RDA Ireland SPOTLIGHT:
SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND

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"Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) funds oriented basic and applied research in areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). SFI also promotes and supports the study of, education in, and engagement with STEM and promotes an awareness and understanding of the value of STEM to society and, in particular, to the growth of the economy."

Interview with   DR. MARION BOLAND
Head of Research Policy

Science Foundation Ireland **sfi** For what's next

Commitment to good research data management and Open Science

Science Foundation Ireland is committed to ensuring that all outputs arising from SFI-funded research are openly available. Open Science practices encourage collaboration, support the integrity and reproducibility of research and importantly ensures that maximum impact can be realised from research findings. To this end, Science Foundation Ireland is a partner of cOAlition S, an initiative to make full and immediate Open Access to research publications a reality.

Good data governance and stewardship are key components of good research practice and Science Foundation Ireland supports that research data should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR). Appropriate data management and data sharing are fundamental to all stages of the research process and support high quality, reproducible research. As such, access to research data arising in whole or in part from SFI funding should be as open as possible.

Focusing on policy mandates as powerful drivers of change

To date SFI has focussed on policy-oriented solutions through international partnerships and initiatives as policy mandates can often be powerful drivers of change. SFI has also engaged in social and educationally oriented activities by discussing the benefits of Open

Science practices and encouraging complimentary initiatives such as the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) with researchers, institutional senior management and government representatives.

Cultural change is probably the most significant challenge so far but international collaboration, progressive policy mandates and promotion campaigns are increasing awareness and providing momentum for Open Science activities.

Sharing lessons learnt

We have just published our (updated) Open Access Policy. It's taken a year or more to get it to a point where we are happy that it reflects SFI's ethos and approach to Open Research. In monitoring its impact, we needed to consider how we would determine whether the changes being implemented were effective and course correct if not. This required that we could measure the status of SFI attributed research outputs in terms of compliance with the policy; this was challenging. Whilst we support the transition to full compliance with Plan S, we need to be mindful that researchers aren't forced to find work arounds to enable them to publish in the most appropriate journal destinations.

Contributing to the open research environment in Ireland and Europe

We have just updated SFI's Open Access policy in line with the principles espoused by Plan S and the National Framework on the Transition to an Open Research Environment. We hope this policy will help achieve Ireland's goal of ensuring all publicly funded publications are openly available. SFI currently encourages award holders to make research data, and other outputs, openly available and as part of their application to some programme calls, Science Foundation Ireland requests that researchers submit a data management plan. We have also signed the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) and have implemented changes in our application and review processes to highlight the importance of all types of research output and encourage reviewers to consider the availability (openness) of these when assessing research track record. We will continue to encourage open research practices and explore new ways we can recognise and reward contributions to Open Research.

In addition to developing, implementing and monitoring SFI's policies regarding Open Access and Research Data Management, as a member of the National Open Research Forum in Ireland SFI contributed to the National Framework on the Transition to an Open Research Environment and will continue to support implementation of this to help deliver Ireland's Open Research agenda.

At an international level SFI is a member of the Science Europe Open Access to Publications working group and also contributed to development of the Science Europe "Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management". SFI will continue to represent Ireland in international discussions and initiatives that progress Open Research. In particular, as a member of cOAlition S, I chair a working group that is developing a framework to monitor the impacts of Plan S.