



# Irish Cancer Society Research

## Guidelines for Applicants

### Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020

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## Guidelines for Applicants

### Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020

#### 1. General

##### 1.1. Introduction

Advances in prevention, detection and treatment have revolutionised cancer medicine and survival. Outcome has significantly improved in Ireland in the last 30 years with 6 in 10 cancer patients now surviving at least 5 years after their diagnosis.

However, the pace of progress has not been the same for every cancer. Globally and nationally survival has not dramatically increased in some cancer groups such as rare cancers, cancers affecting children and young adults, as well as hard-to-treat cancers like primary and metastatic forms of lung, pancreatic and oesophageal cancers and brain tumours. These cancers continue to have unmet needs in terms of lack of effective treatment options and/or lack of research capacity within the area, both of which contributes to inferior survival and outcome.

A key priority for the Irish Cancer Society is to ensure that all patients in our community benefit from world class cancer research and expertise, and that the gap in survival between different cancer groups is closed.

In line with this commitment the Irish Cancer Society has launched the Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020. The aim of the award is **to provide funding for a translational research project that addresses an issue(s) in a cancer with an unmet need**- a cancer that has a lack of effective treatment options and/or a lack of research capacity in the area.

While there are many definitions of such a scope and all cancers have inherent challenges for those who are affected by them, for this award cancers with unmet needs are defined as:

- Rare cancers (annual incidence of less than six cases per 100,000)
- Childhood and youth cancers (aged 0–24 years)
- Lung, oesophageal, pancreatic cancers and brain tumours (primary and metastatic forms)

The translational project may be researching a new idea or may be a new arm of an existing project that is patient focussed and aimed at improving patient care and/or outcome. However, please note this award may not be used to top up a project that already has existing funding, the proposed research project must not be currently funded.

**1.2. Translational research**

Translational research can be defined as “bench to bedside” or patient-focused research, whereby the aim of the research is to translate existing knowledge about cancer biology into techniques and tools that will accelerate progress towards patient benefit.

For the ‘Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award’ we will accept translational research projects (T0.5, T1 or T2 phase) (Figure 1). Applications where the research is predominantly at T0 phase with some proposed aspects of the project being T0.5 phase will not be accepted.

Applicants will need to be able to articulate how the proposed research project is translational in nature and how the research will accelerate rapid progress towards patient benefit.

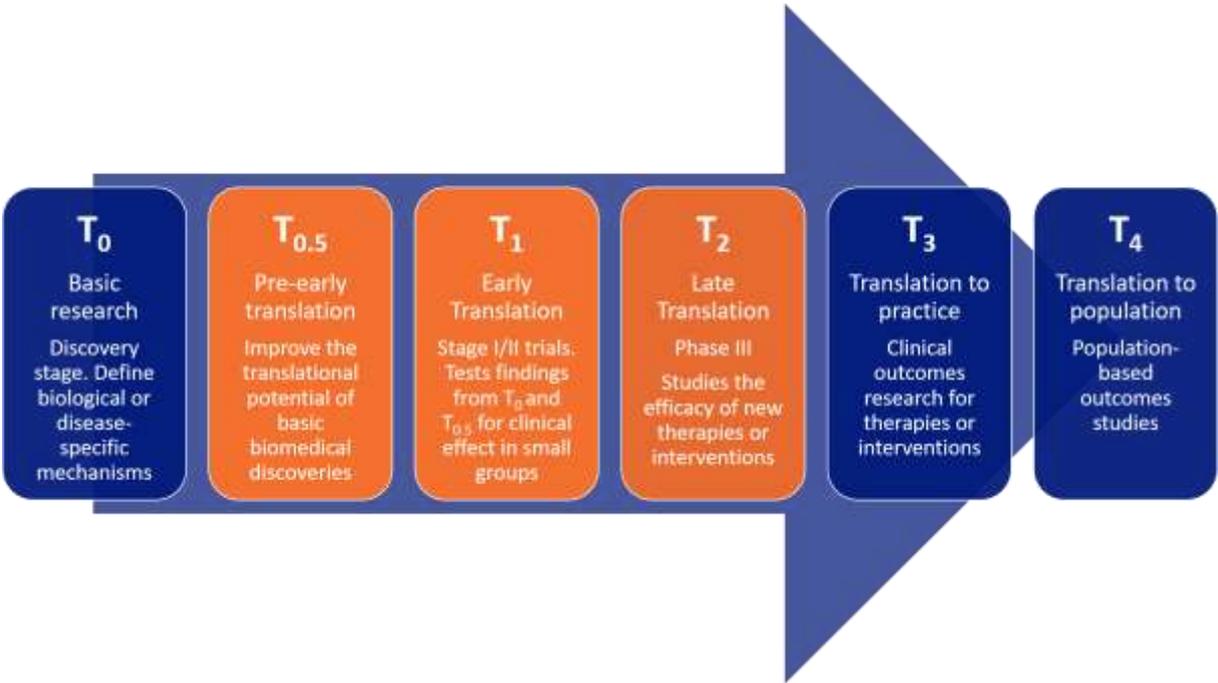


Figure 1. The Irish Cancer Society Phases of Translational Biomedical Research.

### 1.3. Funding

The maximum funding granted for the Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020 is €100,000 over 24 months. Funding for one award is available.

As part of the €100,000 funding, a **mandatory provision** of €1,000 is available to support Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the proposed research project. Please note that the €1,000 available for PPI may be supplemented with funds from the remaining core (€99,000) budget. However, the core budget may not be supplemented with the PPI fund.

### 1.4. Patient Involvement

The Irish Cancer Society is dedicated to involving patients, families, survivors, supporters, and the public in research. Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the research process ensures that research is meaningful and of benefit to those affected by cancer.

Patient involvement is a fundamental aspect of the application: a full and detailed patient involvement plan and a plan budget are required at this stage, as is a plan for sharing of research findings.

A PPI Review Panel will review and provide feedback for applicants on the following sections: Patient Involvement Plan, Sharing of Research Findings, and Budget (patient involvement plan).

### 1.5. Dates

3pm Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2020	Application deadline
October/November 2020	Review
Early/mid Dec	Interviews (video call)

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

Please read the following eligibility criteria carefully. If you are uncertain of your eligibility or for further information on the eligibility criteria, please contact [grants@irishcancer.ie](mailto:grants@irishcancer.ie) before applying.

