

ITN Call 2014_2015 Webinar Questions and Answers

Question: I see that tuition fees are an eligible cost. However, in most Irish Higher Education Institutions PhD fees are taken over four years, but an ESR is contracted for 3 years maximum. Are the fees fully recoverable from the grant for the full four years, or can only 3 years be drawn, leaving the ESR liable for the balance to graduate with a PhD (or indeed the supervisor from another funding source like overheads).

Answer: PhD fees can only be drawn from the grant during the time that the ESR is contracted to the project, i.e. for 36 months maximum. If the PhD is to last 48 months, the fees for the remaining 12 months should be paid for from another source. Prior to recruitment, ESRs must be made aware of this situation, and encouraged to plan their finances accordingly.

Question: A proposed ITN will have a Dublin-based Multi-National Company (MNC) as an industrial Beneficiary. Can an ESR recruited into the MNC in Dublin be registered for a PhD at an Irish Higher Education Institution (HEI) or should this PhD registration be with one of the other HEI partners in a different European country? Relating to this, is it allowable for the MNC then to pay the fees to the HEI from their budget?

Answer: Yes, it is possible for an ESR working at an Irish-based MNC to be registered for their PhD at an Irish HEI (this HEI can be either an ITN Beneficiary or a Partner Organisation). If the HEI requires PhD fees to be paid, these can be taken from the budget for the MNC.

Question: Does the Coordinating Beneficiary manage the funds, as in FP7, or is this different for Horizon 2020?

Answer: Yes, the Coordinator manages the funds on behalf of the consortium. The division of funding across the consortium should be set down in a Consortium Agreement before the ITN commences.

Question: Regarding the min/max size of a consortium, how critical is this? Is 12 Beneficiaries and 6 Partner Organisations too many?

Answer: There is no maximum number of Beneficiaries or Partner Organisations in an ITN, however please keep two things in mind when assembling your consortium:

- Each Beneficiary and Partner Organisation must be an active contributor to the activities of the project – there is no room for “passengers”.
- For a larger consortium, you need to pay particular attention to your Management Plan, and provide evidence that you have the necessary resources and experience to manage a large number of participants.