

SFI Fellowship Programme 2024

Dr. Mark Daly
Scientific Programme Manager

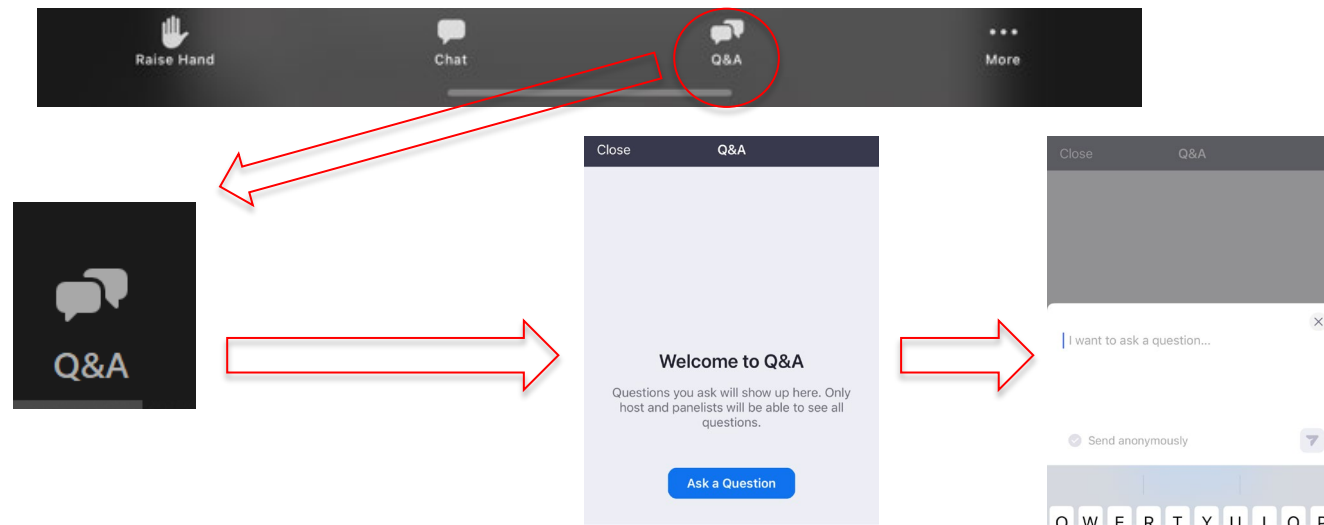
Dr. Aoife Lucid
SFI Fellow

 [*fellowship@sfi.ie*](mailto:fellowship@sfi.ie)

16 April 2024

Webinar information

- Short, one-way PowerPoint presentation with voiceover
- Presented by Dr. Mark Daly, Scientific Programme Manager, Enterprise Partnerships
- Joined by Dr. Aoife Lucid, SFI Fellow
- You may submit questions by typing them in the Q&A box on the bottom of the Zoom screen-please try to be concise



- The webinar (including closed captioned recording) will be available on the SFI Fellowship programme page at:

<https://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-fellowship-programme/>

*The SFI Fellowship Programme provides **career development** and **experiential learning** opportunities for postdoctoral researchers through a **placement within SFI**, aligning with SFI's Shaping Our Future strategy objective of developing "the world's most sought-after skilled workforce" and to "support life-long learning and knowledge exchange out of academia into industry and public service."*

Science Foundation Ireland

Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) is the national foundation for investment in research in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which assists in the development and competitiveness of industry, enterprise and employment in Ireland.

It also promotes and supports STEM education and engagement to improve awareness and understanding of the value of STEM to society and to support the STEM careers pipeline.



SFI Strategy – *Shaping Our Future*

Published March 2021



Vision: Ireland will be a global innovation leader in scientific and engineering research for the advancement of Ireland's economy and society.

Mission: Science Foundation Ireland funds excellent and impactful research and talent, and shapes the future of Ireland through anticipating what's next and widening engagement and collaboration.

