

NDA Research Promotion Scheme 2023-24

Call for Proposals

# 1. Introduction and theme

The National Disability Authority (NDA) is an independent statutory body which was established to provide evidence-based expert advice to the Government on disability policy and practice and to promote Universal Design in Ireland.

The NDA’s Research Promotion Scheme aims to promote high quality new research on specific themes aligned to the NDA's strategic priorities, through the provision of funding to successful applicants.

The NDA is now inviting proposals for research projects from researchers, academic institutions, other research bodies and organisations, disability organisations or service providers, and other relevant bodies, under the theme set for 2023-24.

 **THEME**

**Disability in Marginalised Groups and Communities**

Intersectionality argues that individual identities such as disability, gender, economic status, ethnicity, race, marital status, family status, religion, sexual orientation and age, overlap and combine to create different modes of discrimination and inequality.[[1]](#footnote-1) Disability is just one element of a disabled person’s identity. Therefore, to fully understand the lived experience of disabled people, and to ascertain to what extent their intersectional identities interact with experiences of discrimination and marginalisation, we need to consider the entire picture of a person’s identity.

The NDA recently published the findings of a national survey on wellbeing and social inclusion.[[2]](#footnote-2) The findings indicated that the intersection of identity markers can have a negative impact on wellbeing. In particular, respondents who reported a disability and who were also a member of the LGBTQI+ community scored lower in terms of mental wellbeing compared to those who indicated just one of these characteristics. The analysis of the data gathered as part of the survey did not allow for an examination of other important intersectional identities due to an inadequate sample size.

The NDA would now like to support further research **to examine the intersectionality of being a disabled member of marginalised groups**. The NDA welcomes proposals for research that explores the impact of intersectional identities on various aspects of life for disabled people including, but not limited to:

* health and wellbeing
* social inclusion and participation
* experiences of discrimination
* access to, and/or experiences of receiving and/or using, disability services and supports
* access to and experiences regarding housing
* access to and experiences regarding education
* access to and experiences regarding employment

The scope of the theme is broad to encourage applications from a range of sectors.

## Research Objective and Scope

A range of research methodologies are welcome and may take quantitative, qualitative, mixed or multi-method approaches. Analyses of secondary data are also welcome.

Applicants should demonstrate that their proposed research topic fills a gap in current research and will add to the existing evidence base. Applicants should also show how their research is of sufficient scale to give findings that could be generalised.

The NDA recognises the increasing active involvement of members of the public in research. This scheme encourages applicants to consider how the scientific quality, feasibility or practicality of their proposal might be improved by involving disabled members of the public. Research teams wishing to involve disabled members of the public should include in their application:

* The aims of active involvement of disabled people in this project
* A description of the member(s) of the public to be involved
* A description of the methods of involvement
* An appropriate budget

The involvement of disabled people in the research process will be allocated 10% of the marking criteria. Applicants who do not include disabled members of the public are still eligible to apply.

## Deliverables

Successful applicants will be required to

* undertake a piece of research relevant to the theme, with a strong evidence-base and meeting NDA’s Quality Guidelines for NDA Research (Appendix B)
* write a report of the research, to a publishable standard, that is fully accessible (guidance on making documents accessible will be provided to the successful candidates).
* develop a strategy for dissemination of the research in accessible formats to key target audiences including policy makers, service providers and academics
* give a seminar on the findings in the NDA (via webinar or in-person)

# 2. Application process and timeframe

Applications for funding are required to use the standard 2023-24 Research Promotion Scheme Application Form, which contains full details of parameters and requirements for applying, and which should be read in conjunction with this document.

Successful applicants are expected to follow NDA’s Quality Guidelines for Research (Appendix B).

The table below outlines the key milestones in the application process:

| Stage: | Date/Time: |
| --- | --- |
| Call for Applications Open | 12th September 2023 |
| Deadline for Completed Applications | 23rd October 2023 |
| Interviewing of Short-listed Applicants | Week of 6th November 2023 |
| Successful Applicants Notified | Week of 6th November 2023 |

It is expected that the research will be completed with a final report submitted to the NDA within 12-18 months of the signing of the grant agreement.

# 3. Eligibility

Proposals/applications are invited from the following:

* research institutions and agencies
* independent researchers
* academic departments in recognised third-level institutions
* Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs)
* representatives of user/advocacy groups
* service providers

Organisations that do not have strong internal research expertise should consider partnering with an academic institution or similar.

NDA encourages proposals prepared by partner agencies/organisations/institutions who wish to work in collaboration. However, joint applications must indicate clearly the involvement of all different partners and stakeholders in the design, planning, implementation and dissemination of the research.

The scheme is open to researchers based throughout Europe but the research findings must have application in Ireland.

Project grantees should ensure they have an appropriate supervisory structure in place, where relevant.

## Essential criteria

Only proposals meeting the following essential criteria will be considered:

### Received within deadline

Only proposals that have been received within the deadline will be considered.

### Signatures provided

The application form has been signed by the applicant(s)

### Referees provided

The contact details of two referees have been provided in the application form.

### Tax clearance certificate

Successful applicants will be required to provide Tax Clearance Certificates to the NDA; otherwise funding cannot be provided. Organisations should ensure these are in order before submitting their application to avoid unnecessary delay in allocating funding.

### Satisfies conditions set in EU rules

Under EU rules, applicants will be ruled out if any of the circumstances listed in paragraph 1 of Article 45 of EU Directive 2004/18/EC of 31st March 2004 apply. These circumstances are outlined at Appendix A (Broadly, these circumstances are bankruptcy, professional misconduct and failure to pay taxes or social security contributions).

**Note:** **This is not a scholarship scheme and is not designed for students.**

# 4. Selection Criteria

The NDA will evaluate the eligible research proposals on the basis of the following selection criteria:

* Experience and qualifications of research team and appropriate supervisory arrangements, where applicable (40%)
* Quality and relevance of research proposal and methodology proposed (50%)
* Accessibility (10%)

Only projects which reach a pass mark (50%) **under each of the above criteria** will be further considered.

## Short listing

Following initial assessment, the NDA will create a shortlist of applicants based on the above scoring to interview at the second assessment stage. The researcher leading the project must attend this interview, which will take place virtually during the **week of 6th November**. Applicants will have the opportunity to present their proposed research at this stage and may be questioned on specific aspects of their proposal.

Failure to attend for interview will eliminate applicants from further consideration.

## Rights reserved

The NDA reserves the right not to award any funding, or to award funding in relation to some elements only of a particular research proposal. Reaching the interview stage is not a guarantee that funding will be awarded.

Following award, a grant agreement will be signed by the NDA and the successful applicants. The grant agreement will specify the conditions to apply in the event of unsatisfactory performance or failure to complete the proposed research.

# 5. Funding

There is a total funding envelope for this call of €80,000. We anticipate awarding up to three grants and are **open to individual grant applications that are for varying amounts between €15,000 and €40,000** but the total awarded for this call will not exceed €80,000.

## Use of Funding

Research Promotion Scheme funding may only be used towards the **current** expenditure associated with the direct costs of the research process, including additional personnel hired specifically and exclusively to work on the funded research. Funding may not be used for capital expenditure or overheads.

## Payments

Payment of the grant will be made in three tranches:

* A third on signing a grant agreement
* A third on receipt of a **satisfactory** draft research report
* A third on **satisfactory** completion of the research report

A satisfactory draft report is one that requires only minor further editing.

The final report is expected to be of publishable standard, meeting the NDA requirements for an accessible document. The final payment will be withheld if this condition is not satisfied.

# 6. Monitoring and quality evaluation

Funded organisations must meet the NDA requirements for the submission of interim, final and other reports and will be required to submit periodic information regarding overall project performance, monitoring and management.

