

Marine Research Programme 2014-2020

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS
For
INFRASTRUCTURE AWARDS

**Specialist Marine Research Equipment and
Small Infrastructure Call
May 2017**

CONTACT DETAILS

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CONTENTS

1	BACKGROUND	2
2	INTRODUCTION	3
3	DURATION & VALUE OF AWARDS	3
4	ELIGIBILITY	3
5	EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS	4
6	ETHICAL & GENDER ISSUES	4
7	NATIONAL EQUIPMENT POOL	4
8	GRANT-AID RATES & ELIGIBLE COSTS	5
9	GRANT AWARD	6
10	FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT	6
11	DATA PROTECTION	6
12	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS	6
13	APPLICATION PROCEDURE & DEADLINE	6
14	FURTHER INFORMATION & CONTACT DETAILS	8
	APPENDIX 1 - EVALUATION PROCEDURE	9
	APPENDIX 2 - COST CATEGORIES	12
	APPENDIX 3 – PUBLIC RESEARCH BODY	14
	APPENDIX 4 - DEFINITION OF AN SME	16

1 BACKGROUND

Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth – An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland (July 2012) sets out a roadmap to enable Ireland's marine potential to be realised through a co-ordinated system of Government policy and programme planning.

Vision and Goals

"Our ocean wealth will be a key element of our economic recovery and sustainable growth, generating benefits for all our citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation and managed in an integrated manner."

Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth has three high-level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development:

- **Goal 1** focuses on a ***thriving maritime economy***, whereby Ireland harnesses the market opportunities to achieve economic recovery and socially inclusive, sustainable growth.
- **Goal 2** sets out to achieve ***healthy ecosystems*** that provide monetary and non-monetary goods and services (e.g. food, climate, health and well-being).
- **Goal 3** aims to increase our ***engagement with the sea***. Building on our rich maritime heritage, our goal is to strengthen our maritime identity and increase our awareness of the value (market and non-market), opportunities and social benefits of engaging with the sea.

Specialist marine research equipment and infrastructures were identified as essential to the delivery of *Sea Change: A Marine Knowledge, Research and Innovation Strategy for Ireland (2007-2013)*, and also included in the key actions for *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth*. Analysis carried out as part of the preparation of the National Marine Research and Innovation Strategy 2021 (currently in draft), confirms the requirement for support of marine research equipment and infrastructures.

The research priorities for 2014-2020 aims to support sustainable economic growth, promote innovation, protect marine ecosystems and inform policy, governance and regulation of the Irish marine sector.

Infrastructure Awards funded by the Marine Institute will provide assistance for appropriate research activities that support the goals of *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth*, and/or address the objectives of other national and international marine strategies/plans, for example:

- Our Ocean Wealth Task Force Reports:
 - Report of the Development Task Force
 - Report of the Enablers Task Force on Marine Spatial Planning
- Food Wise 2025
- Food Research Ireland
- Innovation 2020
- National Marine Research & Innovation Strategy 2021 (currently in draft)
- EU Blue Growth
- EU Strategy for the Atlantic (2011) and
- EU Atlantic Action Plan 2014-2020.

2 INTRODUCTION

These **Guidelines for Applicants for Infrastructure Awards** provide details on general issues such as eligibility, the evaluation and awarding of research grants, research costs and the application process. Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant-aid Agreement in advance of starting any work funded by this Programme.

A description of the aims of this call for research proposals is provided in the **Terms of Reference** document, which is available to download from the *Research & Funding* pages of the Marine Institute's website¹.

3 DURATION & VALUE OF AWARDS

The duration of successful awards under this call is expected to be 12 months, completing in September/October 2018. The **maximum** grant-aid for any individual award will be **200,000 Euro inclusive of VAT**. The minimum award value is 20,000 Euro inclusive of VAT.

An example for illustration purposes is shown below:

Organisation Type	HEI	SME
Description of Costs	Amount Euro	Amount Euro
Mass Spectrometer	150,000	150,000
Installation and Technical Support Costs	30,000	36,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>180,000</i>	<i>186,000</i>
VAT at 23% (see note below)	41,400	N/A
Total Costs	221,400	186,000
Grant-Aid Requested	199,260 (90%)	139,500 (75%)

Note: VAT at the applicable rate is only allowable where it is not a recoverable cost for the applicant.

