

**Irish Research Council Policy for  
Emeritus/'Retired' Academic Staff Members**

This policy is designed to advise and assist emeritus/'retired' academic staff members (hereafter referred to as '**RAS member(s)**') who continue to be active in research and are interested in applying for, or being a participant in, Irish Research Council (IRC) awards. This policy is also relevant to awardees who become 'retired' or emeritus during the course of an IRC-funded award.

The scope of this policy is wholly-funded IRC awards, or awards co-funded with national or international partners.

**1. Principal Investigator-led Programmes**

*1.1. Is a RAS member eligible to apply to IRC Principal Investigator-led (PI-led) programmes?*

RAS members may apply to IRC principal investigator-led (PI-led) programme calls, provided that the host higher education institution (HEI)/research-performing organisation (RPO) in Ireland for the application is willing to commit formal support by endorsing the application.

It is strongly recommended that RAS members who wish to apply to IRC PI-led programmes contact the proposed host HEI/RPO promptly to ascertain their eligibility well in advance of preparing or submitting an application. This is particularly important in light of the requirement of institutions to satisfy at all times the requirements of the Employment Control Framework (ECF) for HEIs.

*1.2. How does the IRC verify eligibility for a RAS member applicant?*

Where the application by the RAS member is recommended for funding, the IRC will seek verification at this stage that the RAS member applicant meets the terms and conditions of the award in full.

At this stage, the host HEI/RPO will be required to provide a letter, signed by the Vice-President of Research (or equivalent), confirming the above. They may be specifically asked to confirm that:

- There will be a written contract of employment/statement of appointment (or similar) in place, which extends at least up to the expiration date of the award.

- The RAS member will have full access to all facilities, labs, and other infrastructure necessary to successfully embark on the intended programme of research.
- The RAS member will have full signing and approval authority, in order to manage the award appropriately, and to supervise students.
- The RAS member will be bound by the rules and regulations of the institution, as is the case for other faculty colleagues.
- The RAS member will be covered by the host body's indemnity insurance.

Research officers should endorse applications from RAS member applicants only where such confirmation as outlined above is likely to be subsequently granted.

### *1.3. What happens if the awardee's status changes during the course of an award?*

If the awardee attains RAS member status **during** the course of the award, a similar letter of support must be provided by the host HEI/RPO.

It is the awardee's responsibility to notify the IRC of any such changes in status in a timely manner.

The IRC reserves the right to seek the recovery of grant funding for any period where the necessary host HEI/RPO support is not or ceases to be in place.

## **2. Postgraduate/Postdoctoral Programmes**

### *2.1. Is a RAS staff-member allowed to support applications to IRC postgraduate/ postdoctoral programmes?*

This is a matter for the host HEI/RPO.

If the HEI/RPO considers the RAS member to be still active in the field, and that the applicant will have regular and adequate access to them during the intended programme of research, then RAS member staff may be included in an application for supervision of postgraduate and postdoctoral applicants.

### *2.2. How does the IRC verify eligibility in this instance?*

For individual postgraduate and postdoctoral awards, verification of the eligibility of the RAS member will be sought by the IRC at award-offer stage.

Applicants' academic supervisor/mentor forms will include<sup>1</sup> a field wherein the academic supervisor/mentor is asked to self-identify as retired. This information is for IRC use, for the purpose of checking the academic supervisor/mentor's eligibility only; it will not be shared with assessors.

The host HEI/RPO will be required to provide a letter, signed by the Vice-President of Research (or equivalent), indicating the academic supervisor/mentor's eligibility and suitability for this role. It is the applicant's responsibility to supply such a letter, if successful, at award-offer stage.

To assist applicants in choosing appropriate supervision/mentorship, it is **imperative** that HEI/RPO research offices maintain an up-to-date list of eligible academic supervisors and mentors on the IRC's online application system. (Should RAS members not be permitted/available to supervise/mentor, such individuals should be removed from the online application system promptly.)

### *2.3. What happens if the status of the supervisor/mentor changes during the course of an award?*

If the awardee's academic supervisor/mentor attains RAS member status **during** the course of the award, the host HEI/RPO will be required to provide a letter, signed by the Vice-President of Research (or equivalent), indicating the academic supervisor/mentor's eligibility and suitability for this role.

It is the awardee's responsibility to notify the IRC of any such changes in status in a timely manner.

Should the host HEI/RPO not be willing to commit formal support under such circumstances, the IRC will consider a proposal from the awardee for a change in academic supervisor/mentor. The awardee may wish to propose that the original academic supervisor/mentor adopts a co-supervisory role; the IRC must be notified in advance of any change being made in relation to the primary supervisor, however.

## **3. Contacting the IRC**

Please check the relevant call documentation for further call-specific details of this policy.

---

<sup>1</sup> To be rolled out from 2021

Correspondence should be sent to the relevant scheme-specific email address as follows:

- Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship: [postdoc@research.ie](mailto:postdoc@research.ie)
- Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship: [postgrad@research.ie](mailto:postgrad@research.ie)
- Enterprise Partnership Scheme: [schemes@research.ie](mailto:schemes@research.ie)
- Employment Based Programme: [schemes@research.ie](mailto:schemes@research.ie)
- Laureate Awards Programme: [laureate@research.ie](mailto:laureate@research.ie)
- COALESCE: [projects@research.ie](mailto:projects@research.ie)
- CAROLINE: [cofund@research.ie](mailto:cofund@research.ie)