



# Collaborative Research with External Partners Policy

Policy for undertaking Funded /  
Co-funded Collaborative Research  
with external partners on behalf of  
TU Dublin

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## Table of Contents

1. Document Control Summary.....	2
2. Introduction / Context.....	3
3. Purpose.....	3
4. Scope.....	3
5. Definitions .....	4
6. Policy Details: .....	5
6.1 Policy Overview .....	5
6.2 Approval to undertake Collaborative Research .....	5
6.3 Budget Approval .....	6
6.4 Collaborative Research Agreement.....	6
6.5 Approval process .....	6
6.6 Change Process .....	6
7. Related Documents .....	7
8. Document Management.....	7
8.1 Version Control.....	7
8.2 Document Approval .....	8
8.3 Document Ownership .....	8
8.4 Document Review.....	8
8.5 Document Storage.....	8
8.6 Document Classification .....	8

## 1. Document Control Summary

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Author	Paul Maguire
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## 2. Introduction / Context

TU Dublin encourages staff to engage in Collaborative Research with external partners on behalf of TU Dublin to further develop and enhance their strengths and skills with a view to:

- keeping abreast of developments and innovations in business and the professions;
- continually improving TU Dublin's taught and research programmes;
- testing ideas, inventions and practices developed at TU Dublin;
- fulfilling TU Dublin's mission of contributing to economic and social impact and development;
- establishing relationships with third parties who wish to collaborate on, or fund, research projects, studentships, etc.
- enhancing the reputation and profile of TU Dublin; and
- growing additional income streams for the development of TU Dublin.

Benefits for Colleagues to engage in externally (co-)funded work on behalf of TU Dublin, rather than in a private capacity, include being able to:

- use TU Dublin Resources to carry out the project;
- use the name and reputation of TU Dublin in performing the collaborative research;
- rely on TU Dublin's professional indemnity and other insurance policies with contractual liability falling on TU Dublin as the contracting party rather than the Colleague; and
- avail of TU Dublin expertise of entering into collaborative research contracts (drafting and negotiating agreements) and advising on the best way to structure particular deals, leaving the Colleague free to focus on applying their expertise.

## 3. Purpose

TU Dublin has developed this policy to provide details on the circumstances under which Colleagues may engage in Collaborative Research with external partners on behalf of TU Dublin.

It has been designed to promote Collaborative Research on behalf of TU Dublin and to provide transparency and accountability, improving the costing and pricing process, while minimising the risk to Colleagues and TU Dublin and bringing TU Dublin in line with policies and procedures of other universities.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to all TU Dublin Colleagues carrying out Collaborative Research with external partners.

This policy does not cover Colleagues who undertake research work in their own right in a private capacity without recourse to any form of TU Dublin Resources, facilities or insurance indemnification. When a Colleague wishes to undertake consultancy work privately, they must do so in accordance with the TU Dublin "Policy on External Work, Research, Engagement and Consultancy."

This policy does not cover Colleagues who undertake collaborative research work with academics affiliated with TU Dublin, or affiliated with other national and international institutes, where no specific funding is allocated to TU Dublin by those institutes, or by external funding agencies, to support the work.

## 5. Definitions

The following are some identified core definitions used in this document. These include:

- Collaborative Research – means all collaborative research undertaken by TU Dublin with commercial or non-commercial entities [Government agencies and departments, local authorities, industry, charities, etc.] (collectively termed “External Partner”) which is funded wholly or in part by the External Partner and includes:
  - Part-Funded Collaborative Research – collaborative research in which the programme is funded partly by the State and partly (in cash and/or in kind, including participation in the research itself) by the External Partner.
  - Wholly-Funded Collaborative Research – collaborative research in which the External Partner meets the full economic cost of carrying out the programme.