### 2.1. Eligibility

The lead applicant must have:

- a doctoral research degree
- compelling track record in cancer research

- have a mentor (only required for lead applicants with less than 4 years' post-doctoral research experience)
- be based at an eligible host institution in the Republic of Ireland
- hold a contract at the eligible host institution that covers the duration of the award

Co-applicants must:

have well-defined and substantial roles in the proposed project

## **2.2. Eligible research areas**

Projects must be translational research (T0.5, T1 or T2 phase) (see Figure 1). Projects in the following areas are eligible:

- Rare cancers (annual incidence of less than six cases per 100,000)
- Childhood and youth cancers (aged 0–24 years)
- Lung, oesophageal, pancreatic cancers and brain tumours (primary and metastatic forms)

## **2.3. Host institution**

The host institution is the organisation that receives and administers grant funding and is responsible for compliance with all general and specific terms and conditions of awards. In order to be eligible to apply for funding, a proposed host institution must be a higher education institution in the Republic of Ireland and must be one of the HRB's approved host institutions: <https://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/all-grant-policies/hrb-policy-on-approval-of-host-institutions>.

# **3. Application Procedure**

## **3.1. How to Apply**

Applications must be completed and submitted through the Irish Cancer Society Grant Tracker online system. In order to submit an online application you are required to register at the following address: <https://grants.cancer.ie>.

When registering please fill out all the fields on the registration form.

## **3.2. Overview of the Application Process**

When you enter your login details you will be directed to the Portal home page. From here you can:

- Update your basic information (please make sure all fields are completed)
- Make a new grant application

- Access previous grant applications

### 3.3. Making an application

When you have ensured that all your basic details are entered, then you can proceed to apply for a new grant application. This can be done by returning to the Portal home page and clicking to apply for funding from one of our grant streams. Or alternatively through the 'My Applications' tab on the left hand side of the page, and clicking the 'New Application' button.

You will then be asked what grant type you would like to apply for. Click 'Apply' for the grant type detailed as 'Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020'.

## 4. The Application Form

There are 11 sections outlined on the left hand side of the page:

- a) Introduction
- b) Project Outline
- c) Lead Applicant details
- d) Mentor and co-applicants
- e) Project Summary
- f) Sustainability Plan
- g) Patient Involvement
- h) Sharing of research findings
- i) Declarations of Support
- j) Budget
- k) Validation Summary

These sections are to be viewed and completed. It is recommended that you save the information as you complete each section. This can be done by clicking 'Save' as you go along. Alternatively, the information will be saved when you click 'Save and Close'. By clicking 'Previous' you will be brought to the previous section and by clicking 'Next' you will be brought to the next section.

As you proceed through the sections you will see a small blue question mark icon next to some of the sections. By clicking on this icon you will get more information on the section to be completed. Sections that are required to be filled out have a red circle icon next to them. You will not be able to proceed with the application if these sections are not completed.

**\*Note:** External patient representatives will appraise the sections marked by an asterisk. It is very important that these sections are written in plain English and are accessible to a non-

*scientific audience. Please see information from the Irish Cancer Society on Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines (Appendix 1) for more information.*

*Please see the Irish Cancer Society Guidelines on Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research (Appendix 1) for more information.*

### ***a) Introduction***

This section gives the overview information of the Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020.

### ***b) Project Outline***

Details of your application are entered into this section. Input and save the information as required under the following headings:

- Proposed Project Title
- Proposed Start Date
- Duration (no more than 24 months)
- Proposed Host Institute
- Cancer Type
- Keywords
- Research Type
- Discipline
- Translational research

### ***c) Lead applicant details***

Please upload your CV, completed using the template provided. The templates are downloadable in this section of the online system or on the website.

### ***d) Mentor and Co-applicants***

#### **Mentor**

A mentor is required for all applicants with fewer than 4 years of post-PhD research experience.

If you have fewer than four year post-PhD research experience, you must add a mentor to the application. The mentor should be an established senior researcher in a field appropriate

to the application. Your mentor will have to confirm participation in the application and also approve the application after you submit it and before it is finally submitted for review.

To add your mentor you can search for them by entering their email address. If the Mentor has already created an account, then they will appear on the list. If your Mentor does not already have an account, you can click 'Add a New Contact' and enter their name and email address. Please note that on saving, the contact will be added to the application as a mentor. They will receive a notification of this via email.

#### Mentor CV

In this section you can to upload your Mentor CV, completed using the associated CV template. To upload the CV click 'Attach' then locate the file to be attached, then click 'Attach'.

#### Information on the mentor

Please detail why you have chosen your mentor and any role they will have in the project **(150 words max)**.

#### Co-Applicants

You may add up to 10 co-applicants to the project. Co-applicants must have a well-defined and substantial role in the proposed plan e.g. significant input into study design, data collection, or analysis and interpretation. Co-applicants must confirm their participation and approve the application prior to it being finally submitted for review.

#### Information on co-applicants

Please briefly describe the role each co-applicant will have in the project **(100 words max each co-applicant)**.

### ***e) Project Summary***

Please give details of the research project that will be supported by the award. If the application is an add-on or continuation of an existing project, it is important to detail the work that has been completed to date (including results) and detail how this award will further develop this project. Please complete the following sections:

- Remit of the call: Please justify how the proposed projects fits within the remit and scope of the Cancers with Unmet Needs, Translational Research Award 2020 **(200 words max)**
- Basis for research: Please clearly outline the relevant research data previously carried out by the associated research team which forms the basis of your research proposal. Please also explain why this is the logical next step in the area/research process and not a discovery exercise. Articulate at what stage in the translational phase this research falls

into and detail how patients might be expected to rapidly benefit from the findings and outcomes of the work.

If the proposed project is a novel arm of another project, please indicate who funds the primary project. Please note this award may not be used to top up a project that already has existing funding, the proposed project must be for research that is not currently funded (**450 words max**).

- Hypothesis, aims, and objectives: Please outline the hypothesis and the aims of your research proposal. In this section you need to set out a series of strategic and logical objectives that you hope to achieve. The objectives should be precise and concise statements, with a projected date for completion. In some cases, you can enter alternatives in case a pitfall arises (**300 words max**).
- Methodology: Please describe and justify the methods, procedures, and experimental design you will use to conduct your research with specific reference to how the hypothesis/aims/objectives will be addressed (**800 words max**).

