

FAQ – Pilot Agriculture Call under the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme (Version 1.1)

SECTION A: GENERAL

1. What is the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme?

The US-Ireland R&D Partnership is a tri-jurisdictional alliance between Ireland, Northern Ireland and the United States which was officially launched in 2006. Its aim is to promote collaborative innovative research projects which create value above and beyond individual efforts. To date 30 projects with a combined investment value of €52 million have been funded under the US-Ireland R&D Partnership and cover collaborations with 30 different U.S. Institutions.

2. What is the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme Agriculture Call?

This is a programme where Principal Investigators (PI) from the United States (US), Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (RoI) collaborate in response to calls for proposals in selected areas in the Agricultural and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Foundation Programme.

There must be at least one PI from each jurisdiction, with the US partner bearing responsibility for submission of the joint “tri-partite” proposal to National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). If approved for funding by NIFA, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) funds the RoI investigator(s), the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) funds the NI-based investigator(s), and NIFA funds the US investigator(s).

3. Do US-Ireland R&D Partnership proposals have a competitive advantage over domestic US only applications under the NIFA call?

US-Ireland R&D Partnership proposals compete head-to-head with 'non-US-Ireland partnership' proposals submitted to the same call. The competitive advantage comes from the additive nature of the collaboration as well as the leveraged non-exchequer funds. It is important for applicants to spell this out in the introduction to the proposal to ensure that the NIFA reviewers fully understand the intricacies of the process.

4. When is the deadline for submission for US-Ireland applicants in the relevant thematic areas listed in the 2016 AFRI Foundation Programme Requests For Applications (RFA)?

There are two different deadline dates assigned to the three selected thematic areas applicable to the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Call that are referenced in the AFRI RFA. Applications for pre-approval MUST be submitted to DAFM and DAERA by RoI and NI partners respectfully *at least* 5 weeks in advance of the stated NIFA deadline. For clarity stated below are the applicable respective dates that must be adhered to by Irish based applicants alongside the stated NIFA deadline.

Latest Dates for Submitting Applications under the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Agriculture Call 2016

| Thematic Area in AFRI 2016 RFA | DAFM/DAERA Deadline | NIFA Deadline |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Pests and Beneficial Species in Agricultural Production Systems | 16 June 2016 | 21 July 2016 |
| Animal nutrition, growth, and lactation | 9 June 2016 | 14 July 2016 |
| Animal health and disease | 9 June 2016 | 14 July 2015 |

5. Why do I have to submit an application to DAFM/DAERA in advance of the AFRI submission deadline?

An application must be submitted to DAFM and DAERA *at least* 5 weeks in advance of the NIFA deadline. The purpose of this step is to ensure compliance of the research with the strategic remit of both DAFM and DAERA, to assess the budget requested, and to confirm that the work proposed for each jurisdiction adds significant value so that the overall programme of research goes beyond what might be achieved by any one PI working alone supported only by national funding. If DAFM and DAERA agree to support the proposal, a funding commitment letter is provided to the respective ROI and NI applicant for inclusion in the full proposal to be submitted to NIFA. This letter is also sent to the responsible person at NIFA to indicate commitment to this proposal should it be deemed fundable by the NIFA peer-review process. Please ensure that all relevant appendices are included with the draft proposal.

6. What exactly do I need to submit to DAFM and DAERA and in what format?

Using the forms and guidance provided as appendices to the call document on the DAFM and DAERA websites, you must submit a completed application, budget template and append any requested additional information.

7. I need to know DAFM and DAERA’s decision by a certain date prior to the NIFA deadline?

DAFM and DAERA will endeavour to inform you at the earliest possible date if your proposal is approved / declined but please bear in mind that DAFM and DAERA’s respective internal review process can take about 3 weeks, depending on the number of applications received at any given time. As such, please ensure that the draft proposal is submitted to DAFM and DAERA at least 5 weeks in advance of the stated AFRI deadline.

8. Where can I find information on calls within the AFRI? Which priority areas are open to the US-Ireland programme?

See link to AFRI’s [2016 Foundation Competitive Grant Programme Requests for Applications](#) (pdf 619 kb).

Applicants from ROI and NI are restricted to the following three priority areas:

- Pests and Beneficial Species in Agricultural Production Systems
- Animal nutrition, growth, and lactation; and
- Animal health and disease

9. Can anyone apply to this programme?

No, there are a number of eligibility criteria which you must met, please consult the joint DAFM/DAERA document on the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Agriculture Call 2016 which is available to download at

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/research/us-irelandresearchanddevelopmentpartnershipcallinagriculture/>

Or

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/us-ireland-research-and-development-partnership-call-agriculture>

10. Are there any eligibility criteria for a co-PI?

The eligibility criteria for a co-PI is the same as for the lead PI – i.e. they must be a permanent member of the lead institutions scientific staff.

11. Is it a pre-requisite that the ROI and NI partners have previously collaborated on a project?

This is not a prerequisite, but it is likely to strengthen the proposal.

12. Will US-Ireland R&D partnership applications be reviewed separately to standard US applications for the same call?

No, there is no differentiation i.e. they will be evaluated side by side with all other applications.

13. The PIs of the 3 collaborators ROI and NI are required to be permanent members of staff - this is actually somewhat restrictive in terms of who can apply from ROI/NI. Would applications with a PI who is on a long-term contract be considered?

