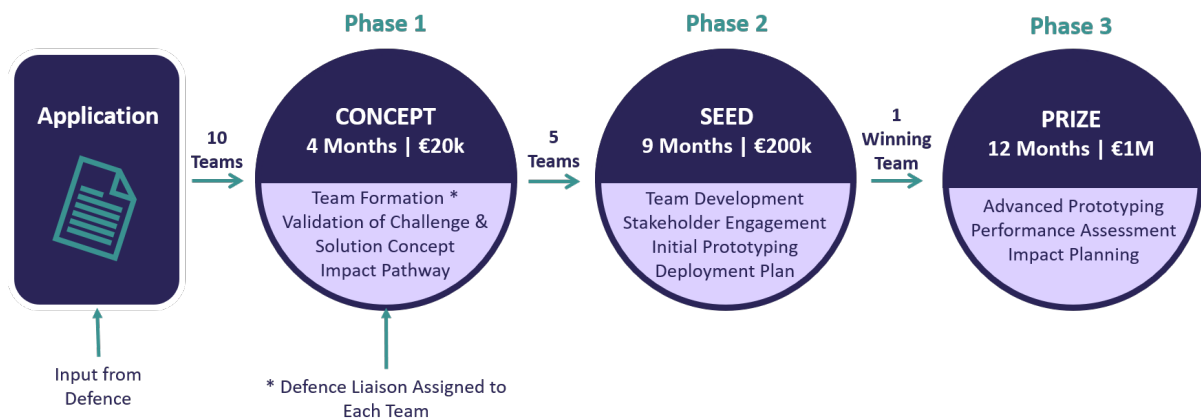


Figure 1. Phased structure of the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge.

3.1 Purpose of the Individual Phases

a. Concept Phase

The Concept Phase is intended to support teams to develop a deeper understanding of the challenge/problem they propose to address via extensive stakeholder engagement and to explore the feasibility and viability of the solution concept presented in their application. Teams will be expected to further validate the challenge/problem selected, provide detail on the proposed solution and its implementation, and describe an impact pathway for their solution. As part of the impact pathway, teams must describe technical and non-technical barriers to be overcome, the opportunity associated with addressing those barriers and how the solution will achieve impact.

Under the Research Ireland - Defence Innovation Challenge, following successful application, **teams will be assigned a Defence Liaison** who will be a subject matter expert on the challenge/problem to be addressed (see [Section 4.1](#) for further info). During the Concept Phase, the core team will have the opportunity to recruit additional team members with relevant skills and knowledge to support the objectives of the proposal. Where appropriate, a broader range of stakeholders and beneficiaries may be considered for inclusion as team members as the team expands.

b. Seed Phase

The Seed phase enables teams to undertake further stakeholder engagement and collaborative co-development of a prototype. The development of this prototype should be guided by the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries and be informed by key measures of success identified through engagement with stakeholders and beneficiaries. During this process, the team should commence planning for further development and deployment of the solution.

The programme will only support pre-deployment/pre-commercial activities, and as such development of existing products is not permitted. However, as part of the Seed Phase it may be necessary for successful applicants to consider potential impact pathways, including commercialisation, as part of the project to fully scope solution deployment. In this context, teams should take into consideration the necessary requirements to facilitate this process, and it is anticipated that the collective skill set of the challenge team will support such activity.

c. Prize Phase

The winning team will develop an advanced prototype of their solution during the Prize Phase and finalise their plan for deployment with a view to translating the solution within this phase or shortly after the project end.

NOTE: Research Ireland reserves the right not to grant the Prize Award if the review panel does not identify a winning team.

3.2 Skills Development

In addition to the provision of funding, Research Ireland will organise training workshops during the Concept and Seed Phases to support the skills and knowledge development of the teams. The topics of these workshops are selected to complement team activities within the specific phases and may include, for example, Design Thinking, Theory of Change, and Communication Skills. Further details of these workshops will be provided to teams successful in securing funding under the programme. **The core team members will be expected to attend the training workshops.**

4 Who Can Apply?

4.1 Team Composition

The Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge is intended to support highly motivated, interdisciplinary and collaborative research teams, committed to developing transformative and sustainable solutions that will contribute to the challenge themes outlined in **Section 2**. It is expected that teams will encompass a range of technical and non-technical skills to address activities associated with problem understanding and solution development. Teams are

encouraged to integrate technical, operational, social, ethical and policy perspectives where this will strengthen the understanding of the challenge and increase the likelihood of sustainable real-world impact.

