



**Rialtas
na hÉireann**
Government
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

FUTURE JOBS
IRELAND

Preparing Now for Tomorrow's Economy

DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES INNOVATION FUND

**Developing and deploying innovative technologies for commercial use in collaborative
research partnerships**

Guide for Applicants

2020 CALL

Collaboration, Disruption, Market Impact

Important dates

2020 INDICATIVE CALL SCHEDULE	
Call launch	24 SEPTEMBER 2020
Webinar	22 OCTOBER 2020
APPLICANT deadline	17 DECEMBER 2020 (15.00 Irish Time)
Announcement of results	MARCH 2021

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1. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

This guide provides practical information to potential applicants in preparing and submitting an application for the Disruptive Technologies Innovation Fund (hereafter "DTIF"). In addition, it provides a general overview of the applicable assessment process.

Applicants are strongly recommended to familiarise themselves fully with the rules of the scheme set out here. Applicants should also consider carefully any related content published on the DTIF webpage (www.dbei.gov.ie/DTIF) before completing and submitting applications.

Enterprise Ireland is administering this Call on behalf of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and reserves the right to revise this Guide.

Please note that definitions of terms used in this Guide are as per the rules of the scheme. See Appendix 1 for key definitions.

A guide on using the online submission system (OLS) will be provided as a separate document during the call period.

2. PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME

DTIF Call 3 is about funding collaborations that demonstrate technology-based disruptive innovation, collaborations that can:

- Alter markets;
- Alter the way business operates;
- Involve new products or the emergence of new business models.

Funding applications for Call 3 should be within the Research Priority Areas 2018-2023¹. We are particularly interested in projects of scale with a strong enterprise agenda to harness maximum medium-term economic impact for Ireland. Ideally, we are looking for enterprise-driven research and development challenges that can demonstrate commercial impacts within 3 to 7 years of project completion.

3. THINKING ABOUT APPLYING

Familiarise yourself with the rules of the scheme and determine your eligibility.

Before starting an application, all applicants should check they are eligible to apply by carefully studying the rules. In particular, applicants should pay attention to the type of collaborations appropriate to DTIF Call 3 which should have:

- **A "lead partner"² and a strong project management structure that will target the development and deployment of disruptive technologies innovation to deliver medium-term impact in Ireland;**

¹ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Research-Priority-Areas-2018-to-2023.pdf>

² Lead partner means the party having submitted the Consortium Application on behalf of the consortium and having overall responsibility for project management structures. All individual partners retain full legal and financial responsibility for their own role within the collaboration.

- Collaborations delivering projects of scale with a minimum funding request from DTIF of at least €1.5 million over 3 years;
- Collaborations having at least 3 independent partners seeking funding from the DTIF of which two must be enterprises and one of these must be an SME³⁴;
- Note that enterprises can claim up to 50% of their eligible costs. Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) can claim up to 100% of eligible costs. RPOs cannot receive more than 50% of the total DTIF grant aid to the project in any collaboration, i.e. RPO funding cannot exceed the eligible funding awarded to the enterprise partners.

To drawdown funding under DTIF, you must be a client of Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland or Údarás na Gaeltachta or an eligible Research Performing Organisation (RPO). If not, you may still be involved in a collaboration, but you will not be eligible for funding. To become a client, applicants should make contact with the relevant agency immediately⁵.

All partners should be collaborating on “industrial research⁶” in a balanced and integrated consortium, i.e., all partners must be integral to the project and make a real and substantive contribution to the outcome. Proposals should demonstrate the potential to develop and deploy novel and ‘disruptive’ technologies in line with the Research Priority Areas 2018-2023.

Ireland’s Climate Action Plan is focused on prioritising low-carbon investments when using public funds. Therefore, projects must neither hinder the achievement of Ireland’s climate objectives nor have other significant negative environmental impacts. Proposals will be expected to demonstrate, as much as possible, a positive contribution to the sustainability targets in the Climate Action Plan.

The call will close automatically at 15:00 Irish Time on 17 DECEMBER 2020 and applications not received by Online Submission by this deadline will be ineligible.

The application form must be submitted online by the lead partner before the call close.

