2024 GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND PROGRAMMES

Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship
Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship

CALL DOCUMENT

Key dates	
Call open	31 August 2023
FAQ deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 05 October 2023
Applicant deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 12 October 2023
Supervisor, mentor deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 19 October 2023
Research office endorsement deadline	16:00 (Irish time) 26 October 2023
Call outcome	April 2024
Award start date	1 September 2024

Due to heavy server traffic on the day of the applicant and academic supervisor/mentor deadlines, all participants are strongly advised to submit their forms <u>well in advance</u> of the relevant deadline.
Applications cannot be submitted once the deadline has passed. Academic supervisor/mentor forms cannot be submitted once the deadline has passed.

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1. **About the Irish Research Council**

The Irish Research Council is the national funder of excellent research across all disciplines. It invests in discovery research and in ground-breaking ideas that address major societal challenges, funding a diverse range of excellent individual researchers across all career stages.

The Irish Research Council collaborates with enterprise, civil society, and with government to leverage the skills, knowledge, and talent of researchers to achieve maximum benefit for society.

Established in 2012, the Irish Research Council is an associated agency of the [Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science](#) and operates under the aegis of the [Higher Education Authority](#).

2. **Purpose of this call document**

This call document provides information for applicants in preparing and submitting an application for an Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship or a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship. It also provides a general overview of the assessment process. This document, in conjunction with the [General Terms and Conditions for Early-Career Awards](#), the letter of offer and the Irish Research Council's policies and procedures, set out the terms and conditions for all early-career awards funded by the Irish Research Council. The Irish Research Council reserves the right to amend this call document at any time.

3. **Government of Ireland programmes**

The Government of Ireland programmes, namely the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme and the Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme, are established national initiatives, funded by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and managed by the Irish Research Council. These programmes support suitably qualified research master's, doctoral and postdoctoral candidates pursuing, or intending to pursue, full-time research in any discipline.

The Government of Ireland programmes are unique in the Irish research landscape. Among their features are:

- individual, prestigious awards for excellent research in the name of the applicant;
- the opportunity for awardees to direct their own research project at the early-career stage, working with a supervisor or mentor as relevant;
- an objective selection process using international, independent expert peer review;
- funding across all disciplines, from archaeology to zoology; and
- awards for bottom-up, non-directed research, with the exception of those awards funded by our strategic funding partners.

Applications can be made in any discipline. Please consult the Irish Research Council's [research categorisation document](#) for further descriptions of the primary areas, disciplines and other research areas covered. Pioneering proposals addressing new and emerging fields of research or

those introducing creative, innovative approaches are welcomed. Proposals of an interdisciplinary nature are also encouraged as it is recognised that advancing fundamental understanding is achieved by integrating information, techniques, tools and perspectives from two or more disciplines.

These programmes are highly competitive, with an average success rate over the past five years of 18% on the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme and 12% on the Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme. Successful awardees under these programmes are recognised as demonstrating world-class potential as future research leaders.

4. **Strategic funding partners**

A number of government departments and agencies partner with the Irish Research Council to support the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme as a mechanism to deliver on shared national objectives. The Irish Research Council's strategic funding partners for the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme 2024 are:

- Environmental Protection Agency – see appendix 1 for more information
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth – see appendix 2 for more information
- Met Éireann – see appendix 3 for more information
- Department of Foreign Affairs – see appendix 4 for more information

While applicants may apply for one theme only, those who choose to apply for a strategic funding partner award will also be considered for a Government of Ireland award should they not be aligned with the strategic funding partner theme. The Irish Research Council will check that applications submitted for consideration under a strategic funding partner strand are broadly aligned with that theme. Eligible applications that clearly have no alignment with the relevant strategic funding partner theme will go forward for assessment under the core programme only.

5. **What we offer**

5.1 Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme

These awards will support suitably qualified research master's and doctoral candidates pursuing, or intending to pursue, full-time research in any discipline. **The duration of a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship ranges from one to four years depending on the type of degree being pursued and the date of first registration (where relevant).**

The value of the scholarship will be up to a maximum of €28,000 per annum in any approved year and will consist of the following:
- a stipend of €19,000;
- a contribution to fees, including non-European Union fees, paid to the host institution, up to a maximum of €5,750[1]; and
- eligible direct research expenses of €3,250 to enable the awardee to carry out the research project.

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[1] Any differential in fees must be paid by the awardee and/or host institution.

Please note that the scholarship award is comprised of all three budget headings listed above. Applicants should not apply to seek funding for one or two of the budget headings only.

5.2 Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme:

These awards will support suitably qualified postdoctoral candidates pursuing full-time research in any discipline. These awards can be either one or two years in duration and will consist of the following:

- a salary of €42,783 in the first year of the award and €43,371 in the second year of the award[2];
- employer's PRSI contribution; and
- eligible direct research expenses of €5,000 per annum.

Please note that the salary may be subject to change in line with changes to the IUA salary scales. The purpose of a one-year fellowship is to prepare the applicant's doctoral thesis for publication through a variety of high quality published academic outputs e.g. monographs, peer-reviewed articles, edited volumes. The purpose of a two-year fellowship is to develop either a new research project or a research project that demonstrates a significant development of the subject of the doctoral thesis through a variety of appropriate, feasible and clear published outputs.

6. Eligibility

Potential applicants should carefully ascertain whether they are eligible in advance of applying to either programme. All applicants will be required to complete and pass an eligibility quiz on the online application system prior to accessing an application form. Further information outlining what would deem an application ineligible is contained in section 8.

