University College Dublin
Institutional Strategic Support Fund

Supported by University College Dublin and the SFI-HRB-Wellcome Research Partnership

Clinical Primer Scheme
Call Document

Introduction to Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF)

The UCD Wellcome ISSF scheme (supported under the SFI-HRB-Wellcome Research Partnership, with matched funding from UCD (Research, CHAS and CoS)) aims to help UCD's researchers overcome systemic barriers to career and network development, ultimately unlocking future research potential within the University and beyond. In particular, the UCD Wellcome ISSF scheme will be used to fund key strategic priorities within health-related research specifically within the area of 'Personalised & Translational Medicine'* and 'One Health'**

Introduction to Clinical Primer Scheme

Nationally and within UCD, there is an urgent need for more medical and veterinary scientists to enable research translation. This deficiency is even more acute in veterinary medicine, for which UCD has the only school on the island of Ireland. The UCD Wellcome ISSF Clinical Primer Scheme will incentivise and support the early careers of medical and veterinary clinicians, practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists and individuals within the allied health services. Given the funding source for this particular call, applications from Clinical Primers whose PI is affiliated to the CHAS or CoS can only be considered (as this individual will be the eventual grant holder). [NOTE 1: In exceptional circumstances, where matched funding can be demonstrated from another College, then the application may be considered (on a case-by-case basis). Please contact issf@ucd.ie to clarify in such an eventuality at least two weeks prior to the grant deadline].

This new talent pool will be essential for underpinning the university's future success in the **priority areas of 'Personalised & Translational Medicine' and 'One Health'.**

The purpose of the Clinical Primer Scheme is to allow successful candidates an opportunity to work in a research environment, generating significant research outcomes that can be leveraged to pursue extramural funding. Thus, only candidates whose research clearly has the potential to provide a launch-pad for larger-scale continuation projects, either by the incoming researcher or the wider host laboratory/team, will be considered.

Furthermore, fostering collaboration between interdisciplinary stakeholders is key to addressing complex scientific, regulatory, societal and economic challenges related to animal and human health.

Collaboration between clinical and non-clinical disciplines are encouraged. Projects that support the development of new, internal research links between human and veterinary medicine will be particularly welcome.

This scheme will operate as a competitive funding programme intended to facilitate career development and growth, with mentorship and staff development being key features of the programme. Up to three fellows will be funded in this round, with funding of €46,600 per award being made available to buy-out clinical time and cover research costs.

*Personalised and Translational Medicine is research which involves tailoring medical approaches specifically to each individual patient and research aimed at accelerating the development of new medical approaches for use in the clinic.

**One Health integrates human medicine, veterinary medicine, and environmental science, and is ultimately aimed at preventing disease and improving the health of all species – animal and human.

Award features include:

- Successful candidates will undertake an ***interdisciplinary*** research project of up to 12 months duration supervised by a pre-identified mentor in either the CoS or CHAS, or in exceptional circumstances, see note 1 above.
- Dedicated project management and grant writing support will be available to all fellows, linking in with the project management team within the ISSF Network of Excellence Scheme. This support will enable fellows bid for future external funding and generate high impact outputs.
- Successful candidates will participate in established weekly seminar series which currently operate across the UCD Research Institutes which gives students, research staff and invited guests an opportunity to meet each other, learn about current research and have topical discussions. This is an excellent forum for emerging investigators to present their original research findings to their peers and to get feedback on their research progress.
- Recipients will present their research at the UCD Conway Festival of Research and Innovation, a 2-day festival showcasing the research achievements of early career researchers that features oral/poster presentations in addition to plenary lectures by eminent international biomedical researchers.
- Where possible, successful candidates will have access to career development opportunities available within the university.

