Supported by nccp National Cancer Control Programme

Irish Cancer Society Research

Cancer Nurse Researcher Award 2025

Guidelines for Applicants

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Guidelines for Applicants

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

The Irish Cancer Society Cancer Nurse Researcher Award, with kind support from the HSE National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP), offers motivated **nurse-led** research teams the opportunity to conduct innovative cancer research which will positively impact **patient care and outcomes**.

This award is a transformative investment in a nurse researcher who demonstrates great potential in driving and leading clinically relevant and innovative cancer research in Ireland. Funding is intended to support a nurse-led, partnership-based research project between nursing professionals and academic researchers based in the Republic of Ireland. These **clinical-academic partnerships** encourage research that is of the highest quality and clinical relevance, while expediting the translation of research into practice.

Research proposals should align with the National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026 and Irish Cancer Society Strategy 2020-2025.

1.2. Indicative Timelines

Milestone	Date*
Application Deadline	**Thursday 18th September 2025, 3pm**
Review	September/Early-October 2025
Interviews	Week of 10th – 15th November 2025
Awardees Announced	Friday 15th November 2025

*Please note: the above dates are provisional and are subject to change at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

1.3. Aims & Objectives

The overarching **aim** of the Cancer Nurse Researcher Award is to stimulate, develop, and support cancer nursing research in the Republic of Ireland.

As such, the **objectives** of this award are to:

- Support the career development of a nurse researcher in driving and leading clinically relevant and innovative cancer research.
- Fund nurse-led, partnership-based cancer research which will positively impact patient care and outcomes.
- Fund research which is clearly aligned with the National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026 and Irish Cancer Society Strategy 2020-2025.
- Foster national and international collaborations to promote cancer research innovation in the Republic of Ireland.

The Cancer Nurse Researcher Award also aims to support **clinical-academic research** partnerships in the Republic of Ireland:

- Clinical-academic teams considering applying should comprise of at least two joint-lead applicants who will collectively undertake a body of research work.
- At a minimum, the team must have one nursing professional working in an oncology/cancer-related clinical role (*Clinical Nurse Research Lead*) and one researcher working in an academic role (*Academic Research Lead*). Further eligibility requirements are listed in Section 2.
- The two project leads should work collaboratively to achieve success in the project and enhance the research capacity and leadership of the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*.
- While each partner may take on certain responsibilities attuned to their skill set, it is expected that both partners will play a role in all aspects of the project. Each partner will bring different expertise, allowing for reciprocal learning opportunities.

Role Objectives for Co-Lead Applicants

The expected role objectives for the co-lead applicants, who make up the clinical-academic research partnership, are detailed below:

- **Clinical Nurse Research Lead**:
  - Existing clinical role must be backfilled (**for a minimum of 1 day per week**) for the duration of the award to allow for protected time to carry out research obligations.
  - Be the primary driver of the proposed research programme and be involved in most (if not all) aspects of the research, including governance and decision-making.

  - Be the person who carries out the research activities, and acts as project manager for the proposed body of work.
  - Provide clinical expertise (e.g., conceptualisation of clinically relevant research, clinical site logistics, patient recruitment, health system navigation) and act as the primary clinical advisor for the duration of the award.

- **Academic Research Lead**:
  - Secure protected research time for the duration of the award to adequately carry out proposed research programme obligations.
  - Act as host institution liaison for clinical site(s) and *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*.
  - Provide academic/scientific expertise in terms of good research practice, scientific excellence, navigating academic procedures (e.g. grant administration, ethical approval, academic writing, data protection), research policy and governance.
  - Support the research development of the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*, in accordance with their outlined career development plan.

1.4. Funding and Duration

Applicants can apply for a maximum **€150,000** funding for a minimum funding period of **18 months**.

The Cancer Nurse Researcher Award 2025 will fund **one applicant team** to undertake a nurse-led, partnership-based research project.

Training and Education

The *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* is entitled to pursue suitable postgraduate training and education (e.g., research-focused degrees) in furtherance of their career in cancer research. Qualifications must be completed within the timeframe of the award. Qualifications that are primarily clinically focused are not eligible for funding.

Please contact grants@irishcancer.ie if you are considering the inclusion of formal postgraduate training/education opportunities within your application.

