



## ***Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme 2022***

### ***Scéim Scópála Nuálaíochta Fiontar Réigiúnach 2022***

#### **Reference Document**

*Version 1.4x - 04/04/2022*

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to the Scheme**

In February/March 2022, nine Regional Steering Committees established by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE), finalised, launched and commenced implementation of the Regional Enterprise Plans to 2024. This ‘bottom-up’ collaborative mechanism, involves the enterprise agencies, local enterprise offices, local authorities, regional assemblies, higher and further education bodies, private sector and others within each region, chaired by a senior figure from industry.

The nine new Regional Enterprise Plans each contain agreed ‘Strategic Objectives’ for enterprise development, accompanied by a time-bound set of actions to deliver on the objectives. The plans build on existing regional and inter-regional strengths and set out many new project areas which require further project building before decisions on funding can be finalised.

Further new state investment is being considered in the coming years for innovative regional enterprise projects. In that regard, to ensure prompt and efficient delivery of the ensuing projects, it is proposed that Feasibility & Priming funding support will be provided to develop a credible pipeline of eligible projects.

Enterprise Ireland’s new Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme 2022 will support Feasibility and Priming activities and is administered by the agency on behalf of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

This Scheme builds on existing regional initiatives and is aligned to national enterprise policy and related government policy initiatives, which include: Regional Enterprise Plans; Remote Working Strategy; Climate Action Plan; Digital Transformation; Brexit Impact; and Enterprise Ireland’s “Powering the Regions” regional initiatives and the forthcoming Smart Specialisation strategy.

The scheme has a total grant budget of up to €5m available in 2022 and aims to target grant aid at projects which will improve the resilience and international competitiveness of enterprises<sup>1</sup> across all regions. The funding should also enable the investigation and confirmation of early stage concepts with potential for enterprise innovation and accelerate the progress of significant or disruptive projects seeking to develop new innovative activities.

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<sup>1</sup> The term enterprise refers to start-ups, micro-enterprise, SMEs and large companies.

## **1.2 Purpose of the scheme**

The main purpose of the Scheme is the investigation and preparation of major new collaborative and innovative initiatives that have the potential to make a significant impact on enterprise development in a region, across regions or nationally.

The scheme sets out to co-finance the scoping out of collaborative and innovative projects that build on unique regional/sectoral capabilities to grow the regions and which can sustain and add to employment at a national, regional and local level.

The scheme will also assist the early stage development of initiatives that can help to strengthen the regional ability to adjust and cope with the potential effects of international economic changes that may impact on regions or sectors performance nationally. Accordingly, the Scheme will provide early-stage financial assistance to potentially significant projects which can define and scope out their potential and/or can prime them to deliver regional impact through the ensuing final project.

## **1.3 Objectives of the scheme**

The objectives of the Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme are:

- To provide assistance, including funding supports, to regionally based Not-for-Profit undertakings that provide enterprise support to Micro/SMEs or Large companies in sectors and regions across Ireland.
- To support new Regional and National projects to investigate an opportunity, confirm its financial viability and develop initial plans for full-scale implementation.
- To improve the competitiveness and capability of regional businesses by supporting collaborative projects to encourage and support increased entrepreneurial activity, productivity, and innovative capability.
- To enhance collaboration and assist enterprises to respond to economic and market challenges, such as: the impact of Brexit and Covid 19; the transition to a low carbon economy; digitalisation; and smart specialisation.
- To enhance the productivity and new product development opportunities of SMEs in order to increase the number of exporters, level of exports and to create and sustain employment across all regions.

The outcome of the overall Scheme should be projects which have confirmed the opportunity they are targeting and made progress towards developing detailed plans for delivery of the ensuing project. The completion of this process should enable the development of a high-quality application for more significant future funding. (Note: REISS support does not confirm any rights or commitment by the state to further funding of the project)

#### **1.4 Focus of proposed projects**

These REISS projects should focus on delivery of **Feasibility studies** on specific collaborative and innovative projects, or on **Priming projects** that scope out detailed project delivery plans including design, costing and planning of infrastructural elements. Suggested areas of focus might include:

- Enterprise Innovation aligned with Regional Enterprise Plans to 2024 or other plans such as Town Centre First, Rural Regeneration, Remote Working etc.
- Digital Transformation & Digital Capability initiatives including Smart Specialisation
- Alignment with National Climate Change, Sustainability and Circular Economy strategies and targets where appropriate
- Initiatives to re-engineer supply chains for resilience from global or geopolitical crises
- Collaborative innovation and export capability development
- Socially impactful enterprise projects such as female entrepreneurship and inclusion

#### **1.5 Legal basis**

The Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme shall be administered in accordance with Section 7 (1) (i) of the Industrial Development (Enterprise Ireland) Act 1998. The scheme shall be administered by Enterprise Ireland, using funds made available for that purpose by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment with the consent of both the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

#### **1.6 State Aid Basis**

The State Aid basis of the Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme Grant shall be administered in accordance with the EU Commission State Aid De Minimis Regulation 1407/2013.

