

## US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership: Agriculture Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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## **SECTION A: GENERAL & NIFA APPLICATIONS**

### **What is the US-Ireland R&D Partnership?**

The U.S.-Ireland R&D Partnership was launched in 2006 to accelerate economic development and cooperation across borders by encouraging trilateral research collaboration between the United States, Republic of Ireland, and Northern Ireland. To date over 50 projects have been successfully funded under the various research areas of the partnership.

### **What is the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Call in Agriculture?**

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Republic of Ireland Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) and the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) launched a five-year pilot (pilot) adding agriculture as a Partnership priority area. During the pilot, the partners capitalized investments in research intended to help solve global agriculture-related issues. Following the successful conclusion of the pilot, USDA, DAFM and DAERA intend to continue to support agriculture as a priority area under the Partnership.

The Call in Agriculture allows Principal Investigators/Project Directors (PI/PD) from the United States (U.S.), Northern Ireland (NI) and the Republic of Ireland (RoI) to collaborate in response to calls for proposals in selected areas in the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Agricultural and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Foundational and Applied Science Request for Applications (RFA).

There must be at least one PI/PD from each jurisdiction, with the U.S. partner bearing responsibility for submission of the joint “tripartite” proposal to USDA/NIFA. If approved for funding by NIFA, DAFM funds the RoI investigator(s), DAERA funds the NI investigator(s), and NIFA funds the U.S. investigator(s).

### **Do US-Ireland R&D Partnership agriculture proposals have a competitive advantage over domestic U.S. only applications under the NIFA AFRI RFA?**

US-Ireland R&D Partnership agriculture proposals compete head-to-head with 'non-US-Ireland partnership' proposals submitted to the same RFA. The competitive advantage comes from the additive nature of the collaboration as well as the leveraged non-exchequer funds. It is important for applicants to spell this out in the introduction to the proposal to ensure that the NIFA appointed reviewers fully understand the intricacies of the process. Please note: As per AFRI RFA, applicants submitting to this US-Ireland partnership must select ‘Collaborative’ as the grant type and their title of the application should begin as “TRIPARTITE: full title....”

### **When is the deadline for submission for applicants in the relevant Program Area Priority (PAP) listed in the AFRI RFA?**

There are different deadline dates assigned to the selected PAPs applicable to the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Call in Agriculture that are referenced in the AFRI RFA. Applications for preapproval MUST be submitted to DAFM and DAERA by RoI and NI partners. Submission of

applications is open 8 weeks in advance of the AFRI deadline and pre-proposals must be submitted to DAFM and DAERA, at the latest 4 weeks in advance of the stated RFA deadline.

**Latest Dates for Submitting Applications under the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Call in Agriculture can be found at the [AFRI website](#).**

**Below are the current list of supported PAPs, under the US-IRL R&D Program**

<b>AFRI PAP code</b>	<b>Program Area Priorities</b>
A1112	Pests and Beneficial Species in Agricultural Production Systems
A1231	Animal Nutrition, Growth, and Lactation
A1251	Welfare of Agricultural Animals
A1221	Diseases of Agricultural Animals
A1201	Animal Breeding, Genetics, and Genomics
A1366	Mitigating Antimicrobial Resistance Across the Food Chain
A1414	Sustainable Bioeconomy through Biobased Products
A1451	Sustainable Agroecosystems: Health, Functions, Processes and Management
A1531	Biorefining and Biomanufacturing
A1402	Agricultural Microbiomes in Plant Systems and Natural Resources
A1261	Inter-Disciplinary Engagement in Animal Systems (IDEAS)
A1541	Data Science for Food and Agriculture Systems (DSFAS)
A1401	Soil Health

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

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

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

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

requested additional information. Please note: the maximum acceptable incoming combined email and attachments size to DAFM is 15 MB. For NI/DAFM applicants, please note that completed applications forms, budget templates and any attachments should be submitted in Microsoft Word by email to [collaborative.research@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:collaborative.research@daera-ni.gov.uk) / [research@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:research@agriculture.gov.ie).

