



Guidance for applicants – The Housing Agency Research Support Programme

This document provides guidance for applicants wishing to submit a proposal to The Housing Agency Research Support Programme. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals focussing one of The Housing Agency's Research Priority Areas:

- The supply and efficient use of the housing stock
- Understanding housing demand and affordability
- Impact of housing on quality of life
- Housing and people
- Housing and sustainable communities

Part 1 outlines what is expected of successful applicants, Part 2 provides details on the assessment process in deciding successful awards, and Part 3 provides details of payment of research grants.

PART 1: Expectations of successful applicants

When applying for funding from The Housing Agency, applicants are expected to comply with our policies and in particular those outlined below.

Research ethics

The Housing Agency requires that the research we support is designed and conducted in such a way that it meets certain ethical principles.

As a source of public funds for research and as a body which encourages, supports, and advises on such research, The Housing Agency recognises that it has a special obligation towards the general public and academic / research community to ensure that the research which it funds is carried out to a high ethical standard. We recognise the importance of high ethical standards within research and have a [Framework for Research Ethics](#) which all Housing Agency supported projects are expected to observe.

Acknowledgement of support

Financial support from The Housing Agency must be acknowledged in all publications and other forms of media communication, including media appearances, PowerPoint presentations, press releases and conferences, arising from the research. A standard disclaimer that any views expressed are not necessarily those of The Housing Agency should be included in all publications.

Knowledge exchange and collaboration

The Housing Agency is committed to knowledge exchange and encouraging collaboration between researchers and the private, public and civil society sectors. Collaborative working benefits both the researchers and The Housing Agency. Through collaboration, partners learn about each other's expertise, share knowledge and gain an appreciation of different professional cultures. Collaborative activity can therefore lead to a better understanding of the ways in which academic research can add value and offer insights to key issues of concern for policy and practice.

To be most effective, knowledge exchange should not be treated as an 'add-on' at the end of a research project but considered before the start and built into a project.

A dissemination strategy will be prepared for successful projects, in collaboration between the researchers and The Housing Agency. This will include:

- Support for publication and dissemination of research findings
- Sharing of research findings to help inform policy development and improve knowledge of the housing sector

PART 2: Applications

When to apply

The current call has a closing date of **24th February 2020**.

Submission of proposal forms

Proposals must be submitted to researchsupport@housingagency.ie not later than 12 noon on the closing date for consideration. It is our policy that once a proposal has been submitted, no amendment can be made to that proposal, nor will additional accompanying documentation or attachments be accepted (i.e. no erratum changes will be accepted). Proposals will need to stand as submitted.

Selection

The Housing Agency will evaluate research proposals and prioritise proposals when in competition. The scoring system outlined below will be used.

Scoring System

1. Previous Research Experience [20 marks]
 - Focussing on previous research experience which is relevant to the proposal.
2. Project proposal [maximum of 50 marks – minimum of 30 marks to qualify]
 - Understanding of topic area, with a defined research problem / question, and clear objectives for the project;
 - Originality of proposal;

- Clear, robust methodology, outlining the proposed approach (including data collection and data analysis methods where appropriate);
 - Detailed work programme and schedule, outlining the resourcing plan and management structure for meeting the key deliverables of the project.
3. Alignment with The Housing Agency's Priority Areas [10 marks]
 - The proposal should specify how the project aligns with one (or more) of The Housing Agency.
 4. Dissemination Plans and Impact [20 marks]
 - A dissemination strategy and potential impact of the findings

Funding

To qualify for funding, you must provide a detailed breakdown of costs, including the following (exclusive of VAT):

- Staff, field work, equipment, travel and incidentals, any overhead costs.