- There is no age limit for applicants to be eligible for either programme type.
- All applicants must be affiliated with an eligible Irish higher education institution or research-performing organisation.
- Applications will only be accepted in either the Irish or English language[3].
- Applicants must not have had two previous unsuccessful applications to the relevant programme, including to strategic partner themes. This applies regardless of whether the applicant has changed their host institution or research topic since a previous submission.
- The Irish Research Council is not in a position to award funding for research activity under any of the following prohibited areas:
  - human cloning for reproductive purposes;
  - genetic modification of human beings that could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be funded); or
  - creation of human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

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[2] This corresponds with points 1 and 2 respectively on the IUA's researcher salary scale at the time of call opening but may be subject to change under the current national pay agreement. Any such changes will be applied in line with updates to the IUA's researcher salary scale.
[3] In order to facilitate assessment, those submitting an Irish language assessment are invited to accompany it with an English language translation. Should an English translation not be provided by the applicant, the Irish Research Council will provide a translation to the relevant assessors.

7. Government of Ireland Programmes

7.1. *Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme:*
   7.1.1. An applicant who is a new entrant to the postgraduate degree for which they are seeking funding is eligible to apply for funding for the full duration of the degree as outlined below:

Degree type	Duration of funding to be awarded
Research master's degree	1 year
Structured research master's degree	2 years
Traditional doctoral degree	3 years
Structured doctoral degree	4 years

   7.1.2. For applicants who have already completed part of the postgraduate degree for which they are seeking funding, **the duration of funding to be awarded is dependent on the type of degree being pursued and the date of first registration as outlined below:**

Degree type	Date of first registration[4]	Academic year	Duration of funding to be awarded
Structured research master's degree	1 Sep 23 – 31 Aug 24 (registrations prior to 1 Sep 23 are ineligible)	2023/24	1 year
Traditional doctoral degree	1 Sep 23 – 31 Aug 24	2023/24	2 years
	1 Sep 22 – 31 Aug 23 (registrations prior to 1 Sep 22 are ineligible)	2022/23	1 year
Structured doctoral degree	1 Sep 23 – 31 Aug 24	2023/24	3 years
	1 Sep 22 – 31 Aug 23	2022/23	2 years
	1 Sep 21 – 31 Aug 22 (registrations prior to 1 Sep 21 are ineligible)	2021/22	1 year

   7.1.3. All applicants must have a first class or upper second-class honours bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree. If undergraduate examination results are not known at the time of application, the Irish Research Council may make a provisional offer of a scholarship on condition that the scholar's bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree result is a first class or upper second-class honours. If the applicant does not have a first class or upper second-class honours bachelor's, or the equivalent, degree, they must possess a master's degree. The Irish Research Council's determination of an applicant's eligibility on these criteria is final[5].

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[4] Exceptions to the above dates of first registration may only be made for those who have taken an eligible career break from their degree programmes.
[5] Host institutions are expected to be guided by QQI and the NFQ in terms of the recognition and equivalence of a degree.

7.1.4. **All degree results as entered in the application form and endorsed by the host institution must be the applicant's overall results and verifiable as such on official transcripts.** Regardless of whether they are relevant to the eligibility requirements listed in clause 7.1.3, conditional awardees will be required to submit official transcripts for each degree listed in the application confirming the overall result, date of graduation and awarding institution[6]. If such transcripts cannot be presented, or do not verify the information exactly as detailed in the application, any conditional offer of an award will be withdrawn.

7.1.5. Applicants for a research master's degree must not currently hold, or have previously held, an Irish Research Council scholarship.

7.1.6. Applicants for a doctoral degree must not currently hold, or have previously held, any Irish Research Council scholarship other than one which would have enabled them to obtain a research master's degree.

7.1.7. All applications require an academic supervisor willing to guide the proposed research project. **The Irish Research Council is not in a position to assist applicants in finding an academic supervisor for their application**. It is also possible to include a secondary or co-supervisor on the application.

7.1.8. Applicants from any country may hold a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship, however applicants will fall under one of two categories based on nationality and residency[7]:

Category one	Applicants must meet BOTH of the following criteria: • be a national of a European Union member state (including the Republic of Ireland) OR Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland or the United Kingdom or Ukraine AND • have been ordinarily resident[8] in a European Union member state (including the Republic of Ireland) OR Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland or the United Kingdom or Ukraine for a continuous period of three of the five years preceding 1 September 2024.
Category two	All other applicants who do NOT meet both of the above criteria.

7.1.9 While the majority of scholarships will be awarded to applicants who fall under category one, a proportion of scholarships will also be made to exceptional applicants who fall under category two. In 2022, the success rates broken down by category were as follows:

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[6] On request, supporting, non-returnable material must be forwarded by the Research Body to the Irish Research Council for inspection before the award can commence. All transcripts must be appropriately stamped and signed to confirm that they are official documents of the institution.

[7] The Irish Research Council reserves the right to request documented evidence of an applicant's nationality and residence.

[8] Ordinarily resident refers to the applicant's place of legal and permanent residence. This will not be deemed as having been interrupted if an absence from the country of ordinary residency has been caused by the training, education or employment of the applicant or the applicant's spouse or parents.

	Overall success rate[9]	Success rate for category two applicants[10]
Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)	17%	3%
Arts, humanities and social sciences (AHSS)	19%	4.5%

7.2 *Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme*

7.2.1 All applicants must:
- have been awarded their doctoral degree within the five-year period before 31 May 2024. For the purposes of this condition, the date of graduation will be taken into account; or
- have been certified as having fulfilled within the five-year period before 31 May 2024 all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including the submission of the hardbound corrected thesis, but have not yet graduated.