Award Aims:

- Facilitate ideation and incubate interdisciplinary collaborative research at its earliest stage with a view to sustaining long-term research careers within the medical, veterinary medical, practitioner, nurse, and physiotherapist communities.
- Encourage engagement and collaboration with researchers across medical, veterinary medical, social sciences and humanities field.
- Support the transformation of new ideas from early concepts through to clinical translation.
- Encourage engagement with stakeholders to include patients and/or end-users of veterinary medicine.
- Support the development of nascent research projects, to a point where they are considered ready for competitive submission to an external national/international funding agency.
- Enhance UCD's research portfolio, profile and impact nationally and internationally.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for the Clinical Primer Scheme, applicants must:

- Be a certified healthcare professional; practitioner; or a member of the allied health services (e.g. clinical nutritionists, dietitians, dentists, nurses, physiotherapists etc.) within the medical or veterinary medical/veterinary nursing field (see Terms and Conditions for further details).
- Previous Clinical Primer Fellows are eligible to reapply through this scheme provided they justify why additional funding is required.
- Be employed either by UCD; hospitals within the Ireland East Hospital Group; or medical and veterinary medical centres affiliated with/linked in to UCD. For those who are not currently employed directly by the University, secondments will be considered (pending agreement between UCD and respective Employer) with regards to the clinical buy out time. The award will need to be linked to a resident PI with academic post in UCD which will act as the de facto grant holder.
- All proposals must include interdisciplinary collaboration within at least two (preferably three) of the following disciplines: medical and biomedical sciences; veterinary and agricultural sciences; environmental science; humanities and social sciences. Collaborators can be external to UCD.
- Be early stage researchers only; therefore, any individual who has previously held or currently holds a large project grant is not deemed eligible for this award (see Terms and Conditions for further details).
- Provide written permission from their Head of School and/or clinical supervisor regarding clinical buy-out time.
- Demonstrate a successful track record as evidenced by academic achievements.
- Identify an appropriate UCD mentor, who should be a member of academic staff in the University from either CHAS or CoS, who agrees to provide supervision during the project. The UCD mentor will also hold the research account and be ultimately responsible for the financial management of same. In exceptional circumstances, where matched funding can be demonstrated from another College, then the application may be considered (on a case-by-case basis). Please contact issf@ucd.ie to clarify in such an eventuality at least two weeks prior to the grant deadline.

Eligibility checks on submitted proposals will only be carried out after the call has closed.

The maximum funding available under this programme is €46,600 for a maximum duration of 12 months. The key desired outcome is sufficient preliminary research findings to enable extramural funding. Within 12 months of receipt of award, applicants will be expected to be competitive for Wellcome Trust, HRB, Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (DAFM), SFI and Irish Research Council awards.

Details of Programme

The purpose of the Clinical Primer Scheme is to embed cultural change in the university, whereby UCD actively attracts medical, veterinary medical/nursing professionals, nurses and physiotherapists (and other members of the allied health services) at early career stages with a view to sustaining long-term research careers.

Central to the 2021 scheme will be the emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration. Therefore, all proposals **must** outline a clinical research project (or a research project with a clear clinical application) that incorporates expertise from at least **at least two (preferably three)** of the following broad disciplinary areas.

1. Medical and biomedical sciences
2. Veterinary and agricultural sciences
3. Environmental Science
4. Humanities and social sciences

To note:
- Collaboration between non-clinical and clinical disciplines is encouraged.
- Projects that support the development of new, internal research links between human and veterinary medicine will be particularly welcome.

Assessors will be looking for submissions that have a clear plan regarding research project development, emphasises interdisciplinary collaborations, and potential future proposal development.

Funding available: The maximum value of award under this programme is €46,600.

Time-lines:

Deadlines for applications will be announced on the opening of each round. The deadline for this current round is: _Friday 12th November 2021, 5pm._

Evaluation:

Applications will be evaluated by a central multidisciplinary evaluation committee consisting of clinical and academic experts within the medical, veterinary medical field, nursing and or physiotherapy fields with the following profile:
- Track record of excellence.
- Track record of mentorship and development of early career researchers.
- Significant experience of and success in leading large interdisciplinary programmes or groups.
- Diversity in discipline, gender and background will be a key feature.

Each review panel will be chaired by a member of the SFI-HRB-Wellcome ISSF Steering Committee.

Evaluation Criteria:

Submitted projects will be assessed, scored and awarded based on the following criteria. With the exception of 1), all other criteria will be scored between 0 and 5.

Relevance to the scope of the scheme.

