



2018 Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme:

Frequent Asked Questions (FAQs)

FAQ Deadline – 4pm (GMT) Monday 21st November 2017

Please note that the deadline for receipt of FAQs is **16:00 (GMT) Monday 21st November 2017**. FAQs must be submitted no later than this date.

FAQs that have been added to this document since the last version was published are in red font.

Similar questions have been grouped below in the following themes:

1. Eligibility;
2. Application Form;
3. Applying to the Scheme.

1. ELIGIBILITY

An Applicant is interested in applying for the 1 year GOI post doc scheme. This person meets eligibility requirements in terms of PhD graduation etc. This person is currently employed with the University on a short-term contract basis in a part time teaching role. If successful the applicant will have completed this role in advance of taking up any award. Would this have any bearing on the individuals' eligibility for this scheme?

No, this will not have any bearing on their eligibility for the scheme. Applicants employed on a short-term contract basis are eligible to apply as long as the contract has come to an end prior to the commencement of the Fellowship (should the application be successful).

I applied last year for the fellowship but my application was deemed ineligible. Am I required to complete the section "Description of modifications made to this proposal if the proposal has been previously submitted, but was unsuccessful under an Irish Research Council scheme"?

No. If the application was not evaluated then it is not counted as an unsuccessful application.

If an applicant applies and then decides to withdraw from the competition, does he/she lose out on another opportunity to apply for the Grant?

As outlined in the terms and conditions, applicants may only re-apply to each scheme on one subsequent occasion. If an application undergoes evaluation, then



that application counts as one of the two opportunities an applicant has to apply to an individual Irish Research Council scheme.

I recently applied for the 2017 Enterprise Partnership Scheme and was unsuccessful. I am hoping to resubmit this application to the upcoming Government of Ireland Scheme 2018. If I am unsuccessful this time am I ineligible for future schemes or do I have another opportunity to submit to both schemes (1 additional time each) in future?

As outlined in the terms and conditions applicants may re-apply to each scheme on one subsequent occasion. The EPS Postdoctoral Fellowship and the Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme are two different schemes.

Since, I have Just submitted my PhD Thesis, and I am waiting for my Viva-voice seminar, can I still apply, or do I have to wait?

Applicants to the scheme must “have been certified as having fulfilled within the five-year period before the 31st March 2018 all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including a viva/thesis defence where such is required, but have not yet graduated.” If successful conditional awardees must provide transcripts to support all qualifications, including PhDs.

Is it correct that the maximum extension to the five year period for documented career breaks is five years? (i.e they must have been awarded their PHD on or after 31st March 2008) Are provisions made for having worked part time?

Eligible career breaks of up to 5 years are taken into account when applying. Part-time work is not considered an eligible career break.

I have already submitted a research proposal to IRC CAROLINE Fellowship 2018. Could I submit a similar research proposal to IRC Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship 2018?

Yes, applicants can apply to both schemes.

Can you clarify if having a non-stipendiary 'research associate' affiliation with a research centre at an Irish HEI has any effect on eligibility. The research associate posts are specifically not HEI posts or staff positions?

Since the applicant is not a permanent member of staff at either an Irish HEI/RPO or an International HEI, this shouldn't impact their application.



An applicant was wondering if their application from last year, which deemed ineligible because it was missing one of the references, counts as one of their attempts at postdoctoral funding from the IRC.

Ineligible applications do not count towards the two applications limit.

On an applicant's official PhD award scroll, there are two dates:

It states that "in view of the results of the final exam held on 22 February 2013 the Rector... confers the Degree". However, the scroll is formally dated 27 June 2013 "for all legal purposes".

Can you please advise if the date of the PhD scroll applies, or the date of the final exams?

In this case the date of the PhD scroll applies, as it is the official date of graduation.

The applicant has a permanent teaching post in an international institution, but is on indefinite unpaid leave in that institution. The institution is considered a vocational education institution but it offers secondary education, vocational and technological courses. It is not a university but does have in some campuses higher education courses. Is this applicant eligible?

International HEI's are defined as institutions which offer level 9 degrees (masters) and/or above. In this instance, as this institution offers masters degrees, the candidate will be subject to the same rules as all other candidates with permanent positions in a HEI; i.e. the candidate can apply to scheme but will have to give up their position should they be successful.

If I have two failed IRC grant applications (to the CAROLINE and GOI Postdoc Fellowship calls) am I restricted from applying for IRC Principal-Investigator level funding opportunities in the future?