Science Foundation Ireland 2022 Portfolio

26%

Investigator-led Research

- ▶ Starting Investigator Grants
- ▶ Frontiers for the Future
- ▶ ERC Support
- ▶ SFI President of Ireland Future Research Leaders
- ▶ SFI Research Professorship
- ▶ SFI-IRC Pathway Programme

11%

Cohort-based Doctoral Student Training

- ▶ Centres for Research Training
- ▶ ESPRC Centres for Doctoral Training Partnership

2%

Science Engagement, Policy and Career Development

- ▶ SFI Discover Programme
- ▶ SFI Fellowship
- ▶ SFI Maternity Allowance
- ▶ SFI Public Service Fellowship
- ▶ SFI Science Policy Research
- ▶ Fulbright – SFI US Scholar Programme

6%

Partnerships

- ▶ SFI Strategic Partnerships
- ▶ SFI Spokes Programme
- ▶ SFI Industry RDI Fellowship Programme



2%

Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Commercialisation

- ▶ Technology, Innovation and Development Award
- ▶ SFI/NSFI-Corps @SFI Entrepreneurial Training Programme
- ▶ SFI Future Innovator Prize
- ▶ Covid-19 Rapid Response Call

4%

International Collaborations

- ▶ SFI-HRB-Wellcome Biomedical Research Partnership
- ▶ SFI-Royal Society University Research Fellowships
- ▶ EPSRC and BBSRC Investigator Partnerships
- ▶ European Programmes
- ▶ US-Ireland R&D Partnership
- ▶ US Centre to Centre
- ▶ SFI-NSF-China Partnership

44%

SFI Research Centres

- ▶ SFI Research Centres
- ▶ SFI Research Centres PhD Supplement

5%

SFI Research Infrastructure

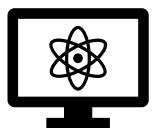
SFI Fellowship Objectives



Provide experience of the duties and activities involved in **research administration** organisations.



Gain experience in **education and public engagement** programmes in a funding agency.



Provide a holistic overview and understanding of a funding agency's operations for those who wish **to continue in academic research**.



Provide experience and skills to help those considering a **transition from academia to the private/public sector**.



Provide applicants with relevant experience and skills in **research policy and strategic development** and implementation.



Enhance **knowledge transfer** between partner organisations

Programme Structure



Up to 24 months on a Full-time continuous basis



2 x 1-year placements



Fellows assigned SFI supervisor



Development Plan



Training and career development

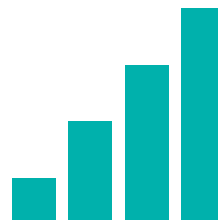
- Successful Fellows will be recognised **as an employee of their current Research Body** for the duration of the Fellowship grant.
- All terms and conditions associated with the Fellow's Contract of Employment with their Research Body will apply.
- Placement agreement signed by the Research Body and Science Foundation Ireland prior to commencement of the placement.



Development of competencies

Including:

- Project management
- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Stakeholder management
- Initiative and innovation
- Flexibility and resilience
- Communication and influencing
- Collaboration



Taighde Éireann - Research Ireland

The Research and Innovation Bill 2024, provides for the establishment of a new National Research and Innovation Funding Agency through the amalgamation of Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Irish Research Council (IRC). Subject to the completion of the legislative process, it is expected that Research Ireland will be established in 2024.