Research Ethics Committee

Before the granting of an award, proposals which may have potential ethical issues will be submitted to The Housing Agency Research Ethics Committee. This will comprise one staff member from within The Housing Agency with the remaining committee members being external to The Housing Agency, and who will have significant experience in research governance matters. The membership composition of the research ethics committee is fundamental to ensuring that it has the range of expertise and the breadth of experience necessary to provide competent and rigorous reviews of the submitted research proposals, and to do so from a position that is independent of both the researchers and The Housing Agency. Its composition and independence are important in establishing the legitimacy of the opinions expressed and the decisions made, in the eyes of the community and wider society as well as the researchers and funders of research. The research ethics committee will be permitted to consider proposals remotely if deemed appropriate.

PART 3: Payment of Research Grants

The financial support available to any one application is unlikely to exceed €25,000 including VAT if applicable. The amount awarded is all all-inclusive, i.e no additional payment is available for expenses or other disbursements.

The recipient(s) of the grant will be responsible for ensuring that any taxation that is applicable is paid in full.

Payment of research grants will be in instalments, based on progress and quality.

- For grants up to €10,000 this will be paid in two equal instalments of 50%, the first instalment upon signing of the service level agreement and the second instalment upon sign-off of the final written report (or other agreed output).

- For grants between €10,001 and €25,000 this will be paid in three equal instalments, one third upon signing of the service level agreement, one third upon meeting agreed mid-point deliverables and the final third upon successful sign-off of the final written report (or other agreed output).

Eligible Costs

General Conditions

All costs sought under an application must be detailed and justified. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that any costs sought are necessary to carry out the proposed research project. Applicants should ensure that their budget calculations are correct and adhere to the eligible costs set out below.

All prices quoted must be all-inclusive, be expressed in Euro only and exclusive of VAT. VAT should be quoted separately and at the appropriate rate. Where VAT is not applicable this should be explicitly stated.

Research Staff Costs

This should detail the costs per day for each member of the research team, the number of days for each member of the research team.

Fieldwork

This should provide a detailed breakdown of fieldwork related costs. This includes outsourcing of fieldwork to market research companies, any incentive payment to participants, payment for venues etc.

Equipment

Please provide details and justification for any items of equipment being sought. The Housing Agency will pay particular attention to any equipment sought (e.g. laptops, voice recorders, etc.). Any such requests will require a strong rationale and an account of why such items might not be available to an applicant from any other source.

Travel and incidentals

Costs for travel, subsistence and accommodation may be requested. Details on the number of trips, location, purpose and duration of the trips should be provided and the team members involved.

Incidentals costs (non-IT equipment) can be included here. Normally these will have a value of less than €1,000.

Dissemination

Costs associated with the dissemination of the research, design and printing of reports, on-line publishing, seminar/conference attendance (provide details of name and location where possible) and other channels of dissemination and material.

Overhead costs

These may be applied by a university or other institution.

Tax Clearance

The successful tenderer is required to confirm that if awarded a Services Contract arising, they will, from the Effective Date of the Services Contract (as defined in the Services Contract), obtain and hold a current and valid Tax Clearance Certificate from a relevant taxation authority. Prior to the award of any contract arising out of this Competition the successful tenderer shall be required to supply its Tax Clearance Access Number and Tax Reference Number to facilitate online verification of their tax status by the “Contracting Authority”. By supplying these numbers the successful acknowledges and agrees that the “Contracting Authority” has the permission of the successful tenderer to verify its tax cleared position online.

Conflict of Interest

Any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest on the part of an applicant, individual employees, agents, or subcontractors of an applicant must be fully disclosed to The Housing Agency) as soon as the conflict or potential conflict is or becomes apparent. In the event of any conflict or potential conflict of interest, The Housing Agency may invite applicants to propose means by which the conflict might be removed. The Housing Agency will, at its absolute discretion, decide on the appropriate course of action, which may in appropriate circumstances include eliminating an applicant from the competition or terminating any contract entered into by an applicant.

Ensuring Quality

The Housing Agency will implement mechanisms to ensure that research projects meet quality standards.

Quality mechanisms which will be put in place include:

- Detailed assessment of methodology
- Monitoring of research progress
- Experience and qualifications of researcher
- Peer review of larger research projects
- Disclaimer in publications