No. Two failed GOIPD applications will not inhibit you from applying to another call. Conversely, two failed applications in another call will not inhibit you from apply to the GOIPD scheme.

An applicant was awarded a doctoral fellowship by the IRCHSS but declined it due to personal reasons. They did not receive any funding from the Irish Research Council. Am they eligible to apply again?

Yes, so long as the applicant meets all of the other eligibility requirements. However, applicant's should note that a declined application counts as one of their two attempts to this particular scheme.



Can you please confirm if candidates must have formally submitted their thesis for examination and have examiners appointed and have a viva/thesis defence date scheduled at the time of submitting the proposal, on the 30th of November 2017?

Applicants must either:

- have been awarded their doctoral degree within the five-year period before the 31st March 2018. For the purposes of this condition, the date of graduation will be taken into account; or
- must have been certified as having fulfilled within the five-year period before the 31st March 2018 all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including a viva/thesis defence where such is required, but have not yet graduated. For the purposes of this condition, the original viva/thesis defence date and not the graduation date will be taken into account.

2. APPLICATION FORM

With regard to the extension of the 5-year eligibility period in the case of Maternity Leave or Carer's Leave - do you upload the documentary evidence to the online system as part of the application?

No. Applicants do not upload certified evidence of an eligible career break (e.g. Maternity Leave or Carer's Leave) as part of the application.

If successful, Applicants must provide this documentation at the award offer stage. In cases where an Applicant is unable to provide the necessary documentation at award offer stage, the award offer is withdrawn.

Is there a particular type of referencing system (e.g. Harvard) that the Irish Research Council would like applicants to use?

No. The Council does not have a preferred referencing system. It is at the discretion of the Applicant which referencing system to use.

My university does not work with a final grade or grade point average system and therefore this information will not be provided in my academic transcript. In this case, what should I write in that particular field under the Academics Qualifications section?

Whatever is written on your final transcript. If your degree is awarded on a "Pass/Fail" basis, then write either "Pass" or "Fail".

Re. supplementary information section of the application form – Please upload select bibliography and references to publications and other



research outputs mentioned in the proposal – does this mean upload the titles of secondary texts I will be using and have referred to, or the references to my own publications I have mentioned? Or both?

Both.

Can I upload a letter of support from an important project partner with my postdoc fellowship application?

No. For the sake of fairness, all applicants are only allowed two references per application. Applicants are not allowed to upload further references/letters of support, doing so will render the application ineligible.

An applicant obtained their masters at a Swedish institution, where each module is graded from F-A individually. They don't you give an average grade - it is either pass or fail. What should they include in their application form in this case?

The applicant should write down the grade/wording is listed on their certificate/transcript. If the award is awarded on a pass/fail basis then that is what the applicant should include.

3. ELIGIBLE FUNDING

If I get selected for the fellowship, can I bring my mother along with me to Ireland, and will the fellowship provide support for my mother's stay in Ireland?

There is no specific allowance for families. The full funding afforded by the fellowship is viewable in the terms and conditions.

Are research trips to non-academic institutions and to other countries are allowed under this scheme?

Yes, as long as they're directly relevant to the applicant's research project.

I have a quick question in relation to the open GOIPD call. In previous years, a Financial Justification section was included in the application but I don't see this in this year's Indicative Application form. Just wanted to confirm that this isn't needed for this year's call?

The Financial Justification section has been removed from the application form.

4. APPLYING TO THE SCHEME



a. How do I apply to this scheme?

An application to the Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship scheme will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding if it has not been submitted via the online application system. No hardcopies or emailed forms will be accepted.

I am interested in the possibility of publishing journal articles from my PhD thesis - is such an activity commonly funded by the fellowships? I would also however like to develop a proposal and conduct some research to support the development of a larger project in a related area to the thesis that I would then look to apply for funding for. Is it possible to join two such activities in a single application? And would you advise aware that the application is for the one or two-year fellowship?

Applicants can apply for one of two different types of award:

- A one-year fellowship, in order to prepare a doctoral dissertation for publication through a variety of high quality published outputs: e.g. monographs, peer-reviewed articles, edited volumes;

Or

- A two-year fellowship, in order to develop either a new research project or a research project that demonstrates a significant development of the subject of the doctorate through a variety of appropriate, feasible and clear published outputs.

Applicants must determine which is most appropriate for their project. All awards are made on the basis of excellence. Consequently, there is no specific quota for each type of award.

b. What publications and supporting documentation should be included?

For 'Publications and Other Research Outputs', how many peer-reviewed articles are sufficient? If an applicant only has two, should they also submit samples of her written work?