2. Eligibility

2.1. Applicant Eligibility

Applications from individuals that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be considered. Please note, each lead applicant **may only be listed on one application** for this award**.**

Clinical Nurse Research Lead:

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

At a minimum, the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a professional qualification in nursing.
- Be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland.
- Hold a nursing appointment at a public hospital or community healthcare service in the Republic of Ireland.
- Be working in an oncology-based discipline or working directly with people affected by cancer*.
- Have a track record of research experience including, but not limited to, recruitment and data collection in research studies; conducting clinical audits; presentation at research meetings or conferences; authoring publications; completion of research training.
- Show a demonstrable commitment a career involving cancer research.
- Act as the clinical advisor/expert to the research project for the duration of the award (e.g., conceptualisation of clinically relevant research, clinical site logistics, patient recruitment, health system navigation). There must be clear evidence of this role through-out the application and for the duration of the award.
- Be able to fulfil the clinical lead role objectives set out in Section 1.3.

*Please note: Eligible candidates must spend the vast majority, if not all, of their time focusing on cancer care.

Academic Research Lead:

Minimum Eligibility Criteria:

At a minimum, the *Academic Research Lead* must meet the following criteria:

- Must hold a post (permanent or on a contract basis), for the entire duration of the research project, at a host institution in the Republic of Ireland. This must be listed as a HRB-approved host institution (See Section 2.2 Institution Eligibility).

- Possess a PhD or equivalent* in an academic field appropriate to the proposed project.
- Have a minimum of five senior authorships (first, joint-first, or last) in peer-reviewed academic publications.
- Demonstrate a clear and strong level of support from their host institution.
- Be an established senior researcher with a track record in research; for example, a history of principal investigator roles, history of grant awards, involvement in clinical trials, research supervision, national or international research partnership development, presentation at national or international conferences, etc.
- Act as an academic/scientific advisor to the research project for the duration of the award; providing guidance and support to the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*, in terms of the academic aspects of the research award. There must be clear evidence of this role through-out the application and for the duration of the award.
- Be able to fulfil the academic lead role objectives set out in Section 1.3.

* PhD equivalence is defined as at least three or more senior (first, joint-first, or last) author publications in peer-reviewed academic journals (in addition to minimum authorship requirements above) **OR** 4 years' full-time research experience post-primary degree. In such instances, candidates should contact grants@irishcancer.ie before applying.

Co-Applicants and Collaborators:

Co-Applicants

Each application may include up to 10 co-applicants. Co-applicants must play a significant role in the development or delivery of the application or proposed project (e.g., significant contribution to the direction of the research), or someone who plays a significant role in the conduct of the research or research-related activity. If proposals are co-designed with key stakeholders (e.g., people affected by cancer, PPI groups), they may also be added as a co-applicant. A role description is required for each co-applicant. Each co-applicant will be required to confirm their participation through the online system prior to application submission.

Collaborators

Official collaborators can be included in applications, once they have a significant, distinct, and clearly definable role in the design or delivery of the research. Superfluous collaborations, or those mentioned in name only, are not permitted. Each collaborator must clearly add value integral to the proposed research project.

2.2. Institution Eligibility

Host Institution (Academic)

The host institution is the 'academic' organisation in the Republic of Ireland, where the *Academic Research Lead* must hold a post, for the entire duration of the research project.

The host institution 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 based in the Republic of Ireland and must be named in the HRB-approved host institution list below* ** :

- Atlantic Technological University
- Dublin City University
- Munster Technological University
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth (Maynooth University)
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- South-East Technological University
- Technological University Dublin
- Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
- The University of Dublin (Trinity College Dublin)
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Galway
- University of Limerick

*Research can be conducted out of non HRB-approved sites (e.g., hospital) but lead applicants must nominate an approved host institution (i.e., academic), and all finances must be managed by this host institution.

**Please contact the Society with any queries regarding institutional eligibility (grants@irishcancer.ie).

Clinical Site

The *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* should hold a nursing appointment at a public hospital or community healthcare service in the Republic of Ireland- to be known as the 'clinical site'.

Organisational support for the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* is very important for this award, demonstrated by strong letters of support from appropriate personnel (See

Section 4g). Clinical sites must acknowledge that they fully support the application and will enable the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* to fulfil research award obligations (for a minimum of 1 day per week).

The clinical site may require staffing rearrangements or the appointment of new staff (i.e., to cover buy-out time, backfill, or protected research time for a minimum of 1 day per week). Clinical sites must also agree to provide indemnity cover, if required, for relevant staff carrying out research at the clinical site.

Please note that the clinical site cannot act as the host institution. Research can be conducted out of non HRB-approved clinical sites (e.g., hospital) but lead applicants must nominate an approved host institution (i.e., academic), and all finances must be managed by this host institution.