Note that applicants will be required to confirm that the application has not been submitted to the other NDP Funds (Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Climate Action Fund).

Exceptions to rules outlined above will not be granted.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please address them to Enterprise Ireland at DTIF@enterprise-ireland.com with the subject line ‘DTIF 2020 FAQ’. Queries will be

³ Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361. See Appendix I.

⁴ Note that Research Performing Organisation (RPO) participation is not obligatory.

⁵ IDA Ireland: <https://www.idaireland.com/contact-us>; Enterprise Ireland: <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/About-Us/Our-Locations/Contact%20Us/>; Údarás na Gaeltachta: <https://www.udaras.ie/faoin-udaras/dean-teagmhail-linn/>

⁶ Industrial research, means the planned research or critical investigation aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services or for bringing about a significant improvement in existing products, processes or services. It comprises the creation of component parts of complex systems and may include the construction of prototypes in a laboratory environment or in an environment with simulated interfaces to existing systems as well as of pilot lines, when necessary for the industrial research and notably for generic technology validation.

answered at the information event and through the webinar process (see indicative dates on page 2 above and follow the Department on Twitter for updates - @EnterInnov).

A webinar for applicants will be held on 22 OCTOBER 2020 with materials (presentation and recording of Q&A session) available on the DTIF webpage thereafter: <https://dbei.gov.ie/DTIF>.

For general enquiries contact the Enterprise Ireland Helpdesk at:

Telephone: +353-1-727 2665

E-mail: DTIF@enterprise-ireland.com

For Research Performing Organisations (RPOs)

Researchers in RPOs should contact the Research Office (i.e. the office of the Vice-President/Dean of Research/Head of Development, as applicable) in their institution for information and clarification on the call and for institutional application support. The Research Office must endorse their application as a Lead Partner or participant. **It is highly recommended that applicants contact the Research Office as soon as they decide to apply for the DTIF.**

Applications involving RPO partners that are not endorsed by the relevant Research Offices by the call deadline will be automatically deemed ineligible.

Enterprise Ireland encourages the submission of applications well in advance of the closing date for the competition, as on the day that the call closes there will be heavy traffic on the server, which may slow down the submission of your application. To prevent problems with heavy server traffic, do not wait until the final day of the call to submit your application.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

The application process is online via a web-based online application system (OLS).

The Lead Partner will be required to complete the application through the OLS:

- All sections of the application must be completed.
- Application must be signed by all participants seeking funding.
- Costs spreadsheets used in preparation of the budgets are not required.
- Supplementary information should not be provided.

The OLS will be available from [date] but project applicants can familiarise themselves with the requirements by reading the hard copy application form which accompanies this Guide.

Please keep in mind that, while the online application form can be completed in multiple instalments, it is not possible to make any changes in the application once it is formally submitted.

5. ELIGIBILITY AND EVALUATION PROCEDURE

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

The eligibility criteria are as follows:

1. The consortium is requesting minimum funding from DTIF of at least €1.5 million over 3 years⁷.
2. The consortium comprises at least 3 independent partners seeking funding from the DTIF including at least one SME⁸ and one other enterprise partner.
3. The application is based on the key parameters that enterprises can claim up to 50% of their eligible costs; RPOs can claim up to 100% of their eligible costs; RPOs cannot receive more than 50% of the total DTIF grant aid to the project in any collaboration.
4. To drawdown funding under DTIF, applicants must be a client of Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland or Údarás na Gaeltachta or an eligible Research Performing Organisation (RPO). If not, you may still be involved in a collaboration, but you will not be eligible for funding.
5. All partners in the consortium have confirmed that they have the financial and operational capacity to participate.
6. The application has been received via the online application system before the closing date of 17 DECEMBER 2020 at 15:00 Irish Time.
7. The application is complete i.e. all sections of the application form completed.
8. Where an RPO is part of a consortium, the participation of researchers has been approved by an authorised signatory for the RPO (e.g. Vice-President/Dean of Research).

5.2 INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION

The DTIF is a competitive offer. Eligible applications will be reviewed by independent international technical and commercialisation experts using the Selection Criteria and marking described below. Following remote evaluation by a minimum of three experts per application, DTIF consortia may be invited for interview by the expert panels.

