



# Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann Royal Irish Academy

## Royal Irish Academy Grants 'Declined Funding' Appeals Policy and Procedures

### 1. Introduction

This Policy sets out agreed procedures and responsibilities for appeals in connection with a decision to decline funding of a grant application.

The RIA is committed to an open, accountable and accessible system of procedures and processes in relation to its Grants programme.

In reaching its decisions regarding funding, the Royal Irish Academy (the RIA) takes into account the assessment of the application, and the funding budget available.

Through its network of Members, multidisciplinary committee members and international contacts, the RIA is able to source the very best peer reviewers across a broad range of disciplines to ensure that all applications received are rigorously assessed to the highest standards.

The membership of each assessment panel is drawn from across the RIA's networks to ensure a balanced disciplinary spread.

The evaluation criteria used to assess proposals and determine the outcome of each grant application process are clearly laid out within the published documentation for each grant scheme.

The primary function of the RIA's appeals procedure is to ensure that the review process has been fair and reasonable, and that RIA's published guidelines and procedures were followed. Although the appeals procedure is not a peer review process and is not intended to re-open the initial assessment process, it may address procedural errors that may have occurred during the initial assessment and other issues such as: unaccounted-for conflicts of interest, inappropriate consideration of extraneous information / hearsay or incomplete / inconsistent documentation being made available to the reviewers.

It is understood that applicants may sometimes disagree with the academic or professional perspective of the panel, or their position on the overall quality or impact of the application. The RIA however, has full confidence in the experts that it engages in its assessment processes and takes the position that this source of expert input allows the RIA to make the best and most informed decisions. The judgement, interpretation or level of understanding of these experts is, not therefore, an admissible ground for appeal.

Appeals must be limited to clearly identifiable issues of procedure. The process required for invoking the formal appeal is detailed in part 2.

It is the responsibility of an applicant to ensure that the procedures for submission of applications and associated forms are followed correctly. Consequently, appeals based on applications that have been deemed administratively ineligible, including, but not restricted to, missed deadlines, applications exceeding word limits or missing documentation, will not be

considered unless it can be explicitly demonstrated that this resulted from an oversight or fault on the part of the RIA.

Only appeals submitted by the applicant themselves will be considered.

Appeals relating to funding levels or award conditions will not be considered.

## **2. Appeal Procedures**

### ➤ Appeal Stage (A)

An applicant whose proposal has been declined may, in the first instance request more information from the RIA, outlining the process and any relevant feedback on their application for funding. Following this, an applicant may be satisfied with any action taken and/or may accept that no further action is required.

### ➤ Appeal Stage (B)

If, after discussing the matter with a staff member an applicant still wishes to appeal a funding decision they must submit a written request to the Executive Secretary of the RIA within eight weeks of the date of the letter of notification.

An applicant must illustrate that they have reason to believe that their application was not assessed or dealt with in a way compatible with the written procedures for administration and assessment that were in place when the applicant applied for funding. The letter of appeal must state:

- The grounds on which you believe your application was not properly dealt with or assessed;
- Specific reasons or evidence you may have to support your appeal.

On receipt each appeal will be checked to ensure that it falls within the scope of the appeals procedure. The applicant will then receive a written acknowledgement from the Executive Secretary, or from a person delegated to represent the Executive Secretary in his/her absence, noting the outcome of the validity check within five working days. Invalid appeals will be rejected at this stage of the process.

### ➤ Appeal Stage (C)

The appeal will be considered and a response issued within thirty working days of receiving a valid appeal request. The Executive Secretary will reconsider the record to determine whether the RIA's initial assessment of the declined proposal was fair and reasonable. The Executive Secretary may personally conduct the review or may designate a Senior Staff Member who had no part in the initial assessment, to do so.

Their decision will be binding and will not be subject to any further appeals. Where any delay is anticipated the RIA will inform the applicant in writing of the extended timescale.

The RIA's appeals procedure does not automatically provide for the restitution of funding or additional funding to supplement or replace the original decision that has been appealed.

Candidates whose appeal is upheld may submit a further application in the next round of funding, if applicable.

## **3. Review of Appeal Policy and Procedures**

The Royal Irish Academy intends to keep this policy under regular review and may update it from time to time. Policy updates will be effective on the date that the update is posted on the RIA website.

Contact details for appeals:

Grant Appeals  
Executive Secretary  
The Royal Irish Academy  
19 Dawson Street  
Dublin 2

[grants@ria.ie](mailto:grants@ria.ie)