Successful grantees will receive payment in two instalments, 50% on signature of the grant-aid agreement and 50% on completion, following submission of the required reports (financial and technical).

4 ELIGIBILITY

Who May Apply?

Applications are invited from legal entities (higher education institute, public research institute, small-medium enterprise, etc.) on the island of Ireland with the appropriate scientific and technical qualifications and research expertise.

Applications will only be accepted from single legal entities (one eligible organisation per application i.e. no partnerships between organisations permitted). However the same organisation may submit multiple applications.

Industry applicants (SMEs) must have their registered office address based in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland.

¹ <http://www.marine.ie/Home/site-area/research-funding/research-funding/research-funding>

5 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

A panel of national/international experts established by the Marine Institute's Office of Marine Research & Development will evaluate eligible proposals. All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure *objectivity, fairness, quality and confidentiality*. Eligible proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Marks
1. Extent to which the proposal addresses the objectives of relevant national/international marine strategies including benefits and impacts	15%
2. The scientific and technical feasibility of the proposal	20%
3. Evidence within the research proposal of ability to address the specific deliverables and intended impacts required in the project Terms of Reference	15%
4. The commitment of the applicant to continue to operate equipment and infrastructure once grant-aid funding has ceased	15%
5. Impact on national R&D capacity building	15%
6. Costs and value for money	20%

Further information on the evaluation criteria and procedure is provided in **Appendix 1** to these Guidelines.

In accepting and evaluating research proposals the Marine Institute does not commit funding to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to research proposals submitted under any call for proposals.

6 ETHICAL & GENDER ISSUES

Applicants should demonstrate that they have taken into account any relevant ethical issues associated with the proposed research, indicating which national and/or international regulations are applicable and how these will be adhered to.

The EU principle of gender mainstreaming applies². Applicants are encouraged to take action to encourage female leads on research projects and shall be required to report the ratios of males to females working on projects.

7 NATIONAL EQUIPMENT POOL

It is the intention of the Marine Institute to establish a National Equipment Pool at a future date, and successful applicants must make the equipment funded under this call available for access, once the National Equipment Pool is established. **Note:** access may be provided free of charge or for an agreed charge to cover the equipment running costs.

² <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming>

8 GRANT-AID RATES & ELIGIBLE COSTS

This call for research proposals is intended to fund not-for-profit or pre-commercial research on a re-imburement basis. Funding is provided for up to **90% of eligible costs**, depending on the nature of the organisation undertaking the research. Table 1 below indicates the maximum levels of grant-aid rates applicable to each type of organisation.

Table 1 Maximum level of applicable grant-aid rates

Higher Education Institute/Research Institute/ Other Public Research Body ³	Industry, Private and Other Organisations
	SME/Other
90%	75%

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are defined as **direct costs** incurred to procure the equipment/infrastructure plus the related support costs. These costs must fulfil the following criteria:

- o They must be **actual**;
- o They must be **reasonable** and **wholly necessary** for the award;
- o They must be incurred and paid **during the lifetime** of the award;
- o They must be **recorded** in the accounts of the applicant, and listed on the fixed assets register, which must be maintained during the lifetime of the project and reported on as required by the Marine Institute;
- o They must **not be funded from any other source**; and
- o They must be **incurred solely for the purposes stated in the proposal**.

The eligible **cost categories** are:

1. Equipment
2. Installation, Training, Technical Support and Other Specified Costs
3. VAT (if applicable)

Technical Support

The costs of existing staff who will provide technical support (e.g. technicians, and engineers) are eligible and are part of the overall costs of the application.

Installation, training, technical support and other specified costs cannot exceed 25% of the cost of the equipment/infrastructure excluding VAT.

Successful applicants may apply to the Marine Institute to transfer between cost headings during the grant term. All budget reallocations will be subject to approval.

Further information on the above cost categories is provided in **Appendix 2**.

Non-eligible Costs

No costs other than eligible costs will be allowed. **Non-eligible costs** include the following:

- o any interest, or return on capital employed;
- o provisions for possible future losses or charges;
- o interest owed;
- o provisions for doubtful debts;
- o resources made available to a Grantee free of charge;
- o unnecessary or ill-considered expenses.

³ Refer to Appendix 3.

Any other staff costs, travel, consumables, service and repair costs and overheads/indirect costs are not allowable on Infrastructure Awards.