7.2.2 An applicant's period of eligibility may be extended as a result of any properly documented eligible career break, provided the grounds for the extension started before the call deadline. Eligible career breaks include maternity leave, paternity leave, adoptive leave, parental leave, parent's leave, extended sick leave and carer's leave.

7.2.3 Only career breaks taken by the applicant as a statutory entitlement will be considered eligible. Career breaks explained by working outside of academia or by being unemployed for a period of time will not be considered as valid reasons to extend the eligibility window.

7.2.4 If an applicant wishes to extend their period of eligibility, they must produce evidence, birth certificate(s), medical certificate(s) and/or documents from the HR office of their employer at the time of the eligible break(s):
- For maternity leave, applicants will be granted an 18-month extension for each child born before or after the first PhD award, regardless of how long the applicant took for maternity leave. If the applicant can document a longer maternity leave, the eligibility period will be extended by the documented amount of actual leave taken until the call deadline. The same principle also applies for child adoption.
- For paternity leave, applicants will be granted an extension equal to the documented amount of paternity leave actually taken for each child born before or after the first PhD award. The same principle also applies for child adoption.
- For long-term illness (over ninety days for the applicant or a close family member, i.e. child, spouse, parent, sibling), applicants will be granted an extension equal to the documented amount of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award.

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[9] Awards as a percentage of all eligible applications within the stream.
[10] Awards as a percentage of eligible category two applications.

- For all other eligible career breaks, applicants will be granted an extension equal to the documented amount of leave actually taken by the applicant for each incident which occurred after the first PhD award.

7.2.5 All applicants must:
- have authored or co-authored at least one published peer-reviewed research publication[11]; or
- have demonstrable equivalent intellectual property output; or
- provide a copy of the table of contents and one chapter from their doctoral thesis. Please note that submission of more than one chapter will render your application ineligible.

7.2.6 All degree results as entered in the application form and endorsed by the host institution must be the applicant's overall results and verifiable as such on official transcripts. Regardless of whether they are relevant to the eligibility requirements listed in clause 7.2.1, conditional awardees will be required to submit official transcripts for each degree listed in the application confirming the overall result, date of graduation and awarding institution[6]. If such transcripts cannot be presented, or do not verify the information exactly as detailed in the application, any conditional offer of an award will be withdrawn.

7.2.7 Applicants must not currently hold, or have previously held, a Government of Ireland postdoctoral fellowship.

7.2.8 All applications require an academic mentor willing to guide the proposed research project. The Irish Research Council is not in a position to assist applicants in finding an academic mentor for their application.

7.2.9 Applicants must not have been employed as a postdoctoral researcher for more than five years as at 31 May 2024.

7.2.10 Applicants must not be a permanent member of staff in either an Irish or international higher education institution or research-performing organisation.

7.2.11 Applicants from any country may hold a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship.

8. Ineligible applications

8.1. In addition to section 6 and 7 above, applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding if:
- an applicant submits more than one application to a given call;
- an application has not been submitted via the online system by the relevant deadline. No hardcopies or email forms will be accepted;
- an application does not have all the required participant forms, i.e. academic supervisor or mentor (as relevant), completed in full and submitted via the online system by the relevant deadline. No hardcopies or email forms will be accepted;
- the name of the academic supervisor or mentor included in the eligibility quiz on the online system does not match that on the application form;

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[11] A journal article in an international journal, or a peer-reviewed conference proceedings paper, that has been published or accepted for publication. Articles submitted or in preparation are not acceptable.

- more than one academic supervisor or mentor's name is included in the eligibility quiz on the online system;
- The eligibility quiz on the online system is submitted without an academic supervisor's or mentor's name;
- an application is incomplete or exceeds the word limits;
- an application includes additional materials other than those requested;
- an application includes materials in a format other than those requested;
- it is found at any stage during the process that any section of an application has been plagiarised or is not the applicant's own work (see section 13 for more information);
- any information supplied in an application is false, misleading or unverifiable with appropriate documentation;
- the research project as proposed in the application form is currently or has previously been funded either in full, or in part, by the Irish Research Council or any other funding agency;
- the application is not endorsed by the applicant's host institution, i.e. the vice-president/dean of research or their authorised nominee, via the online system by the relevant deadline;
- canvassing on behalf of the applicant occurs.

9. Thinking about applying?

For reasons of transparency and fairness to all applicants, we will not enter into written or telephone correspondence with any individual about the assessment process or their eligibility to apply. **In the first instance, you should contact the research office in your proposed host institution for information and clarification on the call. It is highly recommended that applicants contact the office well in advance of submitting an application.** If your research office is unable to answer your query, they should email it to postgrad@research.ie or postdoc@research.ie as relevant for answer through the frequently asked questions (FAQ) process. An updated FAQ document will be published weekly under the relevant Call on the Irish Research Council's website.

Potential applicants are invited to consider the general application feedback provided by our assessors in advance of submitting their applications. Please find this information under the "FAQ" tab on the website of the Call. Details of scoring under each criteria according to the relevant programme are provided in appendix 6 and 7.

You should not add an academic supervisor or mentor to your application without their prior approval. Prior to creating an application, you should contact and discuss your research project with your proposed academic supervisor or mentor as relevant. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to inform the proposed academic supervisor or mentor of their nomination. This should be done well in advance of completing the online application.

