The Irish Research Council

Funds excellent research across all disciplines

Provides support from early career to professor-led research

Enriches Ireland’s pool of knowledge and expertise

Provides policy advice

Our mission is to enable and sustain a vibrant and creative research community in Ireland
Funding Landscape

Irish Research Council €34m
Health Research Board €32.5m
Science Foundation Ireland €172.6m
Enterprise Ireland €123.5m

Frontiers research
Mission-oriented research
(14 priorities and areas of direct economic impact)

Applied R&D
(14 priorities and areas of direct economic impact)

HEA Block Grant

4.3% of direct government funding for individual led frontiers basic research in comparison to 17% by the EU
Who do we support?

2016 New Award Spend

- €20.5m Postgraduate scholars
- €7.8m Postdoctoral fellows
- €4.4m Professor-led projects

1,365 funded researchers and 74 professor-led projects

New Researchers in 2016

- Total ongoing: 126
- AHSS Postgrad Scholars: 45
- STEM Postgrad Scholars: 33
- AHSS Postdoc Fellows: 46
- STEM Postdoc Fellows: 151
- AHSS P.I.-led Projects: 126
Innovation in enterprise
Bringing skills, talent & research to enterprise

Industry-Ready
Enterprise-facing scholars highly employable

Our Partners
70%+ SMEs
15% large indigenous companies
10% multinationals in Ireland
Addressing national challenges

Bringing research & expertise to government & civic society

17

Partnerships with Government Departments and Agencies

55 Projects with Civic Society Groups

An Roinn Ghradhla Pobail, Lenntreacha agus Gaeltachta
Department of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara

Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland

Dochas

IPRT Irish Penal Reform Trust

An Ghlionmhaireacht um Leanai agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn
Who have we supported and where do they go?

Total numbers funded 2000-2016

6,424

817 Research Projects

1,226 Postdoctoral Fellows
- 95% in expert jobs
- 15% outside academia

4,381 Postgraduate Scholars
- 91% in expert jobs
- 40% outside academia
Supporting applications under H2020

National Roles

European Research Council
Joint National ERC delegate & national coordinator for SSH

Societal Challenges 6
‘Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies’

Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions
Jointly operates MSCA National Office, & secured 4 Co-Fund Schemes

IRC has helped draw down*
€81m under H2020 (40% of all HE draw down)

* H2020 national drawdown target under HE is €550m
Priming for ERC success

European Research Council Awards

77% (10/13)
home-grown Starting Grant awardees in Ireland under H2020 are Council alumni or mentors

67% (16/24)
of home-grown ERC awardees in Ireland under H2020 (since 2014) are Council alumni or mentors

€1.2m investment from IRC has leveraged

€18.5m in ERC Starter Grant Funding

Every euro invested by the IRC in these awardees has yielded €15 in ERC funding
ERC success case study

The IRC invested €32,000 in Dr Flynn, which helped leverage almost €900,000 in ERC funding.

Dr Eilionóir Flynn

2010
IRCHSS
Post-graduate Scholar

2011
First Book;
Senior Research Fellow,
Centre for Disability Law & Policy at NUIG

Engaged with: EU-funded research projects; legal capacity reform in Ireland; Secretariat of UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

2014
Youngest Recipient of ERC Starter Grant in Europe
Securing funding in our own right

100% success rate

in applications for Marie Curie Co-Funds: INSPIRE, CARA, ELEVATE, CAROLINE with total drawdown of €17.7m

EU Commission reported IRC in the top 5 most successful co-fund participating organizations under FP7 in 2014
Laureate awards: addressing key national gaps
Perceived impact

Brexit will have a significant impact on higher education and research on the island of Ireland

66% believe that the impact of Brexit on HE and research in the Republic of Ireland will be negative

96% believe that the impact of Brexit on HE and research in the Northern Ireland will be negative

Brexit will have a negative impact on North-South collaborations

Collaborations between U.K and Irish institutions are very important
Threats to research ecosystem

- UK is ROI’s number one partner country on EU grants
- UK is ROI’s number one collaborator on research papers
- UK and Ireland frequent allies on matters of research policy at EU level
- Vulnerable disciplines
Make Ireland a global hub for research and education
Pull ahead in the global war for talent

1. Attract the best talent
   - Address system capacity and financial needs.
   - Rebalance Ireland’s research ecosystem (frontier+applied).
   - Inward mobility schemes for early & senior career researchers.
   - Ambitious Erasmus+ targets.