De Minimis Rules (Industry Applicants only)

Industry applicants will be subject to the EU De Minimis which states that "State Aid given to an enterprise cannot exceed €200,000 over any three fiscal years to any company irrespective of size or location".

9 GRANT AWARD

All applicants will be notified in writing of the results of the evaluation. The letter will outline the contractual obligations and conditions that apply to the award. Applicants must acknowledge receipt of the award letter and acceptance of the conditions attached to the award. In accepting the award, applicants agree to carry out the work as detailed in their application (taking into account modifications arising from the evaluators' recommendations) and the agreed budget.

10 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information supplied to the Marine Institute may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014. It is the responsibility of the applicant to indicate at the time of making an application which information should not be disclosed and the reasons for non-disclosure. The Marine Institute will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request.

11 DATA PROTECTION

Personal information supplied to the Marine Institute will be stored by electronic means (e.g. database) for use only in connection with applications for grant-aid. The provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003 will be fully complied with.

12 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure procedures for managing intellectual property are maintained and appropriately applied. This programme provides funds for not-for-profit, public good research. The Marine Institute expects that outputs and findings should be widely disseminated and made publicly available.

However, the Marine Institute acknowledges research outputs with commercial potential may arise during the completion of the work programme. Where the researcher(s) want to restrict access to intellectual property for the purpose of commercialisation of research results, the Marine Institute should be informed in advance. Costs associated with registration of patents, registered designs, registered trademarks etc. are not eligible costs.

Applicants shall be guided by "Inspiring Partnership" the national IP Protocol 2016 for Ireland⁴.

13 APPLICATION PROCEDURE & DEADLINE

Research proposal applications should be prepared with reference to the call **Terms of Reference**.

⁴ <http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/News/The-National-IP-Protocol-.html>

Applications must be submitted using the appropriate **Application Form**. An electronic copy of this application form can be downloaded from the Marine Institute's online **Research Information Management System (RIMS)**. The application form includes instructions for its completion.

Only applications made on the appropriate application form will be accepted for evaluation and no other materials are required. The application forms are structured to capture the information required to evaluate proposals and applicants are requested to adhere strictly to the stipulated headings and word limits.

A detailed project budget must be provided using the **MS EXCEL budget template** provided as part of the application form. An electronic copy of this budget template can be downloaded from RIMS also.

- If you are already registered on RIMS please visit <https://marine.smartsimple.ie/>.
- To register as a new user please email rims.support@marine.ie with a request for a password and provide details of your organisation and your role.

The closing date for receipt of proposals is:

NOT LATER THAN 16:00 HOURS ON THURSDAY, 15TH JUNE 2017

All applicants will be issued with an acknowledgement of receipt via email shortly after submission.

Applicants should complete all sections of the application form, which must be signed by the VP for Research, Finance Director (or other authorised position) in the lead institution.

Late applications will not be accepted.

14 FURTHER INFORMATION & CONTACT DETAILS

Further Information/Clarifications

Requests for further information/clarifications should be addressed, preferably by **email**, to the contact details below. Responses to requests for further information/clarifications will be made available to all interested parties via the *Research & Funding* pages of the Marine Institute's website. Requests for further information/clarifications must be received **two weeks before** the closing date.

It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure that they keep informed of any responses to clarifications prior to submitting an application.

CONTACT DETAILS
Office of Marine Research & Development Marine Institute Rinville Oranmore Co. Galway H91 R673 Ireland funding@marine.ie Tel. +353 (0)91 387200