It is strongly encouraged that application and participant forms are submitted well in advance of the relevant deadline as heavy server traffic on the day may slow down their submission. **Applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the day of the deadline to register on the system or submit their application.** If you need to submit your application on the closing day, please do this at least six hours before the deadline.

While an academic supervisor or mentor at an Irish host institution is permitted to support more than one award holder under each programme, this should not be used as a means for academic supervisors or mentors to form research teams. Each application must be in support of an individual and original project, written by the applicant and distinctively different to other applications which may be received under the same academic supervisor or mentor.

Please note that no alterations can be made to an eligibility quiz once it has been submitted. Once you submit your eligibility quiz, you will not be able to access it again. Please also note that, no alterations can be made to an application once it has been submitted. It is therefore important to check and re-check the eligibility quiz and the application form until being fully satisfied with all sections before submitting them. If successful, an applicant will only be offered funding to carry out the project as detailed in the application.

10. **Gender**

A key feature of the Irish Research Council's Gender Strategy and Action Plan is to provide equal outcomes for all applicants so that Ireland can attract and retain the most talented, creative and innovative researchers, thereby maximising its collective research intelligence. To ensure a level playing field for all applicants, the Irish Research Council seeks to gender-blind the assessment process for these programmes.

As such, profile information containing the name and gender of applicants is not provided to reviewers during the assessment process. **Applicants are therefore asked to refrain from identifying their gender when completing their application forms.** We also ask that supervisors and mentors use 'the applicant', 's/he/', 'they' and 'his/her', 'their' when providing their observations rather than the person's name or pronouns which would identify their gender. Applicants are advised to consult the sex/gender dimension statement in appendix 5 in advance of completing the personal, ethical and sex/gender statements section of their application.

11. **Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)**

The Irish Research Council is signatory to the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) and, as such, we are aligning our assessment processes with DORA principles. To this end, all types of research output are recognised and we are committed to assessing the quality and impact of research through means other than journal impact factors.

12. **ORCID**

ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes researchers from each other and, through integration in key research workflows such as manuscript and grant submission, supports automated linkages between a researcher and their professional activities ensuring that their work is recognised. If an applicant does not currently have an ORCID, please register for one at www.orcid.org in advance of submitting an application.

13. **Plagiarism and related issues**

Applications are expected to be entirely the applicant's own work. **Random sampling for evidence of plagiarism and excessive duplication will be carried out during the application and award**

process. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. It will be deemed that excessive duplication has arisen when significant portions of multiple applications to the Irish Research Council are similar or identical in content.

If such instances of plagiarism or excessive duplication are identified by the Irish Research Council at any stage during the application or award process, the relevant application(s) will be deemed ineligible, award offers will be withdrawn, or active awards will be terminated with one month's notice. Such instances of plagiarism or excessive duplication will also be brought to the attention of the host institution and the applicant in question will be prohibited from applying for Irish Research Council funding in the future.

14. **Assessment process**

Applications are first checked by the Irish Research Council for eligibility. All applications will be assessed solely on the basis of the material provided at the time of submission. Award holders will be selected following a transparent, merit-based, impartial and equitable selection procedure, based on international peer review. There are separate funding streams for STEM and AHSS. Each stream is assessed independently on a competitive basis. Profile information containing the name, date of birth and gender of applicants is not provided to reviewers during the assessment process.

Eligible applications will be sent for remote evaluation to an outer international assessment board (IAB). Each application is assessed by at least two remote independent, international reviewers. Each assessor submits their evaluation, and the applications are ranked in order of merit. The top ranked applications are then referred to an inner IAB where they are assessed by two further independent, international reviewers before being discussed at an inner IAB panel meeting relevant to the particular funding stream. The primary responsibility of the inner IAB is to determine a quantitative ranking of the applications presented to it, arrive at an overall judgement of standard and make final recommendations to the Irish Research Council. The Irish Research Council will then fund down the ranked list presented to it by the inner IABs until funding is exhausted. The Irish Research Council's decision on whether to make an award under either programme is final.

While outer IAB members may be more familiar with your specific research field, the inner IAB will be made up of representatives with significant overarching experience who will have a more general understanding of your field. Thus, it is important that you write your application so that both outer and inner IAB members can clearly understand the research proposed therein and form a fair evaluation and assessment of whether it is of a sufficient standard to recommend for funding. Applications are assessed under four headings:
- applicant;
- project;
- training and career development aspects of the proposal; and
- environment.

Assessors consider all four headings and allocate scores as per the evaluation criteria detailed in appendices 6 and 7. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves fully with the evaluation criteria prior to making an application. If the total average score is the same between two or more

applications, applications with the same average scores will be ranked according to average score under the project category.

15. Notification and feedback

The Irish Research Council is precluded from discussing results of the competition or the outcome of individual applications over the telephone or in writing. Feedback to unsuccessful candidates will consist of the score assigned by the IAB. Additional qualitative feedback will be provided to applicants under the Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme only. **Feedback derived from the commentary of the assessors must be requested by applicants within 3 weeks of notification of the outcome**. Once this window has passed, no further requests for feedback will be permitted. **Feedback will likely be provided in early summer after the overall review process has concluded.** Under no circumstance will feedback provided by the Irish Research Council compromise the confidentiality of any participant in the process.

APPENDIX 1
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

BACKGROUND

In partnership with the Irish Research Council, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) invites applications for an Environmental Protection Agency Postgraduate Scholarship, hereinafter referred to as an EPA Postgraduate Scholarship.