Proposal Scoring System – Criteria and Marking

	Scale	Weighting %
Strength of the Disruptive Technology Dimension	0-100	100%
Excellence of the Overall Proposal and Approach	0-100	50%
Economic Impact and Sustainability	0-100	100%
Quality and Efficiency of the Collaboration	0-100	50%

Note: A threshold of 60 marks out of 100 will apply to all scoring criteria; where a project falls below threshold in any category, it will not be funded.

Explanation of the Criteria for Applicants and for Reviewers

Strength of the Disruptive Technology Dimension

- Proposal demonstrates strong potential to develop and deploy novel or “disruptive” technologies in global markets.
- Proposal will build on existing scientific research and will advance that research to deliver new solutions.
- Proposal involves collaborating on “industrial research” as defined in COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 651/2014 and in general will be expected to fall within Technology Readiness Levels 3-7. See Appendix 1 for further details.
- Risk profile of the proposal provides justification for State support, i.e., project presents risks or scale associated with innovation especially for growth-, sustainability- and productivity-enhancing disruptive technologies.

⁷ Note that the entities making the application must be those incurring costs throughout the project.

⁸ Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361. See Appendix 1.

Excellence of the Overall Proposal and Approach

- Clear and relevant project objectives.
- Soundness of the concept.
- Credibility of the proposed methodology.
- Extent that the proposed work is beyond the state of the art and demonstrates innovation potential (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and applications).
- Quality and efficiency of the (outline) work plan (project is deliverable (in a typical 2 to 3-year timeframe) based on the work packages described).

Economic Impact and Sustainability

- The proposal has the potential to significantly alter markets and their functioning and/or significantly alter the way that businesses operate through the creation of new business models.
- Proposal demonstrates potential to enhance innovation capacity of enterprise partners (RD&I performance, ability to engage with and deploy disruptive technologies in the future) and especially SMEs.
- Proposal demonstrates potential to create significant new market opportunities and exports, support job creation and retention, strengthen competitiveness and growth of the partner companies within a 3 to 7-year timeframe.
- Proposal considers the further stages and activities needed to commercialise the innovation.
- Proposal demonstrates positive contributions to the low carbon / sustainability targets in the Climate Action Plan⁹. It neither hinders the achievement of Ireland's climate objectives nor has other significant negative environmental impacts.

Quality and Efficiency of the Collaboration

- Strength and credibility of the partners in the consortium to deliver on project goals.
- Collaborations have a strong lead partner and a strong project management structure.
- Appropriateness of allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role.
- There must be at least one SME involved in every consortium with SME(s) in a consortium having an integral role in the project.
- Financial and other resources mobilised across the consortium provides appropriate co-funding against the DTIF contribution.
- Appropriateness of management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management.
- Complementarity of the participants and extent to which the consortium, as a whole, brings together the necessary expertise.
-

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the evaluation by e-mail.

Feedback to applicants will consist of the scores assigned and the decision in relation to funding in an Evaluation Summary Report. Additional feedback will not be provided beyond that which is provided with the assessment result.

Please note that this decision is final and that no correspondence will be undertaken in relation to individual assessments or scoring.

Applicants will have the opportunity to seek redress¹⁰ should they feel that their application was not treated fairly/adequately on an administrative basis. They must do so within two weeks of receiving the outcome communication.

⁹ Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA) - [Climate Action Plan 2019](#).

Unsuccessful applicants may re-apply to future DTIF calls, should they meet the eligibility criteria at the time of the call.

6. INFORMATION FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Following approval of the 2020 Call 3 DTIF projects for funding, Enterprise Ireland will contact the consortia to review financial and operational capacity of the members, project plans and associated costs for eligibility under State Aid rules and national legislation¹¹ as set out in the EU-approved [Research, Development and Innovation Scheme, 2014-2020](#) prior to invitation to contract.

A signed Consortium Agreement¹² will be required prior to contract.

Once it is established by Enterprise Ireland that the applicable conditions have been met, the award will be confirmed, and the project can commence on the approved start date upon receipt of the signed Consortium Agreement.

7. GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

7.1 THE PROJECT

A project may have a duration up to a maximum of three years. Projects of a shorter duration can be supported but are unlikely to be less than two years.

Under DTIF a single project is funded, where all participants are collaborating to common aims and objectives (i.e. not a collection of projects with different aims and objectives under an umbrella consortium).

The disruptive and innovative nature of the proposal must be articulated in the application and it must involve collaborating on “industrial research” as defined in COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 651/2014. In general, proposals will be expected to fall within Technology Readiness Levels 3-7. Please see Appendix 1 for further details.

It is expected that the project work will be carried out in Ireland. Any exceptions to this must be made clear at application stage and must be justified. It is a requirement that the majority of the funded activity be undertaken in Ireland.

7.2 THE CONSORTIUM

A consortium may consist of enterprises only or enterprises with one or more RPOs.

- The minimum consortium supported under the scheme will comprise of at least three independent partners seeking funding from the DTIF of which two must be enterprises and one of these must be an SME.

¹⁰ For details of the redress procedure please contact Enterprise Ireland – dtif@enterprise-ireland.com.

¹¹ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1986/act/9/enacted/en/print#sec29>

¹² See template at www.dbei.gov.ie/dtif.

- The leader of the consortium can be an eligible enterprise or an eligible RPO¹³.
- Ideally, there should be a strategic rationale for the consortium, i.e. they are operating in the same value chain with each enterprise partner having a role to play in the final revenue streams.
- Entities outside Ireland can collaborate in the project but will not be considered eligible partners or able to receive DTIF funding.
- There should be appropriate balance in the consortium and ideally no participant should account for less than 10% of the project funding, unless they have specific capability or intellectual property on which the project hinges.
- RPOs cannot receive more than 50% of the total DTIF grant aid to the project.

Consortium size should be considered in terms of ease of management and effective participation in the project.

7.3 COLLABORATION

Collaboration and collaborative research are key aspects of the DTIF scheme. A meaningful collaboration is sought where all partners are sharing project costs, risk and rewards. They should generally have a strategic linkage, that is, the project would be difficult to execute without their mutual collaboration. Sufficient detail should be provided to allow assessment of the nature of the consortium, its composition, processes, and the benefits to each participant.

7.4 DELIVERABLES

All Deliverables must be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound). The ownership of the deliverable and collaborators should be clearly specified in all cases. Deliverables should be drafted with sufficient descriptive text to allow evaluators assess the relevance of the deliverables in the context of the project. They should be clearly linked to the overall project objectives and where possible be aligned to payment milestones which are typically 6 monthly intervals.

Deliverables should be periodic and equally dispersed through the entire project timeframe, capable of demonstrating progress to the final objective.

8 FUNDING, COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The funding allowed is determined by national legislation¹⁴ and State Aid rules and as set out in the EU-approved [Research, Development and Innovation Scheme, 2014-2020](#)¹⁵. Eligible costs must be focussed on INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH¹⁶ and as set out in the [Research, Development and Innovation Scheme 2014-2020](#), with Sections 1 to 11, 15 and 17 being the relevant sections for the DTIF.

8.1 COSTS GENERAL

In general, claims will be based on incurred costs and paid retrospectively.

¹³ The Principal Investigator must be an employee of the RPO, either permanent or with a contract that covers the duration of the project.

¹⁴ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1986/act/9/enacted/en/print#sec29>.

¹⁵ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Commission-Regulation-EU-No-651-Research-Development-and-Innovation-Scheme-2014-2020.html>.

¹⁶ 'Industrial Research' is defined in Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014. See Appendix 1 below.