**When can I expect to know the outcome of DAFM and DAERA's decision prior to the AFRI RFA deadline?**

DAFM and DAERA will endeavor to inform you at the earliest possible date if your proposal is approved/declined but please bear in mind that DAFM and DAERA's respective internal review process can take about 2 weeks, depending on the number of applications received at any given time. Submission of applications is open 8 weeks in advance of the AFRI deadline and preproposals must be submitted to DAFM and DAERA, at the latest 4 weeks in advance of the stated RFA deadline. Applicants are advised to submit proposals to DAFM and DAERA at the earliest possible opportunity to allow for final preparations for submission to AFRI.

**Where can I find information on calls within the AFRI RFA? Which PAPs are open to the US-Ireland Call in Agriculture?**

See link to [AFRI's competitive grants Foundational and Applied Science Request for Applications \(AFRI FAS RFA\)](#).

**Can anyone apply?**

No, there are several eligibility criteria which you must meet. For AFRI eligibility, check AFRI FAS RFA. For DAFM/DAERA eligibility, please consult:

- [gov.ie - Call Information: US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)
- <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/education-and-research/daera-research>

**Are there any eligibility criteria for a co-PI?**

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

**Is it a pre-requisite that the RoI and NI partners have previously collaborated on a project?**

This is not a prerequisite.

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

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

**The PIs of the collaborators in RoI and NI are required to be permanent members of staff. Would applications with a PI who is on a long-term contract be considered?**

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

**Where can I find more information on the information sought by NIFA in the application that the U.S. PI/PD must complete for the AFRI RFA?**

The [AFRI Foundational and Applied Science RFA](#) references the [NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide](#) as well as some documents available on the [AFRI Request for Applications Resources page](#).

**Will NIFA consider an application that was submitted in a previous US- Ireland Call but was not successful?**

Yes, NIFA encourages resubmissions of previously unsuccessful proposals. Applicants should note **that detail of Program Area Priorities may have changed** compared to previous years.

**Why are some Program Area Priorities supported, and others not under US-Ireland Partnership?**

Program Area Priorities are carefully reviewed by USDA, DAERA, and DAFM. There are several important considerations, including research recently commissioned, the strategic alignment of the Program Area Priority, etc. An important principle of the partnership is that all three jurisdictions must agree on support for any Program Area Priority for it to be included in scope for researchers to collaborate on within the US-Ireland R&D Call.

**If I am resubmitting a proposal from last year and I expand the work to include a collaboration with Ireland and Northern Ireland, is this still a resubmission for NIFA?**

Yes. Please indicate in the extra 1 page for “Response to Previous Review” that you have expanded the scope of the resubmission.

**Do I include Curriculum Vitae for the NI and RoI researchers in my NIFA application?**

Yes. All individuals engaged in the research project (working on one or more objectives) need CVs included in the proposal so that the panel reviewers can evaluate the overall expertise of the team.

**Do I need to include Conflict of Interest lists for the NI and RoI researchers in my NIFA application?**

Yes. NIFA needs this information so it can adequately enforce its strict policy to avoid any perceived or real conflict of interest when assigning proposals to panel reviewers.

**Do I describe “Facilities and Other Resources” and “Equipment” for the NI and ROI researchers in my NIFA application?**

Yes. The panel reviewers need to be able to evaluate the overall facilities/resources/equipment that are available for the team to accomplish the proposed objectives.

**Do I include Current and Pending support for the NI and ROI researchers in my NIFA application?**

No. The funders in Ireland and Northern Ireland are responsible for avoiding potential duplication of research already being conducted by their applicants.

**What do I include in the SF 424 “Estimated Project Funding” box for my NIFA application?**

- For “Total Federal Funds” indicate the budget requested from NIFA.
- For “Total Non-Federal Funds” indicate the budget (in U.S. dollars) your **NI and ROI** colleagues requested from their funding agencies. Do not include detailed budgets for your **NI and ROI** colleagues.
- For “Total Federal Funds & Non-Federal Funds” indicate the sum of the numbers above.

**Do I have more than 18 pages for the project narrative for the NIFA application to describe the research to be done by the US-Ireland-Northern Ireland team?**

No. There are no extra pages. The tripartite team’s collaborative research must be included in no more than 18 pages.

**Is there a specific title to use for these proposals for NIFA?**

NIFA requests that you please begin your title with “TRIPARTITE: full title...”. By doing this, NIFA will be able to quickly identify the tripartite proposals from among the U.S. only proposals. You should also select Collaborative as the grant type.

