



# Partnership Small Grant Scheme

Guidelines 2017

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## Introduction

Ireland joined the European ESTHER Alliance in 2012. ESTHER Ireland is guided by the Memorandum of Understanding between Irish Aid and the HSE, and contributes to Irish Aid's objectives for health and development. It is based on a spirit of partnership and equality which is a fundamental principle of Ireland's development cooperation policy. ESTHER Ireland uses the twinning model to foster effective north-south and south-south partnerships that can build capacity of the health workforce and health institutions. It engages with the other European Members to develop a strong network of partnerships for development and health improvement.

Ultimately, ESTHER Ireland aims to improve health outcomes, through the creation and mobilisation of robust partnerships that enhance mutual learning and service improvement for both partners (see Figure 1, Source: EEA Strategic Framework 2015 – 2010). ESTHER partners work mostly in Africa and Asia to tackle priority issues for health and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The partnerships are based on principles of best practice as set out in the [ESTHER Alliance Charter for Quality of Partnerships](#). Applicants are strongly encouraged to read this important document if considering submission of a proposal.

FIGURE 1:  
ESTHER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES:  
COMMON APPROACHES TACKLING DIVERSE PROBLEMS



Since 2013 Irish Aid has provided €50,000 annually to ESTHER Ireland for start-up grants. The purpose is to enable Irish institutions to undertake the initial work required to establish a relationship with potential Southern partner institutions, consult with stakeholders, assess needs, and develop partnerships based on a common vision for improving health and health care.

Irish Institutions will be invited to apply for a small grant if they are at the early stages of linking with a Southern institution (s) and require funding to plan and develop the partnership. Generally, this will involve a visit to the Southern institution and/or a visit to Ireland by a representative from that institution. In some cases, it may involve meeting with other key international stakeholders. Irish institutions which already have an established link may apply for a grant to strengthen the relationship with their partner institution, for example to improve communications.

## Eligibility and focus

Irish Institutions are invited to apply for a small grant if they are at the early stages of linking with a Southern health institution (s) and require funding to plan and develop a partnership. They may also apply to build and strengthen existing partnerships. The purpose is to enable an Irish institution to undertake the developmental work to establish a sustainable relationship with Southern partner institution and develop a partnership based on a common vision for improving health and health care. Grants will enable Irish institutions to consult with stakeholders, assess needs, develop joint plans, establish governance arrangements, install communications systems.

Applications are invited to develop partnerships that strengthen the capacity of the institutions to address local health priorities and unmet health service needs and will lead to improved health and healthcare outcomes. ESTHER Ireland is particularly interested in partnerships which focus on education and training; involve Irish hospitals/hospital groups, primary care and public health institutions; and counterpart overseas institutions in Irish Aid key partner countries (*eg Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Liberia, Zambia*). In the 2017 grant round, in addition to support for new partnerships, priority will given to strengthen existing partnerships with a longer term view, including past and current ESTHER grantees or ESTHER Partners.

The work of ESTHER Ireland is underpinned with principles of effectiveness, quality, coordination and transparency. Accordingly, ensuring the success of the ESTHER programme and the grants scheme relies on the professionalism and integrity of its partners and applicants. All grant applications are appraised by the ESTHER Ireland Steering Group.

The European ESTHER Alliance describes institutional health partnerships as “**collaborative relationships between at least two institutions based on trust, equality and mutual interest to work as peers towards common objectives. They contribute to the improvement of health services through reciprocal institutional strengthening, capacity building and health workforce development.**”

## Partnership characteristics

### Some characteristics of strong partnership proposals ...

- ✓ Built on existing links with institutional commitment
  - ✓ Demand-driven and needs based
  - ✓ Country-owned, and aligned with country partner priorities
  - ✓ Clear goals, results-focussed with a strong potential for impact
  - ✓ Guided by the need for sustainability
  - ✓ Evidence of mutual accountability, and transparency in the intended use of available resources
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### Some characteristics of weaker partnership proposals ...

- ✗ Unclear partner capacity and experience
- ✗ One-sided benefits, reciprocity unclear
- ✗ Over ambitious with little attention to sustainability
- ✗ Institution involvement not well articulated
- ✗ Overly project focussed rather than partnership focussed
- ✗ Inconsistent budget with weak focus on goals or results
- ✗ Many applications are not supported by the necessary documents

## What the ESTHER Ireland Small Grant Scheme will and will not fund

### The Small Grant Scheme will fund ...

- ✓ Travel
  - ✓ Needs assessment
  - ✓ Accommodation
  - ✓ Communications
  - ✓ Workshops for partnership development
  - ✓ Subsistence allowance at local rates (see [www.esther.ie](http://www.esther.ie) for guidelines)
  - ✓ Publication and development of webpages to enhance partnerships
  - ✓ Monitoring and reporting costs
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### The Small Grant Scheme will *not* fund ...

- ✗ Programme or project activities
- ✗ Salaries or “top-ups”
- ✗ First or business class travel
- ✗ Fundraising activities
- ✗ Backstopping other grants
- ✗ University fees
- ✗ Volunteer funding
- ✗ Consultants
- ✗ Office space
- ✗ Sitting allowances (for training attendees)
- ✗ Entertainment costs

## Partnership Scheme 2017

To date, the ESTHER Ireland has supported the development of partnerships in a variety of intervention areas, which include:

<b>1. Physiotherapy</b>	<b>7. Leprosy</b>
<b>2. Nursing &amp; midwifery</b>	<b>8. Paediatric Cancer</b>
<b>3. Children's Palliative Care</b>	<b>9. Cancer Research &amp; Education</b>
<b>4. Health care Education &amp; Research</b>	<b>10. Community Health</b>
<b>5. Health care Equipment</b>	<b>11. Mother &amp; Child Health</b>
<b>6. Health Systems Research</b>	<b>12. Surgical training</b>

There are many areas that a partnership might focus on including learning, training, exchange visits, research, and teaching.

Ultimately, the creation of a sustainable partnership should aim to make a contribution to achieving a particular health outcome which has been identified as a priority by the Southern partner and their National Health Plan.

*All grants are for 12 months' duration with interim & final reporting at 6 and 12 months.*



## Application process and deadline

In 2017 ESTHER Ireland is offering access to two bands of grant funding:

**Band 1** will support partnership grants of up to €8,000 for Irish institutions to design, create and develop relationships with Southern entities from which a sustainable partnership will emerge capable of addressing an identified need.

In exceptional cases where multiple Irish institutions are involved in the partnership (such as partnerships involving hospital groups and associated universities) an increased grant may be awarded, up to a maximum amount of €15,000).

Institutions working within this band will be expected to demonstrate a clear focus on partnership results together with a logical contribution to a health outcome.

**Band 2** provides for grants of up to €8,000 for institutions which have an established link or partnership. Typically, they have already received an ESTHER Ireland small grant or are an ESTHER Ireland partner. Existing partnerships may apply for a grant to strengthen and further develop the partnership. This grant will not fund project-related activities such as trainings, mentor programmes etc.

Institutions working within this band will be expected to demonstrate clear results from the use of a previous ESTHER Ireland grant (where applicable) and will be expected to demonstrate how a further grant will strengthen a partnership that is moving towards longer term impacts and health outcomes.

ESTHER Ireland will continue to support and monitor active partner participation at all stages of the grant implementation process in particular at the grant planning and reporting stages. Applicants are encouraged to be as clear and succinct as possible in their proposals and ensure all background documentation, including that outlined in the introduction is included in the application.

**The deadline for receipt of 2017 grant applications is the 21st October 2017.**

If you have any queries, please email [grants@esther.ie](mailto:grants@esther.ie).