



UK Science & Innovation Network Country Snapshot:

IRELAND

12th

Ireland is the 12th most innovative country in the world and ranks 12th in the global scientific rankings for quality of research¹.

Ireland's ranks globally¹...

1 st	Immunology
2 nd	Agricultural Science
5 th	Neuroscience
5 th	Material Science
9 th	Molecular Biology and Genetics
9 th	Microbiology

Ireland's Science and Innovation Landscape

Quality of Research and Innovation

Ireland has transformed itself over the past 40 years into one of Europe's top innovation nations. Ireland is currently 1st in the world for knowledge diffusion, 3rd for knowledge impact, 5th for knowledge absorption, 12th most innovative country, and 12th in the global scientific ranking for overall quality of scientific research¹. In terms

of global thematic performance, Ireland ranks 1st for Immunology, 2nd for Agricultural Sciences, 5th for Neuroscience, 5th for Materials Science, 9th for Molecular Biology and Genetics, and 9th for Microbiology.¹ Several Irish-based agriculture scientists, materials scientists and immunologists feature in the 2019 Web of Science list of Highly Cited Researchers. Ireland had secured €1.06B in funding from Horizon 2020 programmes with a success rate of 15.29% (EU average is 12.09%)².

Research Strategy

Ireland has a strategic focus on developing its research ecosystem and sees it as an integral part of Ireland's offer to attract foreign direct investment and to ensure a prosperous and stable economy and society. Ireland strives to become a Global Innovation Leader in research areas of strategic importance and seeks to facilitate, develop and exploit global research cooperation. Ireland aims to be at the cutting edge of new technologies, particularly in the realms of emissions reductions and digitisation. By Eurostat ranking, Ireland is the most

¹ SFI Annual Report 2019. <https://www.sfi.ie/research-news/publications/annual-reports/>

² <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/dashboard/sense/app/a976d168-2023-41d8-acec-e77640154726/sheet/0c8af38b-b73c-4da2-ba41-73ea34ab7ac4/state/analysis/select/Country/Ireland:> accessed on 13/01/2021

research and innovation (R&I) efficient country in Europe¹. Existing research investments of scale in Ireland are in strategic areas such as:

- Agri-Tech and Agri-food (including meat and dairy)
- Diagnostics, Therapeutics, Clinical Research, Medical Devices, Pharmaceuticals, Precision Medicine and Immunology (including COVID research)
- Advanced Materials, Microelectronics, Advanced Manufacturing and ICT
- Bioeconomy, Geosciences, Climate, Energy and Renewable Technologies
- AI, Fintech, Cybersecurity, Digital Media Technology and Data Analytics
- Smart Cities, Future Networks and Communications, and Photonics.

Government funding for research and innovation R&I programmes in the higher education sector is mainly administered by the Government Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Higher Education Authority, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), the Health Research Board (HRB) and the Irish Research Council (IRC).³

UK-Ireland Science & Innovation Partnerships

There are strong links between Ireland and the UK in research collaboration. The proximity between Ireland and the UK, the history, common language, and similar cultures, have led to decades of UK and Ireland-based researchers entering into fruitful and lasting bilateral scientific collaborations of mutual benefit. On a research publications basis, the UK is Ireland's most significant collaborator.

Several bilateral funding partnerships exist between Ireland and the UK. SFI has existing bilateral partnerships with UKRI councils, the Royal Society and Wellcome. These include the EPSRC-SFI Centres for Doctoral Training and individual investigator partnerships, the Royal Society - SFI University Research Fellowships fund, and Wellcome – SFI-HRB biomedical and clinical research programme. The US-Ireland Programme is a tri-jurisdictional programme linking researchers in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the USA at an individual or Centre to Centre collaborative level. SFI also funds joint Research Professorship appointments between a UK and an Irish University. In July 2020, the Northern Ireland Executive has partnered with SFI to co-fund north-south COVID-19 Rapid Response research projects. The IRC has bilateral partnerships with UKRI councils including the AHRC and ESRC.

Examples of other collaborative activities include the signing of Memoranda of Understanding between Irish and UK Universities and in November 2018, the inaugural UK-Ireland Research Funders' Forum took place.

³ Additional State R&I funding is administered through Enterprise Ireland, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, Environmental Protection Agency, Teagasc, the Marine Institute and IDA Ireland.

UK Science and Innovation Network (SIN) Ireland

The SIN Ireland team is based in the British Embassy in Dublin. SIN Ireland works to support UK Science and Innovation objectives, fostering and strengthening the scientific bilateral relationship between the UK and Ireland. SIN Ireland focuses on supporting scientific collaboration through research partnerships, agency agreements and commercial contracts in areas including, but not necessarily limited to, Health & Life Sciences, Climate & Agriculture, and the Digital Economy.

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