

Chairperson: Dr Mark Lang

Please reply to:

Dr. Sheila Gilheany  
Policy Adviser  
Institute of Physics in Ireland  
School of Physics  
University College Dublin  
Belfield, Dublin 4  
T: +353 86 2600903  
E: sheila.gilheany@iop.org

Mr John Halligan, TD  
Minister of State  
Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation  
23 Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

22<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2016

**Re: Funding proposal for basic research in physics**

Dear Minister

Thank you for your response of 11<sup>th</sup> August to the Institute of Physics funding proposal for basic research.

We very much welcome the proposed Frontiers Programme and that it will be open to all disciplines and careers stages. We are concerned to ensure that it has a sufficient budget to be effective. We would suggest that it should be of the order of €15 million annually and that this budget should be pegged at a level of around 10% of the current SFI annual research budget.

In your letter you referenced the existing New Foundations/Lindau/Ulysses schemes. These however are quite specific and are not what we are looking for although again an open strand in New Foundations would be welcome if there is a reasonable budget. In relation to the EU funding opportunities such as the ERC we have concrete examples of Irish research proposals being graded highly for these but turned down on the basis of no history of being funded at local national level.

One easily implementable solution to the current problem of many STEM PhD supervisors having no travel funds would be to double the annual €2500 that IRC funded PhD students currently receive and allow supervisors to use up to half it. Based on 107 STEM students x 4 years x 2.5k this would cost approximately €1M annually and require no additional administration.

As discussed at the meeting there is a crisis in funding for basic physics research in Ireland. The Institute of Physics believes that it is critical that such funding is made available.

If you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the IOP at the above address.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Lang". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'L' at the end.

Dr Mark Lang  
Chairperson  
Institute of Physics in Ireland