2.3. Eligible Research Areas

This award is intended to support innovative **cancer research** which will positively impact **patient care and outcomes**.

Eligible research proposals should align with the National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026 and Irish Cancer Society Strategy 2020-2025. Please ensure you refer to these documents prior to applying.

Proposed research should seek to improve the care and outcomes experienced by people living with and beyond cancer- in **any area relevant to cancer nursing**. Research projects in the area of basic or translational science are not eligible.

Intervention Development Projects:

If considering an intervention development study, proposals should favour a single development phase rather than attempting to complete the entire development life cycle within a single project. The proposed stage of development must appropriately align with any previous development phases completed prior to this application.

Applicants should not attempt to develop a novel intervention where a similar intervention already exists, unless there is robust justification of need. If considering a complex intervention, please refer to the Medical Research Council's Framework for Developing and Evaluating Complex Interventions or similar for guidance.

If you are unsure if your proposed research programme is eligible, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie.

2.4. Public and Patient Partnerships/Involvement

The Irish Cancer Society and NCCP are dedicated to putting patients, families, survivors, supporters, and the public at the very heart of what we do. Public and Patient Partnerships (PPP) or Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the research process ensures that research is meaningful and of benefit to those affected by cancer. PPP/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 expected that all applicants include the following within their application*:

- a detailed PPP/ PPI plan
- minimum **€7,500** budget allocation
- sharing of research findings plan within their application.

It is strongly recommended that applicants read Appendix 1 'Public and Patient Partnership (PPP) in Research' Guidelines prior to beginning work on an application.

*Please note, all applicants that are invited to interview for this award will be required to address comments from the PPI review panel where relevant and provide a revised PPP/PPI plan if requested.

2.5. Research Impact

Ensuring that the research funded by the Irish Cancer Society creates an impact has always been a key priority to the Society. In line with our current strategy 2020-2025, the Irish Cancer Society will place a greater focus on maximising and measuring the impact of the research that the Irish Cancer Society funds through our grant schemes. Research impact refers to the potential real-life implications that the research has beyond the lab or academia.

Research impact is of particular importance to the Cancer Nurse Researcher Award, which aims to support clinically relevant research through clinical-academic partnerships, expediting the translation of research into practice.

Applicants are required to complete an Impact Plan as part of the application process. The Research Impact Framework (RIF) is a guide on research impact and how to monitor it for those applying for funding from the Irish Cancer Society, and for grant holders who are successful in securing a grant. It is strongly recommended that the RIF is consulted when completing the impact plan and it is included at the end of this document (**Appendix 3**).

3. Application Procedure

3.1. Application Overview

This is a two-stage application process, including a written application stage and an interview stage. Both co-lead applicants must read through this application procedure section prior to preparing their proposal.

Either lead applicant may initiate an application. The second lead applicant can then be added to the application within the form. For instance, the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* may create the application initially and subsequently add the *Academic Research Lead* to the application. The *Academic Research Lead* would then have access to the form, with editing capabilities.

The research project should be **designed and jointly written by both co-lead** applicants. The application must not be written by the clinical or academic lead alone.

Stage	Description
Stage 1: Full Application	The full application allows applicants to provide a detailed written plan for the award. Each application will be evaluated by an independent review panel, made up of academic/clinical experts (scientific panel) and experts by lived experience (public & patient involvement (PPI) panel). Applications that are of the highest quality will be shortlisted to the next stage, interviews. Reviewer feedback will be made available to applicants*.
Stage 2: Interviews	Interviews are conducted between shortlisted applicants and the review panel. Interviews will be conducted the week of **10th-15th November 2025****. Feedback from the full application stage should be used to revise and improve the application in advance of the interviews. Both applicants will be expected to attend the interview, and both will be expected to display an in-depth knowledge of the proposed research project.

* Reviewer feedback will be made available to unsuccessful applicants on request. Please email grants@irishcancer.ie to request your feedback.

** Please note: the above dates are provisional and are subject to change at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

3.2. How to Apply

Applications must be completed and submitted through the Irish Cancer Society online grant management system. To submit an online application, you are required to register at the following address: https://grants.cancer.ie. When registering, please fill out all fields on the registration form.

Please note: We recommend that you use a **non-HSE email address** when creating this application to avoid any security issues when receiving correspondence from the grant tracker online system.