**My NI and ROI colleagues indicate I must include a letter of support from their funding agencies in my NIFA application. How should I do this?**

Please add the letters of support as “Other attachments”. Please title the letters “Letter of support IRELAND” or “Letter of support NORTHERN IRELAND”.

**Can I submit a “tripartite proposal” and a “U.S. only proposal” on a different topic to the same NIFA program?**

Yes. However, AFRI discourages submission of more than one proposal to the same program from the same lead Project Director. This also applies to project directors who would want to submit two or more “U.S. only proposals” on different topics to the same program.

**How should I acknowledge this funding in publications?**

Use the following statement: “This work is supported by grant no. XXXX-XXXXX-XXXXX from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Ireland’s Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, and the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs as part of the US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership.”

## **SECTION B: APPLICATION TO DAFM AND DAERA**

### **What is the maximum grant request?**

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

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

### **Does DAFM or DAERA fund the salary of lead or co-PI?**

Neither DAFM nor DAERA fund the salary of the grant applicant/co-applicant.

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

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

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

Yes, both agencies have to separately review and support the tripartite proposal.

### **Are overheads included in the stated DAFM & DAERA grant limits?**

Yes. In accordance with the following:

- For the **DAFM budget request** – overheads of up to 30% of the direct costs of scientific type research – i.e. staff consumables, T&S, but not including equipment and other agreed costs, (25% for desk-based socio-economic/policy type analysis) will be funded. Note that DAFM holds 20% of the budget for release once the project concludes.
- For the **DAERA budget request** – overheads of up to 30% of the direct costs of scientific type research – i.e. staff consumables, T&S, but not including equipment and other agreed costs, (25% for desk-based socio-economic/policy type analysis) will be funded. Note that DAERA holds 20% of the budget for release once the project concludes.

### **What if DAFM approves their portion of the funding and DAERA does not or vice versa?**

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

### **How do I submit my application to DAFM and DAERA?**

For RoI applicants: convert the completed application form, budget template and any attachments to a single Adobe pdf and submit by email to [research@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:research@agriculture.gov.ie) Note: 15 MB is the DAFM maximum acceptable incoming combined email and attachments size.



For NI applicants: submit the completed application form, budget template and any attachments on word and submit by email to [Collaborative.research@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Collaborative.research@daera-ni.gov.uk) by the deadlines outlined in the response to Q4 in Section A.

**What happens if I don't submit all documents as required to DAFM or DAERA by the 4-week deadline?**

Incomplete documents will be returned without review. Applications received after the 4-week deadline prior to the stated AFRI submission for the relevant priority area will be returned without review.

**Can research partner seeking grant aid in Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland be an SME/ industry?**

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

**If my application is successfully approved by DAFM and DAERA – what are the next steps?**

If approved by DAFM and DAERA for submission to NIFA:

- An approval notification email will be sent by DAFM/DAERA to the respective RoI/NI applicant which includes a Funding Commitment Letter stating DAFM/DAERA's support of the research, for inclusion in the full proposal submission to NIFA.
- DAFM and DAERA will share the Funding Commitment Letter with one another.
- The Funding Commitment Letters will be sent by DAFM and DAERA to NIFA.
- **The RoI/NI applicant may need to submit a revised budget and signed cover sheet, if modifications have been made to the budget.**
- **DAFM and DAERA require a copy of the full proposal submission to NIFA along with the NIFA unique application number. Please submit the full proposals to [research@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:research@agriculture.gov.ie) and [Collaborative.research@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Collaborative.research@daera-ni.gov.uk).**

**What is the Funding Commitment Letter (FCL)?**

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

**If the title of the research proposal has changed – do I need to inform DAFM and DAERA?**

Yes, please inform DAFM and DAERA as soon as possible of any title change as the title is listed in the Funding Commitment Letter (see above) which needs to be accurate. Please note: Changing the title is not advised once the project has been submitted for DAERA/DAFM support.

**If the U.S. partners have decided to submit to a different call or Funding Opportunity announcement at NIFA, and this is different to the original call/program details sent to DAFM and DAERA, can I still proceed as a co-applicant based on the approval I received from DAFM and DAERA?**

DAFM and DAERA will not support applicants in this instance. Only applications to the stated Program Area Priorities will be supported.

**Where can I find close out information for the final phase of the NIFA funded project?**

<https://nifa.usda.gov/close-grant>