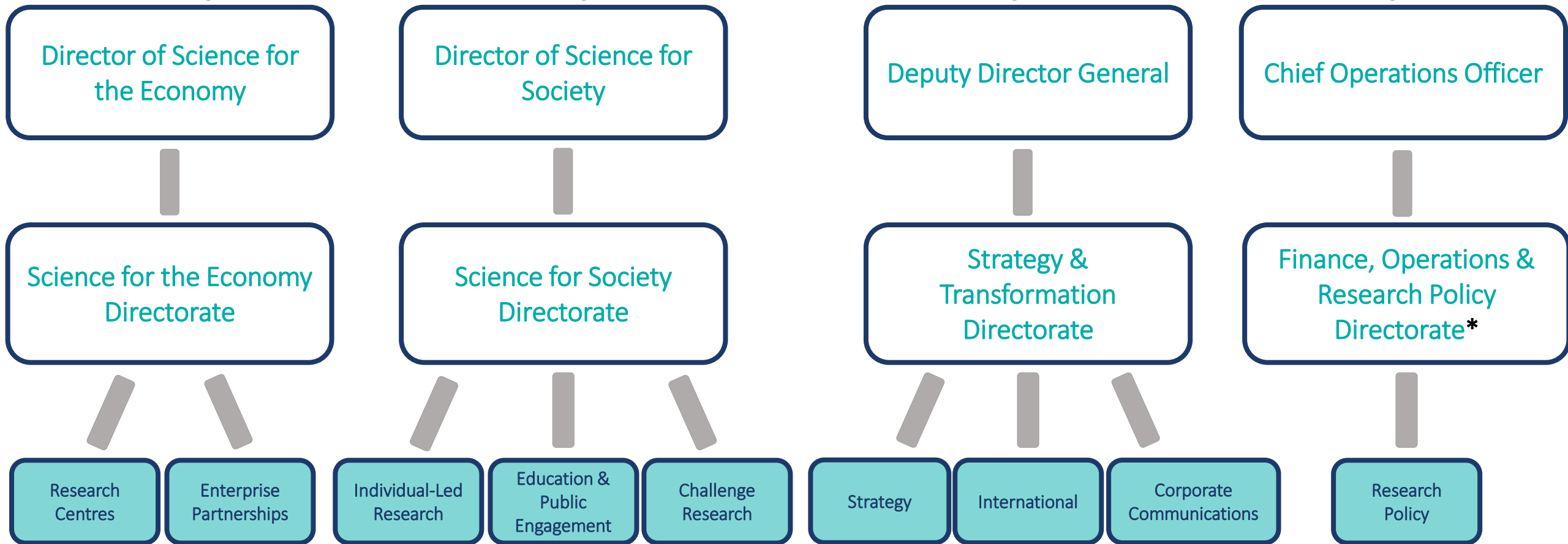


The screenshot shows the Oireachtas website interface. On the left is the logo of the Houses of the Oireachtas. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Gaeilge', 'Reader view', 'Listen', and 'Contact us'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for 'Bills & Acts', 'Debates', 'TDs & Senators', 'Committees', 'Visit & Learn', and 'More'. The main content area features a large heading: 'Research and Innovation Bill 2024' with the subtitle '(Bill 1 of 2024)' below it.

SFI Organisational Chart



Office of the Director General



*Divisions within this Directorate not covered in the Fellowship Programme include – IT and Finance & Grants

Please note that the Irish Research Council, will also be available as a rotation division in the newly established organisation, Taighde Éireann-Research Ireland (see section 8.5).

Divisions/Teams

- The **Research Centres** team is responsible for SFI's flagship programme which funds 15 world-leading SFI Research Centres: multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional virtual centres of scientific excellence that work at the interface between academia, industry and society.
- The **Enterprise Partnerships** team drives engagement with stakeholders to facilitate opportunities for national and international funders, philanthropic organisations and enterprises to foster research and innovation in partnership with academic researchers.
- The **Individual-led research (ILR)** team manages a number of key programmes; e.g. the Frontiers for the Future, many of which are focused on supporting excellent independent researchers.
- **SFI Education and Public Engagement (EPE)** team manages initiatives that support a range of activity including funding projects nationwide, through the SFI Discover Funding Programme, that support STEM public engagement.
- The **SFI Challenge Research** team is responsible for the development and delivery of challenge-based funding opportunities for SFI.
- The **Strategy** team supports the Director General in the development and implementation of SFI's strategy, Shaping Our Future and in overseeing and monitoring SFI's overall performance.
- **SFI International** helps develop global research cooperation for Irish researchers to cooperate with the best from academia and industry across Europe and worldwide.
- The **Corporate Communications** team has responsibility for the design, development, and delivery of SFI's marketing and communications strategy.
- The **Research Policy** team manages the development and implementation of evidence-based policy which supports strong research governance across all SFI programmes.
- The **Irish Research Council** will initially be established as a specific directorate within Research Ireland. The IRC funds excellent research across all disciplines across STEM and AHSS. It is the primary funder of basic research in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Its focus is on ensuring that exceptional researchers are supported to develop their ideas across the key stages of their career.