When you enter your login details, you will be directed to the portal homepage. From here, you can:

1. Update your basic information (please make sure all fields are completed)
2. Make a new grant application
3. Access previous grant applications
4. Manage any active grants

When you have entered your basic details, you will be able to create a new application from the portal homepage. Alternatively, select '**New Application**' from the '**My Applications**' tab. Next, click '**Apply**' for the Grant Type detailed as '**Cancer Nurse Researcher Award 2025**'.

4. Application Form

There are 9 sections outlined on the left-hand side of the page:

a) Application Outline
b) Clinical-Academic Team Details
c) Co-Applicant and Collaborator Details
d) Scientific Research Programme
e) Plain Language Summary & PPP/PPI Plan
f) Research Impact
g) Organisational Support
h) Budget
i) Validation Summary

Saving your progress regularly is strongly recommended by clicking 'Save' as you go through the application form. 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.

Mandatory sections are marked with a red circle icon. You will not be able to submit the application if these sections are incomplete.

Further details on each section of the application form

a) Application Outline

In this section, you will be asked to provide basic information about your application. Input and save the information as required under the following headings:

- Proposed title
- Proposed start date (not before 01/01/2026; must begin by end Q1 2026)
- Funding period/grant duration (must be >18 months)
- Lead applicants' details
- Proposed host institution
- Research sites activity
- Research classification and themes
- Keywords

b) Clinical-Academic Team Details

In this section you will be asked to provide greater detail on the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* and *Academic Research Lead* applicants, including CVs, information on the proposed research partnership, and a career development plan for the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*.

- **Co-Lead Applicants' Curriculum Vitae (CV):** Please upload a CV for both lead applicants. Each CV should be completed using the template provided (the template is downloadable in this section on the online system) and be no more than three pages long. More information on each CV section is given in the template. Please only fill in relevant details, certain sections can be left blank if not applicable to the applicant's career stage. To upload your CV, click 'Attach', 'Choose File', then click 'Attach'. This must be in pdf format, using the Irish Cancer Society Senior (>2 years postdoctoral experience) or Junior CV template.

- **Research Partnership:** The partnership between the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* and *Academic Research Lead* is a core aspect of this award. It is expected that partners will work closely together to ensure the success of this project and reciprocally learn from each other's expertise. In this section, you should describe the nature of the partnership (**500 words max**). Please consider the following:
    - Details on whether the co-lead applicants have previously worked together and the nature of this previous partnership.
    - An overview of how the clinical-academic research partnership will work practically over the course of the study (including information such as number and format of interactions, etc.).
    - An overview of how responsibilities will be divided amongst the co-lead applicants.
    - Details of the knowledge-sharing that will reciprocally occur between the co-lead applicants (i.e., what unique knowledge/ experience will each partner bring to the table?).
    - Please Note: The successful applicant team will be expected to provide evidence of this research partnership throughout the award as part of the reporting process.

- **Clinical Nurse Research Lead Career Development Plan:** This award is intended to be a transformative investment in a nursing professional. Please describe the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*'s short- and longer-term career goals and how the funding will contribute to these goals (**600 words max**). Please consider the following:
    - *Clinical Nurse Research Lead*'s career plans and ambitions.
    - How this award would be transformative to their career and establish them as a leader in research (please be as specific as possible).
    - What skills will be obtained by the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* and how this will contribute to their career plans.

- The next steps following the completion of the proposed research programme (i.e., longer-term career goals), including any funding body/bodies to which a future proposal(s) might be submitted.

c) Co-Applicant and Collaborator Details

In this section, you will be asked to add any co-applicants or collaborators to the application. Please note that this section is not formally assessed and, as such, applications without co-applicants or collaborators will not be penalised. Please consult Section 2.1 prior to adding co-applicants/collaborators.

- **Co-Applicants:** Each application may include up to 10 co-applicants. A role description is required for each co-applicant. To add a co-applicant(s), you must search for them by email. If the co-applicant has already created an account, they will appear on the list. To add them, click 'Select', and the co-applicant will subsequently receive a notification via email. If the co-applicant does not appear on the list, they may not have an account. You can click 'Add a New Contact' and enter their name and email address. Once added, the co-applicant will receive a notification via email. Co-applicant(s) will be directed to confirm their participation through the online system.

- **Collaborators:** You may provide a brief description of any relevant collaborations. Official collaborators are not signatories on an application and do not need to confirm their participation.

d) Scientific Research Programme

Please provide an overview of the proposed research programme to be covered by this award, including the basis for research, hypothesis and/or aims, and methods. You will also be asked to provide a Gantt Chart. More information on each of these sections is provided below. A separate textbox will be provided for references.