Applications to the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge must identify a core applicant/leadership team comprising:

- **Team Lead** (Lead Applicant) will have responsibility for managing the activities of the team, will provide research leadership and have overall responsibility for delivery of research programme objectives. The Team Lead is expected to have a demonstrable track record relevant to the proposed solution.
- **Team Co-Lead** (Co-Applicant) will provide leadership as part of the research programme and should bring complementary technical/disciplinary expertise to that of the Team Lead.

Following successful application, a *Defence Liaison* from a branch of the Defence Forces will be assigned to work with the team lead and co-lead. The Defence Liaison will be integral to the team and will work as part of the team to provide insights as well as organisational, operational or mission context to support the team in understanding and validating problems, and the development of a solution. It is anticipated that the Defence Liaison will, through their participation as a core team member, garner support and buy-in within Defence that will assist the team in planning for potential future deployment/demonstration.

NOTE: Researchers funded under the Research Ireland – Defence Innovation Challenge 2026 will work closely with the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces as part of this programme and **will be required to sign a Collaborative Research (or Intellectual Property Rights) Agreement with the Department of Defence prior to any research activities commencing.** The CRA should clearly outline arrangements for Intellectual property (IP), insurance, liability, and warranties.

To facilitate Collaborative Research Agreements between Research Bodies and Department of Defence, a CRA template will be shared by Defence upon successful application. The CRA must be signed by all parties prior to the Concept Phase Progress Review panel date.

Teams successful at application stage will have the opportunity to expand during the course of their award and be able to recruit additional researchers (e.g. at postgraduate or postdoctoral career stage) or collaborators (e.g., researchers, beneficiaries, end-users) if required. Applications may reference individuals outside the core team who are anticipated to play a future

role as team members. In such cases, it is important to highlight the discipline and skill set that these individuals will bring to the team. Consideration should also be given to the broader challenge and solution context, which may require the integration of expertise from a range of disciplines and perspectives to ensure a comprehensive and effective response to complex societal challenges.

Given the nature of the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge programme and the important role industry can play in addressing the challenges, the participation of industry (in particular, small and medium-sized enterprises), as part of the extended team may be appropriate. Please refer to **Section 7** for guidance on State Aid and Research Ireland Grant Funding. However, please note that the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge is not an industry-academia research programme.

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 External Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2023–2028, which was adopted by Research Ireland⁸, increasing the number of women and members of Historically Underserved⁹ in Applicant Teams are key objectives. As such, women and members of Historically Underserved Communities are strongly encouraged to apply to this programme. Further details on application submission and success rates by gender (binary) can be found for historic programmes on the Research Ireland website.

Gender data fields on Research Ireland's Grants and Awards Management System, SESAME, 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.

⁸ [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion | Research Ireland](#)

⁹ 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.

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.

Conflict of Interest

Research Ireland recognises that applicants may have a prior relationship with an industry partner engaged in an application for funding to Research Ireland (e.g., industry consultancy role, founder of an academic spin-out company) which may be perceived as a conflict of interest. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, Research Ireland requires that it is disclosed by the applicant to Research Ireland and their Research Body and that any such situations are managed by the Research Body in accordance with the principles and mandates laid out in Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019.¹⁰

4.2 Eligibility Criteria

Applications will be accepted where the Lead Applicant and Co-Applicant satisfy the following eligibility criteria.

- Be a **member of academic staff** of an Eligible Research Body¹¹ (permanent or with a contract that covers the period of the award),
or
- Be a **contract researcher** with a contract that covers the period of the award (contract may be subject to receipt of the award).
and
- Hold a PhD or equivalent. Please consult the Policy on PhD Equivalence¹² for further information*.

¹⁰ <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/Reports-Publications/Ireland-s-National-IP-Protocol-2019-.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.researchireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Research-Ireland-Eligible-Research-Body-Policy.pdf>

¹² [Policy on PhD Equivalence](#)

Applications will not be accepted where the Lead applicant or the Co-Applicant is a postgraduate researcher (e.g., MSc, MEng or PhD student).

