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Standard Operating Procedures for Research Applications

Internal and National Funding

15/09/2015

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Research Office

# Introduction

These Standard Operating Procedures for all External Proposal applications and associated Guidelines on the use of the Research Management System (dkit.smartsimple.ie) have been designed to assist all DKIT staff in managing their research proposal applications and to ensure that they are supported by the Research Office. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) relates specifically to applications for **all National financial support** from funders such as, but limited to (i.e. Irish Research Council, Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Higher Education Authority, Health Research Board, and Environmental Protection Agency).

*Please note that external applications for funding can include research grants, teaching & learning grants, scholarships, development grants and bursaries but can also refer to external financial support to engage in an activity e.g. funding to host meetings or travel grants to attend meetings.*

Applications for DkITs Internal funding supports e.g. conference participation, EU networking support, summer internship, are also covered by these guidelines.

The basis for adopting these SoPs and using the Research Management System will ensure the consistent collection and management of research proposal documents. This will allow the Institute to keep record of Best Practice in National funding application and to make tactical and strategic decisions on how DkIT can optimise future applications. In addition, the Research Management System contains data such as value of applications, success rates, value of awards, approvals needed and breakdown of applications.

All researchers – across all Schools, Departments and functional areas applying to any funding body for support of their research or proposal are requested to follow the Standard Operating Procedures and related use of the Research Management System as outlined in this document.

This SoP has been organised into a sequence of five Phases associated with the application for National funding. These phases are:

* Identification of funding opportunity
* Pre-proposal
* Proposal development
* Official Submission
* Post Submission

Responsibilities and timelines for individuals required to participate into the proposal development and pre-application process (e.g. the Researcher, Head of School, Finance Office, Technology Transfer Office, and Head of Research) are outlined for each phase.

## Phase I: Identifying opportunities

There are several possible ways in which a researcher can become aware of funding procurement opportunities and can include:

* Identification of a relevant call by the researcher or the Institute’s Research Office
* Identification of a relevant call through the Research Professional database (www.researchprofessional.com)
* Invitation to collaborate from a colleague (internal or external to the Institute)
* Partner Search sites

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| **Action** | **Staff Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| 1. Individual researchers will undertake periodic reviews of the research calls of relevance to their research\* | Researchers | ASAP/monthly |
| 1. Researchers contacted by an organisation/individual to join a consortium already created or to investigate the possibility to collaborate with DKIT in any capacity are to inform the Head of Research by e-mail of their intention to contribute to the application process | Researchers | ASAP |
| 1. Researchers will upload any relevant documentation to Research Application Management System | Researchers | ASAP |

**\****All Researchers are required to register with Research Professional (*[*https://www.researchprofessional.com/*](https://www.researchprofessional.com/)*). Researchers are to contact the Research Office for details on attend training and information sessions on using Research Professional. All researchers are to review the DkIT Research Application System User Guide* [*(https://www.dkit.ie/research-office/submitting-proposal)*](file:///\\Staff\Home\marmelsg\Internal%20meetings\(https:\www.dkit.ie\research-office\submitting-proposal))

## Phase II: Pre-proposal

Once a relevant National funding opportunity has been identified and a decision to develop an application taken the researcher must log the proposal application on the Research Management System (dkit.smartsimple.ie). If a staff member is not already registered on the research management system they should contact the Research Office immediately ([research.office@dkit.ie](mailto:research.office@dkit.ie)) to receive log-in details.

Applying for research funding is a major undertaking and requires significant effort in terms of time and money. The researcher must be aware that any pre-award expenditure is not an eligible cost. Each partner, including the coordinator, is responsible for their own costs in the preparation for the proposal. At Pre-proposal or the Groundwork stage researchers must assess if they have the time and support to complete the application.

Researchers are requested to meet with the relevant DkIT contributors to the proposal development including the EU Finance Officer, and the Head of School or Research Unit Director to discuss the proposal. These meetings will serve to inform the budget development for the project and identify resources need to complete the project etc.

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| **Action** | **Staff Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| 1. Researcher to log the application on SmartSimple\* | Researcher | ASAP |
| 1. Researcher to provide contact details of all potential partners involved in the proposal (indicating coordinator, Work Package Leaders and Task Leaders etc.) in SmartSimple | Researcher | Within 2 weeks of notification of proposal |
| 1. Researcher to meet with Research Finance Officer\*\* to ‘scope’ potential budget for project | Researcher & FO | Within 2 weeks of notification of proposal |
| 1. Researcher to meet with Head of School/Research Unit Director to identify potential resources needed to complete the project | Researcher & HoS/RUD | Within 2 weeks of notification of proposal |
| 1. The decision to further develop the proposal will be taken jointly among the Researcher, HoS and HoR and will be based on:  * DKIT provisional budget allocation * DKIT resources needed to complete the project * Consortium composition (if applicable) * Timelines for proposal submission * Other upcoming calls and proposals | PI, HoS, HoR | Within 3 weeks of notification of proposal |

*\*Researchers are required to attend an information and training session on the use and management of applications using SmartSimple.*

*\*\* Odelle McGreal in the Research Office (odelle.mcgreal@dkit.ie)*

## Phase III: Proposal Development

Once the decision to proceed with a submission is taken the researcher must log the proposal on the Research Management System (dkit.smartsimple.ie). The full proposal will be developed by the Researcher.

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| **Action** | **Staff Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| 1. Researchers are required to  * Upload the draft proposal to SmartSimple for approval * Provide supporting documentation (budget etc.) for approval | Researcher | 4 weeks before call deadline |
| 1. Initial stage Approvers to review proposals | HoS | Within 1 week of upload (3 weeks before deadline) |
| 1. Researchers to review and amend proposal if required and to resubmit for second stage of approval | Researcher | Within 1 week of 1st approval (2 weeks before deadline) |
| 1. Second stage Approvers to review final proposal | HoR & TTO | Within 1 week of upload of final proposal |
| 1. Researcher to submit proposal | Researcher | 1 week pre deadline |

## Phase IV: Official Submission

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| **Action** | **Staff Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| 1. Researcher is to ensure that all finalised document versions are uploaded to the SmartSimple Management system including but not restricted to  * Description of work (final submitted version) * Consortium Agreement (signed and stamped) * Memorandum of Understanding (signed and stamped by all Beneficiaries) * Detailed projected Project budget breakdown- full proposal budget and DKIT allocation | Researcher | Within 1 week of submission |

## Phase V: Post-submission and Project duration

On receipt of notification of an evaluation judgement (successful or unsuccessful applications) researchers are requested to ensure all post-submission documents are included on the Management System. If the researcher is contacted directly about the outcome of their proposal they should inform the Research Office immediately.

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| **Action** | **Staff Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| 1. Researcher is required to requested to provide copies of the following documents  * Evaluation report with scoring (for successful and non-successful projects) * Details of Grant Preparation (when proposal has been successful) * Final signed Grant Agreement (when proposal has been successful and Grant preparation phase is completed) * Contact details of appointed Project Officer * Amended budget information | Researcher | ASAP |
| 1. Researchers are requested to upload copies of the following documents from the implementation of the project to SmartSimple.  * Deliverables for which DKIT is responsible * Milestones for which DKIT is responsible * Dissemination and Communication Plans * All budgetary and financial communications from the partnership * Interim Project Activity Reports * Final reports | Researcher | Ongoing |
| 1. Researchers are responsible for uploading all peer reviewed publications, proceedings, and conference papers etc. to STÓR DkITs Open Access (OA) Institutional Repository where appropriate | Researcher | Ongoing |