- **Basis for Research:** Please describe previously published research which forms the basis of your research proposal. Include details of any initial research carried out by the co-lead applicant team that underpins the proposed research (**400 words max**).

- **Hypothesis and/or Aims:** Please outline the hypothesis, research questions, and/or aims of your research proposal. Please ensure that the aims are realistic and achievable in the funding period. Consider patients' cancer care and outcomes, which are the particular focus of this award (**200 words max**).

- **Research Methods:** Please describe and justify the methods, procedures, and experimental design you will use to conduct your research (**1,000 words max**).
    - For quantitative research, please provide statistical analysis plan for each section of your research proposal, including power calculations, sample sizes, details of control groups, etc. Additionally, discuss the recruitment plan, including feasibility of obtaining/accessing sufficient/required sample sizes of relevant participant groups.
    - For qualitative research, please describe the planned approach. You may choose to discuss sample size and rationale, data collection methodologies (e.g., interviews, focus groups, and transcription procedures), analytic framework(s), and sources of bias (if appropriate). Additionally, please discuss the methodology and feasibility of recruiting the planned sample size.

- **Gantt Chart:** You must upload a Gantt chart for the proposed research, which includes PPP/PPI activities. The chart must be uploaded in PDF format. Gantt charts should be restricted to a single page, where possible.

- **Research Images:** You may optionally upload up to five relevant research images. All uploads must be in PDF format. Please ensure that figures/ graphs are legible when uploading. Illegible figures may be difficult for the PPI review panel to assess and could detract from your application.

e) Plain Language Summary & PPP/PPI Plan

In this section, please provide an accessible summary of the proposed study and your plan for co-developing and integrating clearly identifiable public & patient involvement. An expert PPP/PPI Panel will review this section. As such, please use plain, accessible language and if technical terms are used, they must be explained.

Patient involvement and partnership is a fundamental aspect of the application. It is strongly recommended that applicants read **Appendix 1 'Public and Patient Partnership (PPP) in Research**' Guidelines prior to beginning work on this section.

- **Project Summary:** Please provide a detailed and structured plain-language abstract; detailing the following (**500 words max**):
    - Briefly outline the background of your research proposal, i.e., how and why your proposal came about and the context in which your proposal will take place.
    - Describe the specific problem, issue, or question that you are asking in your research proposal and describe how you are addressing it

(including the variables being measured and why you have chosen these specific variables). Consider variables relating to patients' cancer care and outcomes which are the particular focus of this award.

- If relevant, outline who will *participate* in your research, how you intend to recruit them into your study, and what they will be expected to do if they take part (please note that research *participants* are different to PPI representatives).
- Detail how the proposed research is relevant and important to people affected by cancer.

- **Involvement Plan:** Along with career development, it is important that successful applicant teams also use the award to build relevant PPP/PPI networks in Ireland. By building these networks it is expected that the applicant will incorporate PPP/PPI in their current and future research, for example including public & patient partners as part of future grant applications**.** In this section, please detail your plans to build on existing or establish new PPP/PPI networks in Ireland that are relevant to your research, and how you plan to include PPP/PPI in your research going forward (**500 words max**). Please consider the following:

  - What is the overall goal of your PPI plan?
  - What are the aims and objectives of your PPI plan?
  - At what stage of the research programme will patients and other stakeholders be involved, e.g., planning, design, implementation, management, evaluation, dissemination?
  - What will be expected of the patients and stakeholders who become involved? What is the burden of involvement and how will people's time and expenses be compensated?
  - Please describe any patient or stakeholder involvement that has occurred to date in the development of the proposal.
  - How will the planned involvement activities influence the research and how will you ensure that the involvement activities are not tokenistic?
  - What key patients and stakeholders will be involved, how many will be recruited, and from where will they be identified?
  - Articulate the challenges that might arise from involving patients in your research and how any issues will be prevented or overcome.
  - What, if any, supports or training will be available to those involved?
  - What PPI supports are available to you locally or nationally and how will these supports be utilised?
  - **Please note:** While patient participation and engagement activities are encouraged as part of this plan, the Society will only fund applications that predominately include true 'involvement' or 'partnership' activities. Please see **Appendix 1** for further details and examples.

- **Sharing Research Findings:** As the largest voluntary funder of cancer research in Ireland, the Irish Cancer Society relies on the generous donations from the public 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, in particular 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. (**300 words max**).

f) Research Impact

In this section, you will be asked to provide an impact plan, detailing how the input of this funding will ultimately result in meaningful impact for people who are affected by cancer. Please consult the **Research Impact Framework (RIF) (Appendix 3**) when completing this section. Both the PPI and Scientific Review Panels will review this section. It should be written in a manner that is accessible to both reviewer groups.

