

Networking Initiative 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

Applications

Q. How do I know if I am eligible to apply?

A. Check the *Applicant Guidelines*, but if you are still unsure then contact the Research Funding Office, Marine Institute – see contact details at the end of this document.

Q. I work in a SME (Small or Medium Sized Enterprise), what funding is available to me?

A. You may be eligible for all three types of funding. For hosting a virtual event apply under Category A, for virtual event attendance apply under Category B and for publication/media production costs apply under Category C. **Note:** SME representatives in full-time education must apply under their host Higher Education Institute.

Q. I am a lecturer in a HEI (Higher Education Institute), what funding is available to me?

A. You may apply under category A and C but not under category B. Please see the *Applicant Guidelines* for the eligibility under each category. We expect that HEI staff have available funding for event attendance from their own organisation. Publication costs towards Open Access Publications and costs towards media productions are open to all applicants.

Q. How do I apply?

A. Applications are submitted using the Marine Institute's online grant management system (RIMS/SmartSimple). Please refer to the *Applicant Guidelines* on how this process works.

Q. When I request my password for RIMS, is there any other information required?

A. Yes. Please include details of your organisation and your role e.g. Masters/PhD student or Post-Doctoral Researcher/Research Assistant.

Q. I am a full-time student but am also working in a company part-time, can I apply for event attendance?

A. If you are a full-time postgraduate (Masters or PhD) student in a marine-related research discipline, then you can apply under category B for event attendance only affiliated with the relevant Higher Education Institute where you are registered. We do not provide funding for undergraduates.

Q. Is it possible to change my application, once it has been submitted?

A. Yes. You can submit a request to recall your application, and then resubmit your application when ready. However, if your application has already been sent for evaluation, then contact the Research Funding Office in the first instance. The application must be resubmitted within the timelines outlined in the *Applicant Guidelines*.

Q. Can I apply for funding for a conference/publication costs/media production that I have already attended/produced?

A. No. Retrospective funding is not provided. Applications should be submitted at least one month before the date of the event. **Note:** In order to be fair to all applicants this one month in advance submission rule is strictly applied.

Q. What happens if I submit the wrong application form?

A. The Research Funding Office will contact you, and let you know that you need to re-submit on the correct application form.

Q. I am involved in organising a workshop that will be held in Ireland, but the organising committee is based in Brussels. Is this eligible for funding?

A. Probably not. The applicant must have a registered address in Ireland (Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland). Costs may only be reimbursed to an Irish partner based on the island of Ireland.

Q. I am involved in organising a workshop that will be held in Ireland, but only part of the conference will relate to marine. Is this eligible for funding?

A. Most likely yes. Provided the themes are marine or marine-related, then it is likely that the conference will be eligible. For example, a three-day conference on climate change may have one day on climate change in the marine environment.

Q. I am organising a virtual online workshop that will be held in Ireland. Is this eligible for funding?

A. Yes. Funding is available for hosting virtual events. Eligible costs include audio/visual equipment hire, promotional materials, printing costs, web hosting and social media promotion.

Q. I wish to attend a virtual workshop and training course held in Ireland. Is this eligible for funding?

A. Yes. Virtual events that meet the criteria stated in the Guidelines are eligible for funding.

Q. I am submitting a research paper for publication. Is this eligible?

A. Probably. The paper must be a new publication in marine research and must be published as Open Access. You must verify that you do not have alternative budget to cover these costs. If you are in receipt of a Marine Institute research grant, please check with the Research Funding Office in relation to your current budget.

Q. What type of media productions are eligible for funding?

A. All media productions must be new. Funding will not be provided for content already produced/in production. The funding of maximum €2,000 is expected to part fund the project. The production must promote marine research or consist of marine educational content.

Q. I have submitted my application, when will I find out if I am successful?

A. You will normally be notified by the 15th of the month following the relevant submission date.

Q. What are my chances of being successful?

A. The average success rate for the Networking Initiative for the past four years (2017-2020) is 64%. The demand in 2020 was significantly reduced due to Covid-19 travel restrictions.

Q. How were the awards split between the different categories?

A. Due to current travel restrictions in relation to Covid-19 the Marine Institute expect that the majority of awards in 2021 will be under Category C for costs associated with Open Access Publications and Media Productions.

Q. My application was unsuccessful, can I appeal or re-apply?

A. The Research Funding Office will advise the reasons why your applications was not successful, which usually relate to the terms and conditions of the *Applicant Guidelines* not being met, for example Masters/PhD student wishing to attend a virtual conference but will not be presenting their research. Where the applicant is unsuccessful because they did not provide enough information in their applications, then they can revise and resubmit their application if there is sufficient time available before the event date for a re-evaluation to be completed.

Q. What advice can you give to help me increase my chances of success?

A. Read the *Applicant Guidelines* and ensure that you are familiar with them. Complete all sections of the application form. Pay particular attention to the evaluation criteria, which are:

- 1) The benefit to you and your organisation,
- 2) The value in terms of addressing national or international strategic objectives, and
- 3) The justification provided in the application e.g. demonstrate research collaboration, show how research findings are communicated, state why this event is internationally important for this area of research, etc.

Q. Is there a cap on the number of applications from a Research Group/ Department?

A. Yes, a maximum of three applications per Research Group/ Department are allowed per event on a first come first served basis (as per the submission date and time on RIMS of the application).

Awards

Q. When is my award official?

A. You will receive a letter of award by email, once you sign this and return it; then you have officially accepted the award. The award is not granted until you return the signed Offer Letter.

Q. I have been awarded a grant to present my research at a virtual conference, but now would like to wait until my research is further developed before presenting it internationally. Can I still receive funding?

