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# Enterprise Ireland KT Boost Programme

## Call and Guidelines for Proposals 2024-2027

**Deadline for receipt of completed applications: noon on 24th March 2023**

Send to: [ursula.okeeffe@knowledgetransferireland.com](mailto:ursula.okeeffe@knowledgetransferireland.com)

For further information and any queries:

Contact Jennifer Malone at: [jennifer.malone@knowledgetransferireland.com](mailto:jennifer.malone@knowledgetransferireland.com)



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## Section 1: Aims of the KT Boost programme

The Enterprise Ireland (EI) KT Boost programme is a new four-year €33.4 million programme directed to Irish universities and technological universities (TUs), including TUs that are currently approved by the State, but which may not have reached legal status at the time of application to this programme. Its focus is on developing and supporting Innovation Offices<sup>1</sup> in these Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as a part of the overall policy and funding landscape that supports research commercialisation.

This will be delivered through funding for people including the recruitment and development of new skill sets and training within HEIs Innovation Offices. The programme is expected to deliver skills sets that will support an increase in research commercialisation outcomes within the university and TU sector regionally and nationally and develop a consistent operational quality across these sectors.

The KT Boost Programme is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union under two European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Regional Programmes – the Southern, Eastern and Midland Regional Programme 2021-2027 and the Northern and Western Regional Programme 2021-2027. The ERDF aims to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion across all European regions.

The Programme will fund Innovation Offices staff costs and related operational activities. These specialist roles supported will continue to develop the Knowledge Transfer System in public research institutions and will provide new resources to place a focus on knowledge and technology transfer activities including IP Management and prospective licensing, and spin-off creation. The Programme is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Develop capacity and capability in the Technological University sector to support knowledge and technology transfer and associated outcomes
- Increase knowledge transfer outcomes within the university and TU sector
- Enhance associated operational quality across the university and TU sectors

Programme outcomes are expected to:

- Accelerate the rate of High Potential Start-up (HPSU) emergence derived from spin outs from research
- An increase in the volume of licences to intellectual property (IP) for companies
- An increase in the volume of research collaboration agreements with companies
- Promote a measurable and improving quality in the focus of the overall services of the Innovation Offices in advice services, including enhanced procedures for swift and simplified transactions

**Applications are now invited** from universities and technological universities (including designated technological universities) as described further in this call for proposals.

**Deadline for receipt of completed applications: noon on 24th March 2023**

Send to: [ursula.okeeffe@knowledgetransferireland.com](mailto:ursula.okeeffe@knowledgetransferireland.com)

<sup>1</sup> Also known as Technology Transfer Offices, Knowledge Transfer Offices, Industrial Liaison Offices etc.



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## Section 2: Proposals under the KT Boost programme

### 2.1 Eligibility

The KT Boost programme will be open to Irish universities and technological universities (including those whose formation has been formally approved by the State but which may not have reached legal status at the time of application to this programme). Applications shall be from individual universities and TUs. Where there is an economy of scale or shared objective, certain activities may be carried out in conjunction with another institution, however direct funding will only be granted to eligible HEIs under this call.

All proposals must identify a fulltime Director of the Innovation Office (or comparable position) at a sufficiently senior position within the institution that is empowered with budgetary control and decision-making authority on operational matters and technology transfer/research commercialisation deals.

### 2.2 Activities in scope

Successful applicants will be offered funding to contribute towards the costs of running their technology transfer/research commercialisation activities for four years (1 January 2024 to 31st December 2027), subject to achievement of the Targets (see [2.4](#)), alignment with the National Smart Specialisation Strategy (see [2.3](#)), acceptable service provision (see [2.5.1](#)) and compliance with obligations under this programme (see [Section 4 & 5](#)).

Programme funds may be used to support Innovation Office staff and operations that directly contribute to delivering the Targets. Staff roles and operational costs that may be supported from the programme budget are listed in [section 4.2.](#) and [Appendix 1.](#)

Eligible activities undertaken by HEIs in delivery of the KT Boost Programme may include:

1. Proactive identification of IP with potential commercial value, including commercial and market assessment.
2. Active management of the IP portfolio against IP strategy and value for money assessment.
3. Awareness raising and training of research personnel on research commercialisation and IP issues.
4. Focussed promotion of institutional IP, technology and expertise to industry, entrepreneurs, and investors.
5. Negotiating and concluding deals with industry in a consistent, fast and professional manner that is consistent with the [national IP Protocol](#) with a process of continuous self-evaluation and improvement including use of [national model agreements](#).
6. Active support for spin-out company development from sourcing through to funding and including development and management of proposals under the EI Commercialisation Fund and operational processes to enable swift, fair and consistent spin-out contract negotiation.
7. Supporting engagement with industry and underpinning contracting where IP and/or access to technology is central to the partnership.

How these activities are balanced is for the HEI to decide based on its strategy and objectives for research commercialisation.

Additional activities undertaken by HEIs themselves in support of delivery under the KT Boost programme are expected to include:



1. Information management including IP and contracts, case management and key performance indicators (KPI).
2. Management reporting (at the level of Innovation Office, HEI, funder and national data collection), including tracking of outcomes from research commercialisation and gathering impact case studies.
3. Operating and revising the appropriate policies, processes and systems to capture and manage IP and the commercialisation process.
4. Reporting under the programme to EI (via Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI)) including running and reporting on an annual Net Promoter Score (NPS) assessment.