- Costs should be submitted for payment every 6 months.
- Costs must be relevant, reasonable and wholly necessary within the project. These will be examined in detail for all projects prior to formal contract.
- Costs can only be incurred between the Start Date and End Date of the project.
- Reallocation of costs between partners will not be permitted without prior approval.
- Cost limits will be rigidly applied and where these are outside scope, they will be reduced without reference to the applicant.
- Sales and marketing costs will be disallowed in all cases.
- Costs must be submitted for each individual partner in the consortium under the categories listed below.
- Financial records of payments and receipts must be maintained using either a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code for all transactions relating to the project and keeping all other administrative records of the project (including, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, timesheets detailing the time spent by all persons on the project) the start date of which will be communicated by Enterprise Ireland and make such records available on request such as to enable evaluation and/or financial audit of expenditure to be carried out if so required by any competent authority in line with provisions under national and EU law.
- Pre-finance for small companies (less than 50 employees):
 - Enterprise Ireland can make payment of up to one-third of the research grant prior to the approved costs being incurred (grant rate: 50%), subject to the company supplying:
 - A rationale for why the company requires pre-finance;
 - Evidence that it has available to it sufficient assets to cover its liability under the grant¹⁷.

8.2 ENTERPRISE COSTS

Companies may claim up to 50% of their eligible project costs:

Where a company is claiming 50% of their costs, the other 50% cannot be funded through other State or EU funds.

- 1) Salaries wholly necessary for the completion of the project:
 - a. Costs for internal scientific and technical staff to the extent employed directly on the project are eligible, based on a percentage of their time to be spent on the project each month.
 - b. Maximum eligible annual salary for personnel, e.g. researchers, technicians and other supporting staff in the project is €80,000 per annum (exclusive of employer's PRSI contributions). Increased salary costs to a maximum of €100,000 per annum are permissible where specific skill sets are required from the project staff necessary for the execution of the project e.g. where technical skills are key components of specific R & D activities.
 - c. It is normally expected that staff engaged on the project would be spending at least 10%-20% of their time on it for a sustained period, usually with a core team spending a significant proportion of their time on the project.

¹⁷ The assessment of sufficient assets uses the following methodology - firstly establishing the net worth of the company, then disallowing any intangible or unsubstantiated investment assets and finally adding a reasonable estimation of the next year's profits or a substantiated proposed equity injection. Note that the assessment where Intangibles (including Intellectual Property, by agreement with the applicant) noted in accounts are added as an asset, where Capitalised R&D noted in accounts is allowed or where investment related loan notes and CCRPS are recognised as share capital may be considered.

- d. Salary refers to gross salary excluding bonus, pension or other endowment.
 - e. The costs of administration, finance, IT support etc. are considered as overheads and are covered under the overhead allowance (calculated at 30% of eligible salary costs).
 - f. Salary costs of the Managing Director (MD) or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) are generally not eligible with the exception of Small Enterprises where a maximum 30% of their time may be eligible if it is deemed critical to the project.
 - g. The costs of a project manager should be included for lead partners only. Note that some project management costs are allowable in other partners, depending on the size of the consortium and the complexity of the project.
- 2) Materials wholly necessary for the completion of the project (generally, no more than 20% of the partner's budget):
- a. Typically, food ingredients, annual/monthly software licences, prototype tooling, hosting charges.
 - b. Where the project includes testing/development work on a production line the following costs may be eligible:
 - i. Staff time and materials used specifically for the project.
 - ii. Rent of equipment up to six months.
 - c. Provide the most accurate costings available. More information may be requested as part of the due diligence process.
 - d. For Recoverable Value - enter an estimate of the scrap or other value of materials that could be reused after the project.
- 3) Travel and Subsistence (5% of the partner's salary budget max):
- a. Wholly necessary for the completion of the project - Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to support only travel that is considered reasonable and required for the project.
 - b. Travel costs are only supported for Economy Air/Rail Fares, Economy Car Hire. The Mileage rate is 60 Cents/Km.
 - c. Subsistence is for all out of pocket expenses including, hotels, meals, taxis, local fares, incidentals etc. Rates for a 24-hour period are €150 [Ireland] or €200 [Overseas] per day or a day rate of €60.
 - d. Subsistence can only apply where a person is absent on business at a location more than 8 kilometres (overnights 80km) from their work base.
 - e. Business Development or Sales related travel is NOT eligible.
 - f. Travel and subsistence for consultants should be included in their daily rate (and not included separately here).
- 4) Contractual research, knowledge acquisition, consultancy services used exclusively for the project (must form a minority of the partner's cost) – **SMEs only**:
- a. Consultancy/contracting costs are generally only provided for work commissioned by SMEs in Ireland. Where consultancy needs to be contracted outside Ireland, a clear business case needs to be provided.
 - b. The costs to the company for availing of external consultancy, contractual research, knowledge and patent licencing from third parties – at arms-length (an individual, a company or a 3rd level organisation) are eligible insofar as they relate directly to the project.
 - c. Such services may not be provided by a consortium member.
 - d. Costs can be included for external expertise to assist with design, implementation or testing directly related to the project.