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicants must:
 - Hold a PhD or equivalent.
 - Be on a research contract in an eligible Irish Research Body at the time of application.
 - Be able to take a period of 24 months (continuous and full-time) away from their current research activities within the Research Body, starting in October 2024.
 - Have a right to work in Ireland with a work visa/permit (if applicable) for the duration of the SFI Fellowship placement.
- Researchers/scientists who are employed under a Contract of Indefinite Duration are not permitted to apply.
- Previous successful applicants to the SFI Fellowship Programme are not eligible to apply.

Line Manager

- Applicants must have the support of a Line Manager within their research body (academic member of staff)
- Takes administrative responsibility for the Fellow if the applicant is successful, arranging salary, leave entitlements and other administrative duties for the Fellow within the Research Body while the Fellow is participating in the Fellowship Programme

Eligibility Costs - Salary

- Salary Contributions
 - SFI Team Members Salary Scales (Level 2A Point 1 to Level 2B Point 4)
 - https://www.sfi.ie/funding/sfi-policies-and-guidance/budget-finance-related-policies/SFI-Team-member-scales_Jan-2024-to-Jun-2026.pdf The current salary of the applicant must be indicated on the Application Form which is endorsed by the Research Body.
 - Applicants will be entitled to one increment increase for months 13-24 of the Fellowship Programme, subject to the maximum of point 6 for Level 2A and point 4 for Level 2B.
- Overheads are payable as a contribution to the Research Body
 - Should not be included in the requested budget to cover costs incurred directly as a result of the Fellowship award.

Application Procedure

- Not on SFI's grant management system SESAME
- To apply to the programme, the following documents should be completed and submitted as a single pdf via <https://api.occupop.com/shared/job/sfi-fellowship-programme-2024-4a8c0by> 1pm 15 May 2024
 1. Application Form (Appendix 2)
 - Research Integrity
 - Requested Salary
 - Details of Line Manager
 - Research Body Signature
 - Applicant signature
 2. CV (max. 2 pages)
 3. Personal Statement (max. 2 pages)
 4. Letter of Support (max. 2 pages)
 - **Line Manager:** confirming that they will take administrative responsibility for the Fellow if the applicant is successful



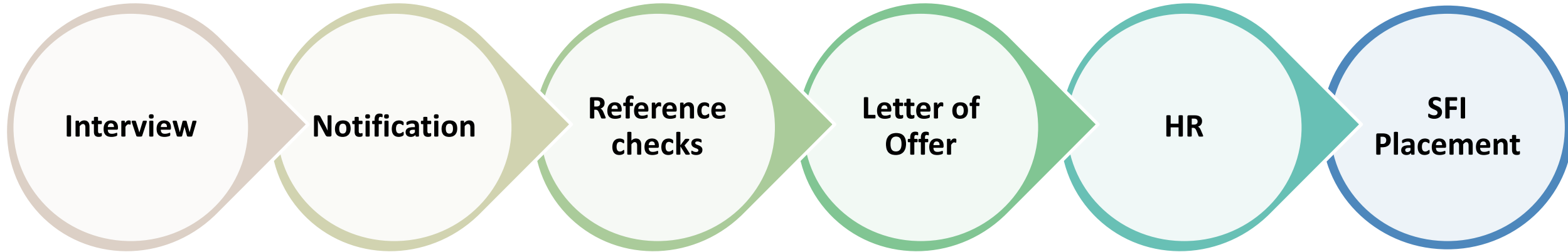
DORA

Selection Process

- **Review Criteria**

- Motivation of the applicant for participating in the Fellowship.
- Suitability of the applicant for the Fellowship taking key competencies into consideration. These may include problem solving and communication skills, teamwork, innovation and creativity, and organisational skills.
- Following confirmation of eligibility, candidates will be shortlisted by SFI, and suitable applicants will be invited to attend an interview.
- Candidates invited for interview will undergo a competency-based interview process
- SFI expects that candidates who are invited for interview will have a high-level understanding of SFI's mission and purpose and will be able to articulate their motivation for the Fellowship
- Typically, the interview will take 30-40 minute. Indicative interview dates **in early-mid June 2024***