The EPA is an independent public body established in July 1993 under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. Its purpose is to protect, improve and restore our environment through regulation, scientific knowledge and working with others. As part of its wide range of functions the EPA manages an environmental research programme that delivers essential scientific support for environmental policy development, implementation and broader decision making. EPA Research focuses on achieving environmental objectives, informing policy and bringing together researchers and research users. The EPA also has responsibility for coordinating environmental research in Ireland.

The EPA Research Programme is a Government of Ireland initiative funded by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.
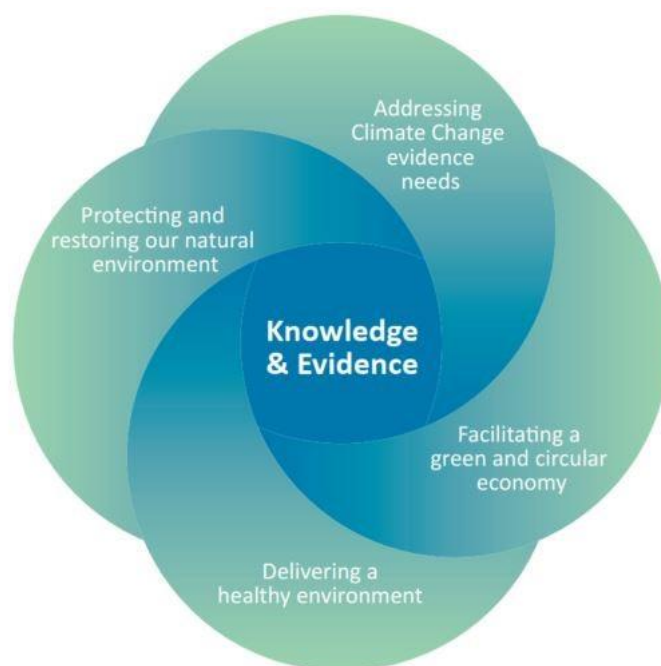
More information on the EPA and its Research Programme is available at: www.epa.ie

EPA RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2021-2030

EPA Research 2030 is a ten-year high-level framework for the EPA's research programming (2021-2030), designed to be agile, responsive and flexible. Within this framework, the EPA research programme plays an important role in generating evidence to support the design and implementation of effective and robust policy, evaluate its outcomes, and demonstrate its value.

EPA Research 2030 has a thematic structure, comprising the following four interconnected hubs that bring an integrated and cross-sectoral approach, enabling holistic management and protection of our environment:
- Addressing climate change evidence needs
- Facilitating a green and circular economy
- Delivering a healthy environment
- Protecting and restoring our natural environment

As part of EPA Research 2030, a detailed consultation is undertaken on a three-year cycle to identify key research areas and actions, including emerging challenges and knowledge requirements for each of these research hubs. The EPA Research Thematic Assessment 2021-2023 is available on our website.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

The EPA Research Programme has a strong focus on policy and is driven by national regulations and European directives. The scope of EPA-funded research is informed by its relevance to policy and its alignment with the key activities of the EPA. Consideration of the interactions between social, behavioural and economic factors as an integral component of environmental research will lead to enhanced governance and more effective implementation of environmental policies and strategies.

Proposals are invited for innovative research to provide evidence to support environmental policy in Ireland. Applicants must clearly demonstrate the relevance of their proposed research to the work of the EPA and national policy and should consider some or all of the following in the preparation of their proposal:
- **EPA Research 2030;**
- **EPA Research Thematic Assessment 2021-2023;**
- **National environmental policy context;**
- **Key activities of the EPA; and**
- **Implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.**

Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to consider whether Earth Observation (e.g., COPERNICUS) could be used to address their selected research question.

Thematic research areas of strategic interest include:

a. **Addressing climate change evidence needs**

Climate change is already having an impact in Ireland and strong mitigation and adaptation measures are needed. Research is essential in providing the evidence necessary to improve our knowledge systems and inform policy decisions that will advance our ambitions to be carbon neutral and resilient to climate disruption.

b. **Facilitating a green and circular economy**

Environmental and sustainability challenges are inextricably linked to economic activities and lifestyles. Research is needed to contribute to the mainstreaming of sustainable management of natural resources and waste, unlocking the potential of the circular and bio-economies, and boosting competitiveness, through resource efficiency and deployment of innovative technologies and solutions.

c. **Delivering a healthy environment**

A clean, vibrant and safe environment is a prerequisite for good health and wellbeing. Environmental degradation, pollution, as well as known and emerging substances of concern threaten our health and that of our supporting ecosystems. Research will contribute to understanding the risks and benefits, and to identifying appropriate policy and behavioural responses.

d. **Protecting and restoring our natural environment**

Our natural environment provides us with clean air and water, food and the raw materials to sustain us and our economy. Research is required to inform and support a cross-sectoral approach to managing our natural environment and for the development of policies relating to the regulation of emissions and activities, and the protection of our water, land and ecosystems.

APPENDIX 2
POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN CHILDHOOD DISADVANTAGE IN IRELAND

BACKGROUND

In partnership with the Irish Research Council, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth invites applications for the Postgraduate Scholarship in Childhood Disadvantage in Ireland. One scholarship will be made to the top ranked applicant recommended for funding.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, EQUALITY, DISABILITY, INTEGRATION AND YOUTH

The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's mission is to enhance the lives of children, young people, adults, families and communities, recognising diversity and promoting equality of opportunity. Please read the Department's Statement of Strategy 2021-2023 for a comprehensive overview of current strategic priorities. These include:

- Developing, implementing and influencing evidence informed policies and legislation that improve the outcomes for those we serve.
- Ensuring the provision of a range of quality and sustainable services, underpinned by strategic investment, that meet the needs of individuals, families and communities.
- Helping those who are vulnerable, including children, young people and at risk individuals, to overcome adverse circumstances and to achieve their full potential.
- Promoting the development of a progressive, respectful and equal society, informed by the experiences of past generations and seeking to respond to the needs of survivors.
- Working in partnership with individuals, families and communities, and across Government Departments, public bodies and civil society to achieve better outcomes.

POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN CHILDHOOD DISADVANTAGE IN IRELAND

This scholarship has been established in memory of the children who died in Mother and Baby Institutions. Applications are invited from those wishing to undertake research in the area of childhood disadvantage. Possible areas of strategic interest include, but are not limited to the following themes:

Possible thematic areas of strategic interest include:

a) Children who live/have lived with social and/or economic disadvantage.

b) Children who experience/have experienced difficulties or disadvantage due to living with disabilities or additional needs (broadly defined).

c) Children from migrant populations, Travellers, or Roma who experience/or have experienced disadvantage as a result.

d) Any relevant socio-historical research.

APPENDIX 3
MET ÉIREANN POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

BACKGROUND

In partnership with the Irish Research Council (IRC), Met Éireann invites applications for **Met Éireann Postgraduate Scholarships**. A maximum of five Met Éireann Postgraduate Scholarships will be made to the top ranked Met Éireann applications recommended for funding.

MET ÉIREANN

Met Éireann is the Irish National Meteorological Service as recognised by the World Meteorological Organisation under an international convention since 1950 and is a division of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Met Éireann is responsible for the collection and production of high-quality meteorological data, the communication of authoritative weather and climate services to protect life and property and the promotion of wider societal and economic wellbeing. Met Éireann conducts research into weather and climate and develops weather and climate services for Irish society and to inform Government policy and decision-making. Met Éireann maintains mission critical 24/7 operational offices, systems and infrastructure needed for successful provision of weather forecasts, severe weather warnings and regulated services to citizens, decision-makers, emergency management and Irish aviation.

Priorities

- Met Éireann continues to provide an **effective authoritative voice on meteorology and climatology** in Ireland, supported by focused research, underpinned by a strong ongoing commitment to excellent customer service standards and by exploiting the traditional, digital and social media communications platforms. Met Éireann leads the national [Destination Earth](#) coordination group;

- Met Éireann continues to strengthen its **support for emergency management** during extreme weather events by focusing on users' needs and increasing the relevance of weather information to users' concerns. This effort includes development of impact-based forecast services, using stakeholder vulnerability and exposure datasets and Met Éireann's state-of-the-art meteorological information;

- Met Éireann is prioritising the **development of the climate services** it provides to support improved societal outcomes in relation to planning and preparing for climate change impacts, through the translation and transfer of climate knowledge to researchers and decision-makers in policy and business. For example, Met Éireann's [TRANSLATE](#) project is producing standardised national climate projections and helping produce future climate information to further support climate adaptation in Ireland, leveraging the considerable international research already underway;

- Met Éireann is **developing flood forecasting capacity** and targeting pre-operational trials of its Flood Forecasting Centre for fluvial and coastal flood events. Fluvial (river) models for all Irish

catchments have been developed and the transfer of the OPW's Tide and Storm Surge Forecasting Service to Met Éireann is on the way. To ensure effective communication of flood alerts and advisories to the main stakeholders, a communications strategy has been put in place and its implementation will be aided through the procurement of an appropriate dissemination system;

- Met Éireann continues to **develop a modern integrated meteorological infrastructure**. Increased high performance computing capacity, an improved observational dataset, robust business continuity management capability, modern weather radar network and resilient and agile ICT services are essential to provide better weather and climate services. Investing in meteorological and climate research will generate new products and new forms of industrial cooperation and support innovation, competitiveness, growth and job creation.

MET ÉIREANN POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

In partnership with the Irish Research Council, Met Éireann invites applications for Met Éireann Scholarships which will develop innovative research to provide evidence in support of specific thematic areas of strategic interest to Met Éireann (see below).

Please read Met Éireann's Strategic Plan 2017 – 2027, entitled "**Making Ireland Weather and Climate Prepared -** *Helping Irish society to be ready for and responsive to weather and climate risks*".

Possible thematic areas of strategic interest include:

- Climate services;

- Climate modelling;

- Specialised weather & climate research, e.g. impact, satellite, marine-, agri-meteorology;

- Applications of AI, Machine Learning, Data Analytics to weather & climate services;

- Weather & climate monitoring and observing systems and instrumentation;

- Numerical Weather Predication (NWP) modelling;

- General forecasting & flood forecasting;

- Dissemination & communication of weather & climate information;

- Perception & interpretation of weather & climate information;

- Decision making & emergency management in extreme weather events;

- Socio-economic impact of weather & climate information;

- Multi-hazard early warning system.

APPENDIX 4
ANDREW GRENE POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

BACKGROUND

In partnership with the Irish Research Council, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) invites applications for one Andrew Grene Postgraduate Scholarship in Conflict Resolution.

Ireland's policy for international development, A Better World, is a whole of government policy for Ireland's international development cooperation. It updates Ireland's traditional focus on 'the poorest of the poor' to realise the pledge of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to reach 'the furthest behind first'.