Research commercialisation activities undertaken in the Innovation Office are expected to be fully integrated with other closely related functions within the applicant institution. As part of its commitment to the Innovation Office, the HEI will ensure that other key institutional functions such as in-house legal, contracts, finance services and the research office are supportive to and knowledgeable of the specific requirements of the Innovation Office activities.

The HEI is expected to meet the National IP Management Requirements set out in the national IP Protocol.

All eligible activities must ensure that the horizontal principles of ERDF funding are taken into account. These include that all eligible applicants confirm that they have taken steps to prevent any discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of programmes and in particular, accessibility for persons with disabilities. Additionally, all eligible applicants must confirm the promotion of sustainable development including the 6 principles of “Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)” - climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, the sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, the circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling, pollution prevention and control to air, water, and land and the protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem. All eligible applicants will be encouraged to consider and report on any positive contribution their activities can have in supporting the 6 principles of DNSH.

### 2.3 Smart Specialisation Strategy

As an “enabling condition” of ERDF funding, Ireland is required to have a Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) fulfilling criteria set out by the European Commission. Smart Specialisation is an innovation policy concept that aims to boost regional enterprise innovation, contributing to growth and prosperity by helping and enabling regions to focus on their strengths. The European Commission has stipulated that S3 should determine RD&I funding. The KT Boost Programme is ERDF co-funded and as such, applicants will be required to demonstrate via their application, and ongoing reporting to Enterprise Ireland over the duration of the programme, how they are working to support the regional priorities as set out in Ireland's Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/national-smart-specialisation-strategy-for-innovation-2022-2027.html>



## 2.4 Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

HEIs will be expected to set out annual attainable out-turn metrics. These will be subject to international peer review to ensure that they are both realistic and provide a suitable stretch. KPIs include both “targets” and “tracked metrics”:

**Targets:** metrics against which the HEI’s performance under the programme is measured

**Tracked:** metrics build a more complete picture of activity, but which are not formal performance measures

KT Boost KPI metrics will be used in the Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey (AKTS), which KTI manages and publishes annually, and in reporting to the EU Commission as the programme is ERDF co-funded.

Definitions can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

**Table 1 – KPI**

Targets	Tracked
<p>Number of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licences, Options and Assignments (LOAs)</li> <li>New registered Spin-outs</li> <li>HPSU</li> <li>Projects gaining funding under the EI Commercialisation Fund (<i>excluding Commercial Case Feasibility (CFF) projects</i>)</li> <li>Research agreements with industry (collaboration &amp; contract research)</li> <li>Enterprises supported (of which: micro, small, medium, large)</li> <li>Enterprises with non-financial support<sup>3</sup></li> <li>Female-led Enterprises Supported<sup>4</sup></li> <li>Delivery of and progress in Net Promoter Score (NPS) assessment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarterly:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New inventions disclosed (IDF)</li> <li>Patent applications filed</li> <li>Patent applications granted</li> <li>Funded Spin-outs</li> </ul> <p><b>Annually:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active Spin-outs</li> <li>Acquired Spin-outs</li> <li>Jobs in spin-outs</li> <li>Consultancy agreements with industry</li> <li>Repeat business with a company</li> <li>Revenue from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licensing</li> <li>Equity sale</li> <li>Research collaboration agreements</li> <li>Research contract agreements</li> <li>Consultancy agreements</li> </ul> </li> <li>Products/services brought to market</li> </ul>

## 2.5 Requirements of the HEI

A HEI funded under the KT Boost Programme will be fully responsible to Enterprise Ireland for the successful operation of the programme and delivery of the targets specified in the grant agreement.

<sup>3</sup> This figure will be the same as the number of enterprises supported under this programme

<sup>4</sup> This figure is a subset of the total number of enterprises supported. Enterprise Ireland considers an organisation to be female-led when:

- Female(s) own at least 25% of the shareholding in the company, and
- Hold at least one C-Level executive position in the organisation (i.e. CEO, CFO, COO etc)



### 2.5.1 Quality in outcomes and in service

The objectives of funding under the KT Boost programme include the enhancement of quality in outcomes and in service. To achieve this, HEIs need skilled staff and processes (business and governance) appropriate to support research commercialisation and make the experience simple and efficient for companies, investors and founders. As a condition of funding under KT Boost programme, HEIs are required in their proposals to commit to the following:

