



31st March 2020

IRDG RD&I Funding Brief

Hi Member

I hope you are keeping well and staying safe in these trying times for all our businesses.

[Recipients: All IRDG contacts in your company]

As coronavirus (Covid 19) continues to spread at home and internationally, we are aware of the uncertainty this has created for members around supply chains, business continuity and cashflow. This brief highlights the range of measures that have been announced by the government and agencies to support businesses through the pandemic and to fund innovators fighting the pandemic.

IRDG is sensitive to the challenges that lie ahead and we remain at your disposal to assist with advice and guidance. Please get in touch for a conversation on how we can help.

Helping Business Through Covid-19

- The [Credit Guarantee Scheme](#) is a government supported product from the banks for small and medium businesses who have difficulty borrowing from their bank. Businesses can apply for loans of up to €1 million at AIB, Bank of Ireland or Ulster Bank. Loans can be for terms of up to 7 years. The scheme provides an 80% guarantee to participating banks which are AIB, Bank of Ireland and Ulster Bank.
- The [COVID 19 Working Capital Scheme](#) – SBCI – This can be used for future working capital requirements or to fund innovation, change or adaptation of the business to mitigate the impact of Covid-19.
- The [COVID-19 Wage Subsidy](#) is a scheme which allows employers to pay their employees during the current pandemic. Employers will be refunded up to 70 percent of an employee's wages -up to a level of €410. This is to be in place for 12 weeks.
- The [Enterprise Ireland Business Response Plan](#) highlights a number of planning supports to help mitigate the impact of Covid-19. These include supports to access consultancy expertise on matters including contingency planning, strategic plans, financial management, sourcing, transport and logistics.

- For companies with existing RD&I grants, the agencies are, in general, encouraging clients to apply for all outstanding grants to maximise their cash flow position. There is no restriction on how early a client can apply for an approved grant. In addition, there is scope to re-profile R&D activity to accelerate project completion. This should be discussed with your relevant advisor.
- For some companies, a time of lower customer demand may allow for greater emphasis on RD&I. By actively engaging in RD&I, companies may keep their employees busy and prepare for the post-crisis higher demand by providing solutions, services and products that offer a better competitive advantage. IRDG can assist you with understanding the relevant schemes and assist with RD&I grant applications.

Funding for Innovators Fighting Covid-19

- SFI, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland have launched a joint [Rapid Response Research and Innovation programme](#) to fund RD&I activities that will deliver significant and timely impact for Ireland in the context of the current emergency. Some of the potential areas the call identifies include new technologies for contact tracing; better supply of frontline healthcare services through ventilators and personal protective equipment; rapid Covid-19 testing kits; and mitigation measures for disruption to essential services and supply chains. The call is open to any research organisation, EI/IDA client or a combination of both. The application deadline has not been set and will remain open until further notice.
- A second [Rapid Response Call](#) was also launched by the Health Research Board and the Irish Research Council. The scope of this funding call covers medical countermeasures, health service readiness, and social and policy countermeasures to COVID-19. This is open to academic researchers only.

EU Supports

The [Start at Best](#) programme is awarding grants on a competitive basis to SMEs for **workplace innovation**. This is an EU funded H2020 programme involving Cork City Council as a key partner. There is a specific national call for Ireland which will see grants of €7,500 awarded to SMEs for projects up to 9 months in duration that address one of the following topics:

Action 1. Jobs, Teams and Technology

Action 2. Organisational Structures, Management and Processes

Action 3. Employee-Driven Improvement and Innovation

Action 4. Co-Created Leadership and Employee Voice

Call for proposal details are available [here](#). Call closes May 6th 2020.

Best regards,
Bernie



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[Calendar](#)

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