Creating impact from the research that we fund has always been of great importance to the Irish Cancer Society and NCCP. The purpose of including an impact plan at the application stage is to focus all projects on working towards achieving impact from the outset. This will be drafted in line with the Irish Cancer Society's Strategic Objectives 2020-2025.

For the Irish Cancer Society, research impact is defined as **'research being used to bring about a positive change to the lives of people affected by cancer'** i.e., the real-life benefit of the research and the impact of the research beyond academia.

When applying for a grant or planning a research project, you usually have a goal or question that you aim to answer by completing the proposed body of work. However, it is the Irish Cancer Society's duty to ensure that the research we fund makes a difference to the lives of those affected by cancer. Therefore, it is important to start thinking about the **pathway to impact** from the start of the project. Thinking about the tangible impact of your research will provide you with a strong foundation when a grant gets underway. As such, plans should be as comprehensive and considered as possible.

We are aware that an impact plan provided by researchers at the application stage may be somewhat limited as the project has not yet started, and it can be difficult to predict research results or how a research landscape may change over time. It is important that you are realistic; there is no need to overstate the impact of your research. Impact can be direct and indirect, and it may happen slowly over time.

An impact plan can be designed using the **sequence of steps outlined in the figure below:**

What you need

Resources required to do your research e.g. funding, staff, equipment.

What you do

Activities involved in doing your research, using the inputs e.g. data collection, analysis etc.

3a. What you deliver

What you produce from your research activities e.g. publications, training programmes.

3b. Impact-Enabling Activities

How you drive outputs to outcomes.

What you change

The meaningful change your research causes for those affected by cancer e.g. increased survival, quality of life, etc.

What impact you have

Working toward a unified goal.

Achieved through bringing about a series of changes to outcome.

3c. Evidence of progress – from outputs to outcomes

This is how you know the research is making a difference e.g. the development of a trial to further examine the research or the submission of a grant application to continue the research.

The recommended approach is to develop the impact plan by working backwards, from goal to inputs. As such, the impact plan should consist of:

5. Goal
4. Outcomes
3*a*. Outputs
3*b*. Impact-enabling activities
3*c*. Evidence of progress
2. Activities
1. Inputs

Please note: Both the PPP/PPI and Scientific Review Panels will review this section. It should be written in a manner that is accessible to both reviewer groups.

Further details on each section of the impact plan follows:

Section	Description & Information
5. Goal	This is the goal of the Irish Cancer Society. It is pre-determined by the Strategy 2020-2025 and cannot be changed. This goal is that 'by 2025, 3 out of 4 Irish cancer patients will survive their diagnosis and everyone affected by the disease will have access to world-class treatment, care, and support. In future, no one in Ireland will die from cancer.' This is the goal that all research funded by the Irish Cancer Society should be working towards. Please note, you will not be required to add anything additional to this category of the impact section.
4. Outcome	To reach the above goal, a number of core changes or 'outcomes' must first be accomplished. These outcomes, identified through stakeholder consultation, will drive us toward our goal. You must select at least one outcome from the below list: — Treatments and diagnostics increase survival.

- Treatments and diagnostics increase the quality of life of people affected by cancer.
- Increased numbers of patients accessing clinical trials and early access programmes.
- Screening increases survival.
- Improved care and support increase survival.
- Improved care and support increase the quality of life of people affected by cancer.
- People affected by cancer feel more empowered in their cancer journey.

You may choose 'other' if you feel strongly that none of the other outcomes covers the potential outcome of your research. If 'other' is selected, then more detail will be required on the proposed outcome.

By targeting a strategic outcome, every funded study funded is contributing to the Society's goal.

3a. Outputs	Planned outputs for the project e.g. publications, newsletters, a website policy document, patents, information leaflets, reports, and training programmes etc. (**150 words max**). These are just examples and are not a comprehensive list. The appropriate outputs will vary for each type of project and what outcome has been selected.
b. Impact-enabling activities	An output is unlikely to achieve a desired outcome on its own. Impact-enabling activities bridge the gap between **outputs** and **outcomes.** Please detail what activities need to occur for the outputs to impact the identified outcome. When will these activities take place? Information can be provided in narrative or bullet point format (**300 words max**).
c. Evidence of progress	Please detail how you will measure the effectiveness of impact-enabling activities i.e. how do you know your activity made a difference? What evidence can be used to show this? Indicators may be qualitative (descriptive or non-numerical) or quantitative (numerical) (**300 words max**).