- e. Consultancy should be primarily focussed on bringing in new skills/capability to the company.
- f. Consultants daily rate should be inclusive of all travel and subsistence expenses.
- g. Daily rates for consultancy must be at commercial market rates. Please note that the MAXIMUM daily rate allowable is €900 for short assignments. For longer terms, the following maximum rates will apply (first 20 days €900, next 20 days €700 remaining days €600).
- h. As part of the due diligence, the daily rate and number of days actually allowed may be reduced to what is considered to be 'reasonable' and 'required' for the project.
- i. Consultancy costs should be a modest portion of the overall project costs.

Note re external clinical trial costs: funding towards clinical trials (up to phase 2A) is eligible provided that the results are a necessary input to develop the product/service/process as part of the project.

Note re market research/consumer studies: - funding towards market research / consumer focus panels are eligible only insofar as the results are a necessary input to develop the product/service/process.

Note re acquisition of IP/knowledge required directly for the project - only knowledge and patents bought or licensed from outside sources at arms-length conditions and used exclusively for the project will be considered eligible costs. Certification and testing will only be supported on work resulting directly from the project.

5) Patent Costs for IP generated in the project – **SMEs only:**

A contribution to patenting costs relating to intellectual property established as a result of the work carried out as part of the project can be funded (for SMEs only).

- i. Costs relating to the preparation, filing and validating of a patent application are eligible as well as translation and other costs incurred in order to obtain the granting or validation of the right in other appropriate countries.
- ii. Costs can only be incurred between the start and end date of the project.
- iii. Grant aid for such IP protection is “ring fenced” and can only be claimed for this purpose.
- iv. A maximum of €50,000 eligible expense will be allowed (at 50% grant rate) per SME partner.

6) Capital Equipment Costs for Project R&D (tangible and intangible assets):

- a. e.g. test equipment, one off software licences (perpetual licences), lab scale prototype lines, items not completely consumed by the R&D project.
- b. All capital equipment must be depreciated.
 - i. No deposit or orders may be placed for capital equipment before the start date
 - ii. Depreciation Period: This is the period over which the item is to be written down to zero value.
 - iii. Depreciation may only be claimed for the time the asset is used on the project.
 - iv. General personal computer equipment and peripherals: typically 36 months depreciation is allowable.
 - v. Test equipment lab scale prototype: typically 60 months depreciation is allowable – no exceptions without approval.

- vi. Building/renovation costs will generally not be considered an eligible cost under DTIF.

7) Overheads:

- a. Enterprise partners will be paid overheads at the rate of 30% of eligible salary costs as a contribution to indirect costs of the project (e.g. administration, finance, IT support etc.).

8.3 RPO COSTS

1) Salaries wholly necessary for the completion of the project:

- a. IUA Salary Scale + employer PRSI and where approved pension @20% for internal staff to the extent employed directly on the project are eligible, based on a percentage of their time to be spent on the project each month.
- b. It is normally expected that staff engaged on the project would be spending at least 10%-20% of their time on it for a sustained period, usually with a core team spending a significant proportion of their time on the project.
- c. The salaries / wages of permanent academic staff are not eligible for grant support.
- d. The funding of PhD and MSc students is not an objective of the DTIF. Where a student can make a valuable contribution to a DTIF project the IRCSET rate will apply: €16,000 stipend, €5,750 contribution to fees and €2,250 contribution towards eligible direct project expenses.
- e. The costs of a project manager should be included for lead partners only. Note that some project management costs are allowable in other partners, depending on the size of the consortium and the complexity of the project.
- f. The costs of administration, finance, IT support etc., are considered as overheads and are covered under the overhead.

