



Rugby Innovation Programme

The **IRFU** in partnership with **Enterprise Ireland** is supporting the Irish Technology Start-up Community by providing a real-life environment to test, trial and scale their products. Through a selection program 2-3 products per year will have the opportunity to be embedded within IRFU with mentoring and wrap around support provided by both the **Enterprise Ireland** and **IRFU**. This opportunity increases the opportunity for product success, confirm commercial viability and create the opportunity for future investment.

The IRFU seeks applicants from the following themes to increase its capability through technology.

- Innovative means of increasing Rugby participation while promoting health and safety
- Technology to enhance Fan Engagement (incl. Metaverse & Web3)
- Technology to increase the preparation and performance of players
- Climate Sustainability across IRFU, Provinces, Clubs and Stadium

Through a pitch/selection process, IRFU, supported by EI, will select the product which most fits its strategic objectives. Engaging in the programme will result in the product being assigned to a department with is most appropriate for products development. The Programme will commence November 2022, and open to applications from Irish Technology Companies.

Key Information for candidates



Application

- Your Development Advisor (DA) is the primary link to the program. The IRFU will not accept direct canvassing of products **[need to agree based on email submission or DA submission]**
- The IRFU will not be an investor in any products/company. The IRFU is providing the test environment based on early access to technology prior (and after) commercialisation
- Potential access to the full range of **Enterprise Ireland** mentoring and supports (Confirmed during selection process)
- All rugby knowledge or data obtained from the programme would remain property of IRFU.
- All 'athlete' products will require ethics approval and endorsement of the IRFU Research Committee. The testing these products will occur with pre-elite teams until the product/technology is proven.

Activation and Support



- Candidates' involvement in the programme for be between 6-12 months
- Candidates will be designated a IRFU 'Expert' to coordinate the IRFU involvement and staff/player engagement to develop and test the product
- During the selection process you will work with Enterprise Ireland DA to identify the supports required to facilitate engagement in the programme (Confirmed upon selection)
- Monthly reviews between IRFU & Enterprise Ireland to monitor progress. We will ensure any barriers to delivering the programme is addressed, project goals and objectives remain on target, and that value is being received by all parties

Selection process



- Register your interest with your **Enterprise Ireland** Development Advisor (DA); Your DA will discuss your suitability for the programme and should they endorse participation you will be asked to complete the following form
- Candidates who address an IRFU strategic need will be invited to pitch to a joint **IRFU & Enterprise Ireland** panel. Successful candidates will be short listed by IRFU for final selection
- Depending on the nature of the product, the applicant may have to submit a research proposal to the IRFU Research Committee for approval
- For applications or further information please contact luke.byrne@enterprise-ireland.com

Note: Enterprise Ireland remit is supporting companies with the ROI jurisdiction. Applications from outside ROI will be considered and reviewed regarding potential benefit and opportunity to IRFU.