For quantitative research, please provide statistical analysis for each part of your experimental plan; power calculations, numbers of samples, number of matched controls, and strategy of different controls to be used should all be discussed. Additionally, please discuss the feasibility of obtaining/accessing sufficient numbers of patient samples/participants and controls that will result in statistically meaningful results.

- Ethical Considerations and Data Protection: Please describe relevant ethical considerations for this project, including: potential risks of participation and how they will be minimised, Research Ethics Committee application procedures, data protection considerations with respect to GDPR legislation, etc. (**200 words max**).
- References: Please cite any literature referenced in the sections above.
- Gantt Chart, Ethics, and Research Images:
  - You must upload a Gantt chart for the proposed research study.
  - You may upload up to four additional research images. All uploads must be in PDF format. Please ensure that figures are legible when uploading. Illegible figures may be difficult for the peer review panel to assess and could detract from your application.
  - If your project already has ethical approval, please upload the approval letter here.

#### ***f) Sustainability plan***

Translational research aims to translate existing knowledge about cancer biology into techniques and tools that will accelerate progress towards patient benefit. The project funded by this award will most likely be one step in the 'bench to bedside' process.

Please detail the plans or next steps that you foresee being taken after the award has ended to ensure the research continues contributing towards continuing the trajectory of improving the lives of patients (**300 words max**).

***g) Patient involvement plan***

The Irish Cancer Society is dedicated to putting patients, families, survivors, supporters, and the public at the very heart of what we do. In this section, please provide a lay summary of your research and an overview of your plan for integrating Patient involvement into your research project. Please carefully review the recommendations outlined for patient involvement in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, in section 4.2 of Appendix 1.

PPI reviewers will review this section therefore it is strongly recommended that the summary is written for an audience with no scientific background.

For more guidance please see Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines (Appendix 1).

Please detail the following:

A. Project Summary:

The purpose of the project summary is to set the context in terms of your project for the PPI reviewers. It is important for the PPI reviewers to know details on your project to be able to adequately review the Patient Involvement Plan and Sharing of Research Findings sections.

When completing this section, please outline: (**150 words max**)

- the overall aims of your research project
- steps in the research project
- how the proposed research is relevant and important to patients and the public

B. Patient involvement plan:

When completing this section, please carefully consider the following questions: (**200 words max**)

- What area/areas will patient involvement be included in your research project? E.g. planning, design, implementation, management, evaluation and/or dissemination.
- What is the overall goal of your patient involvement plan?
- What do you want from the people involved and how will it influence your research?

Please note, while patient participation and engagement activities are permitted and encouraged as part of an application and can be detailed as part of the patient involvement plan, the Society will only fund applicants who predominately include “involvement” activities as part of their plan. Please see appendix 1 for further details and examples.

### ***h) Sharing of Research Findings***

As the largest voluntary funder of cancer research in Ireland, the Irish Cancer Society relies on the generous donations from the public in order to fund cancer research. A key priority is, therefore, to ensure that the public (including people affected by cancer) are kept up to date on research that is funded by the Society. In line with this, it is a requirement that all applicants produce a dissemination plan to include communication of their research to all relevant audiences (including academics, clinicians, and the public and people affected by cancer).

Please describe your plan for sharing your findings. This may include printed or electronic articles, presentations, public engagement events, social media content, etc. (**200 words max**).

### ***i) Declarations of Support***

The declarations of support should be signed and on institutional headed paper.

- **Mentor:** Please upload a declaration of support letter from your mentor. The declaration of support template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the website. This must be completed on headed paper.
- **Head of Department:** Please upload a declaration of support letter from the head of department at your host institution. The declaration of support template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the website. This must be completed on headed paper. The Declaration of Support required from the Head of Department is simply a standard letter stating that they are aware of and support the application.

### ***j) Budget***

Maximum allowable budget is €99,000 plus €1,000 for PPI costs.

A full detailed breakdown of costs and justification for all costs must be provided in your application. All costs should directly contribute to the purpose of the award. Please see Appendix 2 for more information on budget guidelines.

Funds may be requested for the following\*:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary costs</li> </ul>	<p>The Irish Cancer Society will fund the direct salaries of academic research members according to the IUA Researcher Salary Scale, <a href="https://www.iua.ie/research-innovation/researcher-salary-scales">https://www.iua.ie/research-innovation/researcher-salary-scales</a>. The scale, point and full salary (including employers PRSI and pension contribution) must be included within all salary budgets. Please note the IUA scales are continually updated, therefore, it is important to utilise the most up to date scale according to the time period in which the anticipated staff member is due to commence employment. The IUA scales are continually changing, therefore if the IUA scale does not cover the funding period in question, a salary contingency of 2.5% per annum should be applied.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumables</li> </ul>	<p>The Irish Cancer Society will allow the purchase of reasonable running costs relevant to the specific project. Such costs may include but are not limited to: materials and consumables, animal research costs, access costs, survey costs, costs associated with research participants, transcription costs, data management costs, bench fees etc. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable. All running costs should be itemised within the application budget section and suitably justified.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment</li> </ul>	<p>The Irish Cancer Society will allow researchers to purchase small equipment items up to a maximum total value of €3,000. A strong justification must be provided for each equipment item, and a rationale must be given as to why this item is not already available to the researcher at their host institution. Only equipment items that are specific to the applicant's research project will be allowed. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.</p> <p>The purchase of computer equipment as part of an Irish Cancer Society funding award will be considered for any grant of over 18 months' duration, provided a strong rationale is given at the time of grant application. The maximum allowed budget for the purchase of a computer or laptop is €1,500. For funding awards of less than 18 months'</p>

	<p>duration, the purchase of computer equipment will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and dissemination costs</li> </ul>	<p>Please detail the dissemination costs for the research study e.g. printing, posters, publication costs, and public awareness lectures. A <b>maximum</b> of €3,000 may be budgeted for travel/dissemination costs and must be justifiable within the remit of the award.</p> <p>Please also detail costs associated with the lead applicant or research staff attending academic meetings and conferences e.g., registration fees, travel, accommodation. Please note, given the COVID-19 travel restrictions that are currently in place, traditional travel to conferences and meetings may not be feasible within the timeframe of this award. Applicants may therefore want to consider alternative plans for networking opportunities and disseminating their research findings and network.</p>

**Patient Involvement Plan Budget:**

A full detailed breakdown of costs and justification for all costs must be provided for each budget heading in your application. Funds may be requested for the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPI costs</li> </ul>	<p>Please describe costs associated with your PPI plan (€1,000 has been specifically allocated for PPI, which may be topped up from the consumables budget)</p>
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***\*Final approval of all budgeted costs is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.***

***k) Validation Summary***

In this section any required fields in the application form that have not been completed will be detailed. You will not be able to submit the application until all required fields are completed.

