

NORF Open Research Fund Priority Actions Call 2023

Call Specification Document

The National Open Research Forum reserves the right to amend this call document

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1. Aim

The NORF Priority Actions Call 2023 targets a set of five actions in Ireland's [National Action Plan for Open Research](#). These actions seek to advance key areas of open research at the national level and proposals will need to demonstrate benefit to all stakeholders across the Irish research system.

A budget range of up to €200,000 per proposal is specified, and it is anticipated that there will be one successful proposal per action.

As further detailed in Section 3, the proposal and assessment process will take part in two stages: 1) Call for Expressions of Interest (EOIs), 2) Invitation to selected applicants to submit full proposals. EOIs and full proposals will be peer reviewed by an international panel.

The five priority actions for this call are as follows:

1. Incentivising Open Research Practices in Ireland
2. Public Engagement and Open Research
3. Mapping National Open Research Infrastructure
4. National Research Data Management Framework
5. Institutional Open Access Policies and Rights Retention

A1: Incentivising Open Research Practices in Ireland

Summary: Conduct a sectoral-level consultation on the incentivisation and rewarding of open research in Ireland, including consideration of research metrics and research assessment, and produce an agreed position paper and roadmap for action.

Key objectives and expected outcomes:

- Convene a representative group of stakeholders, including government, funders and research performing organisations, to prepare a consultation framework.
- Carry out a full consultation with all appropriate bodies, including those representing specific cohorts of researchers and disciplinary specialists, to ascertain: level of readiness, scope of ambition, and requirements needed to establish a fit-for-purpose system to fully recognise and reward open research.
- Produce and secure agreement of a position paper. This paper will include:
 - A roadmap of agreed actions for each stakeholder group.
 - Recommendations on sectoral advisory, monitoring and oversight structures.
 - Recommendations on appropriate metrics and indicators for open research.
 - A national statement on the adoption of responsible research metrics.
- Based on the position paper, recommend actions to NORF for consideration in the next evaluation and revision of the National Action Plan for Open Research, planned for 2025.

Guidance:

- Proposals should aim to deliver actions in the National Action Plan for Open Research related to incentivisation of open research (NAP A.3.2.1), research assessment (A.3.3.1) and responsible research metrics (A.3.3.2).
- The position paper and roadmap should be informed by and aligned with international developments related to the incentivisation of open research, including [ERA Actions](#) on open science and research assessment and the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment.
- For this action, NORF expects proposals from consortia consisting of multiple stakeholder groups.

Background information:

- [National Action Plan for Open Research](#)
- [NORF policy brief on System-level incentivisation of open research practices](#)
- [NORF policy brief on Responsible Research Metrics policy development and alignment](#)
- [NORF National Open Research Landscape Report](#)
- [Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment](#)

Budget range: €150,000-200,000

A2: Public Engagement and Open Research

Summary: Consult widely and appropriately to secure agreement on overall sectoral goals for and strategic commitment to public engagement with research as a part of the open research agenda. Develop and document key recommendations for actions and a roadmap to realise these goals.

Key objectives and expected outcomes:

- Agree sectoral goals for public engagement with research (also known as engaged research and open engagement and to include citizen science, public-patient involvement, research for policy etc.).
- Secure agreement of strategic commitment from key stakeholders across HEIs, funding agencies and relevant government departments.
- Based on sectoral consultation and an international evidence review, develop detailed recommendations on:
 - National support structure(s) to provide:
 - Training and skill development
 - Specialist advice and brokerage for engagement with research beneficiaries and a range of publics, for example: under-represented communities, arts and heritage organisations, policy officials across national and local government etc.
 - Mechanisms to collect evidence, measure and monitor public engagement with research on a national level.
 - Appropriate resourcing and instruments required to realise national goals.
- Produce a roadmap of actions for implementation of the recommendations to include sponsors/roles, deliverables, milestones, resources and timelines.

Guidance:

- Proposals should aim to deliver actions in the National Action Plan for Open Research related to public engagement (A.3.2.3) as an aspect of open research.
- For this action, NORF expects proposals from consortia consisting of multiple stakeholder groups.