In cases where **the Lead and/or Co-Lead is a postdoctoral researcher**, the application must include a Letter of Support from an established researcher confirming they will act as a mentor to the Lead/Co-Lead for the duration of the award (see **Section 6.1f** for further details). Mentor`s CV must also be included in the application.

NOTE: Members of the Core Team (Lead Applicant and Co-Applicant) are permitted to be named on only one application to the programme. Applicants who are already Lead or Co-Lead on an active Research Ireland Challenge Award (including a National Challenge Fund award) may be required to provide a plan to Research Ireland as to how they will manage concurrent awards if successful.

It is recognised that in certain disciplines relevant to this call, such as engineering or international development, research-active members of academic staff may not hold a PhD or equivalent. Such research-active staff members may be considered eligible to participate as a Team Lead or Co-Lead but must confirm their eligibility with Research Ireland in advance of submission of an application. **Requests must be made by the Research Office of the host research body to Research Ireland by e-mail (challenges@researchireland.ie) no later than 2 October 2026 and should include a completed narrative CV template demonstrating appropriate research experience. In such cases, only current members of academic staff will be considered. The track record of eligible team members and their role in the team will be assessed as part of the review process. Eligibility for this call will not be considered in the assessment of eligibility for other Research Ireland funding calls and does not correspond to confirmation of PhD equivalence¹³.*

5 Programme Review Process and Criteria

San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)

Research Ireland is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)¹⁴ and, as such has aligned its review and evaluation processes with DORA principles. Research Ireland has reinforced its commitment to the core principles by joining DORA as a member¹⁵. In the spirit of supporting open research and as a signatory to Ireland's National

¹³ This should be noted, for example, for the purpose of ensuring appropriate supervisory arrangements for PhD students. See <https://www.researchireland.ie/about/policies/>

¹⁴ <https://sfдора.org/>

¹⁵ Contributor level membership.

Action Plan for Open Research 2022-2030¹⁶ and Plan S¹⁷, Research Ireland is committed to making data and other types of research open and accessible. To complement these activities and further reinforce Research Ireland's commitment to responsible research assessment, Research Ireland is also a signatory to the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment¹⁸ and a member of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)¹⁹. In line with DORA principles and a commitment to responsible research assessment, Research Ireland has changed the way it assesses researchers for funding, adopting a holistic approach that recognises a wide range of research outputs. This has involved assessing the quality and impact of research through means other than journal-based indicators/metrics and research performance-based indicators/metrics, such as impact factors and h-index, through the use of a Narrative CV and associated scoring methodology. The Narrative CV template enables the assessment of diverse research contributions, with a focus on the quality, significance, and impact of individual outputs.

The Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge programme involves three stages of review: Application, Concept and Seed/Prize. Panel members secured by Research Ireland are internationally based experts in their respective fields and may be drawn from a range of backgrounds relevant to a challenge programme or area including academia, industry, investment and civil society.

5.1 Application Stage Review

Following submission, applications are checked for eligibility²⁰. Teams that submit applications that are not deemed eligible under the programme or do not strongly align with the programme remit will be notified and their application withdrawn. Following these checks, eligible applications are then assigned to an independent panel of international experts convened by Research Ireland. Subject matter experts from Defence will provide input on each application to inform the Panel's deliberations during the panel meeting.

Applications will be assessed by the expert Panel against the evaluation criteria provided in **Section 5.3**. Applicant teams whose proposals do not proceed will be notified by Research

¹⁶ National-Action-Plan-for-Open-Research-webversion.pdf

¹⁷ <https://www.coalition-s.org/>

¹⁸ https://coara.eu/app/uploads/2022/09/2022_07_19_rra_agreement_final.pdf

¹⁹ <https://coara.eu/>

²⁰ Applications are checked for compliance with: non-technical mandatory criteria (e.g. all sections complete, page numbers not exceeded); technical mandatory criteria (e.g. any publication and prior funding requirements, alignment with the legal remit of Research Ireland, where required); and any other requirements outlined in the Call Document.

Ireland. Due to the expedited review timelines, applicants may not receive feedback from the application stage review.

