



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Title of Position: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship

Duration: 1 year

Location: Irish Research Council, 3 Shelbourne Buildings, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

“The IRC Postdoctoral Internship was a unique opportunity that far surpassed my expectations. The position provided me with a variety of invaluable experience ranging from major events coordination to funding programme management. While giving me an ‘behind-the-scenes’ understanding of grant assessment and a global network of academic and government contacts, it also enabled me to apply my academic research skills in diverse and dynamic ways. Every day at the Council presented new and interesting challenges that pushed me outside of my comfort zone, increasing my knowledge of the Irish research landscape and adding to my transferrable skills within and outside of academia.”

(Dr Suz Garrard, 2018 Intern)

“The IRC Postdoctoral Internship was an excellent opportunity for me. It was a whole new experience where I worked on the administrative procedures of project funding. This unique experience has given me better understanding of what assessors look for in a proposal, and how a proposal can stand out among several equally good works. I was fortunate to come in contact with so many researchers from all around the world, exchange ideas and in the process build excellent rapport with them which would have never happened if I did not work with the Irish Research Council. Also, now I have a much better understanding of the Irish research landscape which I think will be helpful in my career.”

(Dr Sumona Mukherjee, 2017 Intern)

The Irish Research Council is pleased to offer Internship opportunities to our Government of Ireland and Enterprise Partnership Scheme Postdoctoral Fellows. Current Postdoctoral Fellows (STEM and AHSS disciplines) who are interested in applying their knowledge and skills to a research assessment and management setting, and in further developing their skills in this area, are warmly invited to apply.

Postdoctoral Fellow Interns play a valuable role in the delivery of the Council's mission and ambitious work programme as funders of excellent and impactful research. Successful applicants will be fully integrated as key members of our small, dynamic team of staff who manage our funding programmes and key policy areas.

This document provides an overview of the roles, the criteria for application and how to apply.

About the Irish Research Council

The Irish Research Council is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills and operates under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority. Our core function is to support excellent frontier research across all disciplines and career stages. We place a particular focus on early-stage career researchers and promote diverse career opportunities for researchers by partnering with employers. We also have a particular role in supporting research with a societal focus and has established partnerships across government and civic society.

Information about the Council's funding schemes is available at www.research.ie/funding.

We are strongly committed to providing excellent career development opportunities to postdoctoral researchers funded under its programmes. In particular, we advocate a rounded approach to career development through experiencing the diversity of activities carried out by a national funding agency.

Role Specification:

The Irish Research Council is pleased to offer internships to our Postdoctoral Fellows, and we plan to form a panel of potential Interns as opportunities arise. Responsibilities will include providing support across the Council's suite of funding schemes such as:

Programme Support

- Acting as an initial point of contact to applicants, awardees, assessors and host institutions for general queries
- **Call Operation:** preparing for call launch including assisting with the preparation of call documentation and responses to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- **Call Assessment:** assisting with the operation of schemes at assessment stage and helping to coordinate panel meetings for Calls, including working to identify peer reviewers.

- **Post-award monitoring and administration:** preparing for announcement of results, distributing feedback to applicants, issuing and processing offer letters and research agreements, and arranging payments.
- Management of currently-funded Scholars, Fellows and Academics including:
 - Responding to general queries
 - Tracking 'live' awards, including requesting final reports from awardees
 - Data collection and analysis of all outputs to date
 - Interacting with the Irish Research Council community/Alumni.
- Various administrative tasks related to the above activities, including organisation of panel meetings and monitoring the online application system.

Other activities: Communications Support

In 2016, the Council spearheaded an initiative (the #LoveIrishResearch campaign) to better share information about the results and impact of the work of our researchers and to develop a greater public interest and knowledge of what is happening in research in Ireland. Responsibilities under the Communications brief may include:

- Assisting in implementing the Council's communications strategy
- Developing social media, newsletter and website content to maintain the Council's online presence
- Preparing, updating and managing website content
- Preparing impact and case study material to highlight the outputs and impacts of Council awards
- Assisting with the planning and promotion of special events.
- Engaging with external stakeholders

Interns will also be invited to assist with other activities, in line with the Council's mission and work programme and with candidates' skills and areas of expertise: e.g. gender-equality initiatives.

Benefits to Interns

For those interested in exploring varied career paths and who wish to experience first-hand the processes associated with research funding management, these internships provide a unique opportunity. Interns join the Council to gain experience of a funding environment and to gain skills needed to either further a career in research or within the wider research/higher-education arena. The internships will facilitate workplace experience and will be invaluable to those considering a career in research policy or programme development, nationally or internationally.

For those interested in these career paths, these posts will provide the opportunity to develop key skills within a small but dynamic organisation. The experience gained will also provide the researcher with a valuable insight into excellence-based research funding, which will be of great benefit should they wish to develop their careers in academia. It will provide opportunities to utilise skills in developing strategy, policy,

communications and working with a range of stakeholders. The Council will support the professional development, networking and training of interns during the internship period.

Once the internship is completed, Interns leave with new and fresh skills that are for the betterment of research and the community. This is a proven model of best practice worldwide in funding agencies.

The majority of previous Interns have secured research-management positions at a variety of institutions and agencies subsequent to their Internships, though some have chosen to remain in academia.

Essential requirements

The applicant must be a current Irish Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow with:

- An interest in research and research administration/management;
- Excellent attention to detail;
- Excellent time management skills, the ability to manage deadlines and competing priorities;
- Good IT skills, including advanced knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to work respectfully and collaboratively as part of a team;
- Ability to show initiative, problem-solving and creativity;
- An interest in the impactful communication of research.

Applicants may be postdoctoral awardees under the Council's Government of Ireland or Enterprise Partnership Schemes. Applications are welcome from researchers in all disciplines: STEM and AHSS.

Appointment and Remuneration

The internship posts will be full time and tenable **for a minimum period of 12 months from start date**. In awarding the internship, the Council will grant an initial three months' internship post, which is extendable subject to the agreement of both parties.

The Intern will be permitted, through prior arrangement with their host institution, to pause their research work for the duration of the internship and to resume it afterwards.

The internship will be remunerated at the current Irish Research Council rate, and the Intern will continue to be paid through and to be employed by their host institution.

Application Procedure

To apply, please complete the application form and submit it with a two-page Curriculum Vitae and a cover letter, addressed to the Council's Assistant Director (Impact & Partnerships), Dr Eavan O'Brien. This should be submitted by email, to projects@research.ie, no later than 5pm on **Wednesday 24 April 2019**.

Your application form, CV and cover letter should be focused on communicating any relevant skills and administrative experience.

Applicants must be available for interview on **Thursday 2 May 2019**.