- Review of internal business and governance processes and implement any changes:
  - Prior to funding:
    - Identify and address any bottlenecks in process
    - Provide appropriate autonomy for the Innovation Office to exercise its commercial judgement within appropriate sector standard governance parameters
  - Within three (3) months of programme start:
    - Deploy appropriate internal systems to record and monitor all KPIs requested under the programme
    - Use national Model Agreements as the preferred template (unless a company insists on use of their own template as starting point)
    - Apply the same consents for investment as EI, where EI is an investor in a spin-out (at any stage) from the HEI
    - Provide a clear link to the Innovation Office pages from the homepage of the HEI website
- Development of Innovation Office staff skills including:
  - Involvement in networks of best practice convened by KTI and/or under the programme
  - Support for staff to benefit from KT training availability nationally and internationally
  - Encouragement and support for Innovation Office staff who are eligible to apply for the international professional standards recognition of Registered Technology Transfer Professional (RTTP) or Candidate Registered Technology Transfer Professional (cRTTP)
- Undertake the KT Boost Net Promoter Score (NPS) assessment (to be developed with the Innovation Office community by KTI during 2022) at the start of the programme and annually thereafter
- Submit to KTI for national promotion, as requested:
  - Licensing opportunities for inclusion as a national resource on the KTI website
  - Case studies showing the impact of commercialisation as requested
- Wherein the KT Boost Programme is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), all successful applicants shall comply will all ERDF requirements, including:
  - ensuring that the EU's Horizontal Principles of Equality and Non-Discrimination and in particular the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are addressed. Applicants shall provide a copy of, or links to, their Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policies (and any other documents requested) as part of their application.
  - Promotion of sustainable development including the 6 principles of “Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)” - climate change mitigation, climate change adaption, the sustainable Use and protection of water and marine resources, the circular economy, including waste prevention and recycling, pollution prevention and control to air, water, and land and the protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem. HEIs will be encouraged to consider and report on any positive contribution their activities can have in supporting the 6 principles of DNSH.



## 2.5.2 HEI contribution

### 2.5.2.1 Institutional support

Funding will be contingent on an understanding of the level of commitment that the HEI has made, and will make, to support research commercialisation beyond the financial contribution. The HEI senior leadership (through its Vice President Research or equivalent) will be expected to explain how research commercialisation has been, and will be, supported and embedded within the culture of the HEI and how the institute will support the Innovation Office to deliver to its objectives for research commercialisation.

### 2.5.2.2 Financial

All applications made to the Programme are made in the name of the HEI. In that respect, Enterprise Ireland expect a high level of commitment by the HEI in relation to the ongoing KT Boost Programme activity. It is expected that the HEI will provide a financial commitment to directly support the research commercialisation activities carried out by the Innovation Office. The table below is the expected minimum financial commitment expected. This will not be a contractual obligation however it will be part of the scoring criteria for the evaluation.

The HEI will be expected to provide suitable space and resources, including additional personnel, salary costs and other financial resources. However, where the HEI Commitment includes additional personnel and operational costs that do not sit within the Innovation Office they must be in direct support of the work of the Innovation Office as it relates to this programme. Any additional personnel put forward must be dedicated on a percentage time basis to the eligible Innovation Office activities.

A list of “qualifying” complementary research commercialisation roles and operational activities are listed in [Appendix 1](#).

**Table 2 – Minimum expected HEI funding Commitment**

HEI sector	HEI	HEI Financial Commitment % (minimum requirement)	Evaluation Scoring
University	Dublin City University University of Galway Maynooth University RCSI Trinity College University College Cork University College Dublin University of Limerick	40%	= or > 40% = 10 points <40% = 0 points
Technological University	Munster Technological University TU Dublin South East Technological University	30%	= or > 30% = 10 points <30% = 0 points
Technological University	Atlantic Technological University Technological University of the Shannon	0%	No minimum requirement,



which has received no previous direct funding under TTSI to its constituent institutions			automatic score of 10 points for TU's not previously funded under TTSI
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*\*Financial Commitment is not a contractual obligation but will form part of the evaluation process and scoring.*

The HEI will be expected to provide suitable space and resources, including additional personnel, salary costs, overheads and other financial resources.

Value-for-money will underpin all funding awarded under this Call for Proposals.

The final approval levels will be at the discretion of the Enterprise Ireland Board and with regard to the European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) available in the region; the allocation and release of funding will be agreed between the HEI and the KT Boost Programme Management team and will be based on agreed contractual targets.

Funding for approved Innovation Offices will run for four years, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Continuing funding within this period will be contingent upon the applicant institution's continued achievement of Metric Targets and Key tracking metrics as agreed with Enterprise Ireland. As the programme will be co-funded by ERDF, all funding requests shall comply with all relevant ERDF requirements.

As awards made under this programme are ERDF co-financed, they will be included on the list of projects selected for support by the Funds which will be publicly available on a number of national and EU websites.

The programme shall also be subject to a mid-term review carried out by an independent supplier appointed via open tender. The focus of the review will be to ensure that the programme is meeting its objectives as agreed with the Enterprise Ireland Board. Where the programme is found not be performing then the Board of Enterprise Ireland may recommend corrective actions, up to and including, the orderly cessation of the programme.

Where the total funding requested is higher than the available budget then funding will be allocated competitively based on the proposed metric targets and key tracking metrics, the maturity of the HEI and track record of the applicant.

### 2.5.3 Reporting

As a condition of funding under the KT Boost programme, HEIs are required in their proposals to commit to the following:

- Report quarterly and annually on all required programme KPIs to EI (via KTI) on a timely basis with a high degree of accuracy. A reporting template will be issued by KTI.



- Submission of an annual report and at least two KT high impact case studies from that year. Templates will be issued by KTI.
- Report metrics annually on a timely basis with a high degree of accuracy for inclusion in the Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey (AKTS)

As the Programme is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), all successful applicants must comply with all ERDF requirements in terms of reporting and claims. Applicants must also provide a copy of, or links to, their Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policies (and any other documents requested) as part of their application.

## 2.6 Role of Enterprise Ireland

The EI KT Boost Programme is managed through KTI.

### Monitoring Programme output and impact

KTI will be responsible for the on-going collection of key performance indicators and information from programme participants and will report and disseminate analysis of progress on a regular basis.

