

APPLICATIONS

Q: Can a post that has already been approved be put forward for SALI funding?

A: Applications to the SALI must be for posts that are completely new to the system and have no prior funding committed to them. If a post has already been approved, it falls outside of the eligibility criteria for the SALI. SALI posts are new and additional to the sector, i.e. they are in addition to the existing Employment Control Framework (ECF), and they will be funded through new and additional funding provided specifically to help address the significant gender-imbalance among academic staff at senior levels.

Q: Is there a word limit per Post Submission?

A: The Posts Submissions section have a page rather than word limit. A maximum number of 3 pages is allowed for each section, and this must be submitted in word or pdf file format.

Q: What is meant by the term ‘functional units’ in the Call text?

A: This term refers to a unit (e.g. school, research centre) that does not fall under the terms “faculty”, “department”.

Q: HEIs can apply for up to 3 positions under the SALI. Does this limit apply to the lifetime of the initiative or to each call?

A: Calls for applications to the SALI are planned for 2019, 2020 and 2021. HEIs can apply for up to 3 positions per call.

Q: 30 marks are allocated for “Clear indication of the significant impact of the new post on the departmental/functional unit and fit with the strategies of the HEI plan”. What is meant by HEI plan?

A: This can refer to HEI Strategic plan, HEI Gender action plan or Compact between the HEI and the HEA. The HEI needs to show how the post fits strategically with the institutional mission.

Q: Can applications for fractional appointments be submitted?

A: No, the initiative is intended to fund 1.0 FTE posts. In exceptional circumstances, where the fractional salary cost is equal to a normal professorial/senior lecturer 3 salary and the

appointment is at 1.0 FTE (e.g. clinician academic appointments), applications of this nature will be considered.

Q: Can a HEI propose a position at SL3/Professorship level that is a non- academic post? Can it be a leadership/senior managerial role in a new area of thematic development where there are low levels of female participation and representation across the HEI sector?

A: Yes. However, an application for this type of post (like any other) will need to critically analyse the significant gender under-representation in the faculty/department/functional unit being put forward for new post and indicate the significant impact of the new post on the faculty/department/functional unit and how it fits with the strategies of the HEI.

POSTS

Q: What level of funding will be attached to each SALI post?

A: Funding will be provided at the appropriate level for each post and will cover salary costs. When applying to the SALI, HEIs must outline the organisational and cultural supports that will be in place for the newly appointed SALI staff. A contribution will be required from the HEI towards the cost of the post. HEIs must detail the supports that will be provided for these posts, with specific reference to non-pay costs, administrative supports, research supports etc. In accepting funding for a SALI post, HEIs must commit to providing these necessary supports for the posts.

Q: A description of institutional and organisational supports is required in the application. Is there a minimum contribution from the HEIs towards the costs of a post?

A: No, an amount is not prescribed. The normal support resources/monetary that would be given to a professor/senior lecturer 3 should be provided. Institutions should demonstrate that the supports are in accordance with normal institutional practice.

Q: Is it expected that the post holders will become involved in the gender equality initiatives within their institution?

A: The appointee is not expected to become involved in gender equality initiatives over and above what is typically expected of an individual in this role.

Q: What happens if a professor appointed under the SALI leaves before the 10 years of Government support has expired?

A: HEIs may replace this position. However, any new competition must be run under the same terms and conditions as the original SALI appointment.

Q: Will the 15 posts be pre-allocated to the different HEI sectors?

A: No, each application will be assessed on its own merit. In addition to the quality assessment of the applications, posts within the SALI will be awarded with consideration to Institutional, faculty/department/functional unit, and geographical spread.

Q: Considering that the initiative will fund a spread of applications across institutions, faculties and geographical regions, is it intended that a spread of discipline area will be funded?

A: Each post will be assessed on its own merit. In addition to the quality assessment of the applications, posts will be awarded with consideration to institutional, faculty/ department/ functional unit and geographical spread.

Q: Could the number of awards be higher than 15 in this call if there are significant numbers of high-quality applications?

A: Funding has been allocated for 15 posts in this call.

Q: Will the final decision about which applications are funded be made at HEA Executive level or HEA Board level?

A: The final decision will be made at HEA executive level.

INFORMATION ON GENDER EQUALITY CRITERIA

Q: In relation to the application for specific posts, HEIs must provide the comprehensive critical analysis of significant gender under-representation in faculty / department / functional unit. Does this relate to under-representation in a specific area in the HEI or can national data on general under-representation be used?

