



Conference Participation Fund: Regulations

At its meeting of 16 February, 2011, Academic Council approved the following regulations for the operation of this fund. These regulations were reviewed by Academic Council on 14 May 2013 and updated to include members of the administrative and technical staff presenting at conferences. With the growth of research in RCSI and increased focus on RCSI resources being utilised, and to support early careers and enhance RCSI's reputation, the regulations were subsequently updated in 2023, and approved by Academic Council on 8 November 2023.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this funding mechanism is to support attendance and participation at prestigious national / international conferences, so as to foster the academic credentials of RCSI staff and promote the academic standing of RCSI, while building on, and further enhancing, RCSI's reputation on a national or international stage. It will be directed to staff presenting on research / education within their given speciality. To ensure maximum reputational impact, only oral presentations will be eligible. Attendance to acquire expertise / update skills is not supported by this fund, but funding may be available via applicant's own Departmental funds, please refer to Head of School / Department.

2. Eligibility

Eligibility will be confined to academic and professional staff holding a permanent appointment or a contract appointment funded for at least two years; staff holding such appointments on a part-time basis may be eligible, on the basis of at least 50% commitment to RCSI. Staff must hold a valid RCSI contract at the time of conference participation. Priority will be given to early career academic and professional staff rather than those already established in their careers.

For clarity, eligibility will include Clinical Lecturers / Tutors, technical, administrative and professional staff who satisfy the above criteria, but not postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers or research assistants. While there can be valid needs for conference funding across such sections of the RCSI community, these cannot be accommodated by the Conference Participation Fund.

3. Funding & Limitations

The funding limit will be maximum of €1,200 (European region) or €1,500 (non-European region) for one conference per person per academic year or actual expenses incurred if less. Receipts must be submitted. Applications for funding must be made in advance of conference attendance to allow sufficient time for review of application.

Heads of Department should approve applications that will ensure the best scientific / educational return to RCSI for the investment made. Any shortfall vis-à-vis a higher full-cost might be made up from academic societies, research grants, or shared funding with Staff Learning and Development as appropriate. In such instances, the applicant should discuss options with their Head of Department / other line manager. Submission of an application should not be presumed as a guarantee of funding. The budget allocation is limited, and if the budget for the fund is exhausted before the end of the current academic year the fund may be closed. Likewise, discretion will be used to determine the benefit of the applicant's chosen conference by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation.

4. Prioritisation

The funds available must be targeted to maximise academic benefit, enhance reputation and increase the profile of RCSI. Priority will be given to early career staff presenting at prominent national or international conferences - the emerging talent of RCSI. However, funding may also be available to allow senior academics to promote RCSI at the highest level. Prestigious and prominent conferences will be interpreted broadly, to cover a wide spectrum, from large congresses to specialised workshop



formats, within the applicant's specialist field. It is always expected that the applicant will choose the events with highest quality reputation, attended by the leaders in their fields.

Priority will thus be given to Lecturers / Senior Lecturers and professional staff making submitted oral presentations at major conferences and, particularly, delivering invited talks, where the total cost of attendance is not borne by the conference organiser.

While being invited to speak at a conference increases priority for funding, there can be confusion over the term 'invited'; when an abstract is submitted for presentation at a conference and is 'selected for oral presentation', this must not be mis-interpreted as 'invited to speak'.

Other than in exceptional circumstances [see 7 below], 'in attendance' at conferences (i.e. not presenting), moderating sessions or poster presentations will be deemed a non-fundable activity and will not be permitted/funded under this policy.

5. Operation

Applications will be submitted to the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation via the eMail address (only): applicationsconferencefunding@rcsi.com.

Where an applicant indicates that he / she / they have been invited to speak, they should append a copy of the invitation and associated documentation describing whether that invitation includes funds for accommodation, travel or waiving of registration fees and indicate whether any other sources of funding are available.

There should be no deviation from the agreed funding limit.

Standard RCSI policies will apply in relation to booking economy class flights through RCSI Travel and forwarding receipts for reimbursement. RCSI Travel should be notified that the travel is being funded by the Conference Participation Fund.

6. RCSI Visual Identity

RCSI-funded presentations at conferences constitute an important opportunity for promotion of RCSI in the international arena. Staff presenting at conferences must follow the most recent guidelines for RCSI Corporate Brand Identity in terms of institutional designations and logos.

7. Exceptional circumstances

No set of guidelines can encompass every situation and it is recognised that genuinely exceptional circumstances may occur. Any exemption from these regulations will occur only after careful review by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation and Research Executive Management Team. This amended policy, aimed at optimising RCSI investment in reputation engagement for staff and the institution, will be reviewed after one year when further amendments may be made based on experience.