- Clear relevance to the research topics of 'Personalised & Translational Medicine' and 'One Health'.
- Excellence of the candidate proposal **(weighed X2).**
- Clear demonstration that the applicant has embedded interdisciplinary collaboration as part of their research project **(weighted X2).**
- Clear demonstration of the applicant's outstanding future potential.
- Clear outline of how the project will help the applicant to secure prestigious research funding.
- Impact of the research programme.
- Appropriate public engagement and outreach activity.
- Suitability of the mentor.
- Value for money; the applicant has provided a clear budget justification.

Applications will be assessed within 4-6 weeks of the closing date. Feedback and comments on each application are recorded and will be provided to help applicants understand how they might further improve the quality for future calls.

Application Template

1.	Applicants CV *(include details of affiliation/link to UC).* **Max 5 pages**
2.	Detail of Previous Research Experience *(including total duration).* **Max 1 page**
3.	Main thematic area (*'One Health' or' Personalised or Translational Medicine'*) and how the proposal fits within this area**.** **Max 1 page**
4.	Summary of Proposed Research Programme *(Summary covering project title, objectives and methodology, Gantt chart).* **Max 4 pages (including references)**
5.	Details of collaboration within at least two of the following disciplines: medicine and biomedical sciences; veterinary and agricultural sciences; environmental science; and humanities and social sciences. Include letter of support from interdisiplinary collaborators (see point 10). **Max 2 pages**
6.	Summary of Expected Impact of Research Programme. **Max 1 page**
	Public Engagement and/or Involvement Plan. **Max 0.5 page**
6.	Strategic Plan to Leverage Extramural Funding. **Max 1 page**
7.	Detailed Budget Breakdown and Budget Justification. **Max 1 page**
8.	Letter of Mentor Support. **Max 0.5 Page**
9.	Letter of support from Head of School and/or Clinical Supervisor *(This must include permission for clinical buyout time).* **Max 1 page**
10.	Letter of support from interdisciplinary collaborators. **Max 1 page per collaborator**

The deadline for submissions of applications to issf@ucd.ie is Friday 12th November 2021, 5pm. Applications **_must include support letter from appropriate Head of School and/or clinical supervisor_**.

Queries and application submissions should be directed by email to issf@ucd.ie

Applications must be uploaded as a single PDF attachment less than 5 MB in size, with the naming convention consisting of the applicant's full name, followed by "CPS" for the scheme, and year of application e.g. "Ann Smith CPS 2021". Applications must be provided in Times New Roman font, or similar, with minimum font size of 12, and at least single line spacing as well as a minimum margin size of 2.54cm. Text in diagrams may be in any clearly legible font. The mandatory format for submissions is outlined below. Candidates and mentors are advised to consider the Guidelines, Evaluation Criteria, Terms and Conditions (Annex 1) and Budget details (Annex 2) for the Call when preparing their submissions.

Post Assessment Process - Reporting

Timeline for Assessment

Applications will be assessed within 4-6 weeks of the closing date. Formal results notifications will be sent to all applicants. Feedback comments on each application are recorded and will be provided in the results letters; the purpose of which is to help applicants understand how they might further improve the quality of future proposals. All notifications regarding Clinical Primer Scheme will be emailed to the applicant's email account as appears in your application.

Research Account Set Up

All awards made under the Clinical Primer Scheme will be paid into Research Accounts which will be set up by UCD Research. All successful applicants will be notified of the relevant research accounts within four weeks of announcement of results.

Once the research account has been set up, successful applicants can manage the spending on their award by logging into RMS Grants (https://rms.ucd.ie/ufrs_apex/f?p=1000:14) and navigating to Grant Reporting. This component of RMS Grants provides details on the current expenditure of the account.

Research Account Expenditure

Spending on the grant can be made through eProcurement (http://www.ucd.ie/bursar/orders_invoices_payments.html#e_procurement) or alternatively applicants may be reimbursed for expenditure by downloading and completing an expense claim form, all of which are available on the Bursars webpage www.ucd.ie/bursar. Please reference your Research Account number when completing all expense forms.

The above forms must be completed with codes for the different types of expenditure being claimed. A list of expense codes, to determine the nature of the cost incurred, can be obtained at www.ucd.ie/bursar/ucd_research_d_codes.html

All expense claim forms must be submitted to the Bursar's Office and be accompanied by receipts for all expenditure. These expense codes must be used along with the cost centre number and research account. Please ensure that your supervisor or Head of School/ Institute Director signs off on all claims.

