

North South Research Programme 2024

Strand II: Emerging Hubs of Excellence and Strand III: Partnerships of Scale

User Guide for Research Offices

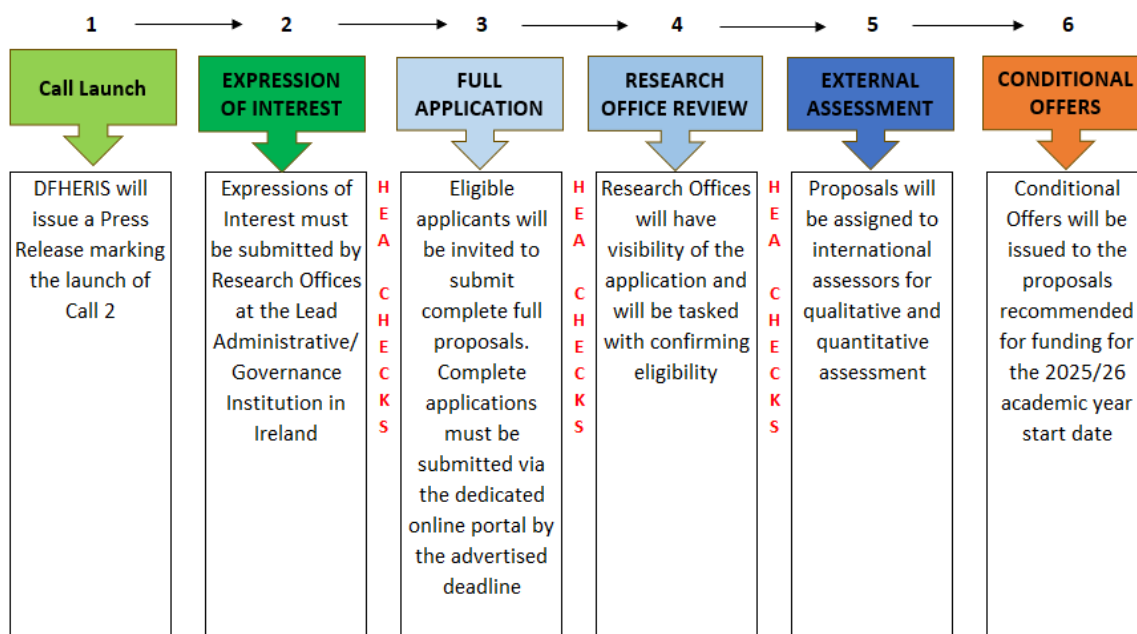
Activity	Date
Call Launch	14 th of October 2024
Expression of Interest Process Opens	15 th of October 2024
FAQ process open	24 th of October 2024
Expression of Interest Deadline	05 th of December 2024
Eligibility to progress to Application Stage confirmed	18 th December 2024
Online Portal Opening	Mid-January 2025
FAQ process ends	20 th February 2025 No further FAQs will be accepted after the 17 th of February.
Online Application Submission Deadline	27 th of February 2025
Research Office Endorsement Process Opening	04 th of March 2025
Research Office Endorsement Deadline	14 th of March 2025
Assessment Process Ends	30 th of April 2025
Panel Assessment Meetings	May 2025
Call Outcome	June 2025
Award Start Date	Academic Year 2025/26

All deadlines are at 4pm on each relevant day.

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Overview of the Call Process



The progression of a proposal through phases 2-5 of the application process will be subject to the completion of eligibility checks by the HEA in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Call document 2024.

Glossary of Terms used in the User Guide for Research Offices

The terms included in this glossary are to support the user in navigating the application process, application form and the online application system. The Call document includes a glossary of terms specific to the terms and conditions of the call.

