

**Regional OPs 2007-13:  
Draft Implementation Plan 1.1.2**

<b>Operational Programme</b>	S&E Region OP 2007 - 2013
<b>Priority</b>	Innovation and the Knowledge Economy
<b>Intervention/Theme</b>	Development of the Region's RTDI Capacity
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	Commercialisation Fund
<b>Categorisation Code</b>	01
<b>ERDF Certifying Body</b>	Department of Finance
<b>Managing Authority</b>	S&E Regional Assembly
<b>Intermediary Body</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Public Beneficiary Body</b>	Universities and Institutes of Technology
<b>Grant Rate</b>	100% direct project costs
<b>EU Co-financing Rate</b>	40%

**Description of the Intervention (including eligible works)**

The Commercialisation Fund is concerned with generating project outputs suitable for commercial exploitation opportunities for the benefit of the Irish economy. Third-level researchers and researchers in other research producing organisations (RPOs) can apply to carry out applied research that may lead to licensing agreements and spin-out companies. This Fund does not support purely exploratory research, nor does it support applied research for companies.

**Objectives**

The objectives of the programme is to foster a dynamic and commercially aware research community and to create an environment that promotes entrepreneurship. In so doing an accessible route to commercialisation is established for the transfer of knowledge from the research base into industry.

**Responsibilities of Intermediary Body**

Enterprise Ireland will manage this initiative through the Programme Coordination unit (within the Research & Innovation Business Unit) which, in collaboration with the agency's Policy Department is responsible for the design of the scheme, project selection and related information and publicity. It works closely with the agency's Finance Department in the administration and financial management of payments to the public beneficiary bodies. Enterprise Ireland is responsible for the selection/evaluation processes and ongoing monitoring of projects during the funding period. In so doing, Enterprise Ireland ensures that a clear audit trail exists for external independent auditing of projects.

An administrative agreement has been entered into between Enterprise Ireland and the Managing Authority setting out the respective roles and responsibilities of each.

### **Responsibilities of the Public Beneficiary Body**

The public beneficiary bodies will support individuals and groups of researchers to successfully execute their duties in respect of delivering the project output. This support will be in the form of grant administration, financial management and control, the scoping and submission of applications, the certification of eligible expenditure, compliance with issues such as public procurement & tax clearance along with providing expert advice on commercialisation through the technology transfer office. This support will be provided in conjunction with mirroring support from Enterprise Ireland's Research & Innovation Business Unit.

### **Contribution to (prioritised) Horizontal Themes**

Gender Equality Principle:

This initiative is a competitive programme whereby awards are made on the merits of individual applications. Thus the gender split within the programme is reflective of the existing gender split within colleges. Applicant colleges will be required to consider equality issues in line with the Equality Authority's guidelines when applying for funding as stated in the programme guide documentation.

### **Project Selection**

#### Selection Process

There will be three Calls for Proposals per year and proposals will be assessed on their own merit. The evaluations will be composed of both internal and external assessments and they will focus on the commercial potential and technical merit of each proposal. Projects are assessed in light of the end goal objective of producing licensing agreements and/ or spin-out companies.

#### Selection Board Membership (where appropriate)

Enterprise Ireland's Industrial Research and Commercialisation Committee (IRCC). This committee is composed of senior members of Enterprise Ireland, the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, the Department of Agriculture, the IDA, senior academics and independent industrial experts and members of the business community.

#### Selection Criteria –

- Technical merit
- Commercial potential
- Track Record (Commercial & Technical) of the Researcher or Research Group
- Project Management

**Performance Indicators** (including horizontal indicators, where appropriate)

Class	Indicator	Baseline	Mid-term Dec '09	Final
Output	Number of approvals by IRCC -Proof of Concept, Technology Development, Commercialisation Plus	0	150	350
Result	Licenses achieved as a result of funded research	0	20	40
Impact	Start-up Enterprises arising from funded research	0	12	25

**Financial Management**

The gross public expenditure in respect of projects funded under this measure will be provided annually in the estimates of the Implementing Body (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment), from SubHead F1 of the Department's Vote. Enterprise Ireland draws its funding from the Office of Science, Technology and Innovation of D/ETE. 25% of the grant value in respect of projects approved under the selection procedures outlined above will be paid to institutions by Enterprise Ireland in advance with the remaining 75% paid in arrears, on the basis of certified returns of expenditure. Grants will include the ERDF contribution, which will be reclaimed by the Certifying Authority for the benefit of the Exchequer. Claims, once approved and certified, in respect of ERDF assistance will be submitted to the Commission by the Certifying Authority (please see flow chart attached).

The public beneficiary body will be required to have in place separate accounting arrangements in respect of project expenditure under the sub-measure. .

Document Retention

In accordance with Article 90 of the General Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, the Intermediary Body and Public Beneficiary Bodies will ensure that all supporting documents regarding expenditure, verification checks, certification and audits on the interventions concerned are kept available for the EU Commission and Court of Auditors for a period of three years following the closure of the Operational Programme.

## **Monitoring and Reporting arrangements**

The necessary reports will be provided in the required formats that are to be agreed with the Managing Authority. A dedicated unit within Enterprise Ireland be responsible for the compilation of data and reporting. These actions will be facilitated by a recently upgraded, dedicated IT system.

## **Information and Publicity**

The contribution of the EU Structural Funds 2007-2013 will be acknowledged in all brochures, promotional material, press releases, publicity activity, advertisements, signage, applications forms, annual reports, letters of offer, etc., by use of appropriate logo and text references. A dedicated commercialisation communications unit within Enterprise Ireland will be responsible for continued promotion of the scheme and commercialisation in general. This may include advertisement campaigns, road shows, and dedicated websites.

**North/South Co-operation** (where appropriate)

## Annex 2

### Steps to gender equality in the 2007 -2013 planning period

#### Policy development

- ✓ Include gender equality as a policy objective in relevant areas, particularly in human resources measures, community and rural development, business.
- ✓ Undertake gender impact assessment, where appropriate, to ensure that the different needs of women and men are reflected .
- ✓ Work with gender equality experts to identify best practice.
- ✓ Consult with client groups on meeting needs and ensure that both men and women's concerns are addressed;
- ✓ Check if budgets provide for special needs issues such as childcare, transport, etc., and ideally provide some flexibility to ensure that the activity supports Government objectives on gender equality, e.g. be in a position to respond to requests for part-time provision.;
- ✓ Allocate a portion of mainstream budgets for specific actions on gender equality and for innovation;

#### Monitoring

- ✓ Develop meaningful indicators to track gender equality outcomes, results and impacts.
- ✓ Set gender equality targets where appropriate. These need to be related to the baseline position (not necessarily 50:50)
- ✓ Ensure gender equality is included in all evaluations and surveys.
- ✓ Promote gender balance on relevant committees and, if necessary, allocate a place/places to the unrepresented gender. See Unit's guide: *'How to promote gender balance in decision-making'*

#### Delivery

- ✓ .Allocate specific responsibility for gender equality to a named individual
- ✓ Ensure gender equality is included in project selection criteria
  - See unit guide *'how to incorporate equal opportunities into project selection criteria'*
- ✓ Promote equality of access for women and men in practical ways by identifying and removing barriers to their participation. e.g.
  - information, publicity and communication
  - flexible provision and delivery
  - childcare supports
  - transport and facilities

- ✓ Put named actions in place to ensure that both women and men will benefit equally;
- ✓ Consider if additional progression supports are needed for particular groups.