Background information:

- [National Action Plan for Open Research](#)
- [NORF National Open Research Landscape Report](#)

Budget range: €150,000-200,000

A3: Mapping National Open Research Infrastructure

Summary: Conduct a mapping exercise to document gaps in the infrastructure supporting open research at national level, propose a national roadmapping process, and recommend future actions.

Note: Research infrastructures can be defined very broadly, but the focus of this project is on e-infrastructures which embody or support the adoption of Open Research approaches and principles, i.e. digital infrastructures that enable open research at various lifecycle stages, both vertical (thematic/disciplinary) and horizontal (networking, compute, data infrastructures, repositories, persistent identifier infrastructures).

Key objectives and expected outcomes:

- Building on previous NORF work, conduct a landscaping and mapping exercise to identify and document current gaps in the national landscape for open research infrastructures. This analysis should include:
 - Identification of gaps for digital infrastructures that enable open research at various lifecycle stages, both vertical and horizontal. Besides local and national, the analysis should also consider gaps in the availability of and/or connection with relevant European infrastructures.
 - Identification of gaps in key datasets of national significance within the Higher Education or adjacent sectors which aren't currently available to researchers as FAIR data or integrated in open research infrastructures.
 - In the absence of a national research infrastructure roadmap, outline the impact of addressing open research infrastructure needs through a coherent and systematic roadmapping process.
- Through stakeholder consultation, propose a national roadmapping strategy, process, funding model and governance structure drawing on best practice and lessons learned from comparable EU Member States.
- Develop a position paper on operationalising the Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructure, including pilot assessments against the principles and recommendations for evaluating and monitoring open research infrastructures.
- Recommend actions to NORF for consideration in the next evaluation and revision of the National Action Plan for Open Research, planned for 2025.

Guidance:

- Proposals should aim to deliver actions in the National Action Plan for Open Research related to research infrastructure roadmapping (A.5.4.1), RDM infrastructure (A.5.2.2) and the Principles of Open Scholarly Infrastructures (A.5.4.2).
- For this action, NORF expects proposals from consortia consisting of multiple stakeholder groups including, but not limited to, research infrastructure providers, research performing organisations and research funding organisations.

Background information:

- [National Action Plan for Open Research](#)
- [NORF policy brief on Research Infrastructure Roadmapping Process](#)
- [NORF National Open Research Landscape Report](#)

Budget range: €150,000-200,000

A4: National Research Data Management Framework

Summary: Align research data management (RDM) policy nationally through the development of a national RDM framework informed by established tools and matrices, and the implementation of institutional RDM policies.

Key objectives and expected outcomes:

- Through stakeholder consultation, including a national survey, develop a national research data management framework to clarify sector-wide RDM roles and responsibilities and agree national reference policy guidelines.
- Develop guidance to support the implementation of RDM policies, including for example, a DMP template framework with disciplinary guidance as appropriate, a framework or criteria for the selection of repositories, guidance on the interaction of RDM with related policies and legislation, methods of versioning and communication of policy changes, and post-project sustainability.
- Consortium members should apply the national RDM framework and related guidance at the local level to create/review, strengthen and support the implementation of institutional RDM policies in line with international best practice and the objectives of the National Action Plan for Open Research.

Guidance:

- Proposals should aim to deliver actions in the National Action Plan for Open Research related to the alignment of policies for the management and sharing of research data (A.5.3) and a national RDM framework (A.5.3.2).
- The national RDM framework should be closely aligned with international frameworks and guidance (e.g. Science Europe, FAIRsFAIR, FAIR-Impact) and build on previous and ongoing NORF work. This should include consultation or collaboration with relevant projects funded by the NORF 2022 Open Research Fund (e.g. open research training, data stewardship network, data storage).

- For this action, NORF expects proposals from consortia that include, but are not limited to, multiple higher education institutions. Proposals should evidence the involvement and support of institutional leadership.

