



# IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL

## An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

### Career Development Policy Statement

It is the Council's ambition to ensure that the early stage researchers it funds are equipped with relevant disciplinary and transferrable skills allowing them to pursue diverse career paths and to establish themselves as independent researchers and thinkers.

Higher education institutions and employers should recognize and value scholars and fellows funded by the Council as outstanding individuals who have won competitive awards and who add to the reputation of their institutions, the Council and Ireland.

The category of "early stage researchers" encompasses researchers up to the point of achieving PhD and PhD holders who are not yet fully independent. It corresponds to categories R1 "First Stage Researcher" and R2 "Recognised Researcher" of the European Framework for Research Careers (EFRC)<sup>1</sup>. Profiles of the two categories as specified in the EFRC are outlined in Appendix 1.

The Council will systematically and consciously work to ensure that:

- The attainment and furthering of doctoral outcomes as specified in the National Framework for Doctoral Education is supported by training opportunities in the following areas:
  - o Research skills and awareness
  - o Ethics and social understanding
  - o Communication skills
  - o Personal effectiveness/development
  - o Team-working and leadership
  - o Career management
  - o Entrepreneurship and innovation
- Early career researchers are provided with adequate supports and guidance to be aware of the full spectrum of career possibilities, including industry, academia and public service – from an early stage;
- Detailed advice, mentoring, internships and placements are provided to ensure that the needs of relevant careers as identified within the full spectrum of career possibilities are recognised and addressed from an early stage;

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[https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_library/towards\\_a\\_european\\_framework\\_for\\_research\\_careers\\_final.pdf](https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf)

- Training and career development activities undertaken by researchers equip them with competencies required for achieving their mid- and long-term career goals;
- Skills acquisition is established as a life-long process by researchers from early stages, to include critical areas such as open science;
- Early stage researchers are adequately supported in reaching independence as researchers;
- The value of the Council's postgraduate scholarship and postdoctoral fellowship awards is enhanced.

### **Expectations for early career researchers funded by the Council**

The Council expects that scholars and fellows will:

- Successfully implement research projects for which they receive funding from the Council;
- Proactively avail of training opportunities available in their host institution and provided by the Council;
- Manage their personal and career development;
- Use their scholarship/fellowship to take opportunities to develop themselves as leaders in research, such as through network building, collaborative work in Ireland or abroad, or in partner organisations in the private, public and civil society sectors;
- Maximise the impact of their research, including but not limited to, publishing in open access repositories and engaging in outreach activities;
- Attend and contribute to Council events, providing feedback of their views and experiences to the Council;
- Act as Council ambassadors, inspiring people to engage in research, and act as role models to other early stage researchers.
- Publicly acknowledge Council funding during and after the award in line with the Council's policy<sup>2</sup>.

### **Expectations for institutions hosting early career researchers funded by the Council**

The Council expects that institutions hosting early stage researchers funded by the Council will:

- Provide access to quality supervision/mentorship with regular progress review
- Comply with the terms and conditions of Council awards, including but not limited to, additional duties

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[http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2017/05/requirements\\_for\\_acknowledgement\\_of\\_irish\\_research\\_council\\_support\\_0.pdf](http://research.ie/assets/uploads/2017/05/requirements_for_acknowledgement_of_irish_research_council_support_0.pdf)

- Provide dedicated career support for early stage researchers, including postgraduate research students, to enable them to pursue and develop careers within or outside of academia
- Be in receipt of an Athena SWAN bronze award by 2019, and an Athena SWAN silver award by 2023
- Adhere to the Council's Dignity in the Conduct of Research policy
- Sign up to HRS4R<sup>3</sup>

## **Implementation**

The statement will be supported by rolling biennial action plans. The Council will engage with early stage researchers funded by the Council to ascertain their training needs as they evolve, and with relevant entities (IUA, THEA, KTI, Association for Higher Education Careers Services etc.) to bring synergies and to ensure an effective delivery of its action plans. Regular review of implementation and impact of actions will be undertaken and reports made available on the Council's website.

Irish Research Council

September 2017

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<sup>3</sup> <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r>

## **Appendix 1**

### **Profiles of early stage researchers as specified by the European Framework for Research Careers 2011**

#### **First Stage Researcher (R1)**

Researchers with this profile will:

- Carry out research under supervision
- Have the ambition to develop knowledge of research methodologies and discipline
- Have demonstrated a good understanding of a field of study
- Have demonstrated the ability to produce data under supervision
- Be capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas
- Be able to explain the outcome of research and value thereof to research colleagues

Desirable competences

- Develops integrated language, communication and environment skills, especially in an international context.

#### **Recognised Researcher (R2)**

Recognised researchers will possess all competences of 'First Stage Researcher' plus the following:

- Has demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of research associated with that field
- Has demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial programme of research with integrity
- Has made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, innovation or application. This could merit national or international refereed publication or patent.
- Demonstrates critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas
- Can communicate with their peers - able to explain the outcome of their research and value thereof to the research community

- Takes ownership for and manages own career progression, sets realistic and achievable career goals, identifies and develops ways to improve employability
- Co-authors papers at workshop and conferences.

Desirable competences for Recognised Researcher:

- Understands the agenda of industry and other related employment sectors
- Understands the value of their research work in the context of products and services from industry and other related employment sectors
- Can communicate with the wider community, and with society generally, about their areas of expertise
- Can be expected to promote, within professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge-based society
- Can mentor First Stage Researchers, helping them to be more effective and successful in their R&D trajectory.