Additional Partner	Additional Partners are from outside of Ireland and Northern Ireland and, subject to clear justification, may be included in a project proposal. Costs incurred by additional partners may not be included in the proposal or charged to the NSRP.
Commercial Application	The exercise, assignment, or license of any rights to make, have made, use, copy, sublicense, sell, or otherwise exploit an invention or work for short term economic or commercial gain.
Application Form	The 'Application Form' is the 'Primary' form which, along with the necessary supporting forms referred to as 'Linked Forms' on the online portal (WizeHive) and the required endorsement form must be completed in full by the applicant. Upon eligibility checks performed by the HEA of the submitted proposal, the application is passed onto and reviewed by

	Research Offices at the Lead Administrative/Governance Institutions in Ireland before progressing to further pre-assessment eligibility checks by the HEA.
Consortium	The lead institutions, together with any partner institutions, and any External and/or Additional partners involved in a proposal will be referred to as a Consortium. Their partnership will be governed by the Terms and Conditions of the award and a corresponding Research/Collaboration Agreement.
Consortium Co-Lead	Each Partner Institution within the consortium must have a Consortium Co-Lead who leads the research at their institution, provides oversight of the project work carried out at their institution and/or an agreed work package, and as appropriate, provides support to any members of the project research team within their institution.
Exploitation	The action of making use of and benefiting from project outputs and outcomes for economic or commercial gain in accordance with National Intellectual Property Protocol
Contingency	These are the estimated costs of identified risks which are intended to mitigate against said risks and cover the costs incurred in the event of their occurrence. These are not direct costs and are, therefore, not to be budgeted with the intention of being used for essential project activities. No more than 10% of the requested funding may be set against contingency costs.
Expression of Interest (EOI) Form	Submission of an Expression of Interest form is the first step of the application process. A complete Expression of Interest & Endorsement form must be submitted to the HEA by the Research Office at the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland on behalf of the proposed applicants by the EOI deadline. Approval to proceed to submit a full proposal or otherwise will be communicated to the Research Office by the HEA.
External Partners	External Partners from further education, civic society, enterprise and innovation from Ireland and Northern Ireland. NGOs, charities, and companies should be officially registered. Research performing organisations and other government agencies may be also included as External Partners. External Partners may be allocated a maximum of 10% of the proposed overall budget.
Host Institutions	Institutions within which a Lead Investigator or Consortium Co-Lead is employed and where research students and team members are registered/employed.
Indicative Application Form	The indicative Application Form is intended for information purposes only, to provide applicants with an overview of the questions included in the portal.
International Assessment Panel	An independent assessment panel comprising international experts in relevant fields and/or with experience in institutional, research and policy development at a high

	strategic level, tasked with assessing proposals against the prescribed evaluation criteria for the North South Research Programme.
Lead Administrative/ Governance Institution in Ireland	The Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland will be required to provide documentation as requested by the HEA on behalf of all partners in their consortium at all stages of the award. Responsibility for oversight and governance of the award lies with the Lead Administrative /Governance Institution in Ireland.
Lead Institution in Northern Ireland	There must be at least one Lead Institution in Northern Ireland associated with each proposal.
Lead Investigator	In the context of the North South Research Programme, there must be at least two Lead Investigators: one in Ireland, employed at the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution, and one in Northern Ireland, employed at the Lead Institution in Northern Ireland.
Linked Form	A 'Linked Form' is a supporting form – which is connected to the Application Form. These forms provide information relevant to the Team Composition, HEI Partner Institution in Ireland, HEI Partners Institutions in Northern Ireland and External and Additional Partners.
ORCID	ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier for all researchers, which can then be linked to their research work across different platforms. Please note the provision of an ORCID is not mandatory.
Overhead	Institutional overheads are indirect costs associated with running the project. These are calculated as a percentage (up to a maximum 25%) of funded staff's pay costs (salary and buy-out costs).
Partner Institution	A Partner Institution either in Ireland or Northern Ireland is part of the consortium. There is parity of esteem between a Partner Institution, the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland and the Lead Institution in Northern Ireland.
Primary Point of Contact	Each research proposal must identify a Primary Point of Contact in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland. The Primary Point of Contact may be the Lead Investigator, a project manager or another suitably appointed representative in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland.
Research Offices	Research Offices are responsible for the development and promotion of Higher Education Institutions' research efforts. Research Offices engage with the HEIs' research community to identify and secure funding as well as provide support throughout the research lifecycle.