Background information:

- [National Action Plan for Open Research](#)
- [NORF policy brief on RDM policy development and alignment](#)
- [NORF National Open Research Landscape Report](#)

Budget range: €150,000-200,000

A5: Institutional Open Access Policies and Rights Retention

Summary: Develop, strengthen and implement institutional policies for Open Access and rights retention to drive and support OA uptake.

Key objectives and expected outcomes:

- Work as a group of organisations to create/review, strengthen and support institutional Open Access policies in line with the objectives of the National Framework on the Transition to an Open Research, the National Action Plan for Open Research and international exemplars.
- In parallel, consortium members should assess the feasibility of institutional rights retention policies, form a shared statement and/or strategy, and work on implementation in their local contexts to help researchers make their work Open Access immediately.
- Develop guidance, training materials and other resources required to support the implementation of institutional policies for Open Access and rights retention.

Guidance:

- Proposals should aim to deliver actions in the National Action Plan for Open Research related to aligning policies for Open Access to publications (A.4.5) and strengthening rights retention (A.4.2).
- For this action, NORF expects proposals from consortia that include, but are not limited to, multiple higher education institutions. Proposals should evidence the involvement and support of institutional leadership.

Background information:

- [National Action Plan for Open Research](#)
- [NORF National Open Research Landscape Report](#)
- Examples of institutional strategies in other contexts include the [N8 rights retention statement](#)

Budget range: €150,000-200,000

2. Guidelines

2.1 Eligibility Criteria

Individuals can submit as a lead applicant if:

- They are employed (i.e. hold a salaried position) at a publicly-funded higher education institution. These organisations are listed on the website of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/5088c-list-of-publicly-funded-higher-education-institutions/>
- In addition to the above, individuals employed (i.e. holding a salaried position) at the following organisations are eligible as lead applicants:
 - Health Service Executive (HSE)
 - HEAnet
 - ICHEC
 - Marine Institute (Foras na Mara)
 - SFI Research Centres
 - Teagasc (Agriculture and Food Development Authority)
- They also have an appointment period for at least the duration of the application procedure and the entire duration of the proposed project.
- They are not a lead applicant in a project currently in receipt of NORF funding under the [2022 Priority Actions Call](#).

2.2 Additional Conditions

- Each proposal must have one lead institutional partner that meets the conditions above, and collaborations across institutions are encouraged.
- Additional contributors (partner institutions and project members) do not need to meet the conditions laid out above for lead applicants.
- While proposals will be led by host institutions meeting the criteria specified under 2.1, the inclusion of partners from other research performing organisations, research funding organisations, research infrastructure providers and other research stakeholder groups will be welcome, including international organisations.
- The lead applicant may submit a maximum of one application to the NORF Priority Actions Call 2023 in that capacity (i.e., as lead applicant).

2.3 Eligible Costs

Proposals submitted to the NORF Priority Actions Call 2023 should have a proposed duration of up to 24 months and an estimated budget of up to €200,000 (including overheads).

Personnel Costs

In relation to personnel, costs for both existing staff and/or newly hired staff for the project are eligible. Buyout costs for permanent existing staff are allowed (to support existing staff participation in a project through buyout of teaching or other duties), and must be clearly justified as with other costs.

FAIR Data Management Costs

FAIR data management costs refer to data management costs for data generated by the project and incurred within the lifetime of the project (i.e., necessary to manage, store, and archive data produced by, during and about the project). Only costs incurred during the lifetime of the award will be eligible.

Overheads

Overheads are calculated at 25% of full staff costs.

Equipment Costs

Equipment costs needed to implement the proposed project are eligible (i.e., infrastructure and associated services).

2.4 Conditions on Granting

Communication and Dissemination of Results

As part of project dissemination and reporting activities, successful applicants will be required to provide a final report that is written in an accessible and understandable manner, and to actively disseminate findings to reach relevant audiences. Consider that the final report will be expected to:

- Describe the solution, options considered, and outline the rationale underlying choices made.
- Provide thorough analysis and discussion of all findings.
- Demonstrate how the project engaged the wider Irish stakeholders throughout the entire project to create awareness, ensure appropriateness and understanding of the importance of national approaches/solutions.
- Deliver presentation of outputs to NORF and policymakers, and help create awareness and maintain interest in the development of a national approach.