De Minimis Aid can come from any State body, agency or department but cannot exceed €200,000 over any three fiscal years to any company irrespective of size or location.

Applicants will need to declare whether the applicant company has been approved grant support from the State for this or any other project under EU Commission State Aid De Minimis Regulation 1407/2013 over the past three years. REISS applicant companies will need to declare that they have available De Minimis balance for the requested grant amount and any approved amount cannot exceed the €200,000 limit.

#### **1.7 Scheme Structure**

The Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme Grant (REISS) will be a single grant type, but with two different grant levels depending on the scope and scale of the project:

- **Feasibility Funding** – A REISS Feasibility Grant with 80% grant support to cover consultancy and travel costs for smaller early stage feasibility projects, and
- **Priming Funding** – A REISS Priming Grant with 80% grant support to cover Consultancy and Travel, but also supporting the cost of Personnel, Promotion and the Rental of Office space for larger scale more significant scoping projects.

Applicants should indicate at application stage which funding stream they wish to apply for<sup>2</sup>.

Supported projects will ideally have:

- Strong industrial interest or connections,
- Strong alignment with the scheme objectives,
- Linkages to key regional/national stakeholders including 3<sup>rd</sup> level/HEIs,
- Well defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) & Metrics, with clear timelines for delivery,
- A clearly defined and costed project plan.

### **1.7.1 Stream 1 – 80% Funding for Preparation of a Feasibility Study on Potential New Regionally Based Enterprise Innovation Projects**

This REISS feasibility funding is targeted at Regional based applicants which meet the eligibility criteria of the scheme and that wish to explore the feasibility of developing plans for regional or sectoral projects aligned with the objectives of the scheme.

Feasibility funding will be open to new projects which have not been previously supported by Enterprise Ireland and are led by existing or new not-for-profit applicants.

**Note:** Not for profit companies which have existing projects supported by Regional Funds such as REDF, BEDF or RETS, can apply if eligible for new projects which are not associated with the previously supported project.

Feasibility funding is available for consultancy and travel expenditure to assist early stage project development and to enable promoters design and test their project concept and establish how they would develop detailed plans to fund the design, planning and tendering costs related to preparing an application for further state funding.

The activity being proposed for funding must be additional to the activities currently being undertaken, if any, and additional to activities currently funded by the State, if any, (note: double funding is not allowable and will be reclaimed in the event of being discovered).

The continuance of funding throughout the funding period shall be contingent upon delivery of the proposed feasibility study project. The funding is subject to justification of costs and evaluation criteria detailed in Section 4.1.

Feasibility Study projects should focus on developing innovative supports for enterprise in the first instance. If an infrastructure gap becomes apparent and is justified, then the project can prepare a suitable business case as the basis for an application for a future competitive call for Regional Enterprise Development funding.

While the objective of the REISS Feasibility project may be to confirm the need for further funding to progress the realisation of an ensuing project, REISS support does not confirm any rights or commitment by the state to further funding of the project. Enterprise Ireland shall make no commitment to funding the successful applicant after the approved period of funding.

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<sup>2</sup> Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to reassign applicants for Priming grant support to Feasibility Study grant at the evaluation stage, as determined by the evaluation panel.

Where there is a border county or international nexus to a particular project, Enterprise Ireland will have regard to the needs of the project and, having regard to its statutory powers, may consider projects for evaluation which have a cross border or international dimension in the form of other cluster or consortium members being incorporated in Northern Ireland or another jurisdiction, provided, however, that Enterprise Ireland shall not provide funding to companies or public bodies incorporated or founded in Northern Ireland or another jurisdiction. Similarly, individual promoter applicants for funding must be resident in the State.

### **1.7.2 Stream 2 - 80% Funding for Priming Significant New Regional Enterprise Innovation Projects to Prepare a Business Case for Substantial Future Funding**

This REISS Priming funding is targeted at new or existing Regional based applicants which meet the eligibility criteria of the scheme, who will develop detailed plans to deliver new transformational regional or sectoral projects aligned with the objectives of the scheme.