WizeHive (WH)	WizeHive is the online application system used by the HEA to run the North South Research Programme. It is also used for monitoring and reporting purposes during the post award phase.
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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to guide Research Officers through the application process for the North South Research Programme Call 2 as they support potential applicants in the submission of their proposal(s) to **Strand II Emerging Hubs of Excellence** and/or **Strand III Partnerships of Scale** of the North South Research programme 2024. The programme will support academic research teams to collaborate on agreed work programme and is supported by the Government of Ireland funding through the Shared Island Fund. This document will also guide Research Officers through the ‘HEI Review’ stage of the application process.

Steps to be taken by the Research Offices in the application process of NSRP 2024

The Research Office in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution must:

- ensure that all institutions involved in a proposal have agreed to participate in the proposal and to support the proposal should it be awarded funding,
- submit a fully complete Expression of Interest & Endorsement form on behalf of each EOI,
- communicate approval to proceed to the submission of a full application or otherwise to potential applicants,
- identify at least **one research officer** who will act as the point of contact with the HEA and who will **review applications in the online portal** at the ‘HEI Review’ stage of the process,
- complete the ‘HEI Review’ stage of the application process well in advance of the **review deadline of 4pm on the 14th of March 2025**.

Research Offices involved in a proposal are required to read the NSRP [Call 2 Document](#) and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 2024 closely throughout the application process. Supporting documents for the submission of an application to the North South Research Programme can be found on its dedicated [webpage](#) and in the appendices of this document.

Should **queries** arise, they will be addressed through the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) process only. Applicants can submit their queries to the Research Office of the proposed Lead Administrative/Governance Institution, where the Research Office will collate all queries. FAQs may be submitted to research@hea.ie by **Research Offices only**.

The ‘Frequently Asked Questions 2024’ will be updated each week from the opening of the Expression of Interest (EOI) process until one week before the application deadline. The HEA will, as far as

possible, address FAQs received by 12pm each Wednesday during the same week. The ‘Frequently Asked Questions 2024’ will be updated each week from the opening of the Expression of Interest (EOI) process until one week before the application deadline. The window for submitting FAQs will close at **4pm on Monday the 17th of February 2025 and the FAQ process will end on the 20th of February 2025.**

Call Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Institutions & Consortium Requirements

Eligible Institutions

The programme is open to all higher education and research institutions and organisations as listed in “Appendix 1 – List of eligible institutions” of the Call Document 2024. All institutions and Lead Investigators as well as Consortium Co-Leads must meet the eligibility requirements set out in the Call Document 2024.

Consortium Requirements

While there is no limit on the number of Partner Institutions, there must be at least one lead from Northern Ireland and one lead from Ireland. Eligible institutions are listed in the Call Document 2024 in Appendix 1.

The lead HEI in Ireland will be regarded as the **Lead Administrative/Governance Institution** for HEA communication, governance and award management purposes.

The application may include **other higher education partners (Partner Institutions)**. Eligible partner institutions are listed in the Call Document 2024 in Appendix 1.

The addition of **External Partners** from Ireland and Northern Ireland is encouraged. Eligible partner institutions are listed in the Call Document 2024 in Appendix 1.

Other **Additional Partners** from outside of Ireland and Northern Ireland may be included in a project proposal provided their inclusion can be demonstrated by the applicants as bringing added value to the project and further support to the project in meeting the aims and objectives of the NSRP.

Eligible Lead Investigators & Consortium Co-Leads

Application to the NSRP is open to researchers in any discipline from early to advanced career stages. The Lead Investigators in Ireland and Northern Ireland and Consortium Co-Leads applying to the North South Research Programme must be, at a minimum, two years post PhD. They must have been awarded their doctoral degrees no later than 31st December 2022. For this condition, the date of graduation (conferral) should be taken into account. If a lead has not yet graduated, all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including the submission of the hardbound corrected thesis, must be complete within the required timeline.