Successful applicants will be required to familiarise themselves with, and follow, the Quality Guidelines for NDA Research (Appendix B of this document).

## Interim Progress Report

To contain a **brief progress note** on the following specific elements of the research (where applicable):

* Methodology – including search terms, scope and sources for literature review
* Literature review – summary of key arguments and theories, identification of key authors and sources, implications for the research, practice, and policy
* Description of fieldwork
* Schedule and timeframe for the completion of the research – identifying any deviation from original plan

## Draft Research Report

The draft report should be written in line with the Quality Guidelines for NDA Research (Appendix B of this document). A satisfactory draft report is one that requires only minor further editing.

## Final Report

The final report should be of publishable standard, in line with the Quality Guidelines for NDA Research (Appendix B of this document) and should be written in a style which will be easily understood by a broad audience. It should be a Microsoft Word document that is readily accessible to the screen-reader technology used by people with disabilities.

The core report (excluding references and appendices) should not exceed 10,000-15,000 words. A short Executive Summary setting out the key findings should also be prepared.

### Contribution to Research

The proposed research must be original and should not duplicate research already conducted.

The research should contribute to the existing knowledge base and advance existing scholarship.

The proposed research must inform the development of relevant policies.

The research should be based on sound evidence, of sufficient scale, to allow some generalisability of findings, or indicate directions for further consideration.

### Ability to complete research in timeframe

Only organisations which can deliver a satisfactory final draft report on the research within 12-18 months of signing the grant agreement will be eligible for consideration.

### Quality monitoring

While the NDA will review the quality of the final report as a condition of payment, we are not in a position to provide ongoing supervision of the work in progress. The NDA expects the final research submitted to meet its Quality Guidelines for Research as set out in Appendix B of this document.

# 7. Applications

Completed applications should be returned by: **12 noon on Monday 23rd October 2023**. Applications received after this time and date will not be processed.

Applications should be submitted by email to research@nda.ie. Please use the subject line: **RPS 2023-24**

Please address any queries you have to: reserach@nda.ie

Appendix A

# Extract from Article 45, EU Directive 2004/18/EC of 31st March 2004

## Article 45

Any economic operator may be excluded from participation in a contract where that economic operator:

1. is bankrupt or is being wound up, whose affairs are being administered by the court, who has entered into an arrangement with creditors, who has suspended business activities or who is in an analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;
2. is the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding up or administration by the court or for an arrangement with creditors or of any other similar proceedings under national laws and regulations;
3. has been convicted of an offence concerning his professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
4. has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can justify;
5. has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority;
6. has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or those of the country of the contracting authority;
7. is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required under this Chapter.

Appendix B

# Quality Guidelines for NDA Research

## 1. Overall Research Design

* The research has been scoped out following engagement with the external and internal stakeholders as appropriate (e.g. officials from relevant policy area of Govt Dept and other NDA staff as appropriate) to ensure it will cover all relevant issues. A first step is to ensure that the research conforms with NDA's mission and strategy, adds value and does not duplicate work elsewhere.
* The research has value for policy makers and, where appropriate, practitioners. A key goal for NDA research is to guide policymakers and practitioners in the achievement of an inclusive, accessible Irish society in which people with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities to participate in economic, social and cultural life.
* The report contains a clear and comprehensive statement of the aims of the research.
* The research design is appropriate for answering the policy questions which have been developed in consultation with customers and end users of the research, both internal and external to NDA.
* There are no major gaps in the report. It does not omit key data sources, key relevant literature, or key issues.
* The research contributes to our knowledge/understanding of a given field.
* The research conforms to ethical principles and has obtained ethical approval as appropriate.