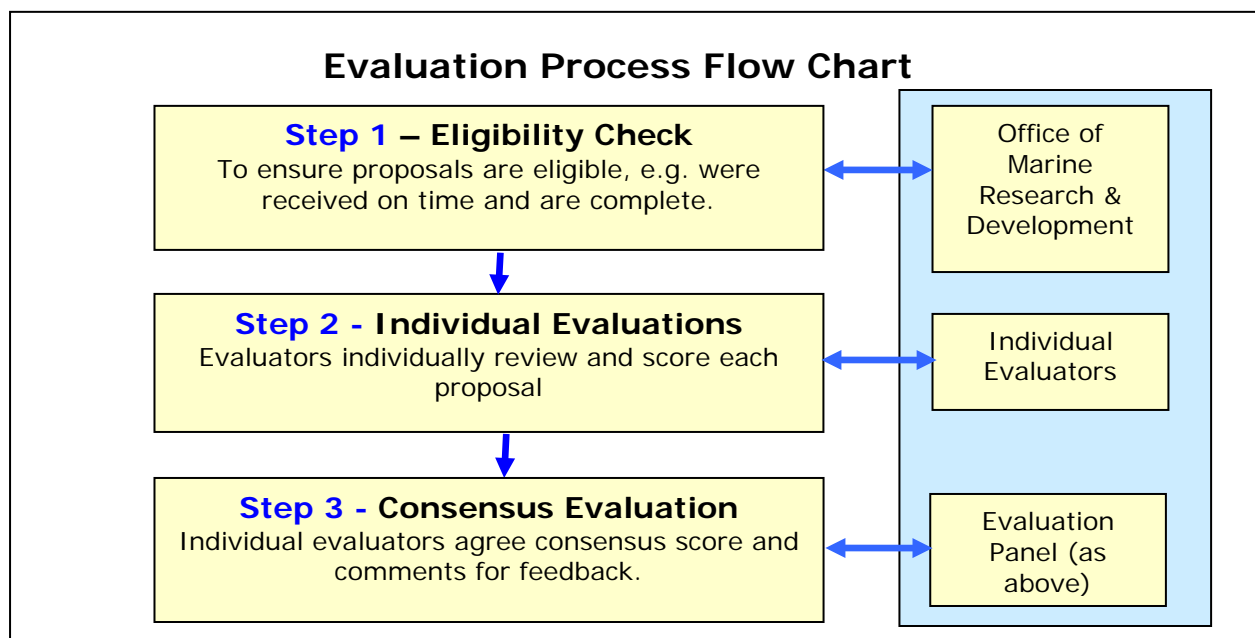
APPENDIX 1 - EVALUATION PROCEDURE

The evaluation of proposals is managed by the Office of Marine Research & Development. The process aims to be fair and transparent and to provide constructive feedback to applicants. Evaluation of proposals is based on the established principles of **Transparency**, **Equality of Treatment**, **Impartiality**, and **Efficiency and Speed**.

Evaluation is conducted in four steps, as follows:

Step	Undertaken by
1. Eligibility Check	Office of Marine Research & Development
2. Individual Expert Evaluation	Independent Experts, overseen by the Office of Marine Research & Development
3. Consensus Evaluation	Independent Experts, overseen by the Office of Marine Research & Development

In accepting and evaluating research proposals the Marine Institute does not commit funding to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to research proposals submitted under any call for proposals.



1) Eligibility Check

Proposals for funding received by the notified submission date are checked for compliance with the general **Eligibility Criteria**. These criteria include:

- Is the proposal from an eligible institution/company?
- Are all sections of the application form completed correctly - including the statement by the lead institution, with appropriate signatures?
- Does the application form contain adequate information to allow the proposal to be properly evaluated?

Applicants whose proposals are considered to be ineligible will be notified and an explanation provided of the reason(s) why their application was considered to be ineligible. Proposals meeting the eligibility criteria will go forward for independent expert evaluation.

2) Individual Expert Evaluation

The Marine Institute maintains a panel of independent expert evaluators (national and international) to assist in the evaluation of all proposals for funding. The names of the experts assigned to individual proposals are not made public. However, the Marine Institute makes available lists of all the experts participating on its evaluation panels at regular intervals.

Proposals meeting the eligibility criteria are evaluated based on their individual merit by a minimum of two/three individual experts chosen from the Panel of Experts. Where feasible, the same experts evaluate all eligible proposals received for a particular topic/project. The experts examine the proposal(s) assigned to them and score and comment on each proposal under each of the **Evaluation Criteria** using an **Individual Evaluation Form**. Applicants are advised of these evaluation criteria in the **Guidelines for Applicants**.

3) Consensus Evaluation

Once the individual experts to whom proposals have been assigned have completed their individual evaluations, a **Consensus Meeting** is convened to enable joint consideration of proposals by the individual experts. An officer from the Office of Marine Research & Development may act as moderator/rapporteur for each consensus meeting. Their role is to support the process and ensure that the panel evaluation is carried out in a fair and proper fashion.