2) Materials wholly necessary for the completion of the project (generally, no more than 20% of the partner's budget):

- a. Food, ingredients, annual/monthly software licences, prototype tooling, hosting charges.
- b. The most accurate costings available should be used. More information may be requested as part of the due diligence process.
- c. Publication and open access costs may be included.

3) Travel and Subsistence (5% of partner's salary budget max):

- a. Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to support only travel that is considered reasonable and required for the project.
- b. Conference attendance is considered beneficial to the overall project. Where conference attendance is planned it must relate directly to the project and have some beneficial aspect.
- c. Travel costs must be in line with the RPO travel policy.
- d. Travel and subsistence for consultants should be included in their daily rate (and not included separately here).

4) Contractual research, knowledge acquisition, consultancy services used exclusively for the project (20% of partner's salary costs max):

- a. Consultancy/contracting costs are generally only provided for work done in Ireland.
- b. Such costs are provided to RPOs primarily to facilitate the introduction of other academic partners who add value to the project.

- c. Costs can be included for external expertise to assist with design, implementation or testing directly related to the project.
- d. Consultancy should be primarily focussed on bringing in new skills/capability to the team.
- e. Consultancy may not be provided by a consortium member.
- f. Consultancy costs should be a modest portion of the overall project costs.
- g. Consultant's daily rate should be inclusive of all travel and subsistence expenses.
- h. Daily rates must be at commercial market rates. Please note that the MAXIMUM daily rate allowable is €900 for short assignments. For longer terms, the following max rates will apply (first 20 days €900, next 20 days €700 remaining €600).
- i. As part of the due diligence, the daily rate and number of days actually allowed may be reduced to what is considered to be 'reasonable' and 'required' for the project.

Note re Certification, Testing, Market Studies and Clinical Trial Costs: In general, these costs will not be supported in RPOs. In limited circumstances, and with the pre-approval of the DTIF team, some costs may be supported.

5) Patent Costs for IP generated in the project:

A contribution to patenting costs relating to intellectual property established as a result of the work carried out as part of the project can be funded.

- i. Costs relating to the preparation, filing and validating of a patent application are eligible as well as translation and other costs incurred in order to obtain the granting or validation of the right in other appropriate countries.
- ii. Costs can only be incurred between the start and end date of the project.
- iii. Grant aid for such IP protection is "ring fenced" and can only be claimed for this purpose.
- iv. A maximum of €25,000 eligible expense will be allowed per RPO partner per project.

6) Capital Equipment Costs for Project R&D (tangible and intangible assets):

- a. e.g. test equipment, one off software licences (perpetual licences), lab scale prototype lines, items not completely consumed by the R&D project.
- b. Access to existing equipment if available in Ireland is preferred and access charges are an eligible cost. Applicants must demonstrate the case for new equipment before they can be charged to the DTIF grant.
- c. All capital equipment must be depreciated.
 - i. Depreciation Period: This is the period over which the item is to be written down to zero value.
 - ii. General personal computer equipment and peripherals: typically 36 months depreciation is allowable.
 - iii. Test equipment lab scale prototype: typically 60 months depreciation is allowable.
 - iv. Building/renovation costs will generally not be considered an eligible cost under DTIF.

7) Overheads:

- a. RPO partners will be paid overheads at the rate of 30% of Modified Total Direct Costs excluding capital equipment as a contribution to indirect costs of the project (e.g. administration, finance, IT support etc.).

APPENDIX I

DEFINITIONS

SME

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361.

The main factors determining whether an enterprise is an SME are:

1. staff headcount
2. either turnover and/or balance sheet total.

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	Balance sheet total
Medium-sized	51-250	≤ € 50 m	≤ € 43 m
Small	11-50	≤ € 10 m	≤ € 10 m
Micro	≤ 10	≤ € 2 m	≤ € 2 m

The European Commission's User Guide on the SME Definition is available [here](#). The User Guide states: "Meeting the staff headcount criterion is mandatory in order to be considered an SME. However, an enterprise may choose to meet either the turnover or the balance sheet total ceiling. It does not need to satisfy both requirements and may exceed one of them without impact on its SME status."

SME applicants should ensure that the company cannot be considered an Undertaking in Difficulty (as defined in COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty) at time of application.