No. In addition it is important to explain the role of each of the partners involved, their expertise in the proposed research, and hence the added value to the proposed research programme.

14. Where can I find more information on the information sought by NIFA in the application that US PI must complete for the AFRI Foundation RFA?

A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov can be downloaded at

<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/oppUSDA-NIFA-AFRI-005843-cfda10.310-instructions.pdf>

SECTION B: APPLICATION TO DAFM AND DAERA

1. What is the maximum grant request?

The budget for full applications from applicants in the RoI has been capped at €350,000 and at £250,000 for NI applicants.

DAFM and DAERA expect that the funding requested by applicants will be commensurate with the work proposed.

2. Does DAFM or DAERA fund the salary of lead or co-PI?

Neither DAFM or DAERA fund the salary of the grant applicant/co-applicant

3. Does DAFM or DAERA provide grant aid to SME's/Industry?

Neither DAFM or DAERA provide grant assistance to SME's/Industry however their involvement is encouraged on a self-financing basis to the need to respect the 'public good' nature of the respective national research funding programmes and compliance with respective national Intellectual Property (IP) protocols

4. Where can I find more information about eligible costs for DAFM and DAERA budget requests?

Please see Annexes 5 and 6 of DAFM/DAERA document on the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Agriculture Call 2016, which sets out both agencies respective funding rules including eligible costs.

5. Do both DAFM and DAERA have to agree approval before a proposal can be submitted to NIFA?

Yes, both agencies have to separately review and support the tri-partite proposal.

6. Are overheads included in the stated DAFM & DAERA grant limits?

Yes.

For the **DAFM budget request** – overheads of up to 30% of the direct costs of scientific-type research - i.e. staff consumables, T&S, but not including equipment, subcontracting and other agreed costs, (25% for desk-based socio-economic/policy type analysis) will be funded.

For the **DAERA budget request** – overheads of up to 30% of the direct costs of scientific-type research not including equipment, subcontracting and other agreed costs (25% for desk-based socio-economic/policy type analysis) will be funded.

7. What if DAFM approve their portion of the funding and DAERA decline or vice versa?

In the event either DAFM or DAERA decides not to support the request, **then the proposal will be rejected and it cannot be submitted for onward review by NIFA**. Applicants need to understand the time constraints involved and need to ensure that the budgets for each agency are distinctly justified and that they must be commensurate with the work proposed within the remit of each agency.

8. How do I submit my application to DAFM and DAERA?

Convert the completed application form, budget template and any attachments to a single Adobe pdf and submit by email to research@agriculture.gov.ie for ROI applicants and e&i@daera-ni.gov.uk for NI applicants.

9. What happens if I don't submit all documents as required to DAFM or DAERA by the 5 week deadline?

Incomplete documents will be returned without review. Applications received after the 5 week deadline prior to the stated AFRI submission for the relevant priority area will be returned without review.

10. Can research partner seeking grant aid in Republic Of Ireland or Northern Ireland be an SME/ industry?

No, the ROI and NI partners have to be eligible research bodies; however the involvement of industry on a self-financing basis is permitted subject to the need to respect the 'public good' nature of publically funded Research Programmes and compliance with relevant National IP Protocols. Evidence of such industry engagement in a real and meaningful manner can help demonstrate the relevance and likely impact of the research work.

Further information on the ROI National IP protocol is available to download at:

['Putting public research to work for Ireland'](#) (pdf 2.2 MB)

In the case of NI partners in the event of industry involvement, a consortium/IPR agreement will need to be provided subsequently to DAERA should the tripartite proposal be approved for funding by NIFA. This must demonstrate the joint benefits from the research which may mean:

- Researchers may expand existing knowledge/intellectual property, publish research papers and obtain new skills such as Masters or PhD training and
- Industry may commercialise products or innovations without significant additional development, and increase turnover / market share.

11. If I'm successfully approved by DAFM and DAERA – what are the next steps?

If approved by DAFM and DAERA for submission to NIFA:

- An approval notification email will be sent by DAFM/DAERA to the respective ROI/NI applicant which includes a Funding Commitment Letter stating DAFM/DAERA's support of the research, for inclusion in the full proposal submission to NIFA
- DAFM and DAERA will share the Funding Commitment Letter with one another
- The Funding Commitment Letters will be sent by DAFM and DAERA to NIFA
- The ROI/NI applicant may need to submit a revised budget and signed cover sheet, if modifications have been made to the budget
- DAFM and DAERA require a copy of the full proposal submission to NIFA along with the NIFA unique application number

12. What is the Funding Commitment Letter or FCL?

This is a letter of commitment from both DAFM and DAERA confirming their support of the proposed research, and is to be included in the joint application to the NIFA. The letters indicates the amount of funding committed by each jurisdiction to their applicant should the application be successful at the NIFA review.

13. The title of the research proposal has changed - do I need to inform DAFM and DAERA?

Yes please inform DAFM and DAERA as soon as possible of any title change as the title is listed in the Funding Commitment Letter (see above) which needs to be accurate.

14. The US partners have decided to submit to a different call or Funding Opportunity announcement at NIFA. This is different to the original call/programme details sent to DAFM and DAERA. Can I still proceed as a co-applicant based on the approval I received from DAFM and DAERA?

DAFM and DAERA will not support applicants in this instance. Only applications to the stated priority areas in the 2016 AFRI Foundation Programme will be supported.