The identity of international experts who conduct the application stage reviews shall remain confidential and will not be disclosed to applicants. Research Ireland shall not be liable for the release of information concerning proposals to third parties by those international peer reviewers involved in the review process.

Reviewers engaged by Research Ireland are required to abide by the Reviewer Code of Conduct²¹. The submission of an application to Research Ireland shall be construed as consent by the applicant(s) to participate in the peer-review process. Research Ireland reserves the right to return applications without review where they do not meet the eligibility criteria.

5.2 Concept and Seed Phase Progress Reviews

The review of progress at the end of the Concept Phase will be undertaken by an independent panel of international experts convened by Research Ireland. This process will involve the completion and submission of a progress report to Research Ireland at both stages and an interview with the Panel. Guidance on progress reports and the interview process will be provided to applicants in advance of the panel review.

The expert Panel will assess the progress/performance of the teams over the course of the Concept Phase and plans for the Seed Phase against the evaluation criteria in **Section 5.3** and recommend those teams that should progress to the Seed Phase. During the nine month Seed Phase, teams that progress may use the remaining award amount. Those teams that do not progress at the end of the Concept Phase will have their Seed Phase funding decommitted.

Prior to completion of the Seed Phase, the remaining teams will submit a progress report to Research Ireland, followed by a final presentation and interview with an independent panel of international experts. Using the evaluation criteria in **Section 5.3**, the Panel will assess progress made in developing the prototype and validation of the deployment strategy within the Seed Phase, plans for the next phase, and the potential for societal and economic impact. At the conclusion of this assessment, the Panel will recommend an overall winning team to receive the Prize Award. If the Panel does not identify a winning team, a Prize Award may not be granted. The panel may also, at its discretion, recommend runner-up prize winners.

²¹ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/review-process/>

At both stages, Defence will provide input on projects to inform the Panel`s deliberations during the panel meeting.

Research Ireland reserves the right to modify the review process. Applicants will be notified of any relevant modification to the review procedure. The final funding decisions are at the sole and exclusive discretion of Research Ireland.

5.3 Evaluation Criteria

At all stages (Application, the end of Concept and Seed Phases), projects will be assessed based on the following criteria, which are equally weighted:

- **Quality, experience and ambition of the applicant team** – Consideration will be given to the team’s ambition, complementarity of expertise, the appropriateness of its composition for addressing the proposed challenge and that necessary partnerships/collaborations are in place to deliver the proposed impact. Consideration will also be given to the quality, significance and relevance of the individual team members’ research track record and key achievements (in particular, generation and translation of knowledge, development of Individuals, leadership, teamwork and collaboration, delivering societal or economic impact, and stakeholder engagement²²). The review will make note of individuals’ career stages and research disciplines, taking into account any periods of leave.
- **Understanding of the challenge/problem** – Consideration will be given to recognition and articulation of significance of the problem identified and any insights contributing to its formulation. Pre-application stakeholder/beneficiary engagement undertaken in validation of the problem will also be taken into account.
- **Novelty of the proposed solution, including its potential to deliver disruptive innovation** – Consideration will be given to the innovation potential of the overall proposed solution, including the novelty of the technology/approach, comprehension of the current state of the art, value for money, the sex and gender dimension etc. Note that novelty may arise through combination or convergence of technologies/approaches in a new or unforeseen way.
- **Transformative societal impact potential of the solution** – Consideration will be given to the potential for the solution to create significant beneficial societal change or impact. Pre-application stakeholder/beneficiary engagement undertaken in validation of the solution will also be taken into account.

²² Examples are provided in the Applicant CV template, which is available on the Programme website.

- **Feasibility of execution within the budget and timeframe permitted** – Consideration will be given to the feasibility of delivering the project within the budget and timeframe of the Concept and Seed Phases and likelihood that this can lead to successful delivery of the solution during the Prize Award Phase.

NOTE: The Sex and Gender Dimension Statement will be evaluated as part of **Understanding of the challenge/problem, Novelty of the proposed solution, Transformative societal impact potential of the solution** and **Feasibility of execution** components of the review, if relevant.