Where funding is to support a visiting academic (not a member of UCD staff) then a 'Non Staff Requisition Form' should be downloaded and completed with the per diem rate which can be obtained at http://www.ucd.ie/bursar/forms.html#expenses

Project Reports

Successful applicants will be required to submit biannual progress reports, detailing their progress to date. The continuation of funding is dependent upon submission of these reports. Within 1 month of project completion, a final report must be completed in terms of outputs and deliverables. Future funding within UCD will be dependent upon submission of this report.

Annex 1: Terms and Conditions

1. The Clinical Primer Scheme is open to early stage health professionals/practitioners or individuals in allied health professions within the medical and veterinary medical field. This includes (but is not limited to), clinical nutritionists, dietitians', dentists, pharmacists, nurses, veterinary nurses, physical therapists, physiotherapists, radiographers, occupational therapists etc.

2. Applicants currently undertaking a postgraduate course (e.g PhD, MD or MSc) are eligible to apply for this scheme.

3. Applicants must be either employed by UCD; by hospitals within the Ireland East Hospital Group; or by medical and veterinary centres affiliated with/linked in to UCD. Each individual's affiliation/link to UCD must be included in their CV. For applicants who are not currently employed by the University, secondments will be considered (pending agreement between UCD and respective employer) with regards to the clinical buy out time. The award will need to be linked to a resident PI with academic post in UCD which will act as the de facto grant holder.

4. Collaborations across two of the following disciplines (preferably three) must be included in the application: medicine and biomedical sciences; veterinary and agricultural sciences; environmental science; and humanities and social sciences. Letters of support from collaborators must be included in the final submission. These collaborators do not have to be based in UCD.

5. Successful applicants will be expected to start their Fellowship no later than 1st January 2022.

6. This funding is for early stage researchers only; therefore, any individual who has previously held or currently holds a project grant is not be deemed eligible for this award i.e. they must not hold or have previously held a large-scale, independent, internationally peer reviewed grant exceeding one-year duration. Personal awards, including student and postdoctoral fellowships, travel awards, and bursaries of greater than one-year duration are permissible, so long as their value is no greater than €100,000 per annum.

7. It must be clear from the application that the objectives of the programme have been taken into account.

8. Applicants must have a clear sustainability plan outlining the approach for obtaining successful extramural funding within 12 months of completion of the award.

9. Applicants may only submit one application within a given round.

10. Previous awardees of the Clinical Primer Scheme can reapply for further funding but must include a justification within their submitted application.

11. Application forms must be complete. No supplementary material will be accepted - all relevant material must be displayed within the application form. Application forms must display information clearly and concisely and must be of a high professional standard. Page limits must be strictly adhered to. Incomplete application forms will not be evaluated by an Assessment Panel.

12. All successful applicants will be required to submit biannual progress reports to the review committee. Failure to submit these reports, or to reach appropriate milestones, may result in termination of this award.

13. Successful candidates must participate in at least one of the established weekly seminar series which currently operate across the UCD Research Institutes.

14. Recipients will be required to present their research in the Conway Festival of Research and Innovation.

15. All applicants must have written permission from their respective Head of School or clinical supervisor for clinical buy out time.

16. Funding received under this programme must be used for the project outlined in the application.

17. Successful applicants must apply in writing to the Chair of ISSF Steering Committee in order to make any changes to their application following receipt of an award.

18. UCD Research must be notified of any significant budget transfers between categories. Up to 20% or €500 (whichever is greater) transfer between budget categories will be allowed without seeking written approval.

19. The Principal Applicant cannot transfer an award to any other person.

20. The start date of the project will be automatically activated following the announcement of the awards. The award must be spent either within 12 months of the start date or the applicant's contract end date, whichever is earlier.

21. In extenuating circumstances, a no-cost extension of up to 3 months may be considered (subject to duration of initial project and what the funder may allow). This must be applied for in writing to issf@ucd.ie, no later than 3 months prior to award cessation. Requests for a no cost extension will be reviewed by the Steering Committee and granted on a case by case basis, if possible. The no cost extension cannot fall beyond the end date of the overall ISSF project.