The output of the REISS project should:

- **Confirm the Opportunity:** Clearly define the market need/fit for the project and the proposed solutions that the project will offer, identify key stakeholders who will support/benefit or utilise the project offering. Develop an outline Capital plan and draft Operational business plan which may be used to apply for more significant future Regional Enterprise funding,
- **Create Detailed Designs:** Support the creation of architectural drawings/models of proposed Capital projects,
- **Develop Detailed Plans:** Support the creation of a robust financial model (P&L, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow, etc.) demonstrating the viability and sustainability of the proposed project and outlining the underlying assumptions, partner contributions, funding etc.
- **Define KPIs & Metrics:** Clearly set out the Key Performance Indicators and indicative metrics for the proposed capital project with indicative timelines for delivery
- **Support the submission of a planning application:** the project should focus on all planning requirements and facilitate preparation of documentary backup required for the submission of a planning application, such as:
  - Architectural Drawings
  - Environmental Impact Surveys/Reports
  - Consortium building (identification of partners)
  - Planning consultations and submission preparation

REISS Priming Grant funding will be for a maximum 12-month period from the call close date.

Funding can also be used to assist early stage project development which will enable promoters hire staff to manage the project; design and test their project concept; deliver virtual or site based solutions from temporary or rented premises to their target audience; and fund the design, planning and tendering costs related to a subsequent application for potential future state funding of the ensuing project.

Note: REISS support does not confirm any rights or commitment by the state to further funding of the project under future competitive or non-competitive schemes administered by Enterprise Ireland.

### **1.8 Overview of Funding Available**

This Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme is a competitive offer with up to €5m available for approval in 2022. Applications for funding will be invited through a public call. This call will be announced in the national and regional press. All applications will be subject to an Evaluation process as outlined in Section 4.

Following evaluation, successful projects with eligible expenditure between €25,000 and €62,500 will be supported as **REISS Feasibility Study Grant projects at a grant rate of 80% up to a maximum grant of €50,000** or 80% of eligible expenditure of up to €62,500, whichever is the lesser. An evaluation score of 60% or higher will be required to be approved for a Feasibility project. Projects with eligible expenditure of less than €25,000 will not be eligible for support.

The funding limit for significant **REISS Priming Grant projects will be up to a maximum €200,000 in grant aid** per project, or 80% of €250,000 maximum eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser. An evaluation score of 75% or higher will be required for projects to be considered for approval (see Section 4.1).

## **2.0 Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme Grant - Feasibility Study**

To be eligible for REISS Feasibility Study Grant support applicants must comprise national, regional or local promoters, with a purpose of benefiting the wider needs of the enterprise community and the region/nation as defined in the scheme objectives.

### **2.1 Eligible Applicants for REISS Feasibility Study Grant**

To be eligible for feasibility funding, (as outlined in Section 1.7.1 above), applicants must be one of the following:

- a) Applicants will be Not-for-Profit entities that are registered Designated Activity Company, (DAC) or a Company Limited by Guarantee, (CLG) with the CRO under the Companies Act 2014 prior to submission of their applications. OR
- b) Be a public body, such as Local Authority, Institute of Technology/HEI, that is involved in a collaborative proposal with enterprise and other local and regional stakeholders, with the intention of establishing a long-term project through a special purpose company (DAC or CLG), benefiting the wider needs of the enterprise community and region. Please note where a project is led by a public body, the submitted project must be additional to the public body's existing work programme.

The constitution of the not-for-profit DAC or CLG shall provide that:

- No payment (other than reasonable and proper payments for services rendered, vouched expenses, or rent for premises let to the Company) is transferred, or distribution is made, directly or indirectly to a member; and
- Upon a winding up or dissolution of the company, no transfer, payment or distribution may be made to a member, but that instead, all net assets shall be given up or transferred to some other institution or institutions having main objects similar to the main objects of the company and which shall prohibit the distribute on of its or their income and property amongst its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the company.

### **2.2 Ineligible applicants for REISS Feasibility Study Grant**

The Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme is not open to the following:

- Applications to the competitive call that are received by Enterprise Ireland electronically after 15.00 hrs. (3.00 pm) on the call close date of 18/05/2022.
- Applications that do not meet the minimum eligible funding threshold, i.e. minimum of €25,000 in eligible feasibility study expenditure (€20,000 grant aid at 80%).
- Applicants for Feasibility Study support that are not an eligible public body or a registered Designated Activity Company (DAC) or Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) with the CRO under the Companies Act 2014 prior to the Call Close Date.
- Applications from Tourism; Transport; and large infrastructural projects – e.g. Ports; Roads; By-pass; etc.
- Applications which include or relate to activities that Enterprise Ireland considers as ineligible or as involving an unacceptable reputational risk. Ineligible activities include activities relating to: the Gambling Sector, including 'gaming' (as defined in the Gaming and Lotteries Act 1956); Adult Entertainment; and Tobacco Products.