As per the Terms and Conditions 2017, an applicant must have authored or co-authored at least one published peer-reviewed research publication; or demonstrable equivalent intellectual property output; or provided samples of their written research work. There is no requirement to submit samples of written work if



an applicant has at least one peer-reviewed research publication or demonstrable equivalent intellectual property output.

Is there any specific requirement of number of publications, I mean like 3 or more publications in high impacted journals?

Applicants to the scheme are not required to have submitted a specific number of publications. The application process simply requires that applicants are able to submit either “one published peer-reviewed research publication”, a “demonstrable equivalent intellectual property output” or provide a “sample of their written research work”.

Regarding the section asking me to list my research related papers/output can I also include software/exhibitions/performances created in areas of research unrelated to the PhD?

These outputs should be listed in the section which is titled: “Please provide details of up to 15 other publications or research outputs”.

An applicant has authored one peer-reviewed research publication; however, it not yet been published. The applicant can provide the editor’s email of acceptance of the article for publication. Is this sufficient for the applicant to claim that they have one peer-reviewed research publication?

The terms and conditions describes a peer-reviewed research publication as “A journal article in an international journal, or a peer-reviewed conference proceedings paper, that has been published or accepted for publication.” So, the applicant would be able claim this as a peer-reviewed publication.

A potential applicant has a forthcoming article and thus is not required to submit samples of his work as per the IRC regulations. Since the article is not yet published, we are wondering whether it would strengthen his application to upload work samples anyway, so that the selection committee will be able to get a sense of his written work. These work samples might include the article itself, a further article he has with conditional acceptance, and a thesis chapter.

No. Applicants should only upload a writing sample when they are unable to provide a “one published peer-reviewed research publication or [an] demonstrable equivalent intellectual property output”.

c. How do I choose a Mentor and Host Institution?

Is it possible for a Professor Emeritus to be a mentor?



Yes, where the institution is satisfied that the Professor Emeritus is able to commit to the mentorship for the full duration of the award.

How can I obtain an academic mentor?

It is the applicant's responsibility to locate a Host Organisation and an Academic Mentor. The Irish Research Council does not offer advice in this regard.

The applicant in question is wondering whether joint-supervision by 2 mentors is possible (both based in Trinity but in different schools). Can you confirm if joint supervision by two mentors is allowed under this scheme?

Yes but, for the application, one mentor will have to be designated the primary mentor.

In the terms and conditions document an Academic Mentor is defined as “the person or persons responsible for supporting and mentoring the Fellow and ensuring the academic quality of the research produced under the Fellowship.”

1. Does this imply that a Fellow can list more than one mentor in the application?

2. Can the second mentor be located in an institute outside of the one where the candidate will be primarily hosted?

1. Yes but one mentor must be designated as the lead mentor for the purposes of the application.
2. Yes but the second mentor must be able to uphold point 6.6 of the Terms and Conditions: “6.6 - The Council requires fellows and mentors to have regular contact”.

An academic has agreed to act as an External Assessor for another IRC programme. One of their Irish PhD students, who has graduated and is now working in the UK, has asked them to act as a referee for their application. Does their being an assessor for another programme disqualify them from acting as a referee for their Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Research Fellowship?

No, they're perfectly eligible to act as a referee.

d. General online-application queries.

Can you please confirm whether an Academic Mentor needs to be a full member of staff of a HEI for the full duration of the Postdoctoral Fellowship?



The HEI/RPO must ensure an Mentor is appointed with responsibility for supporting and guiding the Fellow for the full duration of the Fellowship. This Mentor would normally be a Principal Investigator, or other suitably qualified person, with an employment contract in place for the full duration of the Postdoctoral Fellowship.

Is it possible for a co-mentor to also be a referee?

No. The same rules that apply to a mentor apply to a co-mentor.

If there is a discrepancy between the terms and conditions and the call documentation which document should take precedence?

The Term and Conditions always take precedence.

5. GENERAL TERMS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Please can you let me know if people awarded a fellowship are required to work on the fellowship full-time or if they can also hold a second appointment in parallel?

Fellows must engage full-time in research during the funding term and should not engage in any activity other than developing stated research project and the Training Career Development Plan.

We are unclear from the wording of the application if you need full ethical consent now at the application stage, or awareness of the potential issues and intend to obtain consent once funded.

Applicant do not have to provide proof of ethical approval at the application stage. They just have to demonstrate an awareness of any potential issues which might arise as part of their research.