6 Application Process

Applications to the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge Programme must be submitted through SESAME, Research Ireland’s online grants and awards management system in advance of the application deadline. Full details of this application process can be found in the **Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge SESAME Guide** available for download from the call webpage.

Applying through SESAME involves completion of an online form with details including team members, alignment to remit and requested budget. In addition, applicants will be required to complete the Application Form and Applicant Narrative CV using the Word templates available to download from the call webpage. These documents must be uploaded to SESAME in PDF format.

NOTE: Submitted applications that are missing required documents will be deemed ineligible. We advise applicants to contact challenges@researchireland.ie in advance of submitting their application, if they are unclear about a documentation requirement.

If your submission relates to a previous unsuccessful application to any Research Ireland scheme, a statement referencing the previous application and explaining the differences must be provided as part of the SESAME application and must refer to reviewer comments where relevant. This statement will assist Research Ireland staff in the assessment of the eligibility of a revised application and will not be shared with reviewers. See Resubmission policy for further details²³. Given the time commitment involved with leading on a Research Ireland Challenge award, Research Ireland may follow up with individuals managing other/multiple Research Ireland grants to provide justification and rationale for how they would manage two or more major

²³ [Resubmission of Grant Proposals](#)

awards. This information is provided for planning purposes by Research Ireland staff and will not be shared with reviewers.

6.1 Sections of the Application

Applications to the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge comprise the following sections:

a. Summary of Idea

This section of the application should provide a clear, concise summary of the idea. Applicants should ensure that they clearly describe what elements of the challenge/problem they intend to address and the proposed solution. Describe what is novel or unconventional about the approach, why applicants expect it to succeed and how it will deliver impact.

b. Research Alignment

This section includes drop-down questions for the applicants to identify the research areas most relevant to their proposed projects.

c. Stakeholder Engagement, Team, Challenge/Problem, Solution & Societal Impact

The Application Form is available to download from the call webpage in Word format and provides applicants with the opportunity to describe in detail the team, the problem, the proposed solution and the societal impact that the solution aims to deliver. All fields must be completed; the document should be converted to PDF and then uploaded in SESAME as part of an application.

- **Pre-Application Stakeholder Engagement:** Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage with the Defence Forces in advance of application submission to ensure that the ideas proposed in their application are relevant to the Defence Forces and have potential to deliver impact. Evidence that engagement has taken place must be provided as part of an application. Information about any engagement (i.e. name of stakeholder(s), when meetings/calls took place or how often) along with any key insights about the challenge or problem to be addressed should be provided. Information webinars, jointly hosted by Research Ireland and Defence, will be held for researchers to provide further context for the call. Furthermore, to facilitate pre-application engagement with the Defence Forces, it is anticipated that a number of open days will be arranged whereby researchers can visit Defence Forces installations to see equipment and speak with Defence Forces subject matter experts to gain a better understanding of challenges and operational context and needs. Individual follow-on

sessions with experts may also be arranged. Further details of these arrangements will be provided as part of call information webinars and on the programme call webpage.

- **Team Profile:** Briefly describe the applicant team. Describe how, through its composition and formation, the team brings a unique perspective and distinct advantage in addressing this problem. Applicants are advised not to use this section to provide biographies of team members rather it should convey the team's ambition and ability to deliver. This section should articulate why the team is competitive. The information provided in this section should be complemented by the curricula vitae submitted as part of the application.
- **Challenge:** Describe clearly the challenge/problem to be addressed and the team's understanding of it. Applicants should consider as part of this description, providing information on the importance/significance of the issue along with the opportunity for Defence and Ireland in addressing it. How have the key insights from engaging with stakeholders/beneficiaries allowed applicants to validate the problem? Describe what are the key issues and how the team will overcome these? Has this problem national/international relevance?
- **Solution:** Describe clearly the solution proposed. Applicants should describe how the proposed solution is novel and/or unconventional? What is its current stage of technical development? What is the current state-of-the-art? How will the proposed approach (technical/non-technical) lead to disruptive innovation? How feasible/viable is the solution? What are the risks? As part of this description, applicants should consider providing a number of high-level milestones/deliverables (and achievement times).
- **Societal Impact:** Describe the societal impact the solution can achieve. What outcomes will the solution deliver for Defence and when (provide an indication of key milestones, deliverables and timelines)? How will the solution have a beneficial impact on society? Can the impact of the solution be transformative?

NOTE: In preparing your application to the programme, please consult the Guidance for Applicants on Ethical and Scientific Issues.²⁴ In particular, applicants should fully consider potential biological sex and socio-cultural gender dimensions associated with challenge identification/definition and solution development.

d. Ethical Issues

²⁴ [Guidance on Ethical and Scientific Issues](#)

In preparing your application to the programme, please consult the Guidance for Applicants on Ethical and Scientific Issues.²⁵

e. Sex and Gender Dimension in Research Statement

In accordance with the Research Ireland External Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy²⁶, 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 Issues²⁷ 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 and/or in your CV, 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.

f. Budget

This section should be used to describe the budget (direct costs) and resources requested and should also include a justification for the requested costs.

Up to €20,000 can be allocated for use during the Concept Phase of the programme (Months 1–4) while the remaining request of up to €200,000 can be allocated to and will be accessible only during the Seed Phase (Months 5–13). It is recommended that applicants maximise the budget requested at each stage. In this section provide a breakdown of the indicative eligible direct costs (in €) associated with the application observing the following:

²⁵ [Guidance on Ethical and Scientific Issues](#)

²⁶

[Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion | Research Ireland](#)

²⁷ [Ethical Policies | Research Ireland](#)

- Please review the Grant Budget Policy and Team Member Salary Scales for eligible/ineligible costs and salary levels for research staff.²⁸
- Include any subcontracting to be undertaken in the Materials & Consumables category. Note that subcontracting costs may not be requested in the Concept Phase.
- Equipment costs may not be requested in the Concept Phase.
- **Teaching replacement costs (Technological Universities/Institutes of Technology)**
Team Leads and Co-Leads in Technological Universities (TUs) or in Institutes of Technology (IoTs) are permitted to apply for teaching replacement of up to a maximum of 50% of their teaching load for the duration of each phase of the programme. Salary scales for replacement lecturers must be reasonable and justified appropriately within the budget justification. Teaching replacement requests must be pro-rata and proportional to the time commitment to the award. Postdoctoral researchers based in any Eligible Research Body²⁹ who are acting as a Team Lead or Co-Lead may include up to 100% of their salary as part of the budget request in line with their time commitment to the project.

In addition to direct costs, Research Ireland also makes an indirect or overhead contribution to the host research body, which is reflected as a percentage (30%) of the direct costs (excluding equipment). Overheads are payable as a contribution to the Research Body for the indirect costs of hosting Research Ireland-funded research programmes and are intended to enable the research body to develop internationally competitive research infrastructure and support services.

NOTE: Please refer to Research Ireland’s Grant Budget Policy and Team Member Salary Scales for further information. All staff salary requests must include the team member scale description.³⁰

g. Curricula Vitae

The Lead and Co-Lead Applicants must use the Narrative CV template provided in the Downloads section of the programme webpage. This must be completed and uploaded in SESAME in PDF format. **Please click on “Save Draft” after upload.** The current template allows for the provision of additional information such as that relating to periods of leave from research, where

²⁸ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/financial/>

²⁹ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/eligible-research-bodies/>

³⁰ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/financial/>

relevant. Applicants are strongly advised to consult the Research Ireland Narrative CV Guidance and associated FAQs³¹ when preparing their Narrative CVs.

References to metrics such as journal impact factor, h-index, and total numbers of publications are not permitted. This is not an exhaustive list; please consult with the Narrative CV Guidance. If these or any excluded metrics or any hyperlinks or URLs are included in the Narrative CV template, your application will be made ineligible.

h. Letters of Support

As part of an application, Letters of Support must be provided as follows:

- Letter(s) of Support from the **Host Research Bod(y/ies) of the Lead and Co-Lead applicants**, which should comment on how the applicant`s expertise aligns with the proposed research, confirm eligibility of the applicants, and detail the infrastructure and services available to the applicant as relevant for the proposal. In addition, in cases where team members will be transferring from another active Research Ireland grant, an outline of the management plan (i.e., a description of how the individual will be replaced on the original award) to assure how these awards progress satisfactorily should be provided. Also note that the Host Research Body Letter of Support should contain a description of the institutional policy regarding management of conflicts of interest. Members of the applicant team may be located at different eligible research bodies. In this case, funding awarded under the programme will be administered through the Research Body of the Lead Applicant.
- **Where any applicant is a postdoctoral researcher (including Research Fellows), a Letter of Support from an established researcher from the same Host Research Body endorsing the postdoctoral researcher** must be provided. This Letter of Support must confirm that the established researcher has agreed to act as mentor for the duration of the award. In cases where the established researcher is not the current Mentor/Supervisor, the Letter of Support must outline how this situation will be managed and must be countersigned by the current mentor/supervisor of the postdoctoral researcher. The Letter of Support must include details of the postdoctoral researcher`s current role and funding arrangements including remuneration level. The grant identification code and grant title under which the postdoctoral researcher is currently

³¹ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/narrative-cv/>

funded should also be provided. If an established researcher is co-applying with the postdoctoral applicant, they can be the mentor of their co-applicant, if appropriate.

Postdoctoral researchers at Senior Research Fellow level may also be required to identify a Mentor and submit the relevant documentation. We advise that they confirm the requirements with Research Ireland in advance of submitting an application by contacting challenges@researchireland.ie

NOTE: No additional Letters of Support may be included at the application stage. Any additional/unsolicited Lettersⁱ of Support will be removed from an application.

6.2 Research Body Approval

For an application to be accepted, it must be authorised for submission by the host research body of the Lead Applicant. It should be noted that Research Body submission of an application confirms that the Research Ireland Grant General Terms & Conditions have been read and understood³². Submission may only be made by an authorised Research Body representative (e.g. the Research Office). In particular, the Research Body is approving:

- The eligibility of the applicants;
- That the applicants are, or will be upon receipt of the grant, recognised as employees of the Research Body for the duration of the grant;
- That the requested budget including salaries/stipends, equipment, travel and consumables are in line with accepted institutional guidelines;
- The availability of infrastructure within the institution as outlined by the applicant in the research proposal;
- That the proposed research programme has not been funded by other sources;
- That relevant ethical and regulatory approval has been or will be sought and must be granted prior to the award commencing;
- That relevant licences will be in place at the time of grant;
- That the details provided in relation to research funding history i.e., current, pending or expired grants, as detailed in the application, are valid and accurate;
- That permission from all team members and collaborators has been obtained, such that Research Ireland may receive their personal information, and may process such data for the purpose of peer review;

³² [Grant Terms & Conditions | Research Ireland](#)

- That the information supplied in the application is correct and the research proposal is the applicant's own work.
- That the proposed project will be in full agreement with all legal and regulatory matters governing research in Ireland.

Research Ireland's Grant Conditions shall govern the administration of Research Ireland grants and awards to the exclusion of this and any other oral, written, or recorded statement.

7 State Aid and Intellectual Property Management

As per Research Ireland's Grant Conditions (inclusive of Research Ireland's General Terms & Conditions³³, Letters of Offer and Research Ireland Policy documents³⁴), 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)³⁵. Namely, research activities undertaken as part of a Grant awarded under the Research Ireland – Defence Innovation Challenge, 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.

The arrangements related to the management of IP arising out of the Research Ireland - Defence Innovation Challenge 2026 programme are the responsibility of the Research Bodies and must comply with the practices and procedures described in the national IP protocol document Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019³⁶. They shall reflect the collaborative nature of the project, the level of commitment of partners, and compliance with State aid regulations. Applicants are also encouraged to review the Department of Defence and the Defence Forces Intellectual Property Policy³⁷.

Where a proposed programme of research involves collaboration with an ‘undertaking’³⁸ 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

³³ <https://www.researchireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Research-Ireland-Grant-GTCs.pdf>

³⁴ <https://www.researchireland.ie/about/policies/>

³⁵ [Commission Notice on the notion of State aid as referred to in Article 107\(1\) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TABLE OF CONTENTS \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2015/1535/oj)

³⁶ <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/Reports-Publications/Ireland-s-National-IP-Protocol-2019-.pdf>

³⁷ [Department of Defence and the Defence Forces Intellectual Property Policy](#)

³⁸ 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.

