

The background features a dark teal gradient on the left and a complex, low-poly green pattern on the right, resembling stylized grass or reeds. The text is positioned on the left side, overlaid on the dark teal area.

APPLICATION PROCESS

RESEARCH APPLICATION PROCESS

The process is explained in four stages:

1. Application form completed and submitted to research@irfu.ie
2. IRFU Research and Discovery Unit value assessment
3. Research Advisory Committee independent review
4. Outcomes communicated to research applicants

STAGE 1 – APPLICATION

The application procedure is explained in Figure 1.

Research activities may be identified as either internal or external.

Internal Research is any research project initiated within the organisation, overseen and carried out by IRFU or Provincial staff member(s) or by contractor(s) in liaison with staff member(s).

External Research is any research project that is initiated outside of the IRFU, overseen and delivered by a person(s) or group(s) that are not directly inclusive of IRFU or Provincial staff members.

Both internal and external applicants initially contact the Research and Discovery Unit (research@irfu.ie). The Medical Department administrator will provide the applicant with the IRFU Research Application Form and guidelines on completion, with the Medical Research Lead cc'd on this email. Applicants return the completed IRFU Research Application Form including details of the question to be explored, the project outline and what is the requirement from and potential benefit to rugby in Ireland.

Any enquiries related to research activity that involves the IRFU will be sent to research@irfu.ie

The application is then assigned a number and logged on the Research Projects Register by the Medical Department administrator.

The completed application form is then shared with the Research and Discovery Unit, to initiate the value assessment.

STAGE 2 - IRFU RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY UNIT VALUE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the IRFU Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment is to evaluate the application to determine:

- a) Potential value to the IRFU (strategic or operational)
- b) Area involved (High Performance Unit, Domestic Game, Business, Commercial, Other)
- c) Feasibility of the project plan and design
- d) If appropriate supports and stakeholders have been engaged, or have been identified

This value assessment will be carried out by a minimum of three people (determined by the Medical Research Lead and the criteria for panel selection must be included in the value assessment form):

- IRFU Research lead (or designated Research and Discovery representative)
- IRFU Content/Area expert
- IRFU representative from unrelated department/area

The Research and Discovery Value Assessment will take the form of a panel discussion. The Medical Research lead will record the details and outcome in the IRFU Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment Form. The review will be completed within three weeks of receipt of application form.

The Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment will be shared with the independent Research Advisory Committee (RAC) Chair with one of four outcomes:

- Project recommended with no concerns identified
- Project recommended with concerns identified
- Project not recommended with clear reason to not pursue
- Project not recommended with further expertise required from RAC

STAGE 3 - RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW

The application form together with the Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment form is then provided to the Chair of the RAC by the Medical Department administrator.

The RAC will follow the process outlined below (figure 2), where the outcome of the Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment will be considered, and the RAC Chair will determine next steps, as per agreed process.

RAC Process:

- 1) Referral from the Research and Discovery Unit to the Chair of RAC.
- 2) Chair reviews the application and the Research and Discovery Unit outcome and
 - a. Assigns three reviewers (content expert(s) can be invited as required)
or
 - b. Chair's Action
In the case of **time sensitive applications**, the RAC Chair may grant approval based on the following criteria:
 - 1) Low impact study
 - 2) Low risk to IRFU and participants
 - 3) Expedited review based on time/resource constraintsAll projects with decisions reached by Chair's action will be presented and ratified at the subsequent RAC meeting.
- 3) Reviewers are invited by the Medical Department administrator and provided with the completed application form and the IRFU RAC Value Assessment Form. The reviewers should independently assess study within two weeks of receipt.
- 4) Completed RAC reviews are returned to the Medical Department administrator, who collates the feedback and shares with the Chair of the RAC.
- 5) Outcome of the review:
 - a. RAC Review has consensus, and is in agreement with the Research and Discovery Unit outcome, with no further clarification needed
 - b. Further clarification is required:
 - i. Additional information from applicant is requested
 - ii. Meeting with reviewers to reach consensus
 - iii. Meeting with reviewers to discuss disagreement with Research and Discovery Unit recommendation
- 6) Application is presented at the next RAC meeting where it is approved or rejected.
- 7) Decision communicated to Research and Discovery Unit by Medical Department administrator.