UNDERTAKING IN DIFFICULTY

'Undertaking in difficulty' means an undertaking in respect of which at least one of the following circumstances occurs:

- (a) In the case of a limited liability company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its subscribed share capital has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. This is the case when deduction of accumulated losses from reserves (and all other elements generally considered as part of the own funds of the company) leads to a negative cumulative amount that exceeds half of the subscribed share capital. For the purposes of this provision, 'limited liability company' refers in particular to the types of company mentioned in Annex I of Directive 2013/34/EU (1) and 'share capital' includes, where relevant, any share premium.
- (b) In the case of a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its capital as shown in the company accounts has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. For the purposes of this provision, 'a company where at least some members

have unlimited liability for the debt of the company' refers in particular to the types of company mentioned in Annex II of Directive 2013/34/EU.

(c) Where the undertaking is subject to collective insolvency proceedings or fulfils the criteria under its domestic law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors.

(d) Where the undertaking has received rescue aid and has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee, or has received restructuring aid and is still subject to a restructuring plan.

(e) In the case of an undertaking that is not an SME, where, for the past two years:

- (1) the undertaking's book debt to equity ratio has been greater than 7,5 and
- (2) the undertaking's EBITDA interest coverage ratio has been below 1,0.

LEAD PARTNER

The Lead Partner means the party having submitted the Consortium Application on behalf of the consortium and having overall responsibility for project management structures. All individual partners retain full legal and financial responsibility for their own role within the collaboration.

FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH

As defined in Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014:

Fundamental research, means experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct practical application or use in view.

INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

As defined in Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014:

Industrial research, means the planned research or critical investigation aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services or for bringing about a significant improvement in existing products, processes or services. It comprises the creation of component parts of complex systems and may include the construction of prototypes in a laboratory environment or in an environment with simulated interfaces to existing systems as well as of pilot lines, when necessary for the industrial research and notably for generic technology validation.

EXPERIMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

As defined in Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014:

Experimental development, means the acquiring, combining, shaping and using existing scientific, technological, business and other relevant knowledge and skills for the purpose of producing plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered or improved products, processes or services. These may also include, for instance, other activities aiming at the conceptual definition, planning and documentation of new products, processes or services. The activities may comprise producing drafts, drawings, plans and other documentation, provided that they are not intended for commercial use.

The development of commercially usable prototypes and pilot projects is also included where the prototype is necessarily the final commercial product and where it is too expensive to produce for it to be used only for demonstration and validation purposes. In

case of a subsequent commercial use of demonstration or pilot projects, any revenue generated from such use must be deducted from the eligible costs.

The experimental production and testing of products, processes and services shall also be eligible, provided that these cannot be used or transformed to be used in industrial applications or commercially. Experimental development shall not include routine or periodic changes made to products, production lines, manufacturing processes, existing services and other operations in progress, even if such changes may represent improvements.

TECHNOLOGY READINESS LEVELS (TRL)

Projects submitted to the DTIF scheme are expected to be in the range of TRL levels 3 – 7 based on the descriptions below. Ideally the consortium should be capable of demonstrating how it will move from the current state of the art in TRL 3 to a system prototype in TRL 7.

- TRL 1 – basic principles observed
- TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
- **TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept**
- **TRL 4 – technology validated in laboratory**
- **TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)**
- **TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)**
- **TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment**
- TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies or in space).

APPENDIX II

ELIGIBLE RESEARCH PERFORMING ORGANISATIONS

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)	National College of Ireland (NCI)
Boyne Research Institute	National Institute for Bioprocessing Research and Training (NIBRT)
Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)	National University of Ireland, Cork (UCC)
Dublin City University (DCU)	National University of Ireland, Dublin (UCD)
Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS)	National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology (IADT)	National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)
Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI)
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)	Teagasc
Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)	Technology University Dublin (TUD)
Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)	Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITT)	Tyndall National Institute
Irish Manufacturing Research Centre (IMR)	University of Limerick (UL)
Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)	Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)
Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)	
Marine Institute	

Please note that additional public research bodies not listed may be eligible to apply for funding. Please email specific queries to DTIF@enterprise-ireland.com