

US-IRELAND R&D PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME: Frequently Asked Questions

Is it necessary to have a PI from each jurisdiction?

Yes. There must be at least one PI from the US, one from Northern Ireland and one from the Republic of Ireland who come together to write a proposal for submission to the partnership programme. One of the key objectives of this programme is to encourage the development of three-way, trans-national and collaborative peer-reviewed research projects.

Are proposals submitted to Invest NI/DEL and SFI for review?

Tri-jurisdictional proposals must be pre-approved by SFI and Invest NI/DEL (see below) before being submitted to identified programmes at the NSF/NIH in conformance with the procedures set out in the appropriate Guidelines for Submission documents available on the Invest NI/DEL web sites.

If proposals are successful, does the funding come from the NSF/NIH?

If proposals are successful, funding for the US partner comes from the NSF/NIH, funding for the Northern Ireland partner comes from DEL, and funding for the Republic of Ireland partner comes from SFI.

Do Invest NI/DEL have a pre-submission stage?

Yes. Invest NI/DEL are required by the NSF/NIH to ensure the eligibility of proposals under the US-Ireland R&D Partnership, and also of the proposed NI costs, prior to full submission to the NSF/NIH. For details of the pre-submission procedures, please see the appropriate Guidelines for Submission documents available on the Invest NI/DEL web sites.

It is also strongly recommended that you contact the Invest NI/DEL Programme Managers to discuss your proposal well in advance of pre-submission.

Is there a requirement to submit the full proposal to Invest NI/DEL?

Invest NI/DEL request that a copy of the full proposal be submitted to Invest NI/DEL simultaneously on submission to the NSF/NIH. In addition to the full proposal, Invest NI/DEL require Northern Ireland applicants to include:

- (i) a standard cover sheet signed by the applicant and approved by the appropriate signatories from their institution.
- (ii) an appendix outlining the Northern Ireland applicant's budget request to Invest NI/DEL. The applicant should provide details of the budget requested (on a standard Invest NI/DEL budget template) and provide **justification** for the funding requested. The appendix should be no longer than **3 pages** (plus the budget table).

What level of funding is available for the Northern Ireland applicants?

The budget for full applications from applicants in Northern Ireland is capped at £320,000 per proposal, equating to an average of around £107,000 per annum for a 3 year award.

The funding sought should also be commensurate with the work proposed and of an appropriate scale relative to the other partners given their respective roles in the project.

What are considered as eligible costs?

The eligible costs are shown in the bespoke budget template available on-line. These include staff, equipment, materials and travel. Invest NI/DEL will also consider other specified costs if demonstrated to be essential for the project to proceed. However, the programme will not meet costs related to new premises, refurbishment or major items of equipment (costing more than £20,000).

Regarding staff costs, existing members of staff will not be supported, unless their posts are being back-filled with additional staff to cover their existing duties. In other words, as is the case for all cost categories, the staff costs must represent a truly additional cost to the University.

An overhead allowance can be included in the “other” cost category at a rate of up to 40% of the staff costs.

What NSF/NIH programmes are open to the US-Ireland R&D Partnership programme?

For a list of eligible programmes and programme areas, please see the NSF/NIH Guidelines for Submission published on the Invest NI/DEL web sites.

However, it is strongly recommended that NSF/NIH should be contacted well in advance via the US PI to ascertain the details of specific calls, deadlines and submission procedures and also to confirm the eligibility/suitability of potential proposals.

What thematic areas are the focus of these partnership programmes?

Proposals are sought that address the exciting research challenges in the prioritised thematic areas of *nanotechnology, sensors, telecommunications, energy / sustainability, diabetes and cystic fibrosis*.

The NI element of approved *Nanotechnology, Sensors, Telecommunications and Energy / Sustainability* research projects will be funded by DEL.

The NI element of approved *Diabetes and Cystic Fibrosis* research projects will be funded by the Health and Social Care (HSC) R&D Office (which should be contacted directly and well in advance concerning any such health-related proposals).

Is there any funding available for travel between potential partners?

Yes. Invest NI is offering planning grants which will provide travel support to researchers in Northern Ireland to travel to the United States in order to develop specific projects with US collaborators for identified programmes under the NSF/NIH auspices.

What scale of funding is available through these planning grants?

The budget available, on a competitive basis, is up to **£3,000** direct costs per grant to cover travel and accommodation costs during grant preparation with US and Republic of Ireland collaborators.

Can the programme fund research which will be carried out by a company based in Northern Ireland?

No. Under Article 30 of The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1993, research funding can only be provided by DEL to Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions .