## Document Information

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# SFI Research Centres: Guidelines for Completion of Monthly Reports on Industry Collaborative Research Agreements

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# 1. Introduction

Research Centres are required to update SFI on a monthly basis on the status of collaborative research agreements (CRAs) with industry partners. Updates to CRAs are to be made directly on SESAME before close of business on **the second Friday of each month**. It is the responsibility of Research Centres to introduce practices to ensure that the monthly reports are prepared and submitted on schedule and in an appropriate manner. SFI will run a SESAME report to validate the data each month and revert to the Research Centres if the data is incomplete or contains errors. This can be viewed on the CRA Query Tableau Dashboard (accessed through [Research Centre SharePoint](#) or [Tableau](#)). It is essential that Research Centres provide their metrics in a clean and reusable fashion.

Validated data is used to:

- Track progress of the Research Centres against their targets and, in the case of the SFI Spokes programme, to ensure all CRAs have been signed within the timeframe detailed in the award letter of offer
- Carry out further analysis for reporting to the SFI Executive Committee
- Provide statistics relating to the industry partners when requested by our parent department and other agencies such as IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland

Please note, CRAs should be logged starting with a 'Status' of 'In discussion' and modified on SESAME throughout the course of the CRA using the 'Status' as described in Table 1 below.

# 2. Steps for creating or editing CRAs on SESAME

**Step 1:** Navigate to the Research Centre Administrator Profile, under 'General' tab, 'Funding Diversification' can be found under the 'Research Profile' section.

**Step 2:** A new transaction can be added by selecting 'Add New' while existing records can be edited by selecting 'Show' and then 'Open' on the record. Please see the image below. See section 3 below regarding bulk uploading CRAs.
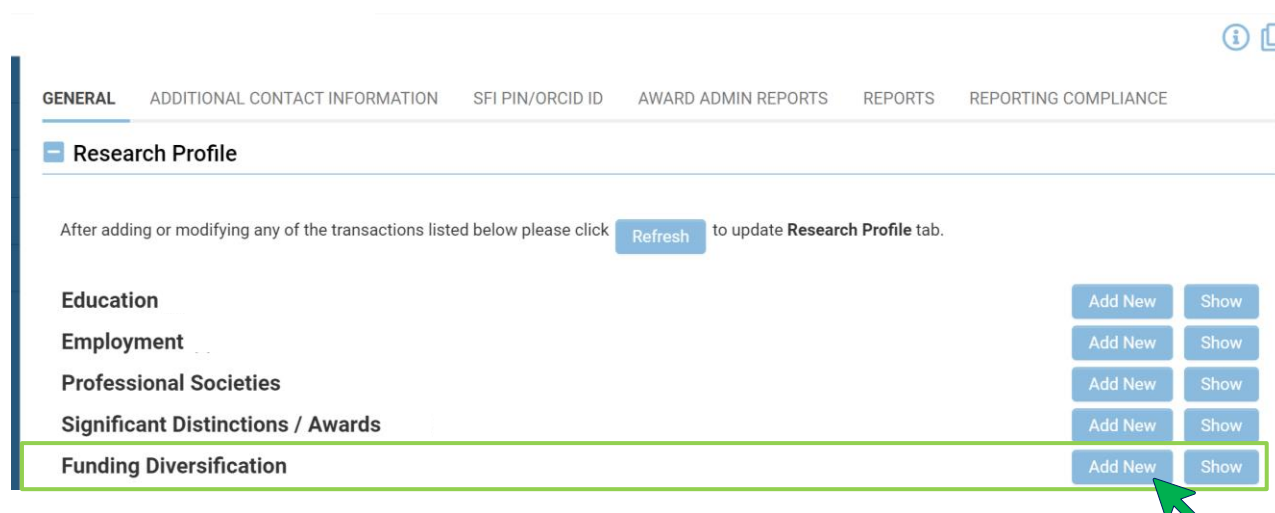
**Step 3: Attribution**

**For a Centre-funded CRA**
1. **[Primary Proposal Attribution]** **must** be the Research Centre award code, e.g. 12/RC/1234_P2
2. **[Secondary Attribution]** can reflect other sources of co-funding, or may be left blank

**For a Spoke-funded CRA**
1. **[Primary Proposal Attribution]** **must** be the Research Centre award code, e.g. 12/RC/1234_P2
2. **[Secondary Attribution]** **must** be the Spoke award code, e.g. 13/SP/9876

This tells SFI/SESAME which award's cost share the CRA is associated with.