Periodic programme reviews (including a major review around the mid-point of the programme) will be performed throughout the course of the funding period. Recipients will be required to address any recommendations for improvement under the programme. In cases of poor performance corrective action will be required and, in certain situations, there may be implications for continuing funding under the programme.

### Networking, Training and National Events

KTI will work with all participant institutions to further develop the national KT network as a mechanism to pool their skills and expertise and will run networking and training events for the KT community to share best practice and to develop next practice, during the course of the programme.

## 2.7 Policies and Procedures

The application should clearly demonstrate how the host currently implements the EU's Horizontal Principles on Equality and Non-discrimination and the 6 principles of Do No Significant Harm. Copies of these policies and procedures will be required as part of the application process, failure to include them will deem the application as ineligible.

The Institution should also have in place policies and procedures necessary to deal with the unique nature of the Innovation Offices, such as a Conflict of Interest Policy that is reviewed on an annual basis.

Delays in the hiring of staff have the potential to impact on the Innovation Office ability to meet its Key Performance Indicators with Enterprise Ireland. In applying for funding the HEI commits to putting in place HR policies that support the resource requirements of the Innovation Office.



## Section 3: Call Procedures

### 3.1 Timelines

The indicative timetable for the KT Boost call is outlined below. While the approval timeframe may be subject to change, KTI/EI will make every effort to ensure rapid evaluation and approval of applications.

**Table 3 – Timeline**

Activity	Date
KT Boost Call documents issued	23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2023
Closing date for submissions	Noon 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2023
Review panel meets with applicants (virtual)	May 2023
Discussion of recommendations with individual applicants (where relevant e.g. conditions attached/implications for funding) Presentation of report and recommendations by KTI to EI Committees and Board for approval leading to indicative outcomes of funding allocations (as appropriate) conveyed to applicants by KTI (timing subject to EI Board approval)	June/July 2023
Final Contracts issued by EI Contracts team	August 2023
KT Boost programme commences	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024

\* *timing subject to EI approvals*

### 3.2 State Aid Basis

The support under the KT Boost Programme will only be granted to organisations in circumstances where Enterprise Ireland is satisfied that the funding would not fall under Article 107(1) of the Treaty, i.e. where it does not amount to State aid. Applicants must therefore demonstrate that they meet the criteria determining categorisation as 'Research and Knowledge Dissemination Organisations and/or Research Infrastructures' *as well as the other conditions set out in the European Commission Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2022/C 414/01)* to be deemed eligible. This will be validated by reference to the State Aid Check List (State Aid Checklist for the KT Boost Programme 2024-2027 Research Organisation and/or Research Infrastructure validation checklist (see section 8 of the Application Form). Enterprise Ireland will review applications and supporting documents and may ask applicants to provide further evidence.

### 3.3 Application process

Applications must be submitted on the template provided (KTB2) and must be signed by the Authorised Officer(s) including the bursar/CFO of the HEI applying for funding. Where a TU has been approved but does not have legal status, all Authorised Officers of the constituent institutions should sign, unless an alternative approach has been formally agreed by the Governing Bodies. All



documentation requested must be submitted on time with the application. Any applications received after the closing date will be deemed ineligible and will not be assessed.

Applications should be sent as a **single** MS Word document and a PDF copy with associated excel documents by e-mail to:

Ursula O’Keeffe at [ursula.okeeffe@knowledgetransferireland.com](mailto:ursula.okeeffe@knowledgetransferireland.com)

**Deadline for receipt of completed applications: noon on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

### 3.4 Evaluation

The evaluation process is designed to be fair, transparent and rigorous and to select proposals for funding that best meet the objectives of the KT Boost programme.

**Pre evaluation:** Each application will be assessed by members of the grant administration team within EI to firstly ensure the application is eligible for evaluation and this assessment will include:

- (a) Confirmation that all the required sections have been completed and the application is signed by an authorized officer of an eligible institution and has been received by the closing date
- (b) Confirmation that the proposed activities are consistent with the call documentation and Ireland’s Smart Specialisation Strategy, and that the project has not commenced prior to selection
- (c) Confirmation that the funding will not be utilised to fund capital equipment or infrastructure
- (d) Confirmation that the activity respects the 6 principles of “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH)
- (e) Confirmation that applicants have effective mechanisms to ensure that all public procurement is consistent with National and EU procurement legislation
- (f) Confirmation that any state aid would be lawful and that the applicant is eligible to receive grant aid at the requested level within the State Aid regulations, if applicable
- (g) Confirmation that any aid granted through the project to third parties is permissible under and would be managed in accordance with State Aid regulations
- (h) Confirmation that applicants have effective mechanisms in place to ensure compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights of the European Union and with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disability (UNDRPD)
- (i) Confirmation that the application does not include activities which were part of an operation subject to relocation in accordance with Article 66 or which would constitute a transfer of a productive activity in accordance with point (a) of Article 65(1) of the CPR
- (j) Confirmation that the application is not directly affected by a reasoned opinion by the Commission in respect of an infringement under Article 258 TFEU that puts at risk the legality and regularity of expenditure or the performance of operations

If the proposals from the universities and technological universities are eligible, they will be reviewed by international external expert evaluation panels. One panel will review the university applications and one the technological university applications. Within each panel, the applications from the (1) Northern and Western and (2) Southern, Eastern and Midland Regions will be assessed separately.