Collaborative Research may involve two or more External Partners and includes, but is not limited to:

- Enterprise Ireland Innovation Vouchers;
  - Service level agreements;
  - Contract research and consultancy;
  - Tenders;
  - Clinical trial projects; and
  - Industry-funded/co-funded scholarships for PhD students
  - Collaborative projects funded through national or international research and innovation funding agencies, including, but not limited to, Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, the Irish Research Council, the Health Research Board, the Higher Education Authority, and the European Commission.
- Colleague – means an employee of TU Dublin, a consultant, visiting academic or researcher, or emeritus/emerita staff using TU Dublin Resources.
  - Conflict of Interest - refers to a conflict between the duties of an individual as an employee of TU Dublin on the one hand and their personal interests on the other. Teaching and research/scholarship activity; the hiring of staff; the procurement of goods and services and other duties of employees of the University must be free from undue influence by outside interests. Conflicts of Interest that may arise in connection with Collaborative Research include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - An individual using their TU Dublin position to:
      - influence a contract or other favourable terms for a company in which they, or a relative or friend, had a financial interest;
      - obtain financial or non-financial benefits for themselves or for a relative or friend in return for providing advantage, or potential advantage; or
      - use TU Dublin Resources or confidential information for personal financial or nonfinancial benefit or benefit to a relative or friend.

- Conducting business, employment or activity outside of TU Dublin which adversely affects the individual’s ability to perform their duties.
- An individual compromising research objectivity or independence in return for financial or non-financial benefit for them or for a relative or friend.
- Principal Investigator (PI) - is the primary individual directing the Collaborative Research programme, in charge of research grants, cooperative agreements, or public service projects, contracts, or other sponsored projects and is the person, or one of the persons, in whose name the activity is registered in TU Dublin.
- Resources - includes but are not limited to TU Dublin’s physical structures, research facilities, capital equipment, technical facilities, services, employees and/or TU Dublin-Owned IP.

## 6. Policy Details:

### 6.1 Policy Overview

This document describes the policy that TU Dublin Colleagues follow when:

- Seeking prior approval to undertake Collaborative Research;
- Obtaining budgetary approval prior to issuing a quotation to a third party;
- Executing a collaborative research agreement between TU Dublin and the External Partner(s).

Further procedural details are contained in RESOPxx – TU Dublin Collaborative Research Procedure.

### 6.2 Approval to undertake Collaborative Research

- The Principal Investigator engaging in Collaborative Research must first obtain prior approval from their relevant Head of School or other line manager on an annual basis.<sup>1</sup> Once approval has been provided, each Collaborative Research project undertaken must obtain prior approval from the Head of Research Support Services before commencement.
- Engaging in Collaborative Research without prior approval of both Head of School/line manager and the Head of Research Support Services is in breach of University policy.
- All Collaborative Research work undertaking in TU Dublin will be subject to the university’s Ethical Approval processes and Research Integrity principles and practices, as specified in the TU Dublin “Research Ethics Policy” and the TU Dublin “Code of Conduct for Ensuring Excellence in Research Integrity.”

<sup>1</sup> TU Dublin Public approval relates to aspects including adherence to legislation and best practice guidelines, research competency, use of TU Dublin resources, and alignment with the TU Dublin Strategic Intent. As such, it is not intended to limit Colleagues’ academic freedom.

### 6.3 Budget Approval

- All Collaborative Research projects where the External Partner funds or co-funds university costs must be based on a full economic costs analysis (Direct Costs [including the PI's time devoted to the project where applicable] and Indirect Costs) prepared by the PI to ensure compliance with EU State Aid obligations and internal TU Dublin policies and procedures.
- The Head of Research Support Services, or nominated delegate, will review and approve the budget prepared by the PI and issue the quotation to the third party for their agreement.
- All Collaborative Research projects must be processed through a research account and registered in the university's Research Information System prior to their commencement.

### 6.4 Collaborative Research Agreement

- The TU Dublin Innovation Office (or nominee) will draft a Collaborative Research agreement that must be signed by all parties prior to the commencement of the Collaborative Research project.
- The Collaborative Research agreement will include, amongst other things, a description of the work to be undertaken, the project budget and fees to be charged as applicable, intellectual property ownership, publication rights, confidentiality and warranties, liabilities, and indemnity.
- TU Dublin will take no responsibility and provide no indemnity for work carried out in the absence of a contract signed by all relevant parties. In the absence of a contract signed by all relevant parties, the PI may be held liable for any issues arising and may be subject to disciplinary processes.
- Any surplus funds identified upon completion of the project will be dispersed in line with agreed TU Dublin procedures. In the absence of such procedures, surpluses will be transferred to budgets held by the Vice President for Research and Innovation and will be used to support activities in line with TU Dublin's strategic plans for Research and Innovation.