## **5. Submission of the Application**

Once all required sections are completed on the online system (<https://grants.cancer.ie/>) the application can be submitted.

The application deadline is **3pm Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020.**

## **6. Application Assessment**

Incomplete applications will not be assessed. The eligibility of each application will be checked after submission.

### **6.1. Assessment Procedure**

Applications will be assessed by an international panel of scientific experts. The following aspects of the application will be reviewed by the scientific expert review panel:

- Lead applicant and applicant team
- Project Summary
- Sustainability Plan
- Patient Involvement
- Sharing of research findings
- Declarations of Support

PPI reviewers will review the Patient Involvement Plan and Sharing of Research Findings Plan and will provide feedback to applicants on these sections.

The budget will also be reviewed by the Irish Cancer Society to ensure that it is feasible and that all maximum limits have been adhered to. Final approval of all budgeted costs is at the discretion of the funders.

### **6.2. Conflicts of Interest**

We will endeavour to ensure that the international peer review panel chosen do not have any conflicts of interest regarding the applications they are assessing.

### **6.3. Assessment outcome**

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of review (if they have been shortlisted for the interview) by email.

## **7. Application Checklist**

- Completed Application form submitted online.

Including the upload of:

- Applicant CV
- Gantt Chart
- Declaration of Support-
  - Mentor
  - Head of Department

## **8. Contact**

If you require assistance with the online application system or have any queries about the application, please contact the research department on:

**Email: [grants@irishcancer.ie](mailto:grants@irishcancer.ie)**



## **Appendix 1: Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines**

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## Appendix 1: Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines

**Please note:** This document is intended for researchers planning to submit applications to an Irish Cancer Society research grant. For general information regarding the Irish Cancer Society's Public and Patient Involvement, please contact [ppi@irishcancer.ie](mailto:ppi@irishcancer.ie)

### 1. What is Public and Patient Involvement in research?

The Irish Cancer Society is committed to putting patients, families, survivors, supporters and the public at the very heart of what we do. In keeping with this commitment, we are working to embed Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in our research processes. PPI can be contextualised in the many different ways people with cancer can interact with research, specifically by means of *participation*, *engagement*, and *involvement*<sup>1</sup>.

#### Participation

A person with cancer may be recruited into, and take part in, a research study and provide data of some form.

#### Engagement

Engagement is when the researcher communicates and disseminates research information, for example, at science festivals, public talks, television programmes, or radio.

#### Involvement

Involvement is distinct from participation or engagement. Where participation and engagement are conducted 'to', 'about', and 'for' people with cancer, involvement is conducted 'with' or 'by' people with cancer. People with cancer can be involved at any stage of the research process, from conceptualisation to dissemination.

## 2. Why is PPI important?

PPI is becoming increasingly common in research. The Irish Cancer Society is committed to expanding the involvement of those affected by cancer in the research that the Society funds, and in the funding decision-making process. This commitment is reinforced by the Irish Governments' National Cancer Strategy (2017-2026)<sup>2</sup>, which highlighted:

*“Patient involvement in cancer research improves the relevance of research questions, the quality, acceptability and feasibility of research conduct and the likelihood of uptake of research outputs.”*

PPI creates a partnership between people affected by cancer and researchers. It is more than a tokenistic gesture to comply with policy, but can provide a real and substantial benefit to all key stakeholders. While not without its challenges, PPI can:

- Promote a sense of empowerment and value among patients<sup>3</sup>
- Enhance patient trust in researchers<sup>3</sup>
- Improve researchers' insight into their own research area<sup>3</sup>
- Help researchers identify barriers and come up with solutions to research<sup>3</sup>
- Increase trust and acceptability in the patient community of research findings<sup>3</sup>
- Inform the provision, access, and location of healthcare services<sup>4</sup>
- Improve the dialogue between healthcare professionals and patients<sup>4</sup>

Specific to the cancer setting, PPI may be used by patients as a resource, to make sense of living with chronic condition<sup>5</sup>. People with cancer report feeling enhanced knowledge and skills from taking part in PPI, as well as feeling they contributed to research by providing a lay perspective (i.e., practical knowledge about being a patient with cancer)<sup>6</sup>.

As such, PPI can be a valuable tool in the research process for both patients and researchers, and the Irish Cancer Society aims to expand its PPI work over the coming years.

### 3. PPI and the funding process

The Irish Cancer Society aims to embed PPI in its grant review process and funding decisions. As such, the selection of award recipients is co-decided by scientific and patient reviewers. In doing so, the research we fund is of the highest scientific quality, while being relevant and important to people affected by cancer.

To accommodate PPI in the funding process, the application form comprises of sections that are assessed by the scientific panel only and sections that are assessed by the patient panel only.

As the ultimate stakeholders in any future improvements of cancer care, advances in cancer research is of the most impact to patients. The Irish Cancer Society, therefore, encourages all applicants to use the PPI sections as an opportunity to connect with the patient reviewers. To do this, it is vital that application form sections allocated to patient reviewers are written in plain, non-technical language.

Scientific and patient reviewers will form the interview panel and each panel member will have an equal vote.

#### 3.1. Project Summary

The purpose of the project summary is to set the context in terms of your project for the PPI reviewers. It is important for the PPI reviewers to know details on your project to be able to adequately review the Patient Involvement Plan and Sharing of Research Findings sections.

When completing this section, please outline: **(150 words max)**

- the overall aims of your research project
- steps in the research project
- how the proposed research is relevant and important to patients and the public

The project summary should be written in a format appropriate and understandable to your audience. Remember, your audience, who will be patients, **may not** have a scientific background. Therefore, ensure the lay summary is written in plain English (please see Section 5). However, an important consideration when writing a lay abstract is to determine the right balance between pitching it to the correct lay audience and oversimplifying it too much. As such, the abstract should be written in clear plain English, but also adequately conveys the research question, the steps in the project and what makes that particular research project important. The abstract may still have some “jargon” or scientific names when necessary, once they are clearly defined in understandable terms.