STAGE 4 - OUTCOMES ACTIONED AND COMMUNICATED

Action (after Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment and RAC review):

- 1) Decision is communicated by letter to the applicant by the Medical Department administrator.
The letter will outline the following:
 - a. Decision with relevant supporting information/reasoning.
 - b. Outline any further actions needed.
 - c. Any other appropriate information.
- 2) IRFU approval will be sought (if not already done) from the relevant heads/leads/directors as required.
- 3) IRFU internal projects - Project Planning and Design (Enact phase) is reviewed and any suggestions from RAC incorporated.
- 4) IRFU appointed contact person (if external) or lead (if internal) to liaise with the IRFU Research and Discovery Unit throughout the project.
- 5) All documents related to Research and Discovery Unit Value Assessment and RAC Review including decisions are filed by Medical Department administrator in the Medical Share Drive.

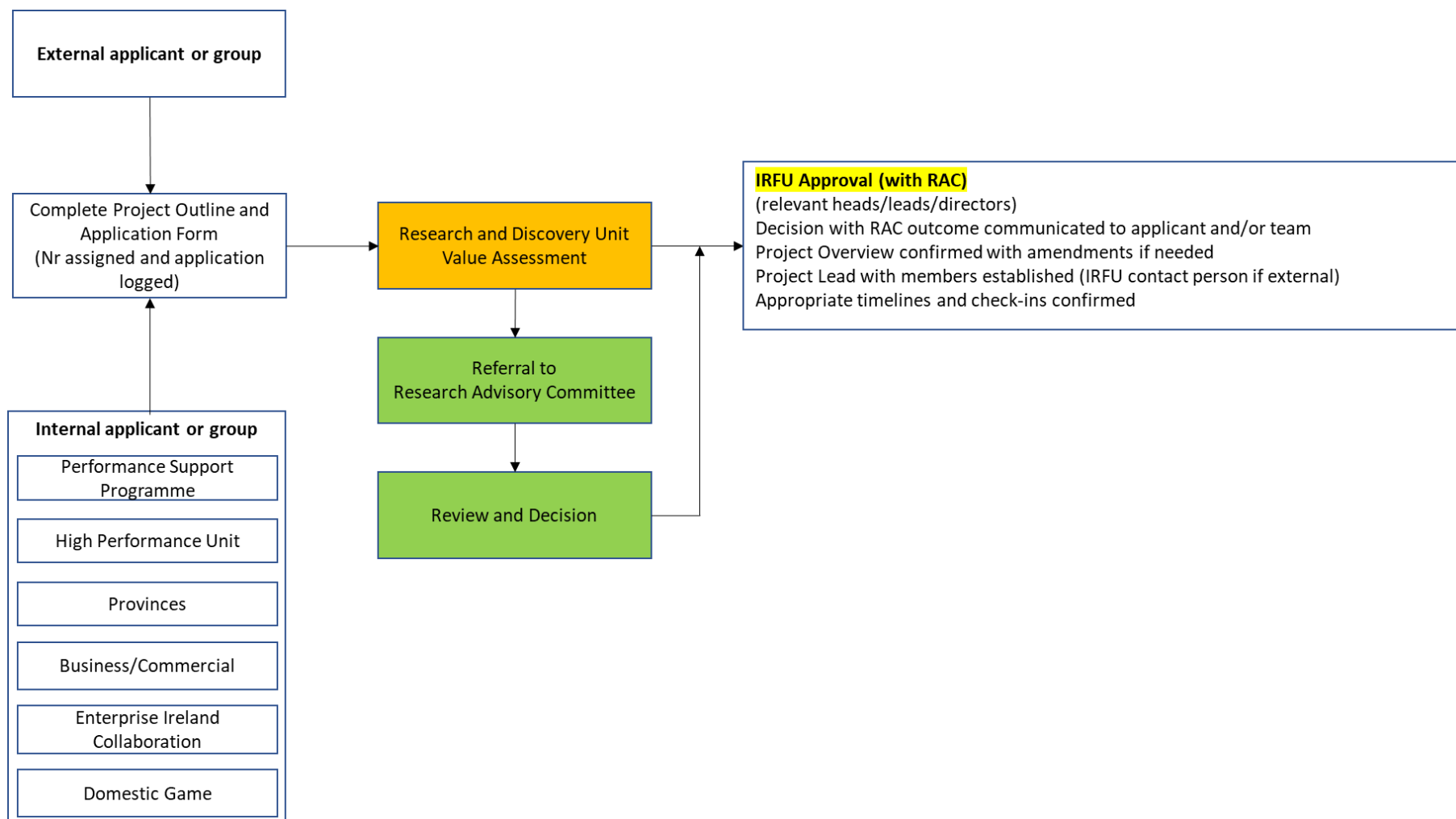


Figure 1. Application procedure

IRFU RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCESS

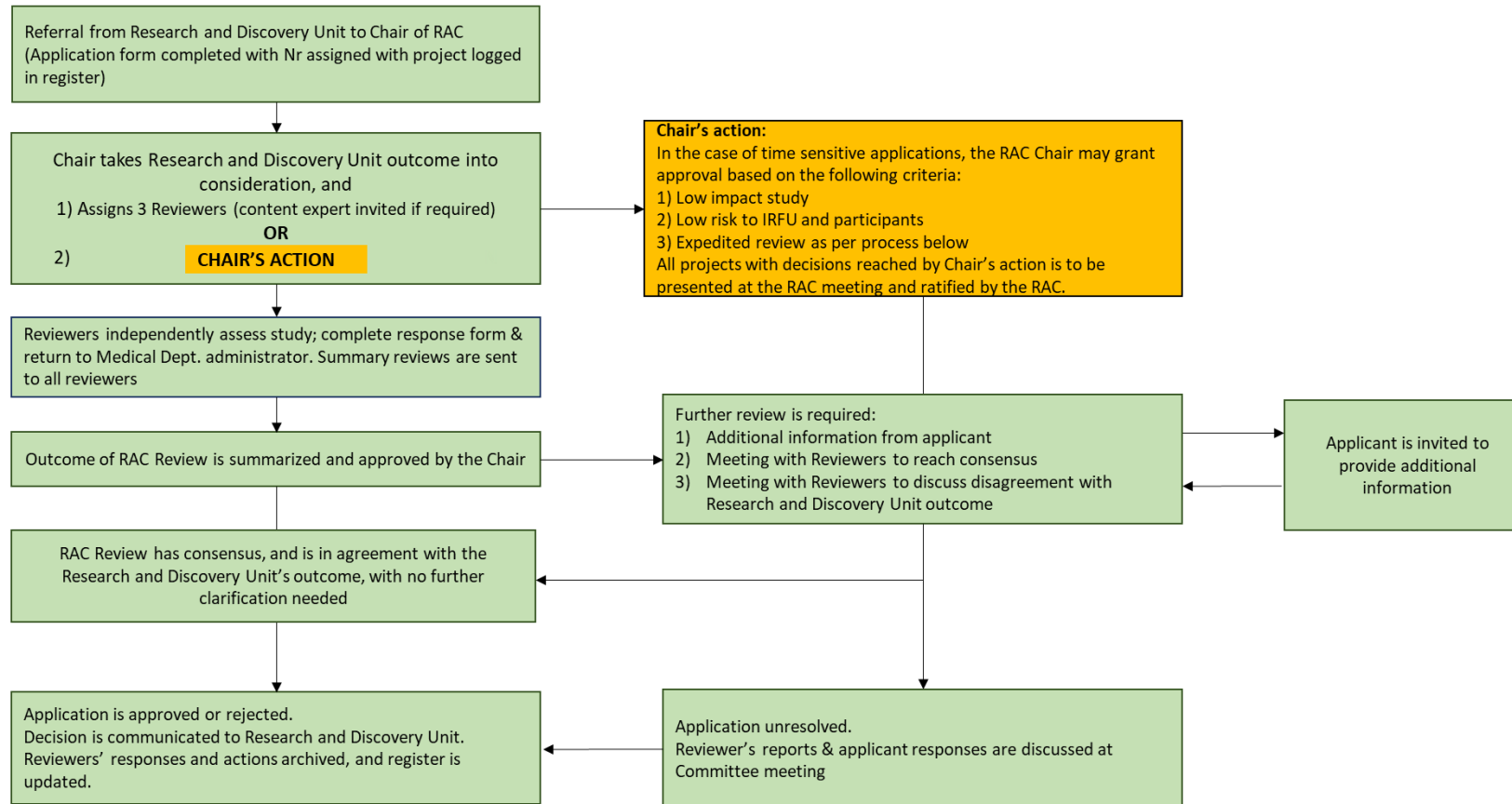


Figure 2. Details of how projects are reviewed by the Research Advisory Committee