A: The criteria for scoring the critical analysis of significant gender under-representation are HEI specific, i.e. the significant gender under-representation should be demonstrated and analysed in relation to the specific HEI faculty/department functional unit where the post will be based.

Q: The SALI application requires institutions to demonstrate that progress has been made towards gender equality, whereas the Athena SWAN Bronze award requires that an institution identifies the barriers to gender equality and puts in place a plan to overcome them. Are institutions that are at an earlier stage vis-à-vis progress in addressing gender equality at a disadvantage in terms of preparing a successful application?

A: No, the SALI application requires a demonstration that progress has been made towards gender equality following the recommendations arising from the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish HEIs 2016 and the recommended actions of the Gender Action Plan 2018-2020.

Q: Are there any allowances made for smaller institutions and specific challenges they encounter in the area of gender equality?

A: The panel will be briefed on the Higher Education sector in Ireland and HEIs will be expected to demonstrate how the post will have significant impact in the faculty/department/functional unit.

Q: Is there any flexibility for institutions who have not yet had their gender action plan approved by Governing Body?

A: Per the recommendations of the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions 2016 and the recommended actions of the Gender Action Plan 2018-2020, institutions are required to have a Gender Action Plan. If this has not been approved by the Governing Body, institutions must explain why.

Q: The application requests a description of the fit of the new post with the strategies of the HEI plan. What if a HEI is in-between strategic plans: can this be accommodated in the evaluation process?

A: In this instance, HEIs should link posts to relevant strategic objectives (e.g. Gender Action Plan).

Q: The SALI intends to address gender under-representation in Irish HEIs. Does this mean that HEIs who are meeting their gender objectives will be disadvantaged?

A: No. A key requirement from HEIs aiming to secure these posts would be demonstration of their commitment to gender equality, through the provision of their Gender Action Plans and evidence that they are progressing their stated objectives and targets to achieve organisational and cultural change. The institution must also demonstrate plans for future developments in this area and outline the organisational and cultural initiatives in place to support the newly appointed staff. These criteria account for 40% of the overall scoring for a SALI application.

PANEL AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Q: What will be examined during the eligibility check phase? Will applications be rejected (not sent to the panel) if they fail the eligibility check? If an application is deemed ineligible, will the HEI be informed of the reasons why?

A: The eligibility of a HEI will be assessed according to whether it is provided with a dedicated pay budget by the Department of Education and Skills/HEA and is encompassed by the Employment Control Framework and if it has an institutional gender action plan. The latest gender action plan that has been approved by its Governing Authority/Body must be submitted with the application. If a HEI does not satisfy these conditions, the application is not assessed and the HEI will be informed of the reason in the feedback.

Q: Will the external panel also be reviewing Section 2 (Institutional Submission) of the application?

A: Yes, the panel will assess all aspects of the applications assigned to them.

Q: What briefing will be given to the panel on how to evaluate inter- or cross-disciplinary applications that involve more than one faculty or department?

A: Such applications will be assessed in the same way as single-discipline applications. Inter- or cross-disciplinary applications are welcome and will be required to demonstrate clearly the impact of the post on the departmental/functional units and fit with the strategies of the HEI plan.

Q: Will the panel receive a briefing on the Irish education system to illustrate the context that institutions are working in? For example, will the difference between Professorial and Senior Lecturer 3 roles be explained to them?

A: Yes, the panel will be fully briefed on the Irish education system and the sectoral differences in relation to these posts.

Q: Will the panel have access to disciplinary expertise to help them to assess applications?

A: The focus of the application process is on institutional progress on gender equality objectives and panellists will allocate scores as per the assessment criteria outlined in the call guidelines.

Q: Will there be any cross-moderation of the applications within the panel in order to standardise the process?

A: Following an eligibility check by the HEA, applications will be sent for remote evaluation to assessment panel members. Each application will be assessed by at least two members of the assessment panel. In cases of significant variation in scoring or where a final score is an outlier in relation to the median, a third panel member will moderate the application. All panel members will consider reports on all applications, before moderating final scores at a meeting in Dublin in November. The HEA will also appoint a Process Auditor to assess the overall process.

Q: Will institutions receive feedback on their applications, and if so, will this be done in advance of a second call?

A: Yes, results will issue Q4 2019 and feedback will be supplied Q2 2020 ahead of next call.