International Context and Contacts

Successful applicants will be expected to reference and apply international best practice throughout their project, integrating key international experience and expertise as

appropriate. It will be a requirement that successful applicant(s) will engage with organisations and institutions with significant experience in the field to analyse and discuss the potential solutions deployed, and where relevant, avail of existing developments (e.g., strategies, policies, software, hardware, other) as best fits the Irish context.

Sustainability and National Scalability

Projects must take a national level approach, and demonstrate how any project elements that are limited in scope can be adapted to meet national research needs (both technically and socially). Projects should also assess financial and operational sustainability beyond the duration of the project. It is important that the decisions around any models and technical infrastructure will be tried and tested so that they provide a valid contribution to broader national implementation in Ireland.

Open Research Requirements

Open Research practices should be followed and identified; a Data Management Plan is required as part of the full application (mandatory- as a separate document: [see Science Europe's DMP template](#)), along with a plan for updating it. It will be a condition of the grant that solutions are open (i.e., no vendor lock-in), that the dissemination of project outputs are Open Access, and that project data are managed and shared in compliance with the FAIR principles.

2.5 Grant Funding Principles

Institutions should be aware of the requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform circular (13/2014) relating to the Management of and Accountability of Grants. Institutions will be asked to confirm that the funds provided by NORF as outlined in the grant allocation letter will be used for the purposes intended and that the institution will comply with the Statement of Principles for Grantees (Appendix 2 of Circular 13/2014) relating to: Clarity; Governance; Value for money; and Fairness.

3. Application Procedure

3.1 Requirements

Submissions to the NORF Priority Actions Call 2023 will be in two stages:

- 1) Call for Expressions of Interest;
- 2) Invitation to selected applicants to submit full proposals.

3.1.1 What is required to submit an Expression of Interest?

- A completed and signed expression of interest form in PDF format.

Please note that Expression of Interest application forms require institutional sign-off by the Lead Institution (i.e. the institution that employs the lead applicant).

3.1.2 What is required to submit a Full Proposal?

- A completed and signed full proposal form in PDF format.
- A data management plan (see 2.4 Conditions on Granting) in PDF format.
- A Gantt chart to illustrate the project timelines, milestones and deliverables in PDF format.

Please note that full proposal application forms require institutional sign-off by the Lead Institution (i.e. the institution that employs the lead applicant).

3.2 Submission of Expressions of Interest

All expressions of interest must be submitted via Jotform by **17:00 (Irish local time) Thursday, 6 April 2023**. The Jotform link is available on the NORF website (<https://norf.ie/2023-open-research-fund/>) under the heading "Priority Actions 2023 - How to Apply". Please note the following:

- Late applications will not be considered.
- Applications must be submitted in PDF format.
- Applications must be submitted by the Lead Applicant.

The application form is available at <https://norf.ie/2023-open-research-fund/>.

3.3 Assessment

Submissions to the NORF Priority Actions Call 2023 will undergo a two-stage proposal and assessment process: 1) Call for Expressions of Interest, 2) Invitation to selected applicants to submit full proposals. EOIs and full proposals will be peer reviewed by an international panel.

Proposals will be assessed based on excellence of approach and outcomes, including the quality of the project proposal, the feasibility of the project plan, how well they propose to

forward the identified target action, and benefit to the Irish research and higher education community as a whole.

In dialogue with the reviewers, NORF will also seek to ensure the widest possible coverage of all actions, and may request further information from applicants, or suggest potential partnerships should similar expressions be received.

3.4 Key Dates

2 March 2023	Call specifications and forms published
31 March 2023	FAQ deadline
6 April 2023	EOI deadline
25 May 2023	EOI outcome
6 July 2023	Full proposals due (from invited applicants)
11 August 2023	Call outcome
16 October 2023	Award start date