research and development and innovation (2022/C 414/01) (the “Framework”³⁹). Research Ireland has set out guidance to support how the programme of research or project is developed and undertaken in accordance with these conditions. See ‘Guidance on State Aid for applicants to, and recipients of, Research Ireland Grant funding’ for further information.⁴⁰

Where a proposed programme of research activities involves a collaboration with an industry party or “undertaking”, for all or part of the term of the Grant, grant holders must demonstrate compliance with the conditions of “effective collaboration” and complete and “**Industry Collaboration Form**” (ICF).⁴¹ The ICF is to assist grant holders in defining the relationship with the relevant industry partners in order to comply with the conditions of “effective collaboration.” Research Ireland require that the ICF is completed and returned to Research Ireland on or before the date that the Collaborative Research (or Intellectual Property Rights) Agreement has been ‘agreed’ with, or signed by, the relevant partner(s). For the Research Ireland - Defence Innovation Challenge, the form should be submitted by the Principal Investigator and uploaded to SESAME. A download of the ICF and related guidance, inclusive of an FAQ document, can be found on the Research Ireland website.⁴²

A copy of each CRA arising from the Grant must be held on file by the relevant Research Body. Research Ireland may request a copy of the signed CRA to be provided (as advised in the Grant Terms & Conditions) and held on file by Research Ireland for audit purposes.

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

8 Data Management Plans

Good data governance and stewardship are key components of good research practice. **While Data Management Plans are not required to be submitted at the application stage of this programme, teams are encouraged to consider data management at an early stage in their project.** At the end of the Seed Phase, as part of the Seed Phase Progress Report, teams will be required to provide a 2-page Data Management Plan (DMP). In preparing this plan, consideration should be given to Guidance on Data Management Plans.⁴³ A DMP is a living document which details the procedures for careful handling of data and other research outputs. A DMP follows

³⁹ [2022 Framework for State Aid for research and development and innovation \(2022/C 414/01\)](#)

⁴⁰ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/state-aid>

⁴¹ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/state-aid>

⁴² <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/state-aid>

⁴³ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/open-research/>

the data through the lifecycle of the programme of research⁴⁴, from collection to analysis and interpretation, sharing and dissemination, and long-term storage.

DMPs will be reviewed to ensure that they contain sufficient information on practices and standards as guided below; this assessment will be incorporated into the overall scoring criteria for the Research Programme section of the application. Although practices and standards vary across disciplines, Research Ireland recommends the use of [Science Europe DMP templates and guidelines](#). Each DMP should include the following as appropriate to the programme or project⁴⁵:

- Data description and collection or re-use of existing data
- Documentation and data quality
- Storage and backup during the research process
- Legal and ethical requirements, codes of conduct
- Data sharing and long-term preservation

Data management responsibilities and resources including institutional or project-specific resources dedicated to managing data and ensuring adherence with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-usable).

9 Research Ireland Policies and Positions

In addition to complying with the [General terms and 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 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 policies of the legacy agencies should be followed.

- Animal Usage
- Research Integrity
- Maternity, Paternity and Adoptive Leave Policy
- Appeals Process
- Child Protection

⁴⁴ Research Ireland funded research programmes, can range from a single research project to a collection of research projects encompassed in several work packages. The data management plan should reflect the relevant standards for individual research projects while describing a cohesive approach to managing data across the overall programme of research as appropriate.

⁴⁵ Based primarily on guidance provided by Science Europe: <https://www.scienceeurope.org/our-resources/practical-guide-to-the-international-alignment-of-research-data-management/> and supplemented by guidance from the European Research Council of the European Commission: https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/ERC_info_document_Open_Research_Data_and_Data_Management_Plans.pdf

- Data Protection Policy
- Open Research
- Data Management
- Grant Budget Policy
- Disability Policy

Research Ireland's policies can be accessed in the Research Ireland [website](#)⁴⁶. For any questions concerning Research Ireland Policies, please email researchpolicy@researchireland.ie.

10 Further Information

Further information, including a guide to submitting an application on SESAME, an FAQ document, and the application templates related to the Research Ireland-Defence Innovation Challenge are available on the programme webpage. For additional queries please contact: challenges@researchireland.ie

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⁴⁶ <https://www.researchireland.ie/funding-policies/>