

Minister Harris announces targeted funding of €47 million for researchers affected by COVID-19

From [Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science](#)

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Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, has today (12 October 2020) confirmed that €47 million will be provided to support contract researchers and research students whose work has been seriously disrupted by the pandemic.

The funding was secured by the Minister as part of the €168 million package for further and higher education in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking today, Minister Harris said:

"COVID-19 has caused significant disruption to all our lives. Now more than ever, we need research, innovation and ingenuity.

"The funding will help to protect both people and projects at a critical moment for Ireland's national research system as we look towards the next national research and innovation strategy.

"COVID-19 has caused major disruption to Irish higher education institutions. Basic and applied research, alongside teaching & learning, and engagement, have all been impacted. Some research activities have been paused over recent months, where laboratories have been closed, or access to archives, engagement with focus groups, etc, have been curtailed."

Knowledge Transfer Ireland's latest Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey (2019) confirms the positive impact on society and the economy of research and innovation work carried out in the sector, including in the fight against COVID-19.

Because of its importance, funding of €47 million will be provided to the higher education institutions by the Higher Education Authority to support contract researchers and research students whose work has been seriously disrupted by the pandemic.

Dr Alan Wall, Chief Executive Officer of the HEA, noted:

"I am delighted that the HEA, with the support of Minister Harris and the government, is able to protect Ireland's research, development and innovation sector at this time. Our HEIs

continue to play a pivotal role in world-class research providing access to the best talent, research and technology in a collaborative RD&I environment.

"This capacity has been built over a number of years by our HEIs, the HEA, and research funders such as Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), the Irish Research Council (IRC) and the Health Research Board (HRB), and the representative bodies IUA and THEA, with whom we've worked closely on this allocation process and I want to thank them for their support. I also wish to pay tribute to our research community who have worked hard over recent months to support national and international responses to the challenges of COVID-19."

In their utilisation of this funding, the institutions will prioritise the researchers and research students in greatest need, for example, those researchers who are coming to the end of their contracts before the end of 2020.

They will also continue to pursue all other avenues for project completion, for example in the form of budget re-allocations. They will now engage with relevant funders to agree the extension of appropriate activities.

The funding will help to protect both people and projects at a critical moment for Ireland's national research system as we look towards the next national research and innovation strategy (the successor to Innovation 2020) and the next European funding programme (Horizon Europe).

ENDS

Notes

COVID-19-related Research Costed Extension Funding - HEI Allocations

HEI	Budget Allocation
DCU	€2,909,780
MU	€1,797,820
NUIG	€6,180,720
TCD	€8,247,416
UCC	€7,800,182
UCD	€8,273,620
UL	€3,757,422
RCSI	€1,952,766
AIT	€502,433
CIT	€724,597
ITC	€644,504
DKIT	€319,005
GMIT	€388,502
LYIT	€194,821
LIT	€479,647
ITS	€280,269

ITT	€288,244
TUD	€1,793,263
WIT	€964,990
Retained for audit purposes	€200,000
TOTALS	€47,700,000