Panel chairs will meet to discuss and ensure consistency in approach across panels. The rationale for the panel's construction is:

- universities and technological universities are at different stages of maturity and should not be compared directly with each other
- while the two regions will not compete directly for funding it is helpful to the individual HEIs to be reviewed with similar institutions so that a fair assessment and constructive feedback can be given to the HEIs from the expert panel that (a) drives and enhances performance across the Irish system (b) can identify additional areas of synergy or opportunity.

Funding will be allocated based on the scoring and recommendations of the International Expert Evaluation Panel. As the KT Boost Programme is about developing and supporting Innovation Offices in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) it is expected that all applications once eligible will receive a baseline allocation of funding. The baseline allocation will be determined with reference to the total budget requested and to the maturity of the HEIs. Funding recommendations may also take into account the needs of the newly established technological universities that may require an initial boost to develop their Innovation Offices.

All applications made to the Programme will be made in the name of the HEI. In that respect, Enterprise Ireland expect a high level of commitment by the HEI in relation to the ongoing Knowledge Transfer activity. It is expected that the HEI will provide a financial commitment to directly support the research commercialisation activities carried out by the Innovation Office. The financial commitment and support from the HEI will be assessed by the International Expert Evaluation Panel as part of their evaluation and will take into account the stage of maturity of the Innovation Office of the applicant HEI.

### ***Evaluation Criteria***

In reaching its overall recommendations the panel will consider the following aspects and score these according to the weighting below.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Areas to be considered and discussed for comment and rating</b>	<b>Total Marks allowable</b>
<b>Strategy</b>	<p>Is the strategy clear?</p> <p>Are the strategic objectives and proposed outcomes sufficiently well described and are they appropriate?</p> <p>Does the strategy have ambition?</p> <p>Is it clear how the funding will support the strategic objectives?</p> <p>Alignment with Regional Needs and the National and Regional Smart Specialisation Strategy</p>	15
<b>Resources requested</b>	<p>Does the proposal clearly explain how the Innovation Office will operate over the full programme of funding?</p>	10



Criteria	Areas to be considered and discussed for comment and rating	Total Marks allowable
	<p>Are the resources requested (for staff and operations) appropriate and properly justified?</p> <p>Are they appropriate to deliver to the proposed objectives and Targets<sup>5</sup>?</p> <p>Are all the relevant activities discussed and are they described sufficiently to give confidence in the proposal?</p>	
<b>Information management</b>	Are the systems and processes for information management and reporting clearly described and appropriate?	5
<b>Innovation Office service</b>	Is there evidence of commitment to quality in service delivery and continuous improvement by the Innovation Office?	15
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<p>Are the proposed Targets<sup>6</sup> realistic?</p> <p>Do they contain sufficient stretch?</p>	15
<b>HEI commitment to research commercialisation</b>	<p>Has the HEI demonstrated that it is actively championing a research commercialisation culture in the institute?</p> <p>Does the description of how the HEI will support the Innovation Office to meet its objectives under this programme give confidence?</p> <p>Is there demonstration of how other related functions in the HEI will support the work of the Innovation Office?</p>	10
<b>HEI governance and operational environment</b>	<p>Is the approach to governance of research commercialisation activity through the Innovation Office sufficiently well described?</p> <p>Is it supportive of the work of the Innovation Office and the ambitions described in this proposal?</p> <p>Is the delegated authority to the Innovation Office sufficient?</p> <p>Is there evidence of institutional reflection on its processes and an appetite for continuous improvement?</p> <p>Does the Institution address the EU's Horizontal Principles of Equality and Non-Discrimination?</p>	10
<b>HEI Financial Commitment</b>	Has the HEI demonstrated that it is committed to investing additional financial resources to directly support the research commercialisation activities carried out by the Innovation Office, at a level commensurate with the maturity of the office? (as detailed in the call documents)	10
<b>Value for money</b>	Does the proposal demonstrate overall value for use of public funds?	10

<sup>5</sup> Targets will include Metric Targets and Key Tracking Metrics

<sup>6</sup> Targets will include Metric Targets and Key Tracking Metrics



The final score will be an average consensus score of the panel members.

Scoring of the applicant's alignment with the National Smart Specialisation Strategy will be as part of the Strategy section and alignment with the EU's Horizontal Principles (Equality and Human Rights) will be sought as part of the HEIs governance and operational environment.

Once scored, the panel may propose one of the following 3 recommendations:

- Recommended for funding as presented.
- Recommended for funding subject to a set of specified conditions / clarifications.
- Not recommended for funding.

Upon reviewing the applications, the evaluation panel will make a recommendation to the relevant Enterprise Ireland Programme Management team on which applications to fund and which to reject. The relevant Programme Manager will then write a paper summarising the outcomes of the evaluation process and requesting contracts be approved and issued to match those recommendations.

- Each contract will last for 4 years subject to the achievement of the agreed performance targets

### **3.5 Notification of award**

The panel recommendations will be submitted to the EI Industrial Research Commercialisation Committee (IRCC) for approval and onwards through committee to the EI Board for final decision on the proposals and the conditions to be attached to any given approval.

Applicants will be informed by KTI of the outcome of the evaluation and approval process following formal approval by the EI Board. A grant agreement will then be issued by EI. Feedback from the evaluations will be provided to applicants from KTI.