The vision outlined in *A Better World* is of a more equal, peaceful and sustainable global community. It incorporates Ireland's international development cooperation and humanitarian action, along with human rights, peacekeeping, disarmament and security policies and actions. It commits Ireland to developing regional approaches to dealing with instability and conflict, highlighting specific needs across the African continent, the Middle East, Latin America, Asia and Small Island Developing States.

ANDREW GRENE POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Eligibility

1. *Thematic*
    Applicants' proposed research must be coherent with one or more of the four policy priorities identified in *A Better World*, within the overarching objective to reach those furthest behind first:
    *   Gender equality;
    *   Reducing humanitarian need;
    *   Climate action;
    *   Strengthened governance.

2. *Regional*
    DFA's preference is that proposals should focus on at least one of Ireland's key partner countries and/or on specific countries supported by Ireland that are affected by conflict and fragility[12].

DFA will award funding to successful proposals that focus on one of the two following areas:

a. *Women, peace and security*
    Ireland's Third National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions (known collectively as the Women, Peace and Security Agenda), was launched in June 2019. The National Action Plan (NAP), which aligns closely with *A Better World*, sets out

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[12] Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda Uganda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cambodia, Colombia, Laos, Myanmar, Palestine, Vietnam; Small Island Developing States.

how Ireland will continue and enhance its implementation of the WPS agenda across the four pillars of Prevention, Participation, Protection and Promotion and will run for a five-year period from 2019-2024. The NAP is a key instrument in driving Ireland's strong commitment to gender equality in fragile and conflict affected contexts, including:

- strengthening women's leadership and meaningful participation in peace processes, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention;
- addressing root causes of conflict;
- strengthening protection of women and girls from conflict related harm;
- promoting a gender perspective and expertise in peace and security.

Research is encouraged in particular in improving the evidence-base for women's participation in decision-making around peace and security and in understanding the impact of harmful social norms, including masculinities and discriminatory gender norms on gender equality and on positive engagement of men and boys as stakeholders and advocates for supporting the WPS agenda.

b. *Post-conflict reconciliation*
Reconciliation involves rebuilding relationships and trust damaged during conflict, whether between different groups or between citizens and the State. As each conflict is unique, reconciliation takes different forms in different post-conflict settings: as national political dialogue; truth-telling; transitional justice and prosecutions; reparations (individual and collective); reintegration; peace education; and human rights-sensitive institutional reform. Reconciliation is context-specific and context-sensitive, meaning that each society must find its own way towards reconciliation, informed by the particular nature of the conflict or the character of the transition, and by the crucial role played by women in reconciliation processes. Ireland has actively sought to engage in two-way lesson-sharing with countries that have gone through and/or are going through their own reconciliation processes. Research is encouraged on comparative lessons in these contexts and in particular relation to Ireland's key partner countries and specific countries affected by conflict and fragility[13].

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[13] Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda Uganda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Cambodia, Colombia, Laos, Myanmar, Palestine, Vietnam; Small Island Developing States.

APPENDIX 5
GUIDANCE ON THE SEX/GENDER DIMENSION STATEMENT

While there are research projects in which biological sex and/or gender may not be relevant in terms of the research content, it is well established that, where relevant, integrating sex and gender analysis into the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the research can lead to better results and opportunities. If relevant sex-gender issues are missed or poorly addressed, research results will be partial and potentially biased. In worst-case scenarios poor consideration of the sex-gender dimension in research can result in real-world applications based on inaccurate results or conceptions. Full consideration of the sex-gender dimension in research content is a requirement for all Irish Research Council awards.

The integration of the sex-gender dimension in research is commonly mistaken for the integration of gender balance in research teams. These are two distinct matters, and the gender balance of a team should not be used to answer the sex-gender dimension in research question. We recommend this short video [here](#) from the European Commission on the integration of sex/gender dimension in research.

Definitions

Sex refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorised as female or male.

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender is usually conceptualised as a binary (girl/woman and boy/man) yet there is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience, and express it. The Irish charity, BelongTo provides a list of terminology associated with gender [here](#).

Resources

The following links provide positive and negative examples that result from the inclusion or exclusion of sex and gender in research respectively. These may be useful for applicants to complete the sex-gender dimension statement in the application:

General

- [Stanford University resource concerning the sex-gender aspects of research](#)

STEM

- [Online training for integrating sex and gender in health research](#)
- [Article about the dangers of drug testing on all-male animal populations](#) (animal studies, drug design)
- [Gender research focus in agricultural technology and botanical science](#) (agriculture, botanical science)
- [Transport Infrastructure Ireland report on the implications of transport design for women in Ireland](#) (transportation engineering)

AHSS

- [Article on urban design principles that take into account the needs of women and minority groups](#) (urban design)
- [Oxfam study about the gendered impacts of mining (geoscience)](#)

How to consider the potential gender dimension and implications for your research

The following is provided to help applicants complete the sex/gender dimension statement in the application. This is taken from the ['Gender in EU-funded research' toolkit](#), which aims to give the research community practical tools to integrate gender aspects into their research, including gender equality (equal outcomes for women and men) and integration of sex/gender analysis in research content.

1. The best possible research validity: Research should take into account the differences between men and women in the research population, and results will be more representative. General categories such as 'people', 'patients' or 'users' do not distinguish between men and women. Research based on such categories may well draw partial conclusions based on partial data. For example, research on a new breast cancer treatment should include male patients, so as to draw a complete picture. Most basic research with animal models focuses on males to the exclusion of females (Zucker et al., 2010; Marts et al., 2004). Research on economic migrants cannot limit itself to male points of view if it wants to understand the whole migrant population.