Successful Applicants



Interview

- Applicants recommended for the Fellowship will be approved for funding by the SFI Executive

Notification

- Successful applicants are informed with indicative start date and details on their 1st Rotation

Reference checks

- Applicants must supply contact details for two referees

Letter of Offer

- Subject to the successful completion of the reference checks, the research grant/award (letter of offer) and Placement Agreement are issued to the VP of Research of the applicant's Research Body. This needs to be returned to SFI

HR

- Depending on policy within Research Body, the nominated Line Manager/VP Research liaises with internal Research Body HR to initiate contract process

SFI Placement

- All incoming Fellows start their placements at the same time (October 2024)

Important Dates

Launch: 3 April 2024

Deadline for Applications: 15 May 2024 @ 1pm

Proposed Start Date: early-October 2024



Queries please contact: fellowship@sfi.ie

Dr Aoife Lucid, SFI Fellow

Currently: Fellow in Individual-led Research Team (Science for Society Directorate)

10 years in research – Computational Materials Science (Physics, Chemistry)

PhD, 3 Postdocs (SFI Investigator Award, SFI Research Centre, IRC GOIPD)

Why did I apply for the Fellowship?

Experience at SFI

Day to Day

Pre-Award

- Reviewer sourcing
- Monitoring review process
- Preparation of results (statistics, summaries)

Post-Award

- Monitoring of the portfolio (reviewing of reporting)
- Organising site visits
- Assisting researchers

Projects

- Assess outcomes against strategies and goals
- Data driven analysis of SFI initiatives
- Work presented both internally and externally
- Cross-organisation projects (collaboration)

Skills

- Stakeholder engagement
- Communication
- Administration
- Project management
- Data analysis
- Problem solving

Advice to Applicants

- First piece of advice* – apply!
- Reach out to current and former fellows to discuss their experience

Preparation

- Spend time mapping your skills to competencies
- Clarify your motivation for applying - which divisions and why

Application

- Highlight any 'non-traditional' research experience you might have
- Familiarise yourself with Impact 2030, SFI Strategy, Research & Innovation Bill