### **3.3. Sharing of research findings**

The Irish Cancer Society is the largest voluntary funder of cancer research in Ireland. Research is conducted primarily for the benefit of patients, therefore, a key priority of the Irish Cancer Society is to ensure that the public (including people affected by cancer) are kept up to date on research that is funded by the Society. In line with this, it is a requirement that all applicants produce a dissemination plan to include communication of their research to all relevant audiences (including the public).

It is important to note that while peer-reviewed journals are an important means of communicating research findings to academic researchers, members of the public are less likely to access academic journals.

Research dissemination and knowledge exchange includes:

- Public engagement talks or events e.g., Irish Cancer Society ‘Decoding Cancer’, Pint of Science, Science Week events, public university talks, etc.;
- Non-peer reviewed professional periodicals e.g., The Irish Psychologist, World of Irish Nursing;
- Newspapers/media e.g., The Irish Times, thejournal.ie, Newstalk;
- Blog posts e.g., professional blog, Irish Cancer Society website;
- Peer-reviewed journals (open-access).

### **4. PPI and the research process**

PPI can be incorporated into almost any stage of the research process, which should be planned from the very beginning of study design. Examples of how PPI can be incorporated into research includes (but is not limited to):

- as members of a patient advisory group for the project;\*
- commenting on and developing patient information leaflets, consent forms, questionnaires or other research materials;
- user and/or carer researchers carrying out the research;
- commenting on and developing dissemination materials (e.g., conference abstracts, posters, presentations);
- Involvement in organising and running public and patient engagement activities.

In general, when, where, and how PPI will be included in studies should be decided early in the research process. The PPI plan must detail the PPI activities that will be organised during the project.

A number of universities within the Republic of Ireland already have dedicated individuals, infrastructure, training, or programmes (e.g., the HRB ‘PPI Ignite Award’) in place dedicated to PPI. We recommend that you engage with these local resources when planning how PPI will be integrated into your project.

Please note that only PPI plans which include **involvement** will be funded. Any plan which includes participation or engagement activities in lieu of involvement will not be funded. *\*Any post-award significant alterations to study design or protocol suggested by the patient advisory group would need to be approved in advance by the Irish Cancer Society throughout the duration of the research project.*

*4.1 PPI and COVID-19*

Please note that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the risks involved for all members of the public, and in particular those in at risk categories, we strongly recommend that you consult the latest government advice when developing a PPI and dissemination plan. All applicants should minimise the use of face-to-face methods of communication where possible, or build in contingency plans to allow for alternative methods of communication. Activities that predominately incorporate online or virtual methods are encouraged and all activities must be in line with the current government advice and recommendations at the time at which they occur. Please see <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/> for further information.

**4.2. Budgeting for PPI**

The cost of PPI is dependent on how you plan to embed it into your study i.e., your ‘PPI Plan’. As such, it is difficult to prescribe guidelines on how to budget for PPI. However, **at a minimum, it is expected that the out of pocket expenses of PPI members associated with involvement are covered by the research grant**

The steps to PPI budgeting are described below:

Step	Activity
Step 1: Framework selection	Select a framework for mapping involvement costs. This might be the research project cycle (i.e., the step-by-step research process/procedure) or a project timeline (e.g., Gantt chart).
Step 2: Planning your involvement	Make a plan of the involvement activities you intend to incorporate into your research.
Step 3: What are the costs?	For each activity, identify the specific costs for which you will need to budget.
Step 4: How much will it cost?	Estimate the cost or range of costs against each involvement activity.

	To work out the budget for your study, go to the online cost calculator: <a href="https://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/involvement-cost-calculator/">https://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/involvement-cost-calculator/</a> . Please note the online calculator is in Pound Sterling.
Step 5: Mapping	Map the involvement activities onto your selected project framework so that you know exactly when in the project timeline costs are allocated.
<i>Adapted from the UK National Institute for Health Research, Budgeting for Involvement (2013)</i>	

An online calculator is available on the *NIHR Involve* website: <https://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/involvement-cost-calculator>. Please note the online calculator is in pound sterling (£), euro conversion rates will apply. The online calculator is a guiding tool, all costs must be appropriate to costing in the Republic of Ireland and all researchers must verify the costs associated with their PPI plan. Please check that the host institute has appropriate systems in place for the payment of PPI costs and expenses. Costings from all categories of the online calculator will be eligible (see below). However, please note that final approval of all costs is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

Please see the worked costing examples below for guidance on creating and budgeting for the PPI plan.

**PPI budgeting costs:**

<b>Costing category</b>	<b>Related costs</b>
Payments and rewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees to individuals</li> <li>• Vouchers/tokens for individuals</li> <li>• Prize draw awards</li> <li>• Fee/donation to a group</li> <li>• Funding for additional training and learning</li> <li>• Honorary appointment e.g., lay fellow or research partner</li> </ul>
Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Subsistence</li> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Carer costs</li> <li>• Personal assistants</li> <li>• Overnight accommodation</li> <li>• Home office costs</li> </ul>

Involvement activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding people/advertising</li> <li>• Training and learning costs</li> <li>• Venues and catering</li> <li>• Equipment and books</li> <li>• Access to university facilities</li> <li>• Conference fees</li> </ul>
Involvement staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative support</li> <li>• Involvement coordinator</li> <li>• Independent facilitator</li> <li>• Peer researchers/interviewers</li> </ul>
Other costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disclosure and barring service</li> <li>• Language translation and interpretation costs</li> <li>• Support for people with impairments</li> </ul>

*Adapted from the UK National Institute for Health Research, Involvement Cost Calculator*

**Worked costing example for virtual event:** A researcher wishes to set up a patient advisory group to guide the dissemination of findings. The aim is to ensure the research findings are communicated as widely and efficiently as possible, are accessible to a lay audience, and are engaging to the general public. To achieve this aim, the researcher hopes to host a virtual public engagement event.

The researcher is looking for five patient representatives to form the advisory group. The group will meet for a half day virtual workshop to design the public engagement event, creating information booklets, and educational project posters. All information booklets and educational videos will be accessible on the researcher’s website. The public event will then be held virtually.