### **3.6 Appeals**

Enterprise Ireland's procedure for dealing with appeals is as follows:

- Potential beneficiaries have the right to contact Knowledge Transfer Ireland to discuss committee decisions.
- Potential beneficiaries have the right to appeal to the Secretary to the Board of EI.
- If appeal is successful, re-application will be invited.



## Section 4: Financial and General Terms and Conditions

### 4.1 Funding Mechanism

The award of funding is based on the evaluation described at 3.4. The precise level of funding is determined through review of budget described in the proposal which will be approved “as is” or with recommended changes. This will be combined with review of the planned growth. Research expenditure will be taken from the AKTS returns. Projected research expenditure will be requested as part of the application process.

Funding under KT Boost will be awarded subject to performance evaluation around the mid-point of the programme. Should the funding recipients wish to restructure its staff complement and associated operations costs, this may be done at this interim review – subject to submitting a new business plan for evaluation and with the approval of EI through its formal processes.

### 4.2 Eligible costs

Value-for-money will underpin all funding awarded under this Call for Proposals and efficiency gains and cost saving initiatives should be fully explored. Applicants must provide a full and clear explanation of costs anticipated in the budget section of the application form. Costs associated with specific activities may be deemed ineligible for funding where detail or justification provided is insufficient.

#### Eligible Costs

##### Pay:

Posts that are eligible for support under this programme are those which are dedicated to:

- Commercialisation case management
- Licensing
- IP management
- Spin-out development

Applicants will be required to complete a detailed breakdown of the posts to be supported under the programme.

Contributions to salary costs under the KT Boost programme will be capped at €90,000

FEMPI legislation will apply in full for all State Funded posts. For any posts eligible for a Single Public Pension Scheme, the ePension contribution will be equal to three times the employee contribution paid by the Single Scheme member.

##### Operational costs:

- Travel, training and professional memberships - applicable to Director and Innovation Office staff only.
  - For example; domestic and international travel (economy rate) and associated subsistence related to training or meetings with potential licensees, business development, conference or short training course fees specifically relevant to technology transfer, memberships of organisations such as AUTM, ASTP, PraxisUnico, LES etc.
- Professional and legal services:
  - For example, outsourced professional services such as patent agents, IP and legal fees, consultants, domain specialists.
- Communications directly related to research commercialisation:



- For example, costs related to promoting the institution's IP and technology, Innovation Office controlled website enhancements, industry and investor events on campus, specialist IP/market research databases.
- Operations:
  - For example, office consumables, post/courier, telecommunications equipment etc.

**Note: Capital Equipment and Infrastructure costs are ineligible under this programme.**

#### 4.3 Contract agreement

Funding contracts will be awarded subject to the terms and conditions of a Standard Grant Agreement between Enterprise Ireland and approved institutions.

#### 4.4 Technical/Financial audit

The basis of funding is the amount of the grant approved for the programme or the actual cost, whichever is the lower. As the programme is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), it is subject to the audit requirements of the European Union, as set out in Reg (EU) 2021/1060<sup>7</sup>, in addition to those of Enterprise Ireland. Therefore, all funded projects will be subject to financial and technical audit at the discretion of Enterprise Ireland and/or any other competent authority including agents contracted by Enterprise Ireland to carry out management verifications on its behalf, the ERDF Managing Authority, ERDF Audit Authority, European Commission (DG Regio) auditors or the European Court of Auditors. The HEI is obliged to maintain appropriate financial, administrative, and scientific records to enable any such audits to be carried out. These records must be made available to the relevant competent authorities as required.

#### 4.5 Acknowledgement of Funding Agencies

The HEI shall ensure that Enterprise Ireland, the relevant ERDF Managing Authority, the Government of Ireland and the European Union are given proper acknowledgement for their support in all reports and publications derived from the Programme. See Section 5 below for details of the ERDF Communication and Visibility Requirements.

Enterprise Ireland may provide display material which should be displayed in appropriate location(s).

KTI logo and a link to the KTI website must be displayed on the homepage of the Innovation Office website.

#### 4.6 Freedom of information

Enterprise Ireland comes under the scope of the Freedom of Information Acts 2014. This Act 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.

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<sup>7</sup> REGULATION (EU) 2021/1060 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy [the "Common Provisions Regulation"].



The Act provides strong protections for information supplied to Enterprise Ireland, which is confidential, commercially sensitive or personal. The Act also gives certain rights to individuals or companies who supply such information. These rights ensure that information, which 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.

#### **4.7 Documenting direct staff costs**

Direct staff costs charged to the project will be based on a declaration by the host institution of time allocated to the project by individual members of staff. The host institution shall issue a document for employees setting out the gross employment costs and the fixed percentage of time worked on the project per month. Alternatively, timesheets may be used to record hours spent on the project and charged to the project based on calculated hourly rates. Further details will be set out in the Grant Agreement.

#### **4.8 Document Retention**

All material related to the grant award should be retained for audit purposes, including financial, administrative, scientific and communications activities records to enable future audits related to the Reg (EU) 2021/1060 which requires that documents are retained for a 5-year period from 31 December of the year in which the last instalment of the grant payment is made by Enterprise Ireland.