2. Bespoke/targeted funding schemes
   - Government of Ireland, IRC Laureates, N-S collaborative research programme, PRTLI

3. Removal of impediments to mobility and collaboration
Building ever stronger international relations

- Bilaterals with UK & EU agencies /institutions
- Become partner of choice as EU grant co-ordinator
- Outward mobility by Irish nationals
- Foreign language education
- Attract European institutions & scientific networks based in UK to Ireland
- Influence EU policy & programmes
Benefits

- Improved reputation and visibility as the destination of choice
- Grow Ireland’s EU funding draw down
- Shape future calls (FP9)
- Increased competiveness & attractiveness to FDI
- Global university rankings
The overall vision of Innovation 2020 is that Ireland – currently classified in the Innovation Union Scoreboard as an innovation follower – will transition to becoming a Global Innovation Leader, driving a strong sustainable economy and a better society.
Innovation 2020: Developing Ireland’s Research Infrastructure

- *Innovation 2020* commits to the further development of Ireland’s research infrastructure. The following guiding principles will apply to this work:

- The core funding driver will be excellence with impact and funding will be awarded via a competitive process with potential for co-funding with industry and other private sources.
- In the context of addressing global challenges, and the need to be competitive, the infrastructural needs of the wider research base will be recognised, and the increasing importance of big data, data analytics and e-infrastructures will be acknowledged.
- The funding of large scale infrastructures will explicitly recognise the importance of international links such as ESFRI.
- There will be long-term commitment to funding the maintenance, operational and upgrade costs of facilities to ensure their future viability and national funders of research will implement access charges for all large pieces of research infrastructure.
- System efficiencies will be sought on a continuous basis through inter- and intra-institutional collaboration for shared access to equipment and promotion of access by industry.
- Link between Council’s role to protect investment in SSH research and support for membership of infrastructures.
Irish Engagement with EU Open Access Policies

• **National Open Data Strategy 2017-2022**
  – The Strategy sets out seven strategic themes which will guide the Open Data initiative over the lifetime of the Strategy. These include: broadening the range of public bodies actively engaged in the Open Data Initiative; improving the quality, quantity and range of datasets available and improving the range of services available on the national Open Data portal; continued engagement with stakeholders to encourage the use of Open Data; supporting and encouraging various groups of Open Data users including public service bodies; evaluation of the impacts, benefits and risks of the Initiative and ensuring that effective governance structures are in place to implement the Strategy.

• **National Open Research Forum (NORF)**
  – This Forum combines the expertise of representatives from policy, research funding, research performing, the library sector, enterprise and other key stakeholders in the research system from across Ireland, and is now working to consider the national infrastructure and national principles for open research data.
  – Health Research Board chairs this group with DBEI

• **HRB Open Research initiative and publishing platform**
Council support for Irish membership of European Research Infrastructure Consortia

• The **European Social Survey** is an academically driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe’s changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its diverse populations.

• Currently in its eighth round, the survey covers more than 30 nations. It is a repeat cross-sectional survey and uses the most rigorous methodologies. It is funded through the European Commission’s Framework Programmes, the European Science Foundation and national funding bodies in each country.

• Professor Michael Breen of Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, is the national coordinator.
Council support for Irish membership of European Research Infrastructure Consortia

- DARIAH is a pan-European network for arts and humanities scholars working with computational methods. It supports digital research, as well as the teaching of digital research methods.

- In November 2014 it was formally established as a European Research Infrastructure (ERIC). The mission of the DARIAH ERIC is to enhance and support digitally enabled research across the humanities and arts. DARIAH ERIC develops, maintains and operates an infrastructure in support of ICT-based research practices.

- Dr Orla Murphy of UCC was appointed as national coordinator for DARIAH for Ireland in spring 2016.
Council support for Irish membership of European Research Infrastructure Consortia

- Irish Research Council submitted a recommendation to the Department of Education and Skills for Ireland to join CESSDA.
- Requirement for Department of Education and Skills to prepare memorandum seeking cabinet approval.
- Requirement for draft memorandum to be circulated to other Government Departments for observations, comments.
- Council continuing to press for cabinet decision as soon as practicable.
Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA)

• National driver for participation in CESSDA. Established under Cycle 4 of PRTLI

• The Irish Social Science Data Archive (ISSDA) is Ireland’s leading centre for quantitative data acquisition, preservation, and dissemination.

• Based at UCD Library, its mission is to ensure wide access to quantitative datasets in the social sciences, and to advance the promotion of international comparative studies of the Irish economy and Irish society.

• Proposal prepared by ISSDA to assume role of Irish national coordinator for CESSDA, and approved by Council.

• General practice for IRC-funded coordinators for ERICs is to appoint following a competitive process
#LoveIrishResearch

A national campaign of the Irish Research Council