College of Medicine & Health
Academic Health Sciences Awards
Call for Applications

The 2023-2028 UCC Strategy 'Securing our Future' aims to "*Align the south/southwest hospitals research framework with that of the University to support the development of an Academic Health Sciences System.*" (Goal 1 Research & innovation | Strategic approach 1.5.v). The ambition of an Academic Health Sciences System (AHSS) is to ensure that advances in research and innovation are translated into direct clinical benefits for patients and the public.

To this end, UCC Academic Health Sciences was established in 2022 within the College of Medicine & Health. It is a partnership between UCC, nine hospitals in the HSE South/SouthWest Hospital Group (SSWHG), the Bon Secours Hospital Cork, Marymount University Hospital & Hospice, the Mater Private Hospital Cork, and Public Health, Primary Care and Community Health networks including Long-Term Care settings in the Cork and Kerry region. Collectively, this grouping is working to develop and operationalize an Academic Health Sciences System in the South/South-West region.

The continued development of an Academic Health Sciences System is a key priority for the College of Medicine and Health, and we are pleased to announce the Academic Health Sciences seed awards which will support new collaborations amongst the Academic Health Sciences System partners. Funding is available due to the continued support of our corporate partners Pfizer, Boston Scientific, Laya Healthcare and GSK, through our Head of Development, Carol Walsh.

Funding: The 2024 call comprises the following levels of awards funded from non-exchequer income. The numbers of awards that will be made in each category is contingent upon the quality of the applications received, but it is envisaged that that the following numbers of awards will be made;
- **Two awards of up to €30,000.**
- **Five awards of up to €10,000**

The AHS awards will support new research collaborations to develop larger grant applications to national, international and/or EC funded calls to support the on-going development of the work and maximise impact. Projects should align to the UCC 2023-2028 Strategic Plan Goal One: Research and Innovation by seeking to align to one or more of the UCC Futures.

Who can apply? AHS awards applications are accepted from a new collaborative team of at least two applicants where the lead applicant is a member of CoMH academic staff of lecturer grade and above, with a primary affiliation to a member School (Clinical Therapies, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Midwifery, Pharmacy or Public Health), and the primary co-applicant is a member of healthcare staff in an affiliated clinical institution. Up to four additional co-applicants, from any jurisdiction are allowed, whose roles must be clearly defined and justified in the proposal. A PPI / end user co-applicant is strongly recommended. Industry partners, research staff and post-graduate research students are permitted as co-applicants.

Applicants must not be current collaborators and may be involved in one application only (per call) under this initiative. This is a seed award, and the proposed study must not already be funded.

Key points

- The Programme is open to UCC academic staff in the CoMH and staff in affiliated clinical / community institutions only. Queries on eligibility can be made by email to ashleigh.byrne@ucc.ie.
- The lead applicant must a member of academic staff with a UCC staff number with a primary affiliation to a constituent School within the College of Medicine and Health.
- The lead and all co-applicants must each complete a one-page CV in the application form. Collaborators listed in the project description do not need to submit a CV.
- Participation in only one AHS award application by either the lead or co-applicant is permitted within any one call. Participation by either applicant in more than one application will lead to the withdrawal of all associated applications from the review process.
- All expenditure must be processed through UCC's AGRESSO system.
- Funding can only be awarded and administered through the home School of the lead UCC CoMH applicant.
- Funding will be awarded for a period of 12 months that will commence in October 2024.

Budget

Applicants can apply for the scale of an AHS award that they feel best fits the scope of their project to an upper funding limit of either €30,000 or €10,000 per award. There is no minimum amount that applicants need apply for. Funds requested must be for eligible costs (below) and fully justified. If successful, all expenditure must be aligned with UCC's policies on research funding, ethics, and integrity and must be processed via UCC's Agresso system by the lead UCC CoMH awardee. Any unspent funds must be returned to CoMH at the end of the award. The use of AHS award funding for ineligible costs, or costs not requested / justified in the application, will lead to a request to have the funds in question returned to the CoMH. All budgetary matters related to AHS awards may be subject to audit by the CoMH financial analyst.

Eligible costs

- Contribution to the cost of consumables & materials required to complete the project.
- Costs associated with Patient and Public Involvement (PPI).
- Access costs for specialised equipment or software.
- Limited travel costs will be permitted to a maximum of €500. These costs must be essential to conduct the research and be fully justified in the budget description.
- Small items of equipment or software, less than €500 may be purchased. This must be essential to conduct the research, not be available elsewhere within the CoMH and be fully justified in the budget description.
- *Stipend or Salary costs of researchers on the project (*for €30,000 award only)
- *Postgraduate student fees (*€30,000 award only)

Ineligible costs

- Travel costs associated with conference attendance.
- The costs of access for industry researchers.
- Computers.
- Overheads or indirect costs.

Application assessment

College of Medicine & Health Research & Innovation Committee

Applications will be assessed by members of the CoMH Research & innovation Committee.
The criteria which will be applied to the assessment of applications are:

- Scientific excellence of the research project.
- Excellence and meaningfulness of the partnership / consortium.
- Excellence of the impact pathway.
- Potential of the project to leverage additional funding.

Ethical Approvals

If successful, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary approvals are in place before any work is undertaken. Applicants should allow sufficient time to obtain necessary regulatory / ethical approval from the relevant University Ethics Committee , and then forward copies of these to Dr. Ashleigh Byrne (ashleigh.byrne@ucc.ie) prior to funds being made available. An offer may be withdrawn if approvals are not provided by the lead applicant within three months of the award offer.

Post-Award Requirements

Awardees will be required to submit a project and impact pathway report and a financial report detailing the expenditure within in three months of the conclusion of the funding period (templates will be provided at the end of the project). There will be an additional impact pathway report requested at 12 months after project completion.

How to apply?

A PDF version of the completed application form must be sent by email to Dr. Ashleigh Byrne (ashleigh.byrne@ucc.ie) by the **deadline of 5pm on 10/05/2024.**