Interview

- Prepare for competency-based questions (evidence)
- Mock interview panel

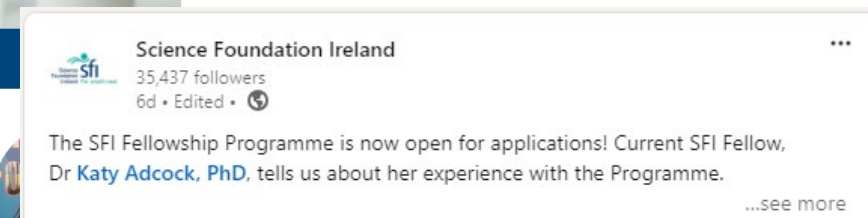
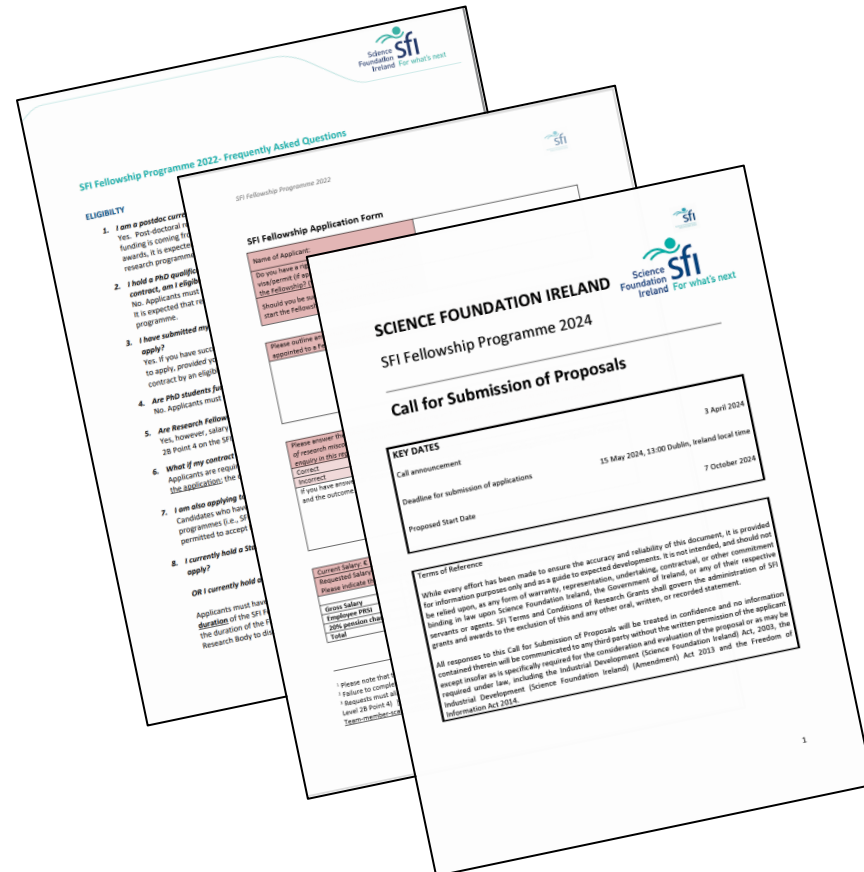
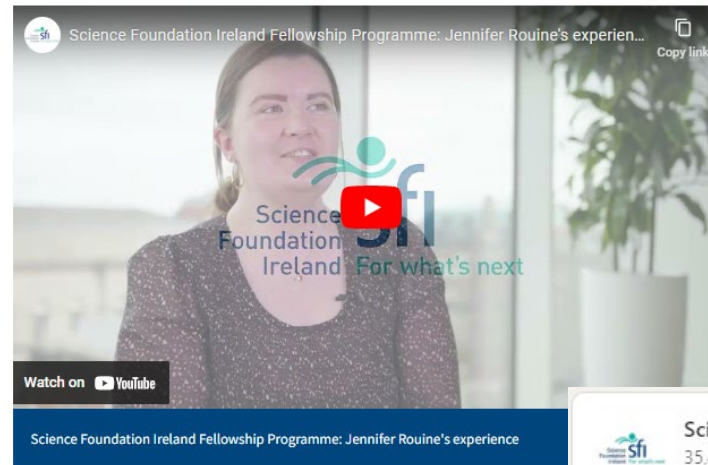
*Read the call document!

aoife.lucid@sfi.ie or reach out on LinkedIn

SFI Website

SFI Fellowship Programme Experiences

The SFI Fellowship Programme has proved very successful and, on conclusion, all fellows have secured excellent positions within international funding agencies, research offices, academia and industry. Click below to hear from some previous and current SFI Fellows about their experience with the Programme:



Aoife McGowan
COMMUNICATION AND
DISSEMINATION COORDINATOR,
IRISH MANUFACTURING
RESEARCH



Shane O'Reilly
ASSISTANT LECTURER IN
CHEMISTRY, ATU



Dr
PROFESSOR
NATURAL
RESEARCH



<https://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/sfi-fellowship-programme/>
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/science-foundation-ireland/>

Q&A Session

- We are now reviewing questions
- You may submit questions by typing them in the Zoom Q&A box- please be concise
- We will deal with as many of these as we can, verbally
- We will post a recording of this webinar on the SFI Fellowship webpage
- Questions can be submitted after the webinar to fellowship@sfi.ie