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Cómhaoinithe ag an  
Aontas Eorpach  
Co-funded by the  
European Union



Northern & Western  
Regional Assembly



Tionól Réigiúnach an Deiscirt  
Southern Regional Assembly



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## Section 5: ERDF Communications and Visibility Requirements

### 5.1 Communications Requirements

As beneficiaries of the ERDF Programme 2021-27, all HEIs shall adhere to the communications requirements set out in the Guidelines for Beneficiaries for their relevant region, summarised below. Non-compliance can result in a loss of up to 3% of ERDF financial support. For a complete up to date copy of the relevant regional guidelines, please refer to EI KT Boost Communications team.

### 5.2 Programme Logos and Funding Statement

The EU emblem, the Government of Ireland, the relevant Managing Authorities and Enterprise Ireland logos must be used by beneficiaries under the ERDF Programme 2021-27 - either in horizontal or vertical presentation.

Below is a sample including the logos of both Managing Authorities. Individual HEIs shall include the Managing Authority logo applicable to them.



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Cómhaoinithe ag an  
Aontas Eorpach  
Co-funded by the  
European Union



Northern & Western  
Regional Assembly



Tionól Réigiúnach an Deiscirt  
Southern Regional Assembly



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If other logos are displayed with the Programme logo strip, they must be at least the same size (in height or width) as the biggest of the other logos. The logo strip must be prominently displayed on all printed and digital products, websites, social media channels and other communication products related to your ERDF co-financed project.

The logos must be in colour on websites and wherever possible on other materials related to the co-funded project. Only use greyscale when colour is not possible. The logo strip must be used in the format supplied and must not be recreated or modified in any way.

Beneficiaries must include the funding statement (relevant to their Managing Authority) with use of the Programme logo strip.

*“The Enterprise Ireland KT Boost Programme is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Northern & Western or the Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27”.*

This funding statement will be edited according to the location of the beneficiary institution.



### 5.3 Websites

All beneficiaries must create a webpage on their main website to highlight the ERDF co-funded project, including the project title (Enterprise Ireland KT Boost Programme), a brief outline of the activity (aims and results), and displaying the Programme logo strip and funding statement. The logo strip and Programme reference must be readily seen inside the viewing area of digital devices without needing to scroll down the page. The MA will link this page to the Programme and other relevant websites.

Information on the programme activities will be supplied to successful applicants prior to commencement of programme funding.

### 5.4 Social Media

Individual posts specifically related to your ERDF co-funded project must acknowledge the EU support with the Programme logo strip and funding statement – it is recommended that these posts are presented visually to accommodate this. These posts must include the hashtag #euinmyregion.

### 5.5 External Documents intended for the Public or Participants

Documents and printed material related to the implementation of the ERDF co-funded project intended for the public or participants must display the logo strip and funding statement. These include, but are not limited to approval letters or contracts, brochures, project updates in corporate annual reports, booklets and leaflets, certificates, invitations, presentation slides.

### 5.6 Advertising, Press Releases and other Promotional Materials

The following must acknowledge the ERDF when directly related to the co-funded activity:

- Print advertising, including advertorials or job advertisements must display the logo strip alongside the funding statement,
- Radio advertising must, at a minimum include the funding statement,
- Television advertising must, at a minimum, include logos at a size and for an appropriate time period in which it can be read and the funding statement,
- Press releases, speeches, presentations and information directed to local, regional and national media (press, radio or television) must reference the ERDF support in the body of the main text, not just the note to editors,
- Project spokespersons must be briefed to mention the ERDF support when speaking to the media.
- Any promotional material used to communicate the ERDF activity, such as display stands or giveaway items, should include the Programme logo strip and funding statement where possible.
- Videos must include the Programme logo strip at size that can be read and appropriate time period in which it can be read with the funding statement.



## Appendix 1      KT Boost programme eligible posts

### Posts eligible for funding

Posts dedicated to:

- Commercialisation case management
- Licensing
- IP management
- Spin-out development

In all cases these are expected to be filled by individuals with appropriate and relevant experience for the roles. As a spin out development manager post is a relatively new concept, the common features expected within that role are listed at Appendix 2.

### Posts eligible to be presented under “HEI Financial Commitment

When considering associated financial contribution (where applicable) the posts that are eligible to be “counted” are those that directly support the research commercialisation work undertaken by the Innovation Office and that are dedicated to the Innovation Office (in whole or by way of a formally agreed percentage of time - only that % dedicated to research commercialisation can be counted). Operational budget for activities associated with the operation of these posts may also be counted. Typical posts that may “count” are:

- Commercialisation case management
- Licensing
- IP management
- Spin-out company development
- Innovation Office Director (or equivalent title)
- Legal
- Communications and Visibility
- Company incubation management only where the role can be shown to be directly responsible for development of an HEI spin-out company

### Posts and associated activities that are not eligible to be “counted”:

- Research grants/research development/research support
- Company incubation management
- Start-up Company support (i.e. support for companies other than HEI spin-outs)
- Student enterprise
- Posts supported through other agency funding programmes e.g. SFI Centres, EI Technology Centres, EI Gateways, HEA RRDII
- Overhead Costs



## Appendix 2 Spin-out company development manager – features

### Typical Activities

- Advising spin-outs
  - Support for business planning
  - Expert advice to new spin-outs on business planning and executive talent
  - Funding advice and guidance to prospective new companies and founders
- Working with investors and stakeholders
  - Engaging with venture capital investors to establish new and repeat partnerships
  - Engaging with national stakeholders in the field e.g. Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, Business Partners, Investors and other HEIs.
  - Managing relationships with national providers of incubation space and accelerator programs
- Promotion of new spin-outs

### Typical Experience in:

- Equity related terms and conditions in contracts and licences.
- Relationship development and management between international/national investors and research performing organisations.
- Presenting investment opportunities to venture capital and angel investor syndicates.
- Portfolio management related to start-up companies.