Call Launch

A formal Press Release by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) will mark the launch of the North South Research Programme's second call. **NSRP Call 2024 accept applications to Strand II – Emerging Hubs of Excellence and Strand III - Partnerships of Scale**, supporting academic research teams to collaborate on all-island emerging hubs of excellence, focusing on shared challenges.

Data Protection

During Expression of Interest and Application preparation

Information collected by applicants, in preparing, submitting and applying to the North South Research Programme during the application preparation process, should be done so in agreement, and with the consent of, the partners involved. Applicants should be cognisant of the data protection policies in their respective institutions regarding the sharing of draft and completed applications. Copies of the application should be destroyed once they are no longer required by the applicants. Where a copy of the submitted application is retained for administrative purposes, it should be anonymised in line with institutional policies.

Data collection and processing

The HEA as data controller during the application process, processes personal data in line with the requirements of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information, please see the [HEA Data Privacy Notice](#) and the [HEA North-South Research Programme 2024 Data Collection Notice](#) which are available on the HEA website. Applicants should only provide the data requested and when providing proposal details (title, abstract, etc.) should avoid including data of any identifiable third-party subjects unless necessary to the project.

Expression of Interest (EOI)

Submission of an Expression of Interest & Endorsement Form by the Research Office in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution is the first step instigating the application process.

Applicants and Research Offices should refer to the terms and conditions of the North South Research Programme Call 2024, consulting the '[Call Document 2024](#)' in its entirety, to ascertain '**whether they are eligible**' to apply to the scheme.

Applicants must communicate with their Research Office in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland regarding the completion of Expression of Interest process.

Prior to the submission of an Expression of Interest by the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland, each Partner Institution involved in a proposal **must** provide the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution with confirmation that they agree to be included in the submission and to support the proposal.

How to submit an Expression of Interest Form

The **Research Office Submission Pack** is to be used by Research Offices at the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution when submitting EOIs for proposals to the HEA. EOIs submitted directly by applicants to the HEA **will not be accepted**.

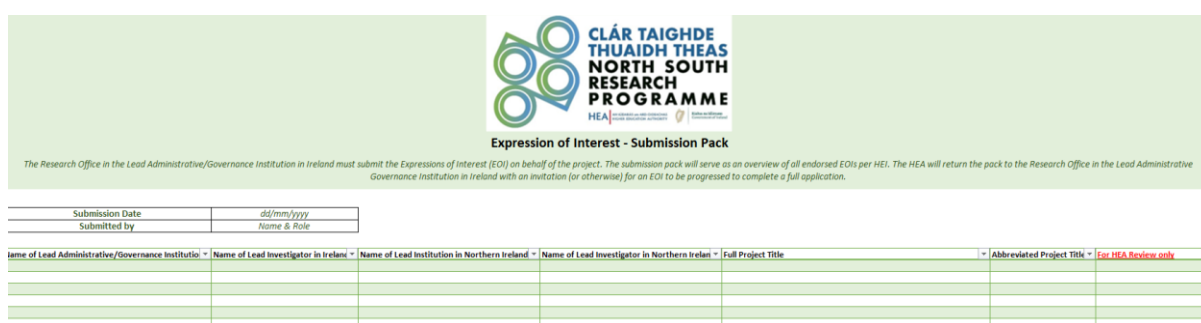
The **Expression of Interest Form & Endorsement Form**, along with a **Research Office Submission Pack** containing an excel spreadsheet seeking brief details on each EOI are available [here](#) on the HEA website. The submission will provide the HEA with an overview of the institutions' submissions.

A fully complete Expression of Interest Form & Endorsement Form, with the appropriate signatures, **must be submitted** for each proposal to the HEA (research@hea.ie) **by the Research Office** at the **Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland** by the EOI deadline of **4pm on Thursday the 05th of December 2025**.