### **2.3 REISS Feasibility Study Grant Funding**

Feasibility funding up to a **maximum grant of €50,000** or 80% of eligible expenditure of up to €62,500, whichever is the lesser will be available to eligible projects who achieve an evaluation score of 60% or higher. Projects with eligible expenditure of less than €25,000 will not be eligible for support.

Eligible feasibility study expenditure must be incurred and claimed in 2022. Enterprise Ireland will grant aid up to a maximum 80% of eligible feasibility study consultancy and travel expenditure up to a maximum grant of €50,000 (a maximum €10,000 of which can be to support optional Travel & Subsistence costs).

Funding awarded under the Feasibility Study does not of itself confirm eligibility for funding or provide any assurance of funding under future competitive or non-competitive schemes administered by Enterprise Ireland.

### **2.4 Eligible Costs for REISS Feasibility Study Grant**

Eligible expenditure can only be incurred after the call close date, but is at the promoters' risk until a letter of offer confirming approval is received.

#### **2.4.1 Categories of Eligible Expenditure for Feasibility Study Projects**

Funding will be for eligible consultancy and travel expenditure:

- **Consultancy Support:** A maximum grant of €50,000 or 80% of maximum eligible Feasibility Study project expenditure of €62,500, whichever is the lesser, to support the hiring of appropriate external experts required to drive key elements of the work programme. The maximum daily consultancy rate is €900 per day, (subject to evaluation panel approval), which includes the cost of domestic travel and expenses in Ireland.
- **Optional Travel:** A maximum grant of €10,000 or 80% of eligible travel costs, whichever is the lesser, over the period of funding to support domestic and foreign travel, which can be shown to have been reasonably incurred by employees of the applicant company and wholly for the implementation of the work programme. Modest foreign travel for Irish-based consultants, specified at application stage and relating entirely to the proposed project, may also be eligible. All air/rail travel costs incurred must be for economy seat fares. All travel expenses are subject to Enterprise Ireland's current rates of travel and subsistence.

Note: The maximum funding limit per applicant across both of the above categories under this Feasibility Study will be **up to €50,000 in grant aid** per project, or **80% of eligible expenditure**, whichever is the lesser. Projects must have a minimum expenditure of €25,000 to be considered eligible for Feasibility funding.

Where applicants can certify through the Revenue Commissioners that they have unrecoverable VAT on supported categories of expenditure, it may be deemed an eligible expense under this fund.

### **3.0 Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme Grant – Priming**

#### **3.1 Eligible Applicants for REISS Priming Grant**

To be eligible for REISS Priming Grant funding applicants must be Not-for-Profit entities that are registered Designated Activity Company, (DAC) or a Company Limited by Guarantee, (CLG) with the CRO under the Companies Act 2014 prior to submission of their applications.

They must comprise national, regional or local promoters, with a purpose of benefiting the wider needs of the enterprise community and the region/nation as defined in the scheme objectives.

Public bodies cannot directly apply for priming support unless they are part of a not-for-profit DAC or CLG. The constitution of the not-for-profit DAC or CLG shall provide that:

- No payment (other than reasonable and proper payments for services rendered, vouched expenses, or rent for premises let to the Company) is transferred, or distribution is made, directly or indirectly to a member; and
- Upon a winding up or dissolution of the company, no transfer, payment or distribution may be made to a member, but that instead, all net assets shall be given up or transferred to some other institution or institutions having main objects similar to the main objects of the company and which shall prohibit the distribute on of its or their income and property amongst its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the company.

#### **3.2 Ineligible applicants for REISS Priming Grant**

The Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme is not open to the following:

- Applications through the competitive call that are received by Enterprise Ireland electronically after 15.00 hrs. (3.00 pm) on the call close date of 18/05/2022.
- Applications that do not meet the minimum eligible funding threshold, i.e. minimum of €25,000 in eligible expenditure (€20,000 grant aid at 80%).
- Applicants for REISS priming grant support that are not a registered Designated Activity Company (DAC) or Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) with the CRO under the Companies Act 2014 prior to the Call Close Date.
- Applications from Tourism; Transport; and large infrastructural projects – e.g. Ports; Roads; By-pass; etc.
- Applications which include or relate to activities that Enterprise Ireland considers as ineligible or as involving an unacceptable reputational risk. Ineligible activities include activities relating to: he Gambling Sector, including ‘gaming’ (as defined in the Gaming and Lotteries Act 1956); Adult Entertainment; and Tobacco Products.