During the consensus meeting the experts consider each proposal and agree on a final mark for each of the evaluation criteria and an overall mark (score) for the proposal. They justify their marks with constructive and informative comments suitable for feedback to the applicant and agree on an overall **Consensus Evaluation Report**. Where, a consensus can be reached by electronic correspondence between evaluators, then this will be the preferred route applied. All applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, receive a copy of the Consensus Evaluation Report for their proposal.

4) Evaluation criteria

Criteria	Marks
<p>1. <i>Extent to which the project addresses the objectives of relevant national/international marine strategies including benefits and impacts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the equipment/infrastructure be utilised to improve the growth and competitiveness of the marine sector by adding value to services, products or processes? • Will the equipment/infrastructure create new industrial and commercial opportunities for firms in the marine sector? • Will the equipment/infrastructure purchases help to stimulate the application or use of scientific or technical knowledge and expertise to advance the competitiveness or environmental sustainability of marine businesses? • Will the equipment/infrastructure support the generation of new knowledge in areas of importance to Ireland's economy? • Will the equipment/infrastructure advance the development of scientific data management systems and standards based on best practise in data capture, storage, management, access visualisation etc.? • Have the benefits and impacts been clearly demonstrated? 	<p>15%</p> <p>Cont.</p>

Criteria	Marks
<p>2. <i>The scientific and technical feasibility of the proposal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the applicant demonstrated that the equipment/infrastructure can be procured in the allotted timescale? • Does it seem feasible that the equipment/infrastructure will meet the requirements for use? • Is there originality or a degree of novelty in the proposed approach for use of the equipment/infrastructure? • What new scientific and technical competences will be developed following acquisition of the equipment/infrastructure? 	20%
<p>3. <i>Evidence within the research proposal of ability to address the specific deliverables and intended impact required in the project Terms of Reference</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed approach to meeting the specific deliverables and intended impacts in the terms of reference – how will research output be increased • Track record and expertise of the team 	15%
<p>4. <i>The commitment of the applicant to continue to operate equipment and infrastructure once grant-aid funding has ceased</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the applicant demonstrated a plan for long-term maintenance and use of the equipment/infrastructure? • Will there be any shared use of equipment/infrastructure in the future? 	15%
<p>5. <i>Impact on national R&D capacity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the equipment/infrastructure be used to develop new marine research capacity and capabilities in areas that demonstrate high-growth potential? • Is it convincingly argued that the acquisition of the equipment will benefit the competitiveness of the applicants in future research competitions, or facilitate innovation? 	15%
<p>6. <i>Costs and value for money</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total cost • Detail of costs • Own contribution to costs • Economic benefits to applicant 	20%

Successful applicants may be asked to make changes to their proposals during the grant-aid negotiation phase to accommodate the comments of the evaluators.

Declaration of Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

Evaluators are required to read and sign a Declaration of Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Form. If an expert considers that they may have a vested interest in a proposal or that potential conflict of interest may arise as a result of their participation in the evaluation of any proposal they are asked to declare this and may not participate in the evaluation process.

Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014 provides a legal right to individuals to obtain access to information held by public bodies, to the greatest extent possible consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy. The Act provides strong protections for information supplied in applications that is confidential, commercially sensitive or personal (Sections 35, 36 and 37 of the FOI Act refer). The Act also gives certain rights to individuals or companies who supply such information. These rights ensure that information that is confidential, commercially sensitive or personal cannot be released under FOI without the person supplying such information being consulted. There is also a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent authority for FOI matters.

APPENDIX 2 - COST CATEGORIES

1) Equipment

The purchase of a single piece of durable equipment (or multiple component parts that will be combined), when acquired based on best price and in compliance with Public Procurement Guidelines, is considered to be an eligible cost.

The cost of purchased equipment will be considered to be eligible in full, provided that the applicant maintains ownership of the equipment for a period of 36 months in the case of computer equipment and 60 months for all other equipment. Items must be listed on the fixed asset register of the organisation.

If successful the applicant will be required to complete a Grant-Aid Agreement, which will detail the terms and conditions of the award. One of the key requirements is that the applicant must notify the Marine Institute in advance for any disposal of equipment purchased under this call for proposals.

The applicant must include three quotes as part of their proposal submission.

Applicants must confirm that the equipment will be in use for at least 75% of the time.

Funding is provided for new equipment purchases only. Purchases can be off-the-shelf, or a combination of a number of components that assemble into a single item.