## 2. The Research Report

* For contracted or grant supported work, the research aligns fully with all the specifications contained in the contract/grant agreement. The research is completed within agreed timescales and budget.
* The report is presented in a logical structure (e.g. executive summary, context, relevant literature, aims and objectives, methods, findings, discussion of findings, conclusions). The report includes a title page, executive summary, contents page, lists of tables and charts, acknowledgements, glossary of specialist terms, list of abbreviations and acronyms, list of references, relevant appendices. Contracted/grant supported work includes the appropriate disclaimer.
* The report includes a concise review of the methodology employed in the research within the body of the report with a more technical description (e.g. search methods and terms for literature) outlined in the appendix.
* The report contains appropriate signposting that guides the reader through the commentary, with key messages being highlighted or summarised throughout the report.
* The report is accurate with regard to quotations, data, references, etc., and has been proof read for spelling, grammar and syntax.
* Citations are appropriately referenced in accordance with the format specified by NDA
* The final report is presented as a Microsoft Word document that is readily accessible to the screen-reader technology used by people with disabilities
* The writing style is clear, focused and to the point, taking account of the target audience. It is temperate in tone, not emotive. Authors refrain from personal opinion/editorial and focus on the evidence. Technical terms when used are adequately explained.
* The report is rigorously objective and factual. The report contains no plagiarism. Direct quotations are labelled as such and duly referenced.
* The report contains no libellous or abusive comments.
* All tables give the original source and show appropriate units of measurement.

## 3. Literature Review

* There is evidence of a systematic approach to the review of literature which should summarise and evaluate the knowledge base to date.
* Databases and search terms are clearly outlined to allow for replication of literature searches.
* The report sets out clearly the size of samples used in studies reviewed and any conclusions are appropriate to the limitations or otherwise of same.
* The report distinguishes empirical findings from opinion.

## 4. Methodology

* The research methodology is appropriate to address the research question.
* The methodological choices are discussed within the report and the limitations of the methodology are acknowledged. The value of the evidence is weighed by reference to the methodology used and size of sample.
* The methodology is valid, reliable, replicable and (as appropriate) generalisable.
* A description is provided of any formalised appraisal criteria used to support the methodology.
* Any modifications made to the methodology during the course of the research are explained and justified.
* All necessary details of the methodology are outlined (e.g. research instruments used, number of participants, size of sample, response rates, tests of significance). Where a sample has been taken for the study, the number of respondents should be shown in any tables using the data.
* The selection criteria of the sample are detailed and justified and any difference between planned and actual sample (e.g. non-participation) explained.
* Informed consent has been given by research participants and management of confidentiality/anonymity is documented.
* The safety of participants and researchers has been assured and potential risks explained.
* Data collection methods are appropriate for the type of data required and are clear and replicable.

## 5. Data Analysis

* A rationale is provided for the data analysis methods chosen (quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, etc.).
* Data analysis is clear and valid, and synthesised to make sense of data.
* Evidence of how descriptive categories, classes, labels, and coding frames were constructed is provided for qualitative analysis.
* Analysis involving the comparison of data (e.g. international data) includes a determination as to whether extraneous variables (e.g. policy, legal or contextual differences) allow a fair comparison to be made.
* Storage and protection of data, according to established protocols and legislation, is referenced in the report.

## 6. Interpretation of Findings

* The findings are clearly linked to the aims of study.
* Clear links are identified between data, interpretation and conclusions such that others can follow a coherent, convincing and objective 'decision trail'.

There is a synthesis and analysis of data, in such a way that conclusions clearly emerge for the reader.

* Findings have a coherent logic, 'make sense' and are resonant with other knowledge.
* Areas where findings concur or differ from those in the literature are noted.
* There is convincing discussion of the generalisability of findings and limitations of findings relating to aims & objectives (e.g. certain groups not represented etc.) and what remains unknown.
* There is a credible and clear discussion as to how findings contribute to knowledge/understanding and their applicability to current and/or new policy developments, practice.
1. Kelly, C. et al., 2021. ‘Doing’or ‘using’intersectionality? Opportunities and challenges in incorporating intersectionality into knowledge translation theory and practice. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, *20*(1), p.187. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://nda.ie/publications/hows-it-going-national-survey> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)