### **3.3 REISS Priming Grant Funding**

Funding will be available for a maximum 12-month period, however employment grants and related overhead must be claimed and paid in 2022<sup>3</sup>. Enterprise Ireland will grant aid REISS Priming Grant projects up to a maximum 80% of eligible expenditure over the funding period up to a maximum grant of €200,000.

Priming projects must focus on developing innovative supports for enterprise in the first instance. If an infrastructure gap is clearly demonstrable the project can prepare a suitable response for consideration at a future competitive call for more significant Regional Enterprise Development funding.

The activity being proposed for funding must be additional to the activities currently being undertaken, if any, and additional to activities currently funded by the State, if any, (note: double funding is not allowable and will be reclaimed in the event of being discovered).

The continuance of funding throughout the funding period shall be contingent upon delivery of agreed milestones for the project. Funding milestones shall be set and agreed with Enterprise Ireland prior to project delivery. Such milestones may include output feasibility study reports or other business plans, reports or application forms as appropriate.

The funding is subject to justification of costs and the evaluation criteria<sup>4</sup> detailed in Section 4.1 below.

While an objective of the REISS Priming project may be to confirm the need for further funding to progress the realisation of a project, Enterprise Ireland shall make no commitment to funding the successful applicant after the approved period of funding.

Where there is a border county or international nexus to a particular project, Enterprise Ireland will have regard to the needs of the project and, having regard to its statutory powers, may consider projects for evaluation which have a cross border or international dimension in the form of other cluster or consortium members being incorporated in Northern Ireland or another jurisdiction, provided, however, that Enterprise Ireland shall not provide funding to companies or public bodies incorporated or founded in Northern Ireland or another jurisdiction. Similarly, individual promoter applicants for funding must be resident in the State.

### **3.4 Eligible Costs for Priming Significant New Regional Enterprise Innovation Projects**

Eligible expenditure can only be incurred after the call close date. Applicants should be aware that there is no assurance of any kind that an eligible application will be approved, even where a deposit or expenditure has been paid. Therefore deposits/ expenditure paid prior to formal approval are at the applicant's own risk.

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<sup>3</sup> Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to amend the funding period on a case by case basis.

<sup>4</sup> Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to reduce or disallow proposed funded costs, or to schedule some or all of the costs in stages over the term of the funding.

### 3.4.1 Categories of Eligible Expenditure for REISS Priming Grant

Funding will be for eligible expenditure in the following categories:

- **Consultancy Support:** A maximum grant of €120,000 over a maximum 1-year period or 80% of eligible costs whichever is the lesser, over the period of funding. The maximum daily rate of up to €900 per day including travel and expenses, (subject to evaluation panel approval) to support the hiring of appropriate external experts required to drive and deliver key elements of the work programme.
- **Travel:** A maximum grant of €10,000 or 80% of eligible costs, whichever is the lesser, over the period of funding to support domestic and foreign travel which can be shown to have been reasonably incurred and wholly for the implementation of the work programme. Modest foreign travel for Irish-based consultants, specified at application stage and relating entirely to the proposed project, will also be eligible. All air/rail travel costs incurred must be for economy seat fares. All travel expenses are subject to Enterprise Ireland's current rate of travel and subsistence costs.

Applicants for REISS Priming Grant may also apply for support under the following categories:

- **Personnel:** A maximum grant €64,000 or up to 80% of approved eligible salary, whichever is the lesser over a period of no more than 1 year. Eligible salary (excluding employers PRSI, bonus and commission) is capped at €80,000 per annum, per person. New employees of the not-for-profit DAC/CLG (or existing employees whose role is not supported by a grant at the date of application) must have full-time contracts for a minimum term of 12 months and be employed directly by a successful applicant to drive the various elements of the work programme over the period of funding. Roles for which funding has been approved by Enterprise Ireland must be clearly assigned with responsibilities relating to the implementation of the work programme<sup>5</sup>. The person must be appointed within 4 months from the offer date and the post must be maintained for a period of 1 year from the date of recruitment.
- **Overheads:** Assistance for eligible overheads to a maximum of 30% of the total eligible salary costs.

*Note: Salary and Overhead will be paid for 12 months in advance on submission of a valid grant claim within 4 months of the offer date (a signed contract and payslip must be submitted with the claim).*

- **Promotional Activities:** A maximum grant of €9,000 or 80% of eligible costs, whichever is the lesser, over the period of funding to support communication activities required to implement its work programme by a successful applicant. This may include awareness events, promotional material and website costs (excluding website design).

