The Faculty of Health Sciences
Dean’s Research Initiatives Fund
2020-21

The Dean’s Research Initiatives Fund supports new and innovative research that will enhance Trinity College’s and the Faculty of Health Sciences’ ability to compete for large-scale, interdisciplinary, single- and multi-investigator extramural awards. It aims to advance the research priorities of Trinity College’s Strategic Plan, raise the national and international profile of the University through increased competitiveness for funding from sources including European Commission, Wellcome Trust, Science Foundation Ireland, Irish Research Council and Health Research Board, as well as other funding sources (see below).

Fund Objectives
The Dean’s Research Initiatives Fund will award investigators with seed funding that provides the foundation or pilot data necessary to secure extramural funding for cutting edge, innovative and transformative research. The Principal Investigator must be a member of the academic or research staff of the Faculty of Health Sciences in Trinity College.

Specific objectives are as follows:

1. To pursue new research opportunities and/or develop preliminary data that leads to the development of a successful grant application from public and private entities, particularly Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, European Research Council, the Health Research Board, the Irish Research Council and Science Foundation Ireland, Wellcome Trust.
2. To advance novel, innovative research ideas that will have a tangible impact on the respective research discipline and/or body of scholarly work;
3. To encourage engaged research that has impact and benefit to society; and
4. To increase the national and international reputation of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Trinity College and its research portfolio.

Research Focus Areas
Proposals must focus on novel research that leads to a specific application for extramural awards in one of the following research focus areas:

1. Ageing
2. Biomedical Sciences
3. Cancer
4. Digital Health
5. Evidence-based Clinical Practice
6. Population Health

2020-21 Awards
In 2020-21 there will be 4 awards of €20,000 and applicants must complete their project within one year of receiving their award. The recipients will receive the award in two instalments: €15,000 at the commencement of the project and €5,000 upon acceptance of the final report by the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Opening Date: Monday 15th March 2021
Closing Date: Monday 14th June 2021
Award Announcement: Thursday 30th September 2021
Evaluation Criteria

Proposals for funding will be reviewed based on the following scoring criteria:

- **Significant Scientific, Scholarly Merit: 40%**
  Evidence of innovative, transformative research and scholarship linked to the Initiatives Fund priority research areas.

- **High Potential for Extramural Funding: 20%**
  Demonstrable ability to attract future public and/or private funding with clear definition of the extramural funding pathway.

- **Impact: 10%**
  Clear indication of how the proposed research or scholarship will have impact due to the significance of the scholarly work and its broader benefit to society.

- **Record of Achievement & Interdisciplinary Research Team: 10%**
  The record of achievement of the Principal Investigator and the proposed research team members will be evaluated, with particular emphasis on the peer network this project advances and the interdisciplinary nature of the research team.

- **Public Patient Involvement and/or Societal Engagement: 5%**
  Research is considered ‘engaged’ when it is developed in collaboration with patients, community members and partnering organisations rather than for or about them. Such public and patient involvement improves the relevancy of the research question, the quality of the approach, and the likelihood that what is discovered through the research can and will be used. Societal engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of the proposed research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.

- **Justification for funding to be Transformative at Career Stage: 15%**
  The application should clearly indicate how this funding will be transformative for the applicant at their current career stage and justify why this is the most appropriate source of funding for this project.

- **Preferred Criteria:**
  - Multi-investigator collaboration
  - Professional development and mentoring for early-career researchers
  - Matching funds
  - Pathway to impact established which identifies a specific, future funding opportunity that the research team is better primed for, due to this funding. Please note: applicants must provide a detailed pathway for future extramural funding from a government, industry, private, or not-for-profit sponsor.
Proposal Format

Completed application packages must be submitted electronically to lena.doherty@tcd.ie by Monday 14th June 2021. The six (6) required sections listed below must be included in the application package. All sections must be 1.5 spaced, with one inch margins, and 11 point Calibri font.

I. Cover Page: 1 page maximum
   - Project Title
   - Focus Area (choose one of the focus areas)
   - Principal Investigator(s) / Research Team names, titles and organisations
   - Funding Amount Requested
   - Project Abstract: 200 words or fewer

II. Project Narrative: 5 page maximum
   - Describe the project, with emphasis on the innovative and transformative nature of the research, to include the research plan, timeline, strategy for future growth, pathway to impact, alignment to Trinity’s strategic plan, and matching funding, if applicable.
   - Describe the Principal Investigator and research team’s contributions (as applicable) to the proposed research and the project team’s organisational structure to achieve its immediate outcomes and funding goals.
   - Discuss the collaborative nature of the proposed team.
   - Address how the proposed research or scholarship will have impact both within the scholarly field and a broader benefit to society.
   - Include a Gantt chart outlining project milestones and deliverables.

III. Biosketch(es): Half page per researcher maximum
   - Provide bio-sketches for the Principal Investigator, co-Principal Investigators, and other members of the research team (as applicable).

IV. Budget: 1 page maximum
   - The budget may include salaries for students, post-doctoral associates, supplies, travel, and equipment.
   - Faculty academic year salaries will not be funded
   - While collaborations with non-Trinity researchers are encouraged, funding to non-Trinity researchers is not permitted.
   - Programme funding is one-time. Funding is not available for multiple-year awards.
   - Funding should be expended over a maximum of 12-months, beginning when the awards are made.

V. Budget Justification: 1 page maximum
   - The budget justification should include a narrative explaining how the costs were estimated, along with a justification of the planned spending and any matched funding available.

VI. Personal Statement - Half page maximum
   - A personal statement indicating how this award will benefit the career progression of the PI.
   - A justification as to why this award would be transformative for the recipient.

Application Deadline: Monday 14th June 2021
Review Panel and Awards

- Proposals will be reviewed by a Peer Review Committee with expertise in each of the identified research categories.
- The Peer Review Committee will include senior faculty from the Faculty of Health Sciences, faculty members from across the University and external reviewers, selected by the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences.
- The Peer Review Committee members will be required to disclose potential conflicts of interest.
- Awards for winning proposals will be based on the recommendations of the Peer Review Committee with the final decisions by the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Application Checklist

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Details</th>
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| Cover Page          | Project Title  
Focus Area  
Principal Investigator(s) and Research Team  
Funding Amount Requested  
Project Abstract: 200 words or fewer |
| Project Narrative   | 5 page maximum                                                        |
| Bio-sketch(es)      | Half page maximum per researcher                                      |
| Budget              | 1 page maximum                                                        |
| Budget Justification| 1 page maximum                                                        |
| Personal Statement  | Half page maximum                                                      |
| Completed Application| Must be submitted by email to lena.doherty@tcd.ie  
Subject Line: Dean’s Research Initiatives Fund |

Awards Announcement

Awards will be announced by email on 30th September 2021, and posted online on the Faculty of Health Sciences website.

Queries

Should you have any queries, please contact the Faculty Administrator, Lena Doherty, at lena.doherty@tcd.ie.