



Public Only Consultant Contract 2023

Innovation Fund

Purpose

The **Public Only Consultant Contract 2023** facilitates Consultants to foster innovation in patient care. In order to support this, €8,000 per annum will be made available on application for each consultant for research and innovation projects. Such projects will be undertaken by the Consultant and/or their team, under the direction of the Consultant. Access to and decisions on the appropriate use of such funds will be made by Consultants holding the **Public Only Consultant Contract 2023** who have generated same, in conjunction with the relevant Clinical Director / Executive Clinical Director.

Funding model

The funding will be made available to public hospitals and CHOs and is to be ring-fenced to fund service delivery and enhancements in the services / clinical programme in which the monies have been accrued. Governance for the drawdown of such monies rests with the respective Hospitals' Chief Executive Officer or CHO Chief Officer.

Items encompassed

The innovation fund provides funding for innovations that are not covered under the normal allocation of equipment/staff/other resources by the employer and are directed at patient care. The amount is available for each Consultant on the **Public Only Consultant Contract** and may be pooled by the relevant Consultants. Examples of items that may be funded under this initiative include:

- Innovation in terms of piloting a new development
- Research / payment/ commissioning of an external researcher (i.e. separate to HSE employment)
- Hosting a specialty based conference
- Piloting care delivery in community settings
- Equipment / diagnostic appliances necessary to support the above

Alternative delivery model via SPARK Innovation Programme

The available €8,000 per Consultant could be transferred as a single cumulative sum to HSE SPARK, at the request of the Consultant(s), and if approved by the HG CEO/CHO CO, Consultants then apply to access the fund at different levels to allow for flexible investment/spending options. Using this method, Consultants could apply for funding in sums from €3,000 to €50,000 in each calendar year. The fund would be open for as long as there was funding to meet it and closed thereafter until the next calendar year.

The option to draw down lower level funding facilitates small equipment purchasing, prototyping of solutions, procurement of design expertise etc. Larger sums allow for targeted spending for large scale impact. While this would limit the number of 'projects' that could be supported annually, it can be a more effective method of delivering meaningful change.

SPARK is closely linked to the National Network of Innovation around the country, which gives access to an overview of national activity. This is a mechanism to monitor for the duplication of already validated tools and technology, or indeed tools and technology, which have not met the burden of suitability in other settings.