*The estimated costs associated with setting up the advisory group and the costs associated with the virtual public event are as follows:*

Category	Detail	Quantity	Cost	Total
Virtual Meetings	Online meeting platform used by institution for example Zoom	1	€0	€0
Focus group payment	Payment for attending virtual focus group/workshop	5	€100	€500
Advertising	Newspaper advertisement (for 2 weeks)	1	€70	€70
Dissemination	Printing of 12-page booklets	250	€0.96	€240
	And educational posters:	5	€32	€160

Virtual Event costs	Public	Zoom Webinar licence (one off, month long usage)	1	€37	€37
<b>TOTAL COST (€1000 from PPI budget and €651 from consumables budget)</b>					<b>€1007</b>

*All costs were calculated using estimated costs for train tickets, hotels, and so on in the Republic of Ireland as of September 2020.*

#### **Worked costing example non-virtual event:**

A researcher wishes to set up a patient advisory group to guide the dissemination of findings. The aim is to ensure the research findings are communicated as widely and efficiently as possible, are accessible to a lay audience, and are engaging to the general public. To achieve this aim, the researcher hopes to host a public engagement event.

The researcher is looking for five patient representatives to form the advisory group. The group will meet for a half day workshop to design the public engagement event, creating information booklets, and educational project posters. All information booklets and educational videos will be accessible on the researcher's website.

*The estimated costs associated with setting up the advisory group and the costs associated with the public event are as follows:*

Category	Detail	Quantity	Cost	Total
Travel	Local travel in Dublin	3	€7	€21
	Travel from outside of Dublin	2	€30	€60
Focus group payment	Payment for attending focus group/workshop	5	€100	€500
Venue costs	University meeting room cost	1	€0	€0
Catering costs	Breakfast and lunch for attendees (€10 per person/per meal)	5	€20	€100
Advertising	Newspaper advertisement (for 2 weeks)	1	€70	€70
Dissemination	Printing of 12-page booklets	250	€0.96	€240
	And educational posters:	5	€32	€160

Public costs	Event	Costs for university venue (1/2 day) Catering (tea and biscuits) (€3.50 per person)	1 100	€150 €3.50	€150 €350
<b>TOTAL COST (€1000 from PPI budget and €651 from consumables budget)</b>					<b>€1,651</b>

*All costs were calculated using estimated costs for train tickets, hotels, and so on in the Republic of Ireland as of September 2020.*

## 5. Writing in plain English

There are many online resources available to guide you in writing an effective plain English summary. Some of these resources are listed in Section 6 of this document.

*Here are some general notes on how to write in plain English:*

- Patients are not scientists (usually) and knowledge should not be assumed. Avoid using technical language or scientific terminology. Use everyday words to communicate your point and explain the science. While language should be understandable, it should not be dumbed down - It may be necessary to use scientific words and jargon in order to convey why your research is special, but be sure to explain it thoroughly and be consistent in its use.
- Use short clear sentences.
- Use paragraphs
- Use an active voice, and place the person/group/thing doing the action at the beginning e.g., 'We ran an experiment,' rather than, 'The experiment was run.'
- Don't use 'don't'. You can write in plain English without becoming too casual/unprofessional.
- Use an appropriate tone. This is not a newspaper article, and its purpose is not to entertain.
- Make sure grammar, punctuation, and spelling are accurate.
- Bullet points (like these ones) can make it easy to digest a lot of information

## 6. Additional Resources

*General resources*

- INVOLVE – UK National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) initiative to support PPI.  
<http://www.invo.org.uk>
- NALA (National Adult Literacy Agency)  
<https://www.nala.ie>

- Access to Understanding: Promoting public understanding of biomedical and health research

<http://www.access2understanding.org>

### Writing a Lay Summary

- Duke, M. (2012). How to write a lay summary.

<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/HowToLaySummariesDec2012.pdf>

### Communicating to patients

- NHS England. Language Matters: Language and Diabetes.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/language-matters.pdf>

### Writing in plain English

- NALA (National Adult Literacy Agency). *Writing and Design Tips*.

[https://www.nala.ie/sites/default/files/publications/Writing%20and%20Design%20Tips%202011\\_1.pdf](https://www.nala.ie/sites/default/files/publications/Writing%20and%20Design%20Tips%202011_1.pdf)

### Budgeting for PPI

- INVOLVE PPI Involvement Cost Calculator

<https://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/involvement-cost-calculator/>

## **7. References**

- 1) INVOLVE. (2018). *What is public involvement in research?* Retrieved from <http://www.invo.org.uk/find-out-more/what-is-public-involvement-in-research-2/>. Accessed 2/08/2018.
- 2) Department of Health. (2017). *National Cancer Strategy (2017-2016)*. Retrieved from <https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/National-Cancer-Strategy-2017-2026.pdf>. Accessed 28/08/2018.

- 3) Brett, J., Staniszewska, S., Mockford, C., Herron-Marx, S., Hughes, J., Tysall, C., & Suleman, R. (2014a). A systematic review of the impact of patient and public involvement on service users, researchers and communities. *The Patient-Patient-Centred Outcomes Research*, 7(4), 387-395.
- 4) Mockford, C., Staniszewska, S., Griffiths, F., & Herron-Marx, S. (2011). The impact of patient and public involvement on UK NHS health care: a systematic review. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 24(1), 28-38.
- 5) Thompson, J., Bissell, P., Cooper, C. L., Armitage, C. J., & Barber, R. (2014). Exploring the impact of patient and public involvement in a cancer research setting. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(1), 46-54.
- 6) Froggatt, K., Preston, N., Turner, M., & Kerr, C. (2014). Patient and public involvement in research and the Cancer Experiences Collaborative: benefits and challenges. *BMJ Supportive & P Care*, 5, 518–521.



# Irish Cancer Society Research

## Appendix 2: Irish Cancer Society Research Budget Guidelines

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## 1. Introduction

The Irish Cancer Society is the largest voluntary funder of cancer research in Ireland. The majority of the Society's funds are raised from public donations and we are therefore committed to ensuring that all funds are budgeted for and used sensibly in line with donor's expectations and the scientific goals of the work. This policy describes the Society's requirements for drafting budgets as part of the research grant submission process.