22. Successful applicants will be required to submit a project report detailing their outputs and deliverables on completion of the project. Please see Post Assessment Process for further details.

23. All research awards will be registered under the name and school of the pre-agreed mentor who should be from CHAS or CoS.   In exceptional circumstances, where matched funding can be demonstrated from another College, then the application may be considered (on a case-by-case basis). Please contact issf@ucd.ie to clarify in such an eventuality at least two weeks prior to the grant deadline. Both the awardee and mentor are responsible for ensuring spending does not exceed the budgetary allocation. Any over-spend will be charged to the mentors relevant School. The Office of the Vice-President for Research, Innovation & Impact (VPRII) will not be responsible for any over-spend on the project.

24. Any under-spend must be returned to the Office of the VPRII within 3 months of the end of the project or immediately on cessation of the project for any reason other than completion.

25. Successful applicants will be required to provide details of their actual spend compared with their budgeted spend at the end of the award period. Auditable back-up documentation, including invoices, cost allocations, etc. must be maintained by all successful applicants. The Office of the VPRII may undertake annual review procedures in this regard.

26. Requests for the supply of externally sourced goods, services and facilities are subject to the standard University procurement procedures.

Appendix 2: Clinical Primer Scheme Budget Policy

This section sets out the financial/budgetary information you should provide when submitting a proposal to the Clinical Primer Scheme. Please read through this carefully in advance of submitting a proposal. All costs must be in line with the Wellcome Budget Policy

Pay Costs

1. Clinical buy-out time (with approval) is an allowable cost.
2. The duration of all appointments should be outlined in the proposal. If candidates plan to work on a part-time basis, the % FTE must be clearly defined.
3. Postgraduate stipend and fees are eligible costs provided it is the applicant that is undertaking the postgraduate course

Equipment

4. Details of all requested equipment necessary should be itemised. VAT at the prevailing rate should be included.
5. Where equipment of a value of more than €3,000 is requested, details of quotations should be included in the budget justification.
6. Please adhere to the Wellcome Budget Policy for further details on allowed equipment costs.
7. Applicants must confirm that their School is willing to cover the maintenance costs of the equipment following completion of funding under the Wellcome Trust ISSF scheme.
8. A proposal should not be submitted for equipment only.

Materials and Consumables

9. An outline of all materials and consumables that will be used during the course of the research should be provided alongside detailed justification for all costs.
10. Access charges for use of Infrastructure can be included here.
11. Conference registration fees can be included here.

Travel

12. Only travel and subsistence costs for journeys and events directly related to the research programme and undertaken by the applicant or team member may be requested.
13. Details of the trip should be outlined including location, duration, purpose and name of proposed traveller.
14. Business class travel is not an allowable expense.
15. Subsistence should be as per the rates listed on the Bursar's website. The 24-hour subsistence rate covers accommodation and all meals. Subsistence should be reduced accordingly where meals and or accommodation is provided by a third party of covered under a conference registration fee.

Co-funding / cost share

16. Reduce the budget request by any funding available from any other source.

Budget Justification

1. The budget justification is the narrative explanation of the budget. It helps reviewers to evaluate whether the budget requested is reasonable and represents value for money. It should clearly explain why requested eligible costs are necessary for the proposed research project and how they have been calculated. Some general guidance is provided below.
   - When constructing a budget justification follow the same order as that in the itemised budget form, so that reviewers can easily compare the two documents.
   - Ensure that everything in your budget is referenced in the justification. Provide more details for higher value requests.
   - For clinical buy-out time, please indicate an exact break-down calculated costs (to include salary scale). For part-time funding, the % FTE will be required, in addition to a clear justification as to how this will not affect the overall project deliverables.
   - For equipment, justify why existing equipment cannot be used and why this equipment is critical.
   - For materials and consumables, where relevant provide details relating to estimated numbers of runs. If use of technology is required, please include any access costs and detail estimated usage in days or hours.
   - For travel include details of personnel travelling, location, duration and purpose of proposed trip and why it is necessary.
2. Provide details of any cost-share or co-funding available from any other source.
3. Provide confirmation that funding requested for the proposed project is not available from any other source.