

Researcher of the Year Awards 2018
Frequently Asked Questions
Version 2 – 14 September 2018

1. Is having a PhD a requirement for either category 1, 2 or 3?

A completed PhD is **not a requirement for any of the categories.**

2. Can you please confirm whether applicants for category one and category three need to have completed their PhD, as it is explicit in the Call Document that applicants from category two need to have completed a PhD?

A completed PhD is not a requirement for any of the categories.

However, applicants for the Early Career Researcher of the Year Award (category 2) *who do have a PhD*, must have completed it no more than eight years prior to 1 January 2019. For the purposes of this award, the date of conferring will be taken as the PhD completion date.

Applicants for the Early Career Researcher of the Year Award (category 2) *who do not have a PhD*, must have achieved their highest postgraduate qualification no more than eight years prior to 1 January 2019. For the purposes of this award, the date of conferring will be taken as the degree completion date.

3. What Council awards must nominees have held to be eligible to apply for the Researcher of the Year award?

Nominees must be persons who, in their own name, applied for and received funding under one or more of the following categories: postgraduate scholarship; postdoctoral or research fellowship; or research project awards.

Research project awards include all principal investigator-led awards, e.g. Basic Research Grant Scheme, Graduate Research Education Programme Awards, Research Development Initiative, Research for Policy and Society, New Horizons, Laureate Awards.

4. Is a past awardee of a Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting Award eligible to apply?

A past awardee of a Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting Award is eligible to apply *only if* they have also held one or more of the Council's research awards in their own name, as specified in the reply to question 3 above. They are *not eligible* if they only held a Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting Award.

5. Is a past awardee of a New Foundations Award eligible to apply?

A past awardee of a New Foundations Award is eligible to apply *only if* they have also held one or more of the Council's research awards in their own name, as specified in the reply to question 3 above. They are *not eligible* if they only held a New Foundations Award.

6. Can you please advise what the Council's allowance period is per each period of maternity leave and other eligible career breaks taken from paid employment?

The Council's allowance periods for eligible career breaks are:

- For **maternity leave**, the effective elapsed time since the award of first PhD (or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved) will be considered reduced by 18 months or if longer by the documented amount of leave taken for each child after the first PhD award, or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved.
- The effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD (or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved) will be considered reduced by the documented amount of **paternity leave** actually taken for each child born after the first PhD award, or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved.
- For **adoptive leave**, the effective elapsed time since the award of first PhD (or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved) will be considered reduced by 18 months or if longer by the documented amount of leave taken for each child after the first PhD award, or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved.
- For **parental leave/carer's leave**, the effective elapsed time since the award of the first PhD (or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved) will be considered reduced by the documented time of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award, or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved.
- Verification for **long-term illness** must be provided in the form of a medical certificate. For long-term illness (over ninety days for the applicant or a close family member, i.e. child, spouse, parent, sibling), the effective elapsed time since the award of the PhD degree (or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved) will be considered reduced by the documented amount of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award, or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved.
- Verification for **leave taken for clinical qualifications, military service or for other unavoidable statutory reasons** must be provided in an appropriate form. The effective elapsed time since the award of the PhD degree (or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved) will be considered reduced by the documented amount of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award, or the highest postgraduate qualification achieved.

7. Is a birth certificate sufficient documentation to confirm that the applicant has eligible maternity leave and qualify for a 18 month extension?

Yes, a document confirming the maternity leave period from the relevant HR department(s) or a birth certificate are sufficient documentation.

8. Can current awardees of IRC postgraduate funding schemes apply to category 2, even if they have not yet graduated for their PhD?

YES. A completed PhD is not a requirement for any of the categories (see above, question 1).

9. If an early stage researcher is currently not in employment, are they eligible to apply? Can they apply to Category 2? Or there is a requirement for applicants to have a contract with a university at the time of the call's deadline? Is there a requirement that they must be in employment at the time when the awards are announced?

According to the Guidelines, 'One award will be made to an early-career researcher currently working in research in an academic institution'. Therefore, applicants to category 2 on the *postdoctoral level or above* need to have an employment contract with the nominating institution (or another research performing institution abroad) *at the time of application*. Applicants to category 2 on the *postgraduate level* need to be hosted by the nominating institution (or another research performing institution abroad) *at the time of application*.

10. I am a former IRCSET/IRCHSS awardee, but I cannot find/retrieve the project ID. How can I complete the 'Please provide details of any Council award(s) received in your own name, including the year(s) and project ID(s)' field on the application form?
Awardees of IRCSET/IRCHSS schemes who cannot find their project IDs and who cannot retrieve it from the relevant Research Office, should provide as much detail about their project as possible, to allow for eligibility checks using data held by the Irish Research Council.
11. Could you clarify the difference between Category 1 and 2. For example, is a postdoc one or two years post-PhD eligible for both categories?
Yes, postdoctoral researchers are eligible for Category 1 and 2 as long as they fulfil all other eligibility criteria of the category. If an applicant fulfils the eligibility criteria for both categories, it is up to applicants to decide which is the more appropriate category for them.
12. In the call guidance for the nomination process for categories 1 and 2 it states: "Academic institutions should select two nominees (one male and one female) for each category entered". Can you please advise if it is necessary to have one male and one female applicant for both categories one and two, or is it possible to submit an application from a female or male applicant only?
Academic institutions are required to maintain gender balance within <i>any</i> category for which they wish to submit an applicant, i.e. " <i>each category entered</i> ". The application guidelines also state: "Academic institutions may submit nominations (one male and one female) under <i>one or both</i> categories". Therefore, an academic institution may decide to enter a total of either 2 applicants (1 male and 1 female within the same category), or 4 applicants (1 male and 1 female in <i>each</i> category).
13. For category 3 is there any stipulation around the gender(s) of the applicant(s) or limits on how many applications can be submitted from a particular institution?
Applications for category 3 are accepted directly from the applicant, who is currently outside academia. While institutions are welcome to encourage their alumni to apply, they will not be submitting nominations for awards under this category.
14. According to the guidelines, the academic institutions should select two nominees for each category. Is the Tyndall National Institute considered as a separate academic institution or does it fall under the UCC selection process?
The list of academic institutions eligible for funding from the Irish Research Council can be found on our website . For Category 1 and 2, only institutions listed here can nominate applicants. (For Category 3, applicants self-nominate.)

ENDS