2. Research ideas and hypotheses: The relevance of biological sex and/or gender for and within the subject matter needs to be analysed and an assessment made as to whether these are relevant variables. The formulation of hypotheses can draw upon previous research and existing literature. Indeed, the body of knowledge on sex/gender issues has been steadily growing over recent decades and can serve as interesting reference material to build new hypotheses for future research.

3. Project design and research methodology: While research methodologies may vary, they all strive to represent (aspects of) reality. Whenever this reality concerns humans, any sound methodology should differentiate between the sexes and take into account the men's and women's situations equally. Groups such as 'citizens', 'patients', 'consumers', 'victims' or 'children' are therefore too general as categories.

4. Research implementation: *Data collection tools* (such as questionnaires and interview checklists) need to be gender-sensitive, use gender neutral language, and should make it possible to detect the different realities of men and women. This will help to avoid gender bias. For example, answers to be provided by the 'head of household' are not necessarily valid for all household members.

5. Data analysis*:* In most research concerning human subjects, data is routinely disaggregated by sex, which would logically lead to analyses according to sex. However, to date this is still not common practice. Systematically taking sex as a central variable and analysing other variables with respect to it (e.g. sex and age, sex and income, sex and mobility, sex and labour) will provide significant and useful insights. Involving gender-balanced end-user groups in the course of the research is also a good way of guaranteeing the highest impact.

6. Dissemination phase – reporting of data: Collecting and analysing sex and/or gender specific data is not enough if they are omitted from the published results. Sex and/or gender should be included in 'mainstream' publications as it is as much part of daily reality as any other variable studied. Specific dissemination actions (publications or events) for

sex and/or gender findings can be considered. Institutions and departments that focus on gender should be included in the target groups for dissemination. Publications should use gender-neutral language.

Checklist for sex and/or gender in research content

Research ideas phase:
- If the research involves humans as research objects, has the relevance of biological sex and/or gender to the research topic been analysed?
- If the research does not directly involve humans, are the possibly differentiated relations of men and women to the research subject sufficiently clear?
- Have you reviewed literature and other sources relating to differences in the research field?

Proposal phase:
- Does the methodology ensure that (possible) sex/gender differences will be investigated: that sex/gender differentiated data will be collected and analysed throughout the research cycle and will be part of the final publication?
- Does the proposal explicitly and comprehensively explain how sex/gender issues will be handled (e.g. in a specific work package)?
- Have possibly differentiated outcomes and impacts of the research on women and men been considered?

Research phase:
- Are questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, etc. designed to unravel potentially relevant sex and/or gender differences in your data?
- Are the groups involved in the project (e.g. samples, testing groups) gender-balanced? Is data analysed according to the sex variable? Are other relevant variables analysed with respect to sex?

Dissemination phase:
- Do analyses present statistics, tables, figures and descriptions that focus on the relevant sex/gender differences that came up in the course of the project?
- Are institutions, departments and journals that focus on gender included among the target groups for dissemination, along with mainstream research magazines?
- Have you considered a specific publication or event on sex/gender-related findings?

APPENDIX 6
GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME
EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation criteria and detail	Maximum marks
APPLICANT, including: • Track record and research potential of the applicant - Quality - Significance and relevance of the applicant's key achievements - Applicant's personal statement • Match between the applicant's profile and the proposed research project • Evidence of independent thinking • Quality of the reference provided by the academic supervisor	40
PROJECT, including: • Clarity and coherence of the proposed research • Quality of the proposed research design and methodologies • Feasibility of the proposed milestones, deliverables and contingency plans • Consideration as to how the proposed research will advance state of the art and make a contribution to existing knowledge • Plans for dissemination and knowledge exchange of the proposed research • Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender dimension • *Where relevant, does the application directly align with the strategic funding partner's themes and priorities?*	40
TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL, including: • Clarity and quality of training and career development plan • Potential for the development of new research-related and transferable skills and competencies, including those relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector • Capacity to acquire new knowledge • Clarity of thought as to how the scholarship will impact on the applicant's career path	10
ENVIRONMENT, including: • Suitability and ability of the supervisor(s) to provide adequate supervision • Quality of infrastructure and facilities provided by the host institution • Match between the applicant, supervisor(s) and the host institution	10

APPENDIX 7
GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME
EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation criteria and detail	Maximum marks
APPLICANT, including: • Track record and research potential of the applicant[14]**,** - Quality - Significance and relevance of the applicant's key achievements - Applicant's personal statement • Match between the applicant's profile and the proposed project • Evidence of independent thinking and leadership qualities • Quality of the reference provided by the academic mentor	30
PROJECT, including: • Clarity and coherence of the proposed research • Quality of the proposed research design and methodologies • Feasibility of the proposed milestones, deliverables and contingency plans • Consideration as to how the proposed research will advance state of the art and make a contribution to existing knowledge • Plans for dissemination and knowledge exchange of the proposed research • Consideration of the relevant ethical issues and sex/gender dimension	35
TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL, including: • Clarity and quality of training and career development plan • Potential for the development of new research-related and transferable skills and competencies, including those relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector • Capacity to acquire new knowledge • Clarity of thought as to how the fellowship will impact on the applicant's career path, including their professional independence	25
ENVIRONMENT, including: • Suitability and track record of the mentor, with a particular focus on their experience in developing researchers • Quality of infrastructure and facilities provided by the host institution • Match between the applicant, mentor and the host institution	10

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[14] For instance, collaboration, networking, generation of knowledge, contribution to research and higher education, leadership and management experience etc may be considered.