A. No. As funding is limited, preference must be given to researchers who are presenting their research (i.e. oral presentations or posters).

Q. I cannot now attend the virtual event, what do I need to do to cancel my award?

A. Contact the Research Funding Office to advise that you wish to cancel the award. **Note:** Under Category B in the event of an Award cancellation, payment can be retained by the HEI for another award to the same organisation.

Q. Is there any circumstances where I may transfer my award to another colleague?

No. Networking awards are not transferable.

Q. How many awards are allowed per applicant?

A. Two awards per annum for individuals. Unsuccessful applications do not count, so the number of applications that you submit may be higher.

Q. I wish to apply for a research working visit at the end of 2021. Can I apply for funding towards my travel costs?

A. No. The Networking Initiative is not providing funding for travel due to Covid-19 restrictions as advised by the Irish Government.

Q. My circumstances have changed since I submitted my application or accepted my award. Can I still receive funding?

A. It depends. For example, if you have just moved organisation but your role is the same then you may be still eligible. However, if you are no longer resident in Ireland then you may not be eligible. You must contact the Research Funding Office for clarification and approval.

Payment and Receipts

Q. Is it possible to receive the full funding in advance?

A. Reimbursement of costs will be after the event (conference, workshop or training course) or when costs have been incurred (publications/media productions). Under Category B we can make an initial payment of 25% to your host Higher Education Institution if required.

Q. Why is the Marine Institute no longer reimbursing individuals?

A. For a number of reasons the Marine Institute will only reimburse Organisations for Networking awards now, which are 1) to significantly reduce the potential of double funding, 2) to avoid requesting individual bank details and risk of GDPR breach and 3) reduce administration time.

Q. The event is over, so what do I do next?

A. You must upload your report and receipts on RIMS/SmartSimple. **Note:** we do not accept reports and receipts sent by email, these must be uploaded on RIMS. For full instructions please refer to the User Guide in RIMS, which are summarised as follows:

Login to RIMS <https://marine.smartsimple.ie/>

To upload Networking Technical Report

- Open your list of Applications under the **Applications & Project Tab**
- Select the **'Successful'** Tab
- **Open** the application your wish to create a Report for
- Select **New** button (top left corner of screen)
- Then select **Activity**
- The screen will open on the **Networking Technical Report** Activity
- You can now see the **Report Template** that you can save locally and complete
- Once you have completed the report offline, then you can upload it
- Enter Start and End Date of Event (as published)
- Upload completed report and abstract
- Click **Submit** lower middle of screen.

To upload Networking Financial Report

- Open your list of Applications under the **Applications & Project Tab**
- Select the **'Successful'** Tab
- **Open** the application your wish to create a Report for
- Select **New** button (top left corner of screen)
- Then select **Activity**
- Change from **Networking Technical Report** to **Networking Financial Report**
- Enter Start and End Date of Event (as published)
- Upload your combined receipts (e.g. registration fee, etc.) and the expenditure summary – the preferred format is PDF
- Click **Submit** lower middle of screen.

Note: You will receive an email confirming submission for each report a few minutes after you have clicked to submit.

Q. I uploaded my report and receipts on RIMS, what happens next?

A. The Research Funding Office will contact you to clarify any queries in relation to your receipts. You should be contacted within five days of uploading your report and receipts. If not, then please email the Research Funding Office.

Q. How long will it take before my organisation receives payment?

A. Payment will normally be made by bank transfer 7 to 10 days after the Research Funding Office (see contact details at the end of this document) have confirmed that all documentation has been received. You will be copied on the email notification to your Organisation confirmed that payment is approved and advising of the payment amount. Payment will be paid into (credited) to the budget code/research account as advised to the Marine Institute in your application form.

Q. I attended a conference/workshop/training course, but am unsure what types of receipts I need to submit?

A. Conference, workshop or training course fee invoice and fees relating to travel and accommodation costs. Copy receipts are acceptable. Please ensure that they are legible. If you cannot read it, then the Research Funding Office cannot read it either!

Q. What receipts are required for publication costs/media productions?

A. Relevant receipts e.g. journal invoice for publication costs, visualisation design costs and invoices/receipts for costs associated with media production e.g. equipment hire/editing suite costs.

Q. Do I need to post original documents?

A. No. The scanned originals submitted as PDF are acceptable to us.

Q. We hosted a workshop in Ireland. What types of receipts should I submit?

A. Web/video hosting costs, hire of audio-visual equipment, promotion and marketing costs and design of conference brochures/programmes. Refer to section on *How to Claim Grant-aid* in the *Applicant Guidelines*.

Q. I am having problems uploading my report and receipts, who do I contact?

A. Please contact the Research Funding Office contacts shown below.

Q. Can the award be split?

A. No. We will reimburse your organisation only, to avoid any chance of duplicate payment.

Q. If my actual costs are less than the amount awarded, what happens?

A. Only receipted costs up to the amount awarded are paid. If you are awarded 750 Euro, but your receipts total 550 Euro, then we will pay 550 Euro. If you are awarded 2,000 Euro, but your receipts total 3,000 Euro, then we will pay 2,000 Euro.

Q. Can my offer of award be withdrawn or the grant cancelled for any reason?

A. Yes. If an applicant makes a fraudulent claim or misrepresentation e.g. double claiming of expenditure, then the Research Funding Office will cancel the award and no payment will be made.

Q. What if I have more questions?

A. Then please contact the Research Funding Office, by phone or email – see below.

Research Funding Office Contacts

☎ 091 387200 Martina Maloney or Veronica Cunningham

RIMS/SmartSimple Queries rims.support@marine.ie

Any Other Queries funding@marine.ie

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