*Please note:*

- These guiding principles are not an automatic approval for the use of funds from any grant. The Society reserves the right to review expenditure for reasonableness at any time during the research project.
- These guidelines describe the overall general budget guidelines for our awards. More specific budget rules may apply for some bespoke awards, and these rules will be included in the call documentation specific for that award.
- Each research grant has a defined, agreed budget to help carry out the agreed Research Project. It is the responsibility of the research institution to ensure that all monies claimed and paid are allowable, necessary and reasonable for the conduct of the Research Project.
- The Society acknowledge that an approved budget may require modifications over the course of an award. Budget reallocations may be permitted during the lifetime of award provided they are adequately justified on an Irish Cancer Society budget reallocation form. Approval of such reallocations is at the sole discretion of the Society. Details of the budget reallocation process can be found [here](#) on the Irish Cancer Society website.
- It is expected that an internal financial governance structure will be in place to monitor and review allocation of funds for the Research Project.
- Annual and interim financial reports sought by the Society must include a detailed breakdown of costs claimed. The Society reserves the right to request independent verification of costs charged to a research grant.
- The Society reserves the right to refuse the payment of costs which are deemed contrary to the guiding principles contained herein.
- The Society reserves the right, as often as it may reasonably require, to arrange for an audit to be conducted into the use of funds provided.
- As an Irish charity, The Irish Cancer Society will fund eligible direct costs only. The Society do not pay any overhead contribution to host universities

## 2. Budgeting for Personnel Costs

The Irish Cancer Society will only fund the direct salaries of staff working on Irish Cancer Society research projects provided it is expressly stated in the call documentation specific to

a particular funding award. For the majority of awards, the Irish Cancer Society will not provide funding for the salaries of applicants already employed by their host-institution on a full-time permanent basis. Exceptions may be made in certain research calls or applicant cohorts that allow for the provision of buy-out time. In addition, the Irish Cancer Society will not contribute to the salaries of any project mentors or collaborators included on a grant application.

It is expected that all applicants will budget for salary to include employers' PRSI and pension contributions in accordance with the appropriate salary scale and research institution. Where an applicant is budgeting for a part-time position, salaries should only be budgeted for the % full-time equivalent (FTE) that the employee will spend working on that specific research project. Please note The Irish Cancer Society may ask the employee to provide evidence (e.g. records or timesheets etc.) for specific time spent on the funded research project. For all positions, the Irish Cancer Society will allow a staff member to move up a point on the scale every 12 months. This **must** be incorporated into the original budget application.

## **2.1. Academic Research Staff**

The Irish Cancer Society will fund the direct salaries of academic research members according to [the IUA Researcher Salary Scale](#). The scale, point and full salary (including employers PRSI and pension contribution) must be included within all salary budgets. Please note the IUA scales are continually updated, therefore, it is important to utilise the most up to date scale according to the time period in which the anticipated staff member is due to commence employment. The IUA scales are continually changing, therefore if the IUA scale does not cover the funding period in question, a salary contingency of 2.5% per annum should be applied.

### 2.1.1. Research Assistant:

The Irish Cancer Society will fund the salary of a Research Assistant starting at the entry level position of Level 1, Point 1 of the IUA Scale, which is the minimum point on the scale. It would be expected at this level that the Research Assistant would hold a primary degree but would likely have little or no research experience. For higher points on the scale, the individual would be expected to hold a secondary degree (Masters/PhD) and/or some research experience. Higher points on the scale would need to be thoroughly justified in grant applications.

#### 2.1.2. Postdoctoral Fellow:

The Irish Cancer Society will fund the salary of a Postdoctoral Researcher starting at the minimum point of Level 2, Point 1 of the IUA Scale. It would be expected at this level that the postdoctoral fellow would hold a minimum of PhD or equivalent\* research experience. For higher points on the scale, the individual would be expected to hold a number of years (depending on the point) postdoctoral and/or industry experience. Higher points on the scale would need to be thoroughly justified in grant applications.

*\*Please note that PhD equivalency is only permitted for certain grant calls, and will be specifically outlined in the grant call guidelines. The Irish Cancer Society defines PhD equivalence as three or more senior (first, joint-first, or last) author publications in peer-reviewed academic journals or 4 years' full-time research experience post-primary degree. Alternative research outputs may be considered eligible e.g. monographs. In such instances, candidates should contact grants@irishcancer.ie before applying.*

#### 2.1.3. Research Fellow:

The Irish Cancer Society will only fund the salary of a Research Fellow if it is expressly stated in the call guidance document. A Research Fellow will be required to hold at least 4 years post-doctoral and/or industrial research experience and must have a significant track record of high-quality peer reviewed publication and/ or other equivalent outputs based on the norms of their discipline. In addition, it will be expected that the Research Fellow has previously obtained independent competitive peer-reviewed research grants, and is capable of leading and managing independent research projects. Research Fellows should be appointed at Level 3, point 1 of the IUA scale, and a strong justification will be required to appoint at other points on the scale.

#### 2.1.4. Postgraduate Student:

**Stipend:** The Irish Cancer Society will fund the stipend of postgraduate students (PhD and MSc) at a flat rate of €18,500 per year for up to four years' full time (in the case of PhD Scholar's) or up to two years full-time (in the case of MSc students). The funding of part-time post-graduate students over longer periods of time may be permitted depending on the specific funding call.

**Fees:** The Irish Cancer Society will make a contribution of up to €8000 towards the annual costs of EU or non-EU postgraduate registration fees for up to four years. Some host institutions provide a reduction of fees in the latter years of the postgraduate degree (e.g. a 50% reduction in Year 4 of a PhD) and this should be taken into account when calculating the total registration fees over the four years. The Society is not in a position to fully fund the full registration fees of non-EU applicants. In this instance it would be the responsibility of the host institution to cover the remaining fee's shortfall.

## **2.2. Nursing and Allied Health Professionals**

The Irish Cancer Society will fund the direct salaries of nurses and allied health professionals (AHPs) either via the [IUA Researcher Salary Scale](#) or via buy-out time on the HSE salary scale, whichever is the most appropriate for the call and/ or applicant. For appointments on the IUA Researcher salary scale, applicants should follow the guidelines outlined in Section 2.1.

For applicants seeking buy-out using the HSE salary scales, a maximum of 0.5 FTE buy-out time will be permitted for applicants who will hold a concurrent clinical post in their professional field. Only applicants that are permanently employed by the HSE may use this salary scale. Applicants should use the scale and salary point most relevant for their role and experience within the HSE. A strong justification will be required as to why specific salary points were chosen.

## **2.3. Research Support Staff**

For large programmatic awards, the Irish Cancer Society will, in certain circumstances, allow for the budgeting of research support staff (project managers, project officers, project admin staff etc.). In this instance, salaries should be aligned to the most appropriate administrator scale for the specific research institution. Strong justification on all scales and salary points will be required.