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<sup>5</sup>Only key management personnel or key technical personnel charged with the management and delivery of the overall project or specific elements of the proposed project will be eligible for assistance.

- **Rental of Temporary Project Space:** Where it is necessary to rent a temporary premises in the initial phase to commence the delivery of the project, the cost of renting/leasing this accommodation will be eligible up to a maximum grant of €10,000 at a grant rate of 80% of eligible expenditure from the effective start date of the project (call close date) post approval. This rental/lease support will be provided for up to 1 year only. The space is to be used for the purposes of the project only and there must be a commercial lease/licence in the name of the grantee in place. Rental cost can be paid 12 months in advance once a signed lease is entered into (subject to approval by the evaluation panel).

Where applicants can certify through the Revenue Commissioners that they have unrecoverable VAT on supported categories of expenditure, it may be deemed an eligible expense under this fund.

The funding limit per project under this Stream overall will be up to a **maximum €200,000 in grant aid** per Priming project, or **80% of eligible expenditure**, whichever is the lesser.

Funding of the REISS Priming Grant will be for a maximum 12-month period. Funding under this stream can also assist initial project development and delivery, which will enable promoters design and test their project concept; deliver virtual or site based solutions from temporary or rented premises to their target audience; and fund the design, planning and tendering costs related to the delivery of their subsequent transformational project.

The support for project management personnel, along with consultancy for the preparation of design drawings and documentation should enable priming projects to submit a planning application. This in turn will assist such subsequent projects to be “shovel ready” when applying for future regional enterprise funding, which should lead to speedier project delivery.

## 4.0 Evaluation Criteria and Process

### 4.1 Evaluation criteria

All applications will be evaluated against the following criteria:

	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
1	Impacts & value for money	30%
2	Collaboration and Participation	20%
3	Building regional strengths	20%
4	Significance for innovation and Capability Building	10%
5	Scalability and Viability	20%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Evaluation Panel will score each applicant based on these criteria and will rank them in order of merit. Applicants that are being considered for REISS Feasibility support must have attained a minimum 60% of the score available, while REISS Priming projects must attain a minimum 75% score.

Where two or more applicants have the same score, the scores attained by each of those applicants in the following criteria will be applied, as necessary, in the following order to determine the ranking of the applicants:

- The applicant with the highest score under ‘Impacts and Value For Money’
- If scores are still even, the applicant scoring highest under ‘Scalability and Viability’.
- If scores are still even, the applicant with the highest score under ‘Collaboration and Participation’.

#### 4.1.1 Detailed Evaluation Criteria

Detail of the evaluation criteria are as follows:

##### **Impacts and VFM – 30%**

- The ensuing final projects must be nationally and or regionally impactful and outline defined economic benefits including job creation potential and planned regional and/or national benefit.
- These ensuing final projects should have strong green credentials and encourage best in class environmental policies and sustainable practices to create positive impacts.
- The current application should demonstrate the gap in provision being addressed, the value for money of the initiative in terms of supports for enterprise outlined in the scheme objectives. Show additionality and planned extra activity/impact compared to what exists at present.
- The applicant should demonstrate how the current application shows alignment with or adds to existing public and private infrastructure e.g. availability of business space in creating enterprise hubs and clusters across the region, developing skilled talent and stimulating innovation, R&D or IP.
- Demonstrate the project’s ambition and how it can assist in growing additional competitive advantage and USP for the region, and the longer-term capability of the project to deliver that. How the project will assist the connectedness of the region both within, between key stakeholders, and companies, and with the global marketplace.

### **Collaboration and Participation – 20%**

- Evidence of collaboration between a number of key stakeholders to develop and implement the proposal showing Industry support/need/benefit.
- Outline plans for collaboration between stakeholders both within, and between regions and appropriate industry/3<sup>rd</sup> level/R&D linkages locally and nationally.
- Building linkages between different sectors and subsectors on convergence opportunities and other issues, e.g. between the MNCs and exporting/sub supply SMEs and between micro enterprise and other businesses and interests.
- Promoting public and private partnership, e.g. alignment, collaboration with other regional stakeholders, e.g. EI, LEO, Regional Skills Fora, Education & Training Board (ETB), Higher Education Institutes (HEIs), and Chambers of Commerce etc.

### **Building Regional Strengths – 20%**

- Building on existing or potential geographical strengths by sectors and leveraging of existing public/private infrastructure in the area.
- Credible value proposition for the Region.
- Projects which can demonstrate alignment with the Regional Enterprise Plans to 2024.
- Focus will be in sectors that contribute to national economic development with due regard to critical scale.