Equipment and infrastructure acquired must be used for research and innovation purposes as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

If value for money becomes an issue due to the limitations of suppliers then this should be documented and a case made to justify expenditure outside the general rule. Such cases must be submitted to the Marine Institute for prior approval before any commitments can be made on expenditure.

Non-recoverable VAT is an eligible part of equipment acquisition cost.

2) Installation, Training, Technical Support and Other Specified Costs

Installation and Training Costs

There may be a requirement for special housing for the equipment, calibration costs or training on use of the equipment by the supplier. These are eligible costs, subject to the overall limit stated below.

Technical Support (Staff Costs)

Technical support staff costs are an eligible cost. These can be existing technical staff within the organisation or contracted external assistance. These costs subject to the overall limit stated below.

Staff costs are deemed to be the gross salary of eligible staff members together with the grantee's contribution to their pension and PRSI costs. Only the costs of the actual hours/days worked by the persons directly carrying out work may be charged. Such personnel will be required to maintain and make available timesheets and must:

- Be directly hired by the participant in accordance with its national legislation;
- Work under the sole technical supervision and responsibility of the latter, and
- Be remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the participant.

Person-day costs are limited to the actual salary cost including employers PRSI and statutory pension contributions made on behalf of the employee into a defined pension scheme. This rate must be specified in the budget and is subject to a maximum of 20% of salary. The employer's pension contributions will only be eligible for payment when relevant documentation is provided to the Marine Institute (or its agents) and where these contributions are made to an appropriate pension scheme.

Where applicants are uncertain at the time of submitting an application as to the exact identity of personnel involved in the project then salary rates may be used for categories of staff, where staff are paid on specified salary grades or scales (e.g. IUA). This rate must be verifiable and where an application is successful, must be adjusted to the actual rate of pay for each individual at the time of submitting a claim for reimbursement of expenditure.

Costs for remuneration of salary should be taken from the payroll records of the participant and should reflect the total gross remuneration plus the employer's portion of PRSI and pension contributions. Remuneration costs must be calculated individually for each staff member and the use of average salary or pay scale levels (other than as indicated above) is not permitted.

Where the technical support is externally sourced by the organisation, then it must be procured and concluded in accordance with the normal Irish government grant-aid procedures as set out in the Department of Finance public procurement regulations (e.g. three quotations must be obtained where the value is greater than €5,000 (including VAT), and a request for tender must be published on www.etenders.gov.ie) where the value exceeds €25,000 (including VAT).

Other Specified Costs

This allows for specific actual costs, which do not come into any of the above eligible cost categories. They may include costs associated with equipment warranties up to 12 months. Such costs must be detailed in the proposal, and may only be claimed subject to prior approval by the Marine Institute.

Installation, training, technical support and other specified costs cannot exceed 25% of the cost of the equipment/infrastructure excluding VAT.

3) Value Added Tax (VAT)

Where a participant organisation is registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) and able to reclaim any VAT they incur on their costs then all expenditure items included in their application for funding and subsequent claims for reimbursement should be shown at the VAT exclusive amount. Where an organisation is not entitled to reclaim the VAT that they incur in relation to their costs then the amounts included in their application for funding and subsequent claims for reimbursement should be the VAT inclusive amount. Applicants will be required to specify their VAT status in the Application Form for funding.

Any other staff costs, travel, consumables, service and repair costs and overheads/indirect costs are not allowable on Infrastructure Awards.

DPER Circular on Grant Management

Successful applicants will have to adhere to the relevant requirements contained in circular 13/2014 *Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds* issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on 26-Sep-14. These requirements, dealing with reporting of grant expenditure, publication of the award details in the grantee's financial statements and disposal of assets, will be detailed in the Grant-Aid Agreement.

APPENDIX 3 – PUBLIC RESEARCH BODY

For the purpose of this call a public research body is defined as “a public sector body or a legal entity governed by private law with a public service mission providing adequate financial guarantees, who are undertaking research and are based on the island of Ireland”. A public research body must be a legal entity with their registered office address in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Therefore, there are two clear cases of entities that are considered public bodies:

1) Public sector bodies

Any public authority or entity set up under public law by a state or one of its authorities (e.g. government). Even if such an entity has a legal personality, it acts on behalf of the State with regard to and within the limits of its specific areas or competencies. Activities carried out by such authorities or entities may be of a commercial nature.