The primary attribution reflects the main award whose outputs and outcomes have contributed to securing this new award. For industry cash and in-kind commitments to be counted as cost share, the **Research Centre award must be listed as the primary attribution**. For Research Centres with multiple phase awards (e.g. Phase 1 and Phase 2) the start date of the signed CRA should correspond to the relevant Research Centre award phase.

The secondary attribution reflects other sources of funding that have contributed to the same award. For industry cash and in-kind commitments to be counted as cost share for a Spoke award, the **Spoke award must be listed as the secondary attribution**.

**Step 4**: Assigning CRA

1. **[Funding Body]** **must** be *'Private Enterprise'*
2. **[Nature of Project]** **must** be *'Collaborative'*

**Step 5: Complete mandatory CRA fields**

**[Funding Programme or Company Name]:** Name of the parent company. Please avoid using special characters or abbreviations. Please see Section 5 below regarding CRAs involving a consortium of companies.

**[Title of Proposal]:** Internal name of the project within the Research Centre.

**[Grant No]:** Internal ID of the project within the Research Centre. Previously referred to as 'Project ID'. For CRAs that do not have an internal ID please input 'NA'.

**[Status]:** The CRA status column has a drop-down list with the following options listed along with their definitions as outlined in **Table 1 below.**

**Table 1: CRA Status**

| CRA Status | Suggested Definition (as agreed by Research Centre Business Development Managers) |
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| 1. In discussion | Business Development Manager or other relevant team member held significant meeting(s) with industry partner<br>Non-disclosure agreement or confidential disclosure agreement executed |
| 2.1 Scope Discussion | Project(s) outline drafted<br>Background intellectual property (IP) identified and due diligence completed (available and unencumbered) |
| 2.2 Proposal drafting | Project work packages written up<br>Project sized and budgeted<br>Outline timetable, milestones, and deliverables<br>Cash value estimated |
| 3.1 Proposal Submitted | Project risk analysis completed<br>Proposal completed and submitted<br>Business Development Manager has clear path to close deal (timeline, objection-handling, budgets, who will decide etc.)<br>Technology Transfer Office (TTO) term sheet issued |
| 3.2 Funding allocated | Written e-mail communication indicating funding approval<br>Budget allocated |
| 4.1 In discussion | Timetable, milestones, deliverables and resource provisionally committed |
| 4.2 In preparation | TTO on-track to issue contract<br>Any special terms agreed with TTO (e.g. IP/ licensing terms) |
| 4.3 Issued | Industry partner(s) CRA signed and issued by TTO<br>Awaiting partner finalisation |
| *CRA signed[+]* | The industry partner and Research Centre representative have signed the CRA |
| *CRA expired[+]* | This refers to the situation where the project has been partially, rather than fully, completed. In some cases, the project may only have been partially completed, e.g. due to a change in research direction. In this case the CRA should be classified as 'CRA expired' and the industry funds which have been invoiced should be listed in the relevant cost share columns. |
| CRA at risk | This refers to the situation where, despite negotiations, there is a strong probability that the company will withdraw from discussion before the CRA is signed. |
| *CRA terminated[+]* | This refers to the situation where a CRA was signed but the project never got off the ground, for example in the case of a |

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| | company being taken over, or a company going out of business. The signed CRA has been terminated **before the project start (before any funds have been invoiced)** through unforeseen circumstances and no industry funds have been invoiced. |
| Company withdrawn | The company has withdrawn from the discussions before the CRA has been signed.<br><br>If a company withdraws from CRA discussions, it is important that this information is retained on SESAME with a status of *'Company withdrawn'*. Please do not delete entries that should otherwise be *'CRA terminated'* or *'Company withdrawn'*. |

[+]*In calculating industry commitments SFI sums the 'CRA expired', 'CRA signed' and 'CRA terminated' values.*

**NB: 'Current', 'Expired' and 'Pending' are not a valid status for CRAs.** These are only for non-industry funding sources (e.g. grants from SFI, the EU etc.). If CRAs are incorrectly assigned, they will not be counted.