2. Activities	Please outline the activities that will take place as part of the research project. As a lot of this has been provided in detail as part of the methodology section of your application, a high-level summary of what will be done over the course of the funding period is sufficient. Bullet points may be used (**150 words max**).
1. Inputs	Please detail the resources needed for the project. As a lot of this has been provided in detail as part of your application, a high-level summary is sufficient. Bullet points may be used (**150 words max**).

g) Organisational Support

Organisational support is very important for this award, demonstrated by strong letters of support from appropriate personnel for both the co-lead applicants.

Each application requires an unequivocal and strong organisational declaration of support (in PDF format) from both the **clinical organisation ('clinical site')** of the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* and the **higher education institution ('host institution')** of the *Academic Research Lead*.

Declarations of support should be completed **using the template** provided, downloadable from the application form on the online system.

To upload declarations of support, click 'Attach', 'Choose File', then click 'Attach'. This must be in PDF format, using the Irish Cancer Society Declaration of Support template, to be deemed eligible.

I. **Clinical Site Declaration of Support:** Please upload a letter of support from the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* applicant's Director of Nursing (or equivalent) on behalf of the clinical site organisation (See Section 2.2 Institution Eligibility). Clinical sites must acknowledge that they fully support the application and will enable the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* to fulfil research award obligations, including staffing rearrangements/new staff appointment for a minimum of 1 day per week. Clinical sites must also agree to provide indemnity cover, if required, for relevant staff carrying out research at the clinical site. The letter should describe how this support will be accomplished in the context of providing a clinical service.

II. **Host Institution Declaration of Support:** Please upload a letter of support from the Head of Department at the *Academic Research Lead's* HRB-approved host institution (See Section 2.2 Institution Eligibility). The Head of Department should include acknowledgement that the organisation is aware of the application and will act as host institution should the applicant team be successful. This letter should also include acknowledgement that they will provide the staff of the award with research space, access to resources, and the appropriate insurance cover. On awarding of the funding, a contract will be made between the Irish Cancer Society and the nominated host institution. The declaration of support should indicate that the Head of Department will facilitate this process.

h) Budget

All applications should include a detailed budget, with detailed breakdowns of costs and justification for all costs. The Irish Cancer Society does not cover indirect costs or overheads. **Please consult the Irish Cancer Society Budget Spending and Expenses Guidelines when developing your grant budget (Appendix 2**).

Approval of all budget items is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society. Any budgeted costs that do not adhere to spending guidelines risk rejection. We therefore strongly recommend you get support from the research office in your chosen host institution when preparing this budget.

Please note- While the hiring of junior research staff (e.g., research assistant/nurse) may be considered for the Cancer Nurse Researcher Award 2025, strong justification must be provided and a rationale as to why co-lead applicants cannot carry out the proposed work. In this instance, both co-lead applicants must possess a) significant practical research experience; b) significant research management experience; and c) experience of supervising research staff. If considering this option, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie before applying. The hiring of any senior researchers (e.g., PhD student) is not allowed.

Direct costs can be requested for the following budget categories:

Budget Item	Details
Personnel: **Buy-Out/Backfilling for Research Activities**	The Irish Cancer Society will allow researchers to utilise a proportion of the budget to fund their or another staff members protected time to carry out the research activities. These costs towards research time should be calculated using the most up-to-date HSE or IUA salary scales, as appropriate, and include employer PRSI and pension contributions. Applicable annual increments (e.g. 2.5%) per annum should be included.

	A breakdown of each cost is required, detailing and justifying a) the point, level, and scale used, b) the employer PRSI contribution, c) the employer pension contribution, d) any annual increments, and e) the FTE (full time equivalent) of each post. Scales: HSE: https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/benefitsservices/pay IUA: https://www.iua.ie/research-innovation/researcher-salary-scales/
Travel & Dissemination costs	Costs associated with research dissemination may be budgeted e.g., poster printing, open-access publication costs, engagement events, conference attendance, etc. Include any dissemination-related travel and accommodation costs here.
Running costs & Equipment	Running costs are costs associated with conducting the principal research activities e.g. materials and consumables, survey costs, travel for participants, transcription costs, etc. The Irish Cancer Society will allow researchers to purchase small equipment items up to a maximum value of €3,000. 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 research project will be allowed. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable. Requests for large pieces of equipment will not be funded. The purchase of computer equipment will not be considered for this grant.
Training & Education costs	Education and training for the researcher may be budgeted. This may include attending courses, workshops, professional development training, etc. Include any training-related travel and accommodation costs here. The *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* is entitled to pursue suitable postgraduate training and education (e.g., research-focused degrees) in furtherance of their career in cancer research. Please contact grants@irishcancer.ie if you are considering the inclusion of formal postgraduate training/education opportunities within your application.
PPP/PPI costs	A minimum provision of €7,500 must be budgeted for involvement activities. Research participation costs (e.g. participant travel) should not be included here, as these form part of the running costs of the research project.

