

RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2019 – GUIDELINES

ABOUT

The Irish Research Council¹ (the Council) has opened its call for nominations for the 2019 Researcher of the Year awards. Now in their third year, these awards will commend the very best of our awardees and alumni who have made, or are making, highly significant and valuable contributions to knowledge, society or innovation. The nominations will be judged by an expert independent panel whose decision will be final.

AWARD CATEGORIES

Nominations are invited under three categories:

- **Category one — Researcher of the Year**

One award will be made to a person currently working in research in an academic institution who is, or has previously been, a named awardee of the Council¹, and who has made an exceptional contribution to research in their field.

This category will be evaluated on the basis of:

- > excellence in research — on the basis of published work; national and international acknowledgements; research awards secured;
- > demonstration of leadership in their field;
- > communication of their research; and
- > impact of their research on knowledge, society or innovation.

- **Category two — Early-Career Researcher of the Year**

One award will be made to an early-career researcher currently working in research in an academic institution who is, or previously has been, a named awardee of the Council¹, and who has demonstrated an exceptional level of achievement in their field at this stage in their career.

This category will be evaluated on the basis of:

- > excellence in research — on the basis of track record appropriate to their career stage;
- > demonstration of potential to become a leader in their field;
- > communication of their research; and
- > potential to evolve into an inspiring role model for new researchers.

¹ This includes the Council's predecessors, namely the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET).

- **Category three — Impact Award (formerly Alumnus of the Year)**

One award will be made to an alumnus of the Council¹ who is making a highly significant impact outside of academia. Eligible alumni need not specifically be working in a research-driven role.

This category will be evaluated on the basis of:

- > the impact of their work, nationally and/or internationally;
- > demonstration of leadership and a proven ability to make a difference;
- > contribution of their work to knowledge, society or innovation.

The Campus Engage report, [Engaged Research: Society & Higher Education Addressing Grand Societal Challenges Together](#), illustrates the wide range of potential types of impact that may be considered here.²

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Nominees under all three categories must be persons who, in their own name, applied for and received funding from the Council¹ under one or more of the following categories:
 - Postgraduate scholarship schemes
 - Postdoctoral fellowship schemes
 - Research project awards including all principal investigator-led awards, e.g. COALESCE, Research of Policy and Society, New Horizons, Laureate Awards.

A past awardee of a Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting Award or 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.

- Nominees from all disciplinary areas are encouraged.
- Nominees can be based anywhere in the world.
- Category 1 and 2 nominees must currently be based within academia.
- A completed PhD is not a requirement for any of the categories.
- Category 2 nominees must have successfully completed their PhD or their highest postgraduate qualification no more than eight years prior to 1 January 2020³. This period of eligibility can be extended on the grounds of eligible career breaks⁴.
- 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.
- Applicants to category 2 at postdoctoral level or above must have an employment contract with the nominating institution (or another research performing institution abroad) at the time of application. Applicants to category 2 at postgraduate level need to be hosted by the nominating institution (or another research performing institution abroad) at the time of application.
- Canvassing the Council or the adjudication panel is not permitted and will result in automatic disqualification.
- Current Council Board members may not be nominated.

² Potential categories include economic, environmental, health and wellbeing, policy and/or product development, professional and public services, social and cultural, internationalisation, and capacity building impacts.

³ For the purposes of this award, the date of conferring will be taken as the PhD or the highest postgraduate qualification completion date.

⁴ Eligible career breaks include maternity leave, paternity leave, adoptive leave, prolonged sick leave and carer's leave (as set out in Appendix 1). Provision of documented evidence of an eligible career break will be required if an exception is to be requested.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Categories one and two

- Step one — Nominees
 - > Nominees must complete the relevant form available [here](#).
 - > The completed form should be sent to the designated research officer within their academic institution.
 - > Nominees not currently based in an Irish academic institution should forward their forms to the designated research officer at the academic institution where they held their Council¹ award.

- Step two — Academic institutions
 - > Academic institutions may submit nominations (one male and one female) under one or both categories. Academic institutions are required to maintain gender balance within *any* category for which they wish to submit an application. 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 each category).
 - > Academic institutions should select two nominees (one male and one female) for each category entered.
 - > Receipt of more than two nominations per category from the same academic institution is not permitted.
 - > The list of academic institutions eligible for funding from the Irish Research Council can be found [on our website](#).
 - > Research offices should forward the nominee forms together with the academic institution overview form, available [here](#), to rotya@research.ie no later than 4pm (Irish time) on 26 September 2019.

Category three

- This category is open for nominations by the organisation in which the individual currently works or by staff at the individual's former academic institution (e.g. academic supervisor or mentor, research office, alumni and career development office).
- Staff at academic institutions are encouraged to contact Council alumni to make them aware of this category.
- Individuals may check the Council's Awardee database [here](#) to ensure the nominee is an alumnus of the Council.
- The nominator must complete the relevant form available [here](#).
- Applications should be emailed to rotya@research.ie no later than 4pm (Irish time) on 26 September 2019.

AWARD PRESENTATION

The awardees will be presented with a commemorative plaque at a ceremony in late 2019. The winners will also be profiled through an extensive media and online communications campaign.

IMPORTANT DATES

Call open	13 May 2019
FAQ deadline	20 September 2019
Nomination deadline	4pm (Irish time) 26 September 2019

If you do not find the answer to your query in the call documentation, you should contact the research office in your academic institution who will provide additional information. Research offices can send any queries they are unable to clarify to rotya@research.ie.

APPENDIX 1

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 achieved⁵.
- 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.

⁵ A document confirming the maternity leave period from the relevant HR department(s) or a birth certificate are sufficient documentation.