## **3. Guiding Principles for Budgeting for Non Personnel Costs**

### **3.1. Research Running Costs**

These are the day to day costs associated with the running of the research project. The Irish Cancer Society will allow the purchase of reasonable running costs relevant to the specific project. Such costs may include but are not limited to: materials and consumables, research sample costs, access costs, survey costs, costs associated with research participants, transcription costs, data management costs, bench fees etc. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable. All running costs should be itemised within the application budget section and suitably justified.

#### **3.1.1. Small Equipment items**

The Irish Cancer Society will allow researchers to purchase small equipment items up to a maximum total value of €3,000. A strong justification must be provided for each equipment

item, and a rationale must be given as to why this item is not already available to the researcher at their host institution. Only equipment items that are **specific** to the applicant's research project will be allowed. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.

#### 3.1.2. Computer/Laptop Equipment:

The purchase of computer equipment as part of an Irish Cancer Society funding award will be considered for any grant of over 24 months' duration, provided a strong rationale is given at the time of grant application. The maximum allowed budget for the purchase of a computer or laptop is €1,500. For funding awards of less than 24 months' duration, the purchase of computer equipment will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Any computer or laptop purchased as part of an Irish Cancer Society award is the property of the host institution, and any use of such equipment by the researcher or research team beyond the end date of the Irish Cancer Society grant is at their discretion.

#### 3.1.3. Mobile phone expenses:

The Irish Cancer Society will not generally cover mobile phone expenses of any researcher working on a Society-funded project. However, the Society do acknowledge that for exceptional cases only, the provision of a phone for specific research projects may be required.

In this case, the researcher must use the most economical and cost-effective means for purchasing a phone and bill-pay call plan. The Society will cover mobile phone charges verifiably associated with the research work up to a maximum of €40 per month only. Please refer to the Irish Cancer Society Researcher Expenses Policy for further detail.

### **3.2. Training**

These are the costs associated with the education and training of the grant applicant and/or other Irish Cancer Society team members. These include costs relating to technical skills training specific to the research project e.g. animal handling, statistical analysis etc. In addition, costs relating to the long-term career development of the researchers will also be permitted e.g. personal and professional development training etc. providing it relates to their future research career aspirations.

All costs relating to training must be outlined and justified as part of the researcher's application budget. When justifying these costs, it is important to provide details on the training type, location and rationale. Please note, for any training elements where travel is required, please detail the travel costs as part of the Travel and Dissemination budget (Section 3.4).

### 3.3. Travel and Dissemination

#### 3.3.1. Travel:

These are the costs relating to the travel of the grant applicant and/or other Irish Cancer Society funded team members. Such costs must be directly related to events as part of the research programme and only funded researchers will be eligible to claim these expenses. As a charitable organisation, we would expect that all costs in relation to travel be reasonable, and must be clearly justified. Please note that the Irish Cancer Society will fund Economy-Class flights only. Please refer to the Irish Cancer Society Researcher Expenses Policy for further detail on permitted costs.

An example of permitted travel includes but is not limited to: costs associated with attendance at meetings, conferences, patient engagement events, workshops, fostering collaborations etc.

Reimbursement for costs associated with conference attendance will only be provided if the recipient is presenting their specific Society-funded research project in poster and/or oral format. Exceptions may apply for post-graduate students in the first year of study, whom would benefit from attendance at a national conference.

The applicant should provide as much detail as possible at the application stage. For example, if planning to attend a conference: the name, location and dates (where possible) of the conference should be detailed, in addition to the reason for attendance.

#### 3.3.2. Dissemination:

These are the costs associated with the communication and reporting of your research results. A key priority of the Society is to ensure that research findings are communicated to all relevant stakeholders. In particular, we are committed to ensuring that the public (particularly people affected by cancer) are kept up to date on our research that is funded. In line with this, we require that all applicants produce a dissemination plan that includes communication of their research not only to the academic community but to **all relevant** audiences.

Dissemination costs should be clearly planned and articulated as part of your research budget. Such costs may include printing, posters, generation of leaflets, publication costs, costs associated and hosting of public awareness events etc. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.

### 3.3.3. Open Access Publication:

The Irish Cancer Society encourage publication in open-access journals and will provide a contribution of up to €2,000 towards open-access publication costs. Please note, the Irish Cancer Society will not fund any research published in so called “predatory journals”. We therefore ask that all researchers be aware of predatory publishers and exercise caution in this regard when publishing their research.

### **3.4. PPI costs**

The Irish Cancer Society is dedicated to putting patients, families, survivors, supporters, and the public at the very heart of what we do. Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the research process ensures that research is meaningful and of benefit to those affected by cancer and other relevant stakeholders. PPI can be involved at any stage of a research project, from development and design to interpretation and dissemination.

In line with this commitment, it is encouraged that all applicants include PPI within their application where relevant, and guidelines on this will be outlined within the guidance documentation specific to each call. The Irish Cancer Society have specific documentation in place for developing a PPI Budget and these can be found in Appendix 1 of all call document guidelines.

A mandatory provision for specifically costing PPI activities into grant applications is included in the majority of Irish Cancer Society funding calls, and will be outlined in the specific call documentation. At the very minimum it is expected that that all costs to patient members associated with involvement are covered by the research grant e.g. bus/train fares, mileage, parking charges, and subsistence. These costs should be outlined as part of the PPI section of your grant application.

### **3.5. Mobility Element**

As part of our Scholarship and Fellowship Research Awards, applicants are given the opportunity to request mobility funding for travel to a national or (preferably) international research institution in furtherance of advancement of their research project aims. This is considered separate to the general travel and dissemination budget outlined in the main project application. The specific details, amount and duration of mobility funding will be outlined in the specific grant call documentation.

Details of mobility funding is requested at the application stage. However, please note that this funding is separate to the funding amount requested as part of the main application. In recognition that mobility plans can often change through-out the course of the research

project, all successful applicants must reapply for this funding closer to the period of travel (at least three months in advance of travelling). Applicants therefore have the opportunity to change the details of the mobility element during the research award. However, final approval of all changes is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

Allowable mobility costs include travel, subsistence, accommodation, and running costs. Mobility payments will only be made by the Irish Cancer Society upon approval of a successful mobility application. Further guidance on expenses permitted as part of the mobility award are detailed in the Irish Cancer Society Researcher Expenses Policy or by contacting [grants@irishcancer.ie](mailto:grants@irishcancer.ie).