Construct Innovate Seed Fund Call
1st April – 31st May 2025

From the previous Construct Innovate Seed Fund Call that ran in 2023 and 2024, an FAQ has been developed to assist with queries that prospective applicants may have.

If there are further questions to what is outlined below, please email colm.mchugh@universityofgalway.ie for clarification.

FAQ:

Q: When is the deadline for submission?

A: The project application must be submitted to info@constructinnove.ie before 12pm on 31st May 2025. Applications received after this time/date will not be considered or evaluated.

Q: Can a company be involved in more than 1 seed fund application?

A: Yes. Each valid project application will be assessed individually and on its own merits, however a maximum of 2 applications will be accepted by a collaborative partnership (RPO/Industry partnership)

Q: Are overheads included in the Construct Innovate funding of up to €50,000

No. The €50,000 contribution available from Construct Innovate does not include overheads or VAT. An overhead of **30%** will be added on top of the Construct Innovate funding sought (value under "*Funding requested from Construct Innovate (B)*" from Budget section of the project application). Overheads should therefore not be included when calculating this figure. Please note that individual RPO's may apply a different overhead rate to the 30% outlined above. This should be considered when calculating the project budget.

Q: Is an overhead applied to the Industry Cash contribution?

A: This is dependent on the policies of the RPO partner institution and should be confirmed when calculating the project budget. If an overhead is applied, the industry cash contribution will include the industry overhead as defined by the applicant's RPO. This overhead cost will not contribute to direct project costs and should be deducted before factoring industry cash available to cover project costs.

Q: How is the Industry contribution calculated?

The minimum industry contribution is set at €15,000 for this funding call. The minimum contribution of each individual industry member is determined by the industry partner(s) size (Micro, small, medium, large) and the amount of industry partners on the project.

The cash/in-kind requirement is calculated using the Industry Funding Calculator_CISFC24-1.xlsx tool which can be downloaded from the Construct Innovate website.

The industry partner(s) size is determined using the table below:

	Headcount: annual work unit (AWS)	Annual Turnover or Annual Balance Sheet Total
Micro	< 10	≤€2M or ≤€2M
Small	< 50	≤€10M or ≤€10M
Medium	< 250	≤€50M or ≤€43M
Large	> 250	>€50M or >€43M

Can the Industry Partner contribute more cash than the minimum required contribution?

Yes. The contribution of additional industry cash will be looked at favourably in the evaluation of the proposal submission and extra marks in the evaluation will be available for additional industry cash contribution. There is no upper limit on the amount of industry cash that the industry partners can contribute to the project.

Q: Does the project applicants need to provide proof of industry funding as part of the project application?

A: No. The application does not need to provide proof that the industry contribution is secured and signed-off within the industry partner organisation. However, some commitment to the Lead PI should be given to provide comfort that the contribution will follow, if the funding application is successful.

Q: Does the Industry "Cash" contribution actually leave the industry partner organisation or will they just need to be able to show they have spent the cash on the project, e.g. paid for specific invoices directly related to the project, as well as the in-kind staff time etc.

A: Yes. The industry cash contribution will be paid into a specific account set up by the RPO and managed by the Lead PI as budget holder. This cash will contribute to project specific costs. The reason; the spend of company cash must follow public spending rules as well as provide appropriate transparency on accounting, reporting and management of spend.

The industry partner(s) will be invoiced by the RPO and the cash contribution will be required to be paid to the RPO within 30 days of project kick-off.

Q: If projects applications have been developed through a Construct Innovate Working Group, is the industry contribution requirement related to the project or the Working Group.

A: All Industry contribution requirements (cash & In-kind) are project specific and required on a project-by-project basis.

Q: Can a non-Construct Innovate member be a partner in a Seed Fund application?

If not yet members of Construct Innovate, industry partners can join as Associate or Patron members in parallel with the seed fund application and will be put forward for CSC approval on a monthly basis.

Lead PI's & Researchers who are not yet signed up as Individual RPO members, must join prior to project start by completing and signing the Construct Innovate Individual Membership form.

Project agreements cannot be issued and the funding cannot be drawn down from Construct Innovate until all named partners in the application are RPO, Associate or Patron members of Construct Innovate.

Q: Can an international company apply as an industry applicant?

A: International companies can contribute to the project but cannot be the sole industry contributor. At least one Associate or Patron member must be partner on the project and contribute the required cash/in-kind as part of the submitted application.

International companies cannot become members of Construct Innovate. Associate or Patron members must have a valid CRO & VAT registration in the Republic of Ireland.

Q: Can modelling carried out by the industry member be paid for the project funding?

A: Time, resources, software and equipment contributed by the industry partner can go towards the "in-kind" portion of the industry contribution but cannot be paid for by the Construct Innovate funding allocation or industry cash contribution.

Q: Can an employee of the industry partner(s) undertake the role of researcher on the project?

A: If the industry partner(s) have an employee to propose as the researcher on their project application, part of the seed funding budget can be used to employ that person on a secondment to the RPO partner (transfer of staff between industry and academia), as long as the employee becomes a full/part time employee of the RPO for the duration of the project. HR rules of the RPO must be complied with in full in this regard and an open competition for the researcher post may be required. The PI should check with their HR office in their institution to agree how this will be executed and details should be included in their Work Plan.

Q: Do industry partner(s) have to be named specifically in the project application, or can Lead PI identify companies who are favourably disposed to the seed co- funding but may not be able to commit in writing before the deadline?

A: An industry partner (or partners) will need to be identified specifically in the project application. One of the primary objectives of the Seed Fund Call is to get industry partners to identify challenges/opportunities and be integral to the development of the project application. Part of the impact section in the application needs to be completed by the industry partner.

Q: Can the funding be used to buy out teaching time of academics?

A: No. The teaching buyout of academic staff is not allowed. Funding of research staff, including two-way transfer between academia-industry should be prioritised.

Q: Is institutional sign-off from the RPO required as part of the project application submission?

A: Construct Innovate will not be looking for proof of institutional sign-off under this Seed Fund Call. It is the responsibility of the RPO members to comply with their own institutional policies.