2) Legal entities established under private law with a public service mission and providing adequate financial guarantees

With respect to the “public service mission”:

a) where an entity established under private law is owned by a public sector body or the state, it can be deemed to have a public service mission.

b) for an entity established under private law that is not owned by a public sector body, the entity must be explicitly granted such a mission through a decision by a public sector body. Secondary and higher education establishments that deliver diplomas recognised by a public authority according to criteria established by the state or perform research with public funding and in accordance with objectives agreed by the state would meet this criterion. In cases of doubt proof of the public service mission can be required from the potential contractor showing that it falls into one of the two categories above.

With respect to the “adequate financial guarantees”:

a) if the entity is owned by the state then it can be presumed to provide adequate financial guarantees as the state will honour its obligations.

b) if the entity is not owned by the state or a public sector body then it must prove that it will provide adequate financial guarantees (except for the secondary and higher education establishments that are presumed to provide such guarantees). In cases of doubt proof of the existence and adequacy of a financial guarantee can be required from the potential contractor showing that it falls into one of the two categories above.

The following organisations are considered to be eligible Public Research Bodies:

- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
- Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)
- Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
- Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL)
- Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)
- Dublin City University (DCU)
- Dublin Institute of Advances Studies (DIAS)
- Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)
- Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)
- Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)
- Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI)
- Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo)
- Institute of Technology Tralee (IT Tralee)

- Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LyIT)
- Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)
- Marine Institute (MI)
- Met Éireann
- National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway)
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)
- Queen's University Belfast (QUB)
- Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
- Teagasc
- Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
- Tyndall National Institute
- Ulster University (UU)
- University College Cork (UCC)
- University College Dublin (UCD)
- University of Limerick (UL)
- Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

The list above includes organisations who have previously been funded to undertake marine research in Ireland, but this list is not exhaustive and if any applicant is unsure whether they are eligible, then they should clarify with the Marine Institute by sending an email to funding@marine.ie.

APPENDIX 4 - DEFINITION OF AN SME

1. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs⁵) are defined as enterprises which:
 - o have fewer than 250 employees, **and**
 - o have either,
 - o an annual turnover not exceeding €50 million, or
 - o an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding €43 million, **and**
 - o conform to the criterion of independence as defined in paragraph 4.
2. Where it is necessary to distinguish between small and medium-sized enterprises, the **'small enterprise'** is defined as an enterprise which:
 - o has fewer than 50 employees **and**
 - o has either,
 - o an annual turnover not exceeding €10 million, or
 - o an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding €10 million,
 - o conform to the criterion of independence as defined in paragraph 4.
3. Where it is necessary to distinguish **micro-enterprises** from other SMEs, these are defined as:
 - o enterprises having fewer than 10 employees;
 - o annual turnover not exceeding €2 million; or
 - o annual balance sheet total not exceeding €2 million.
4. Independent enterprises are those which are not owned as to 25% or more of the capital or the voting rights by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definitions of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply. This threshold may be exceeded in the following two cases:
 - o if the enterprise is held by public investment corporations, venture capital companies or institutional investors, provided no control is exercised either individually or jointly,
 - o if the capital is spread in such a way that it is not possible to determine by whom it is held and if the enterprise declares that it can legitimately presume that it is not owned as to 25% or more by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definitions of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply.
5. In calculating the thresholds referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, it is therefore necessary to cumulate the relevant figures for the beneficiary enterprise and for all the enterprises that it directly or indirectly controls through possession of 25% or more of the capital or of the voting rights.
6. Where, at the final balance-sheet date, an enterprise exceeds or falls below the employee thresholds or financial ceilings, this is to result in it acquiring or losing the status of 'SME', 'medium-sized enterprise', 'small enterprise' or 'micro-enterprise' only if the phenomenon is repeated over two consecutive financial years.
7. The number of persons employed corresponds to the number of annual working units (AWU), that is to say, the number of full-time workers employed during one year with part-time and seasonal workers being fractions of AWU. The reference year to be considered is that of the last approved accounting period.
8. The turnover and balance-sheet total thresholds are those of the last approved 12-month accounting period. In the case of newly established enterprises whose accounts have not yet been approved, the thresholds to apply shall be derived from a reliable estimate made in the course of the financial year.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition/index_en.htm