### 6.5 Approval process

Amendments to this policy must be approved by Governing Body.

### 6.6 Change Process

TU Dublin Research and Innovation provides administrative support, and the Vice President for Research and Innovation has responsibility for this Policy.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years and more often if needed, including within six months of the publication of any new or updated National IP Protocol or change in other relevant national policy or guidance.

## 7. Related Documents

This Policy refers to other TU Dublin policy documents including:

- > xxxx – TU Dublin Conflict of Commitment and Conflict of Interest Policy
- > xxxx – TU Dublin Research Ethics Policy
- > xxxx – TU Dublin Code of Conduct for Ensuring Excellence in Research Integrity

This Policy refers to other TU Dublin procedure documents including:

- > RESOP01 – TU Dublin IP Policy Procedure

This Policy refers to other TU Dublin policy documents including the TU Dublin’s IP Policy, Policy on Conflict of Interest, Signing Authority Policy, External Work, Research and Engagement, and Code of Governance of TU Dublin.

This Policy is intended to be consistent with the terms of the IP Protocol 2019 – A Framework For Successful Research Commercialisation - as well as the recommendations arising out the Review of Intellectual Property Management and Conflicts of Interest (2018) and the Review of implementation of IP Polices within Higher Education Institutions (2021) both commissioned by the Higher Education Authority in partnership with Knowledge Transfer Ireland.

## 8. Document Management

### 8.1 Version Control

VERSION NUMBER	VERSION DESCRIPTIN / CHANGES MADE	AUTHOR	DATE
<i>Draft</i>	<i>Initial Document</i>	<i>Paul Maguire</i>	<i>19<sup>th</sup> August 2021</i>
<i>Draft 2</i>	<i>Updated document based initial feedback received from internal stakeholders. Updated document format based on the requirement for separate policies and procedure and the use of the provided TU Dublin policy template</i>	<i>Paul Maguire</i>	<i>13<sup>th</sup> October 2021</i>
<i>Draft 3</i>	<i>Updated document with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Broadened scope to cover all collaborative research projects</i></li> <li>• <i>Clear reference to the roles of Pre-Award, Innovation and Finance offices</i></li> </ul>	<i>Paul Maguire</i>	<i>11<sup>th</sup> July 2022</i>
<i>Draft 4</i>	<i>Updated document with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Definition of collaborative research broadened to</i></li> </ul>	<i>Paul Maguire</i>	<i>26<sup>th</sup> September 2022</i>

	<p><i>include commercial and non-commercial entities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Project approval required from the Head of Research Support Services before commencement</i></li> </ul>		
<i>Draft 5</i>	<p><i>Updated draft document with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Clarifications on approval procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusion of reference to Ethics and Research Integrity policy and processes</i></li> <li>• <i>Other minor edits and clarifications</i></li> </ul>	<i>Brendan Jennings</i>	<i>12th October 2022</i>
<i>V1.0</i>	Updated policy name to reflect scope of applicability, as requested by UET.	<i>Brendan Jennings</i>	<i>18th October 2022</i>

## 8.2 Document Approval

VERSION NUMBER	APPROVAL DATE	APPROVED BY (NAME AND ROLE)
<i>1.0</i>	<i>23rd March 2023</i>	<i>Governing Body</i>

## 8.3 Document Ownership

Accountability to defining, developing, monitoring and updating the content of this document rests with the Vice President for Research and Innovation

## 8.4 Document Review

The Vice President for Research and Innovation is accountable to review this document. This document should be approved by both the University Executive Team and Governing Body.

## 8.5 Document Storage

This document will be stored on the TU Dublin content management systems under the Policies INTRANET folder.

## 8.6 Document Classification

Detail the classification of the document so that users / readers know who to treat the information contained in the document.