Please see Appendix 1- Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines, when developing a PPP/PPI budget.

Please Note: Justification of the costs proposed for each budget item is required. Supporting images of estimated costs (e.g. travel and accommodation costs) may be required.

i) Validation Summary

The validation summary page will notify you of any incomplete sections. You will not be able to submit the application until all required fields are complete.

5. Submission of the Application

The application is ready for submission once the form has been validated on the validation summary page. This will also highlight any co-applicants who have yet to confirm their participation. Once the application has been validated, it may be submitted by the lead applicant who initiated the application.

The application will then be routed to the lead applicant who did not initiate the application for sign-off. For example, if the *Clinical Nurse Research Lead* creates the application form and submits it, the form will be routed to the *Academic Clinical Lead* for sign-off.

The application will not be received by the Society until both co-lead applicants have approved it.

All signatories must approve the application before the application deadline [3pm, Thursday 18th September 2025]. It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to ensure that signatories are given sufficient time to approve the application before the deadline.

Applications must be received by the Society prior to the deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Application Checklist:

- ✓ Completed application form
- ✓ Clinical Nurse Research Lead CV
- ✓ Academic Research Lead CV
- ✓ Declarations of Support (Host Institution, Clinical Site)
- ✓ Gantt Chart
- ✓ Relevant signatures

6. Application Assessment [Stage 1 of 2]

The Irish Cancer Society bases its funding decisions on the recommendations of an external review panel. However, the Society withholds the right to reject any funding application at its own discretion.

Incomplete, ineligible, or late applications, or those which do not use provided templates (e.g., CV, Declarations of Support) will be rejected by the Society and will not proceed to external review.

6.1. Conflicts of Interest

The Society endeavours to ensure that external reviewers are free of any conflicts of interest that might unduly bias the decision-making process.

6.2. Assessment Procedure

Applications will be reviewed by both a panel of international academic/clinical experts (scientific panel) **AND** a panel of experts by experience (PPP/PPI panel). Each reviewer will provide scores and feedback on each application, shortlisting the top applicants for consideration.

Sections of the application will be assessed in the following way:

	PPP/PPI Panel	Scientific Panel
Application	• Research Partnership • Clinical Nurse Research Lead Career Development Plan • Plain Language Summary & PPP/PPI Plan • Timeline (Gantt Chart) • Research Impact • Budget (not scored)	• Application Outline • Clinical-Academic Team Details • Co-Applicant and Collaborator Details • Scientific Research Programme • Research Impact • Organisational Support • Budget (not scored)
Interviews	Reviewers Present	Reviewers Present

It is vital that the sections reviewed by the PPP/PPI panel are written in **plain accessible language**. Failure to do this may result in the PPP/PPI representatives being unable to accurately score and provide feedback on these sections of your application.

The review panel will also be asked to provide feedback on the budget, which the Society will take into consideration. The approval of all grant budget items is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

6.3. Assessment Outcome

The deadline for applications is **3pm, Thursday 18th September 2025**. Applications submitted prior to this deadline will be reviewed and notified of the outcome by email.

Review scores and comments will be collated, and all applications will be discussed at a review panel meeting. The review panel will select which applications should proceed to interviews. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by email. Reviewer feedback will be available to all applicants on request.

7. Interviews [Stage 2 of 2]

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an online interview during the week of 10th-15th November 2025. The interview panel will be made up of scientific and PPI reviewers, in addition to Irish Cancer Society and NCCP representatives.

Applicants will be asked to present a summary of their project, including a response to the review panels' comments. This will be followed by a question-and-answer session.

Both co-lead applicants will be expected to demonstrate a detailed and critical understanding of their proposed project. The final funding decision will be co-decided by the scientific and PPI reviewers.

8. Contact

If you require assistance with the online grant management system or have any questions about the grant call, including questions regarding initiative eligibility, please contact the Irish Cancer Society Research Department:

Email: grants@irishcancer.ie

FAO: Dr Sarah Tighe