### **Significance for Innovation and Capability Building - 10%**

- Scale & impact of capability building provided in the project and its alignment with the plans to improve Ireland's Smart Specialisation.
- Innovation in approach to stimulating enterprise and 'best practice' and fit with industry sector potential in the region.

### **Scalability and Viability – 20%**

*(note: a minimum score of 15% is required in this category for REISS Priming Grant Support)*

- Outline Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), metrics and clear timelines for delivery of the current application and the proposed approach to scaling up of the ensuing project in the short to medium term, including sources of matching funds for this and the subsequent project.
- Demonstrate the proposed path to viability of the ensuing project. Each application must demonstrate a clear route to self-sustainability, including confirmation of the proposed sponsors, partners and target audience of the venture.
- Provide clear business plans for the project identified along with underlying assumptions. Priming projects should also provide cash flows and identify other sources of finance and how the working capital needs of the project will be met along with proposed timelines for completion.
- Demonstrate the track record of promoters in delivering and implementing scalable projects.

## **4.2 Evaluation Process**

Eligible applications received will be assessed by Enterprise Ireland in line with the stated evaluation criteria. Projects shortlisted for funding will be presented to the appropriate Enterprise Ireland approval committee.

### **Stage 1:**

- Due diligence and project evaluation will be completed on all eligible projects by an experienced Enterprise Ireland Regional Development Executive with support from the Commercial Evaluation Department as/if required. Please note Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to employ an external Commercial Evaluator to assist in this evaluation process (who will comply with all confidentiality requirements).
- The output of Stage 1 will be a scored proposal document which will be inputted into Stage 2.

### **Stage 2:**

- An Evaluation Panel will assess all eligible applications against the stated evaluation criteria based on their application and the outputs of Stage 1. This panel will consist of senior management of Enterprise Ireland along with external evaluators and will include a representative of the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.
- Feasibility Study applications which score at or above the cut-off score of 60% will be recommended for approval by the Evaluation Panel.
- At Enterprise Ireland's discretion, applicants for REISS Priming grant support may be invited to pitch their proposal to an Evaluation Panel followed by a question and answer session.
- The Evaluation Panel will then score and rank projects in order of merit. applications which score at or above the cut-off score of 75% will be recommended for approval by the Evaluation Panel. Enterprise Ireland reserves the right to reduce or disallow proposed costs detailed within the Application, or to schedule some or all of the costs in stages over the term of the funding.

### **Stage 3:**

- The project shortlisted for support will be presented to Enterprise Ireland's approvals committee. The committee will approve projects for Feasibility Study and Priming grant support. The decision of the Enterprise Ireland's approvals committee is final. The Enterprise Ireland Board will be notified of approvals to all successful applicants under this scheme

## 5.0 General Information

### 5.1 Application Process

Applications forms can be downloaded from the REISS page of the Enterprise Ireland website ([www.enterprise-ireland.com/REISS](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/REISS)) and once complete must be submitted electronically to Enterprise Ireland at [GA-REISS@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:GA-REISS@enterprise-ireland.com) before 15:00 hrs. (3:00 pm) on Wed. 18/05/2022. **Applicants who require advice on completion of these forms should contact their local Enterprise Ireland Regional Office** (see Section 5.10) or send an email to [REISS@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:REISS@enterprise-ireland.com).

Applications received after the Call Close deadline on 18/05/2022 will not be accepted.

On receipt of an application pack, an email will be sent to confirm that Enterprise Ireland has received the application. After the deadline for receipt of applications, and following initial eligibility checks, each application will be acknowledged by email within three working days. Applicants who do not receive this email should contact [GA-REISS@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:GA-REISS@enterprise-ireland.com).

Eligible expenditure can only be incurred after the call close date but is at the promoters risk until a letter of offer confirming approval is received.

### 5.2 What will an application consist of?

All applicants must submit a fully completed application in two parts; a Project Plan (Word) which clearly addresses the required project evaluation criteria (as set out in Section 4 above); and a Project Cost Workbook (Excel) which details the expenditure proposed.

Limited support documentation will be accepted to provide clarity on the significant scale, size or scope of the proposed priming project for the evaluation committee. This additional documentation will be restricted to plans or drawings, artist's impressions, outline project costings and financial projections, as appropriate. However, these additional documents may not form part of the documentation reviewed at stage 2 by the evaluation panel (see Section 4.2 Evaluation Process). It is essential that all key facts are presented in the application form as this will form the basis of the evaluation process.