**[Total Amount of Funding for the Project (€)]:** This refers to the **'Total project cost'** as stated in the CRA. The total project cost should include both the SFI contribution to the project (direct costs) and the total industry contribution, both cash and in-kind. Overhead can be included if it goes to the Research Centre.

**[Amount of Funding Allocated to PI (€)]:** This refers to 'Total amount of funding for the project' minus SFI's contribution i.e. **the total industry contribution** (cash and in-kind and any overhead that goes to the Research Centre).

**[Amount of the allocated funding that is cash]:** The amount of direct cash contribution to be provided by the company for the duration of the project i.e. 'Cost Share (cash)'. The direct contributions do not include any institutional overhead or VAT. However, if the industry overhead paid to the Research Body is given directly to the Research Centre (or part thereof), then this amount can be counted as a cash contribution. Provide the total value of the CRA, regardless of the period over which the CRA runs. In calculating industry commitments SFI uses the 'Amount of the allocated funding that is cash' and 'Committed Cost-share (in kind)' fields to capture committed industry cash and in-kind respectively.

**[Position held on Award] must** be *'PI'*

**[Start Date] must** be the start date of the project as per the signed CRA (provide an estimate if the CRA is not yet signed)

**[End Date] must** be the end date of the project as per the signed CRA (provide an estimate if the CRA is not yet signed)

**[MNC/SME]** Define whether the company is a multinational corporation (MNC), small or medium sized enterprise (SME), start-up or 'Other'. Use Enterprise Ireland definitions of the relevant company type[1].

**[Company Country of Origin]** Provide the country in which the company was originally founded. For example, for an international company such as Intel who have a base in Ireland, the country of origin is the USA and not Ireland. A drop-down list is provided to avoid multiple versions of the same country (e.g. USA, US, America etc.).

**[Award Type]** Indicate whether the CRA is associated with a platform/targeted project funded through the original 'Research Centre Award' or from an award granted through the SFI Spokes programme ('Spokes Award'). While targeted projects associated with the Research Centre may sometimes be referred to as spoke projects, 'Spokes Award' in this context refers only to projects funded through the SFI Spokes programme.

**[Is Company Name Confidential?]** This column refers to whether or not the Research Centre's interaction with a named company is confidential or not. It does not refer to the details of the CRA between the Research Centre and the company. If 'No' is selected, SFI may use the name of this company in connection with the Research Centre in public relations initiatives and the company should be included in the Research Centre Researcher Snapshot. If 'Yes' is selected, SFI will honour the wishes of the company and will not use their name in any public relations activities.

**[Committed Cost-share (in kind)]** The amount of in-kind contribution to be provided by the company for the duration of the project. Provide the total value of the CRA, regardless of the period over which the CRA runs. **This field is not highlighted as mandatory on SESAME however it is mandatory CRA reporting.** In calculating industry commitments SFI uses the 'Amount of the allocated funding that is cash' and 'Committed Cost-share (in kind)' fields to capture committed industry cash and in-kind, respectively.

**[Completion Date of Contract]** **The date that the CRA is signed** (if not yet signed, provide the expected or estimated date on which the CRA will be signed). **This field is not highlighted as mandatory on SESAME however it is mandatory CRA reporting. The 'Completion Date of Contract' should be on or before the 'Start Date' of the project.**

**[IP Arrangements]**: Please select from the dropdown list, indicating where the IP Arrangements are 'Default', as per the National IP Protocol[2], or whether other arrangements exist.

