



**IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn

## COMPETITION

**Title of Positions:** Role A: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship – Physical Sciences and Engineering

Role B: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship – Communications and Programme Support

Role C: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship – Gender and Programme Support

**Duration:** Min. 1 year

**Location:** Irish Research Council, 3 Shelbourne Building, Shelbourne Road, Dublin 4

*“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 – 2018 Intern)*

The Irish Research Council is offering three opportunities for a Postdoctoral Fellow Internship to our Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellows working in relevant areas.

The successful candidates will work as part of the Irish Research Council team on the Council’s funding programmes and policy areas. Current postdoctoral researchers who are interested in applying their scientific knowledge in a research assessment and management setting and in further developing their skills in this area are invited to apply (subject to eligibility criteria).

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 (hereinafter referred to as the Council) is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills and operates under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority. The core function of the Council is to support excellent frontier research across all disciplines and career stages. It places a particular focus on early-stage career researchers and promotes diverse career opportunities for researchers by partnering with employers. The Council also has 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](http://www.research.ie/funding).

The Council is strongly committed to providing excellent career development opportunities to postdoctoral researchers funded under its programmes. In particular, the Council advocates a rounded approach to career development through experiencing the diversity of activities carried out by a national funding agency. **In line with this, the Council is pleased to offer 3 internship opportunities for a period of 12 months (minimum). Applications are invited from current award holders of an Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship with at least 3 months of their Fellowship completed.**

### Role A: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship – Physical Sciences and Engineering

This post offers the successful candidate an excellent opportunity to participate in the management of the Council's exciting new research programme supporting frontier research, the Laurate Awards programme ([Starting/Consolidator](#) and [Advanced](#)).

Responsibilities will include:

#### Peer review and assessment

- Identify and secure remote peer reviewers for eligible Physical Sciences and Engineering (PSE) applications, according to appropriate criteria
- Update the Council's database of peer reviewers
- Liaise with peer reviewers to ensure adherence to deadlines
- Perform a quality check on all reviews submitted by remote peer reviewers, PSE international assessment board (IAB) members
- Assist in the preparation of documents prior to, during and after panel meetings for the PSE-IAB Chairs and members
- Coordinate feedback reports for all PSE applicants following conclusion of the Call

### Post-award Monitoring and Reporting

- Assist in the collection of periodic reports from PSE awardees
- Review periodic reports for awards and organise peer review of periodic reports as required
- Review data management plans submitted by awardees
- Review institutional ethical approvals where applicable
- Draft a report for the Council on outcome of periodic reporting.

### Data and Research

- Prepare data and assist in the drafting of reports on the outcome of the application and assessment process both for Council and as a published briefing
- Update and further develop the Council's knowledge base on frontier research programmes internationally and best practice in the implementation of such programmes.

### Administration

- Various administrative tasks related to the above activities, including organisation of panel meetings and monitoring the online application system

## **Role B: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship – Communications and Programme Support**

Ireland has a treasure trove of creative and innovative individuals who are conducting research, many of whom are based in our higher education institutions and are funded by the Council. Their research is contributing to the understanding of our world and to national and global progress. In 2016, the Council spearheaded an initiative 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 will include:

- Assisting in implementing the Council's communications strategy which includes its #LoveIrishResearch campaign
- Developing social media, newsletter and website content to maintain the Council's online presence
- Updating the Council's website, Google analytics and social media monitoring
- Preparing impact and case study material to highlight the outputs and impacts of Council awards
- Assisting with the planning and promotion of special events.

In addition, the successful candidate will provide support across the Council's suite of funding schemes. Responsibilities will include:

- Acting as a point of contact to applicants, awardees, assessors and host institutions for queries
- Call Preparation: preparation for call launch including preparation of call documentation and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Call Assessment Phase: assist with the operation of schemes application stage, assessment and panel meetings for the Calls including working to identify peer reviewers
- Post-award administration: preparation and announcement of results, distribution of feedback to applicants, issuing and processing of offer letters and research agreements and arranging for payments to the host institutions
- Assist with programme 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

### **Role C: Postdoctoral Fellow Internship – Gender and Programme Support**

The intern will play a key role in assisting with the Council's suite of gender-equality plans and initiatives. This will include:

- Supporting the review of the Irish Research Council's Gender Strategy and Action Plan (2013-2020) and designing an implementation agenda for any recommendations arising
- Assisting with the delivery of Council work-packages in relation to the GENDER-NET Plus ERA-NET Cofund
- Reviewing national and international developments in gender equality, analysing current Council approaches to gender in its procedures and practices, and suggesting improvements in light of international best practice

Programme-support duties will be as outlined in relation to Role B above.

## Benefits to the Fellow 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. The internships will facilitate workplace experience and will be invaluable to those considering a career in research policy or programme development, nationally or internationally. Furthermore, this opportunity comes at an exciting time in the evolution of the Irish higher education and research system, and at a time when there will be significant developments for research in Ireland.

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 also provide opportunities to utilise skills in developing strategy, policy, communications and working with a range of stakeholders. The Council will support the professional development and training of interns during the internship period.

The Irish Research Council's offices are in Ballsbridge, approximately 5 minutes' walk from Lansdowne Road Dart Station.

## Essential requirements

The applicant must be a current Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Fellow with:

- the ability to deal effectively with competing priorities;
- a proven ability to work under pressure;
- advanced numerical, analytical, troubleshooting, and problem-solving skills;
- excellent attention to detail;
- excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- advanced knowledge of Microsoft Word and Excel;
- good interpersonal skills and the ability to work as part of a team;
- a research background in physical sciences and engineering **(Role A only)**;
- experience in managing websites and social media platforms and an interest in the impactful communication of research **(Role B only)**;
- an interest in gender equality issues **(Role C only)**.

## **Appointment and Remuneration**

The internship posts will be full time and tenable from **late November/early December 2018 for a minimum period of 12 months from start date**. In awarding the internship, the Council will grant an initial three months' internship post extendable to 12 months (minimum), 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 Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship rate per annum, 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 Director. This should be submitted by email to [eobrien@research.ie](mailto:eobrien@research.ie) no later than 5pm on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018**.

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 **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November** and available to start the internship by **late November/early December 2018**.

Irish Research Council  
October 2018