### 5.3 Procurement Guidelines

Successful Applicants should be aware that the public funding of expenditures of private bodies gives rise to procurement obligations for those bodies (e-tenders). This is particularly so where the public funding represents in the region of 80% of the contract costs as is the case in this scheme. The extent of those obligations will depend on the value and type of the expenditure to be incurred. In general, the higher the value of the expenditure, the greater the obligation.

For these purposes, expenditures may be divided into a number of categories. First, there is the categorisation of above or below threshold contracts. The thresholds are set out in the European Union (Award of Public Authority Contracts) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 284 of 2016). Accordingly, expenditures over €209,000 (excluding VAT) for goods and/or services contracts bring the relevant contract within the terms of the 2016 Regulations.

Where the value of the relevant works, goods or services supply contract is below the relevant threshold then less prescriptive requirements which are set out in the Government Procurement Guidelines of July 2017 apply<sup>6</sup>. Enterprise Ireland will not be in a position to provide further information or advice on procurement processes and applicants will need to make their own decisions.

#### **5.4 False Statements**

Enterprise Ireland will treat any false or misleading statements as a serious matter, which may be used in legal proceedings against the maker of any such statement or any applicant company of which they are an officer.

#### **5.5 Information and Publicity and Updates of Documentation**

This Reference Document and other relevant materials may be amended and updated at the discretion of Enterprise Ireland.

#### **5.6 Disclosure of information**

Enterprise Ireland will not disclose any information except as required by law, including the Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts 2014, the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

Enterprise Ireland's Client Charter is available to read in full at:

<https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/About-Us/Services/Client-Charter/>

#### **5.7 Post Approval Stage**

Where an application for funding has been approved, a Letter of Offer will be issued by Enterprise Ireland. All approved projects are subject to the following requirements:

- A final Feasibility Study Report will be required in order to claim the final grant payment under the Feasibility Study stream.
- REISS Priming Grant projects will be required to provide evidence of achieving agreed project milestones, to the satisfaction of Enterprise Ireland's Regional Funds Team.

#### **5.8 Regional Enterprise Innovation Scoping Scheme Grant Claim Process**

Details of the claim process and required documentation will be available on the 'Process A Claim' section of the Enterprise Ireland Website at:

[www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Process/Companies/](http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Process/Companies/)

#### **5.9 Final Claim Dates for Grant Claims**

Successful applicants for REISS **Feasibility Study funding** should make one (1) Grant Claim which must be submitted **by 18 November 2022** for payment by year end.

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c23f5-public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/>

Successful applicants for REISS **Priming Project funding** can make a maximum of two (2) Grant Claims. The first grant claim should be submitted on hiring the key manager (provision of signed employment contract and first wage slip). Rental Costs, if supported, can also be claimed at this stage once a signed rental agreement is provided. One final claim will be accepted within 12 months of the offer date.

The first grant claim must be submitted in 2022 and must be received by Enterprise Ireland **by 18 November 2022** at the latest, for payment by year end.

### 5.10 Further Information

Enquires on this scheme should be directed to [REISS@enterprise-ireland.com](mailto:REISS@enterprise-ireland.com).

For more information contact your local **Enterprise Ireland Regional Office** or one of the following Enterprise Ireland Regional Executives, based on your location:

<b>North-West</b> <b>Aidan McKenna</b> (042) 9354420  <b>Joan Mullen</b> (071) 9159732	<b>North-East</b> <b>Aidan McKenna</b> (042) 9354420  <b>Deirdre Craven</b> (042) 9354426
<b>West</b> <b>Meabh Conaghan</b> (091) 735920  <b>Margaret Charleton</b> (091) 735946  <b>Noeleen Hussey</b> (091) 735926	<b>Dublin</b> <b>Enda McDonnell</b> (01) 7272944  <b>Deirdre O'Neill</b> (01) 7272145  <b>Ena Coleman</b> (01) 7272787
<b>Mid-West &amp; Kerry</b> <b>Jerry Moloney</b> (061) 777018  <b>Gillian Slattery</b> (061) 777015	<b>Midlands / Mid-East</b> <b>Michael Brougham</b> (0906) 487121  <b>James Maloney</b> (0906) 487125  <b>Mark Atterbury</b> (0906) 487128
<b>South</b> <b>Martin Corkery</b> (021) 4800229  <b>Ciara Concannon</b> (021) 4800231  <b>Jacqui Norton</b> (021) 4800228	<b>South-East</b> <b>Martin Corkery</b> (021) 4800229  <b>Brian Fives</b> (051) 333537