**[Industry Collaboration Form]:** An industry collaboration form (ICF) is required for CRAs that have been signed. Under the 'Status' drop down on SESAME this means CRAs that are 'CRA signed', 'CRA expired' and 'CRA terminated'. For the upload button to appear click 'Save'. A link to the ICF template is provided.

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[1] http://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/about-us/our-clients/sme-definition.html
[2.] http://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/national-policies-sfi-positions/

Download the template and upload in PDF format. A tutorial video on uploading ICFs can be found on the [Research Centre Sharepoint.](#)

**[Research Body Associated]:** Please select from drop down.

**Step 6:** Fill in relevant non-mandatory CRA fields

**[Brief description of proposal including website and names of partners, where available. For pending awards, please also indicate expected decision date]** Please provide a brief description of the project.

**[Time Commitment (%)]** The time commitment of the team member(s) associated.

**[Headcount]** The number of people working on the project.

**[Comments]** Please add comments relating to changes in CRA e.g. committed cash or in-kind changes.

**[Team member name associated with this transaction]** Please add the team member(s) associated with the project.

**[Secondary unique identifier]** This field can be used at the discretion of the Research Centre.

## 3.  Notes for excel uploader templates

If using the Excel templates to upload to SESAME, a number of rules around the completion of the Excel spreadsheet and in particular the use of dropdown lists are listed below. Research Centres are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Do not add any new columns to the spreadsheet template
- Do not change any of the column titles
- If a particular validation does not include a value appropriate to the Research Centre's situation, use the next most appropriate one and explain any variation in the 'Comment' column
- In the case of monetary amounts, provide the exact amount, not an abbreviation. For example, provide 250000, not €250k or €0.25m.
- In the case of dates, provide an exact date, not an abbreviation. For example, provide 31/3/2016, not Q1 2016.
- If the value is unknown or not applicable, input NA – do not leave the cell blank
- If any values need to be estimated, please provide the best estimate possible. Do not append any other text. If your estimate for a particular value is 100, report, 100, not 100 (est.) or 100 (approx.).
- Transaction ID: All new records should have a blank (or zero) transaction ID. These will be allocated a transaction ID once imported.
- All existing records should have the correct transaction ID. If there is a transaction ID in the spreadsheet that does not belong to the Research Centre/Award's Research profile, you will get an

error message on import. If there is no transaction ID, SESAME will assume they are new records to be added, resulting in duplication.

## 4. Repeat industry collaborative research agreements

If a company already engaged with the Research Centre wishes to undertake a new project (i.e. work not covered in the previous CRA), this should be entered as a new funding diversification transaction in SESAME – with dates and costs/commitments for this specified work clearly defined from previous CRAs with the same company.

If, however, the company wish to have a costed extension to the project that is covered by the original statement of work/CRA then, when agreed and signed off by all partners, the additional cash commitments and revised project end date can be updated on the original SESAME transaction – SFI check these columns against previous months to ascertain if there have been any costed extensions. Please include a note in the 'Comments' field to clarify that this is the case.

If there is to be a no cost extension to a CRA then please update the project 'End Date' in the original SESAME transaction.

## 5. CRA involving a consortium of companies

For a CRA involving more than one company, a separate entry will be required for each company of the consortium. The **[Title of the project]** **must** be identical for each CRA entry of the consortium **and** contain the word 'Consortium' in square brackets i.e. *[Consortium] + title of the project,* so that these can be aggregated correctly. Only one ICF is required on **one CRA entry on SESAME (any)** for a consortium of companies.

## 6. Industry collaboration form

For CRAs that have been signed on or after 17th February 2021 it is mandatory that an ICF is completed and returned to SFI on SESAME, on or before the date that the CRA has been 'agreed', or signed, by the relevant partner(s). Further information, including a template for the ICF can be found here: *https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/state-aid/*

Please ensure that the correct ICF is uploaded against the corresponding CRA. Please note that when adding an ICF to a new 'Funding Diversification' entry on SESAME, the item must first be saved before the ICF upload button will appear.

A tutorial video on uploading an ICF can be found on the Research Centre SharePoint.