Gained through relevant start-up company and investor business development experience: 5+ years



## Appendix 3 KT Boost Programme definitions

Metric/Performance indicator	Definition
<b>Active Spin-out</b>	A spin-out company that is at least three years post-formation (three years since being reported as an RPO Registered Spin-out) and has at least one paid employee and has raised equity and/or has booked sales revenue.
<b>Acquired Spin-out</b>	A Registered Spin-out that has been purchased by a third party.
<b>Commercialisation Fund</b>	Enterprise Ireland funding programme to support individual HEI projects with commercial potential, and which may provide a pathway to spin-out company formation and progress to HPSU
<b>Consultancy</b>	Contractual arrangement in which the HEI provides expert advice without performing new research. (Excluded: collaborative research, contract research)
<b>Funded Spin-out</b>	A registered spin-out which has received external investment. A Registered spin-out may become a Funded spin-out the single reporting period.
<b>HPSU (High Potential Start Up) from research</b>	An EI defined company, an HPSUs is a start-up business with the potential to develop an innovative product or service for sale on international markets and the potential to create 10 jobs and €1m in sales within 3 years of starting up. An HPSU from research will have developed from the research base within an HEI.
<b>Invention Disclosure</b>	The Innovation Office has received a formal document completed and signed Invention Disclosure Form (IDF) (which meets the minimum requirements for an IDF as set out on the KTI website/Model Agreements) with supporting data and accepted it into the Innovation Office portfolio for further commercial analysis. The IDF may be from an internal researcher or from an external entity, in either case the innovator will have agreed that for progress to commercialisation by the Innovation Office they will assigned their rights to the HEI. (Excluded: notes of conversations, emails, undocumented disclosures, incomplete disclosures)
<b>Licence, Option Assignment (LOAs)</b>	An agreement between an HEI and one or more commercial undertakings, whereby IP rights are transferred to that undertaking for the purpose of commercialisation. LOA must be for tangible IP i.e. already created. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Licence – a grant of rights for the purpose of commercialisation of IP</li> <li>▪ Licence Option or Evaluation – a grant of a time limited right to secure a position in respect of IP that may or made not lead to a licence depending on development of the IPR and/or external circumstances e.g. company tech development, fundraising etc.</li> </ul> <p>Assignment – a grant of ownership of IP rights for the purpose of commercialisation of IP. Assignment may in rare circumstance be instead of a Licence or a Licence may convert into an Assignment subject to a milestone trigger.</p>



<p><b>Patent Applications Filed</b></p>	<p>The filing of an initial patent application by a patent agent, where the patent filing is in the name of the HEI and the priority date is date of filing of the application by the IP Office. Count will be the first priority patent application filed.</p> <p>(Excluded: double counting, such as a patent application for the same invention filed in more than one patent jurisdiction. )</p>
<p><b>Patent Applications Granted</b></p>	<p>The grant of a patent in any territory.</p> <p>Count will include all the grants obtained, even if they are related to the same invention e.g. granted patent in a territory, continue in part granted patents, granted divisionals etc.</p>
<p><b>Registered Spin-out (also – Spin-out company)</b></p>	<p>An HEI-created spin-out is an incorporated entity which at the time of formation was dependent on the exploitation of specific intellectual property rights of the HEI. The rights to the company can be linked to a specific researcher who was within the HEI at the time of company formation and who would be considered an academic founder. The HEI may or may not hold equity in the spin-out.</p> <p>Excluded: start-ups and spin-ins. Companies to which the HEI licensed IP but where the academic founder(s) were based at another HEI.</p>
<p><b>Repeat Business with Industry</b></p>	<p>Number of companies with whom the HEI has executed collaborative research or contract research agreements in the reference year that represent repeat business i.e. with whom HEI has entered into a commercial transaction on at least one other occasion in the past 3 years. By default, previous commercial transaction will exclude engagements such as giving talks, lecturing, sitting on advisory groups etc.</p>
<p><b>Research Agreement: Contract Research (fully funded by industry)</b></p>	<p>This is where the industry party has a specific need and where it provides 100% of the full economic cost of carrying out the programme of work.</p> <p>(Excluded: where the company funds a research chair or other research of no expected commercial value to the company. Consultancy contracts. )</p>
<p><b>Research Agreement: Collaborative Research (Part funded by industry)</b></p>	<p>This is where an industry party partially funds and works with an HEI on a programme of mutual interest. There will be an element of State research funding meeting part of the cost of the programme of research.</p> <p>(Excluded: where the company funds a research chair or other research of no expected commercial value to the company. Consultancy contracts. )</p>
<p><b>1. Enterprises with non-financial support</b> <b>2. Enterprises supported (of which: micro, small, medium, large)</b></p>	<p>Unique number of companies supported through Collaborative Research Agreements</p> <p>As above however breakdown required by company type.</p>
<p><b>Spin-out company</b></p>	<p>See Registered Spin-out</p>



<b>Start-up company</b>	Company formed by staff or students from the HEI that is not based on knowledge or IP generated by the HEI and where there is no formal licence to equity share with the HEI.
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