



Irish Research Council Maternity Leave Policy

The Irish Research Council Fellows or Scholars taking maternity leave are entitled to request a suspension of their award. If they intend to take this leave they are required to inform the Council of the expected dates of leave at least four weeks in advance. The Council will pause the Fellowship or Scholarship for the duration of Maternity Leave.

When a Fellow or Scholar is returning to research after their maternity leave they should notify the Council in advance of their return. This should be done at least four weeks in advance of the return date and must be done in writing. The Council will then reactivate the Fellowship or Scholarship.

Postdoctoral Fellows

Fellows must contact the Department of Social Protection to enquire if they are entitled to state benefits¹. In accordance with internal HEI policy on paid maternity leave, some Fellows may be eligible for paid maternity leave. Where the Research Office in the Fellow's institution confirms that a Fellow is entitled to paid maternity leave, the Council will provide either (i) a top-up to the state benefit (which must be applied for if an individual is entitled) or (ii) cover the full amount of the Fellow's Irish Research Council Fellowship Salary for up to 6 months. Fellows are required to complete a "Request for Permission to Suspend Fellowship" form². The Fellow will need to provide documentation from the social welfare office confirming the outcome of their application for state maternity benefit or a statement of ineligibility for state benefits. The funding provided by the Irish Research Council as a top-up to state benefits or to cover paid maternity leave will be in addition to the original Fellowship Fund amount. The period of leave taken will be added on to the duration of the award, and a new award end date calculated and notified to the Fellow.

Postgraduate Scholars

Scholars should contact the Department of Social Protection to enquire if they are entitled to state benefits¹. Scholars should also contact the appropriate office within their HEI to ascertain what HEI supports are available. It is recommended that Scholars liaise in the first instance with their Supervisor/parent Department. In order to apply for a suspension of their award on the grounds of Maternity Leave, Scholars are required to complete a "Request for Permission to Suspend Scholarship" form for Postgraduate Scholars³ and submit it to the Council. Once approved, the scholarship and university fees will be paused for the period of maternity leave taken. Up to one year may be requested. No financial support will be given to the Scholar by the Council whilst on maternity leave, however, the period of leave taken will be added onto the duration of the award, and a new award end date will be calculated and notified to the Scholar.

¹ More detailed information of state benefits is available at <http://www.citizensinformation.ie>.

² See Appendix I Request for Permission to Suspend Fellowship

³ See Appendix II Request for Permission to Suspend Scholarship

Fellows and Scholars are encouraged to contact the Council should they have any further enquiries in regards to their leave entitlements.

For Postdoctoral Fellows please contact postdoc@research.ie

For Postgraduate Scholars please contact postgrad@research.ie

Irish Research Council

2016

APPENDIX I REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SUSPEND FELLOWSHIP



GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

Request for Permission to Suspend Fellowship

- Fellowships are intended to be held on a continuous basis without a break. However, if a Fellow has an exceptional change in circumstances that will affect the Fellowship (e.g. if a period of suspension is required due to illness or maternity leave), the Fellow must inform and seek prior approval from the Council. In such instances, supplementary information (such as medical and/or birth certificates) will be required.
- Fellows are advised to organise the supporting documentation and to request same before contacting the Council.
- Save for exceptional circumstances The Irish Research Council will only consider requests made in advance of the period of suspension. In the case of Maternity Leave, not less than 4 weeks' notice must be given.
- Please note that it is the Fellow's responsibility to notify the relevant authorities in the Higher Education Institution that the Fellowship has been suspended.
- Please note that, where possible, the start and finish dates for the period of suspension should be the first/end of the month: e.g. 1 October -31 March.

Section 1 – For completion by Fellow

Name of Fellow: (BLOCK CAPS)	Project ID:
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Institution:

Email address:

Details

Reason for suspension:	Illness (v)	
	Maternity leave (v)	
	Other (v) <i>Please specify</i>	

Please outline your reason for requesting a period of suspension for your Fellowship:

Duration of suspension:

Start: _____ and finish: _____

If period of suspension is required due to illness or maternity leave, have you included a medical or birth certificate?	Yes (v)	
	No (v)	

Signature:	Date:
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Section 2 – For completion by Mentor			
I hereby confirm that I support the request to suspend the Fellowship as outlined above.			
Name: (BLOCK CAPS)		Position:	
Signature:		Date:	
Section 3 – For completion by Head of Department/Research Office/Dean of Graduate Studies or their authorised nominee			
I hereby confirm that		<i>[insert HEI name]</i> supports the request to	
suspend the Fellowship as outlined above.			
Name: (BLOCK CAPS)		Position:	
Signature:		Date:	
FOR OFFICE USE			
Received:		Approved (√): Yes No	
Comments:			

APPENDIX II REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SUSPEND SCHOLARSHIP



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SUSPEND SCHOLARSHIP

- Scholarships are intended to be held on a continuous basis without a break. However, if a Scholar has any change in circumstances that will affect their Scholarship (e.g. if a period of suspension is required due to illness or maternity leave), the Scholar must inform and seek prior approval from the Council. In such instances, medical certificates will be required.
- Scholars are advised to organise the supporting documentation and request before contacting the Council.
- Save for exceptional circumstances, the Council will only consider requests made in advance of the period of suspension. In the case of Maternity Leave, not less than 4 weeks' notice must be given.
- Please note that it is the Scholar's responsibility to notify the relevant authorities in their Higher Education Institution that the Scholarship has been suspended.
- Please note that where possible the start and finish dates for the period of suspension should be the first /end of the month e.g. 1 October -31 March

Section 1 – For completion by Scholar

Name of Scholar:
(BLOCK CAPS)

Year & title of Award:

Institution:

Email address:

Details

Reason for suspension:

Illness (v)

Maternity leave (v)

Other (v) Please specify

Please give a brief outline of your reasons for requesting a period of suspension of your Scholarship

Duration of suspension:

Start: _____ and finish: _____

If period of suspension is required due to illness, have you included medical certificates?

Yes (v)

No (v)

Signature:

Date:

Section 2 – For completion by Supervisor

I hereby confirm that I support the request to suspend the scholarship as outlined above.

Name:

Position:

(BLOCK CAPS) Signature:	Date:	
Section 3 – For completion by Head of Department/ Research Office/Dean of Graduate Studies or their authorised nominee		
I hereby confirm that <i>[insert HEI name]</i> supports the request to suspend the scholarship as outlined above.		
Name: (BLOCK CAPS) Signature:	Position:	Date:
FOR OFFICE USE		
Received:	Approved (v):	Yes No
Comment:		