Ideally, EOIs will be sent to the HEA in bundles however, individual EOIs will also be accepted from Research Offices (Note: to also include details of the individual EOI submission on the **Research Office Submission Pack**).

Approval to proceed to submit a full proposal, **or otherwise**, will be communicated to the Research Office **by the HEA** through the return of the Submission Pack, inclusive of the HEA decision.

It is the obligation of the Research Office at the **Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland** to communicate approval to progress submitting a full application or otherwise to the applicants.



Expression of Interest - Submission Pack

The Research Office in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland must submit the Expressions of Interest (EOI) on behalf of the project. The submission pack will serve as an overview of all endorsed EOIs per HEI. The HEA will return the pack to the Research Office in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland with an invitation (or otherwise) for an EOI to be progressed to complete a full application.

Submission Date	dd/mm/yyyy
Submitted by	Name & Role

Name of Lead Administrative/Governance Institution	Name of Lead Investigator in Ireland	Name of Lead Institution in Northern Ireland	Name of Lead Investigator in Northern Ireland	Full Project Title	Abbreviated Project Title	For HEA Review only

Application

Full proposals are to be submitted by applicants and will be accepted through the online portal WizeHive **only**. The online portal will open in **mid-January 2025**. Applications received that are not documented on the Research Office Submission Pack will not be accepted.

Applications must be submitted via WizeHive by **4pm on Thursday the 27th of February 2025**. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline.

Once submitted through WizeHive, an application cannot be reverted back to draft and subsequently modified for resubmission in the same call, regardless of the date of submission.

To support applicants in the identification of the information required to facilitate the completion of their application on the portal, applicants and Research Offices may refer to the Indicative Application Form.

Post-Submission – Research Office Review

Prior to external assessment and following the submission of the full application by the applicant, an identified Research Office Reviewer in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland will be granted visibility of the submitted application(s) by the HEA in order to confirm that proposals are eligible, as outlined in the terms and conditions stipulated in the Call Document.

N.B.: Should submitted applications be deemed incomplete or not adequately endorsed by the required Institutions, the application will not proceed to further eligibility checks or external assessment.

Access to the online Review Portal

To be granted access to the review portal in advance of the ‘HEI Review Stage’, the Research Office in the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution **must identify two Research Officers** at their institution who will be responsible for the completion of application reviews.

Once identified, please inform the HEA with the names and email contact details of the two Research Officers before Thursday 05th of December 2024 via research@hea.ie:

E-mail subject line: NSRP Call 2 – HEI Name – Research Office Reviewer

Full Names of both Research Officers	
Contact details of the two Research Officers / Research Office Institutional E-mail Address	

Please note that where a Research Office Reviewer has submitted an application on behalf of the Lead Administrative/Governance Institution in Ireland, they will not be assigned the application for review and will be required to nominate another reviewer.

Following receipt of the details above, the nominated Research Officers will be added to an approved list of **Research Office Reviewers** and their access to the review portal will be confirmed by the HEA. A user guide to assist Research Officers navigating the review portal will be available on the HEA website in January 2025.

HEA Eligibility Check

Following the closing of the 'HEI Review' stage, the HEA executive will carry out eligibility checks and move applications deemed eligible forward to the external assessment phase. The applicant will receive confirmation of this movement and the status on the application will change to 'Panel Review'. The offer of and awarding of funding is subject to meeting all eligibility requirements and conditions of contract.

External Assessment: International Panel of Assessors

Applications deemed eligible for assessment will be assigned to a panel of international assessors, comprising international experts in relevant fields and/or with experience in engagement with institutional, research and policy development at a high strategic level.

Process auditors are in place to provide oversight for the panel meeting.

The assessment process concludes with a ranked list of applications recommended for funding. All proposals will be assessed and ranked according to their merit and in line with the specific criteria of the NSRP set out in the Call Document.

The list of proposals recommended for funding will be shared with the Board of the HEA, DFHERIS and the Department of the Taoiseach for their acknowledgement. Depending on budget, demand and the calibre of applications received, a reserve ranking list may be put in place.

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