



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

**GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND POSTGRADUATE
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME 2019**

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

THEME INFORMATION



1. BACKGROUND

In partnership with the Irish Research Council, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) invites applications for an Environmental Protection Agency Postgraduate Scholarship, hereinafter referred to as an EPA Postgraduate Scholarship.

While applicants may apply for one scholarship theme only, those who choose to apply for a strategic funding partner scholarship will also be considered for a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship.

The EPA is an independent public body established in July 1993 under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. The EPA Research Programme is a Government of Ireland initiative funded by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE). The EPA is a statutory body responsible for protecting the environment in Ireland and ensuring that development is sustainable. It regulates and polices activities that might otherwise cause pollution, and ensures that there is solid evidence on environmental trends so that necessary actions can be taken. The EPA has the role of coordinating environmental research in Ireland and supports R&D activities (mainly via its Annual Competitive Research Calls) in a range of environmental areas. The EPA Research Programme aims to identify pressures, inform policy and develop solutions.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2014–2020

The EPA [Research Strategy 2014–2020](#) is based around three pillars (climate, water and sustainability), representing the key research priorities associated with delivering a protected Irish environment.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

The EPA Research Programme has a strong focus on policy and is driven by national regulations and European directives. Where appropriate, applicants are being encouraged to consider how best to integrate the use of Earth Observation (e.g. COPERNICUS) to address their selected research question.

a. Climate research

Proposals are invited for innovative research to provide the evidence to support environmental policy in Ireland. It is critical that applicants clearly demonstrate the relevance of their proposed research to the:

- *EPA Research Strategy 2014–2020*;
- national environmental policy context, e.g. goals of the *Paris Agreement 2015*, *National Mitigation Plan* (DCCAE, 2017), *National Adaptation Framework* (DCCAE, 2018), *National Clean Air Strategy* (publication of final version by DCCAE is imminent) and state of the environment report (EPA).

Research proposals are invited which would lead to scholarships under the following areas:

- [Theme 1: Carbon stocks, GHG emissions, sinks and management options](#);
- [Theme 2: Ireland's future climate, its Impacts, and adaptation options](#);

- [Theme 3: Climate solutions, transition management and opportunities;](#)
- [Theme 4: Air science.](#)

b. Water research

Proposals are invited for innovative research to provide the evidence to support environmental policy in Ireland. It is critical that applicants clearly demonstrate the relevance of their proposed research to the:

- *EPA Research Strategy 2014–2020;*
- national environmental policy context, e.g. Water Framework Directive; river basin management plans, state of the environment report (EPA);
- implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Research proposals are invited which would lead to scholarships under the following areas:

- [Theme 1: Safe water;](#)
- [Theme 2: Ecosystem services and sustainability;](#)
- [Theme 3: Innovative water technologies;](#)
- [Theme 4: Understanding, managing and conserving our water resources;](#)
- [Theme 5: Emerging and cross-cutting issues.](#)

c. Sustainability

Proposals are invited for innovative research to provide the evidence to support environmental policy in Ireland. It is critical that applicants clearly demonstrate the relevance of their proposed research to the:

- *EPA Research Strategy 2014–2020;*
- national environmental policy context, e.g. *Towards a Resource Efficient Ireland* (2014–2020), *Healthy Ireland*, *National Biodiversity Action Plan* (2017–2021), *National Planning Framework*, *Our Sustainable Future: Ireland’s Framework for Sustainable Development*, *National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy*;
- implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Research proposals are invited which would lead to scholarships under the following areas:

- [Theme 1: Resource efficiency;](#)
- [Theme 2: Health & wellbeing;](#) including radiation protection;
- [Theme 3: Natural capital and ecosystem services including soils and biodiversity;](#)
- [Theme 4: Socio-economic aspects of a sustainable environment.](#)