

**2022 Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

FAQs will be published every Thursday until 25 November 2021.

New questions will be marked ****New****

Updated questions will be marked ****Updated****

Questions are grouped under the following headings:

1. Eligibility
2. Applying to the programme
3. Conditions of award

If you do not find the answer to your query in the call documentation, you should contact the research office in your proposed institution which will provide information and clarification on the call. Research offices can send any queries they are unable to clarify to schemes@research.ie.

1. ELIGIBILITY

Could you tell me if the Central Bank is an eligible partner under the Enterprise Partnership Schemes and Employment-Based postgraduate?

An employment partner can be a company, registered charity, social, cultural or not-for-profit civic organisation, state-owned enterprise or an eligible public body that will co-fund the researcher for the duration of the award. An eligible public body is a public service body with specific scientific or cultural infrastructure that is integral to the conduct and completion of the proposed research.

Previously in the EBP scheme if an organisation's only base on the island of Ireland was in Northern Ireland then it would not be an eligible employment partner. Is this still the case?

Yes, this is still the case. The employment partner should be based in the Republic of Ireland and have suitable facilities to host and mentor the researcher.

Are there any eligibility criteria regarding the applicant's country of residence?

Applicants from any country may hold an Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme award. Arrangements with respect to immigration and the right to work will be a matter for settlement between the awardee, their host institution, their employment partner and the relevant immigration authorities of the State.

2. APPLYING TO THE SCHEME

Can you confirm that an applicant who has submitted an application to the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme can submit the same project, personal statement, etc. to the Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme.

An applicant may submit an application to either the Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme or the Enterprise Partnership Scheme as well as the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship Programme. The content of the submission is down to the applicant; however each proposal should provide due consideration to the differing elements of each programme.

Will there be employers added onto the potential enterprise/employment list or is the list on the call pages final?

The list of organisations which expressed interest in funding researchers, which features on the programme call page, will be updated if, and when, new organisations express an interest.

3. CONDITIONS OF AWARD

Does the fee waiver for eligible NGOs apply to the Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme as well as the Enterprise Partnership Schemes?

The fee waiver for eligible NGOs only applies to the Enterprise Partnership Schemes (Postgraduate and Postdoctoral) and not the Employment-Based Postgraduate Programme.

Is it correct that the Awardee's net salary must not be less than €18,500 per annum and that there is no cap on the wage the employment partner pays the Awardee?

The net salary must not be less than €18,500, or the net salary for graduate entry to the employment partner, whichever is greater. The awardee's salary, exclusive of tuition fees, should be negotiated between the awardee and the employment partner and be inclusive of the Irish Research Council's contribution of €18,500 per annum to the employment of the awardee. There is no cap in relation to the awardee's salary.

If there is an applicant currently employed by an Employment Partner, is it possible for them to remain on their current salary if a partner is willing to pay the excess? Or will they will have to drop that salary to be in line with the €27,500 max award amount as outlined in the IRC's call document.

The awardee's salary, exclusive of tuition fees, should be negotiated between the awardee and the employment partner and be inclusive of the Irish Research Council's contribution of €18,500 per annum to the employment of the awardee. There is no cap in relation to the awardee's salary.

We have a query in relation to the T&Cs where it says 'awardees must be primarily based with the employment partner'. The employment partner has a main office and employs people based in the Republic of Ireland. The company allows all employees to work remotely predominantly with occasional visits to the office. Is it acceptable for the postgraduate employee to 'work from home' as long as they are based in the Republic of Ireland or should they be based at their higher education institution? They would be employed under the same conditions as other employees with remote access to the resources, facilities, training and the staff required to support their postgraduate studies.

The employment partner should be based in the Republic of Ireland and have suitable facilities to host and mentor the researcher. Awardees are primarily based with the employment partner which must employ them for the duration of the award as a full-time employee on the normal terms and conditions for salaried employees. If the normal terms and conditions for salaried employees include 'working from home', then the Irish Research Council does not have any issue with the awardee also doing so.

****Updated** Is €9k the maximum amount of money (per year of award) that an employment partner will have to provide to the IRC. In other words, the company invoices the HEI for €18.5k per year of award which goes towards the scholar's salary, but the €9k is a separate transaction between the company and the IRC and the company will not be expected to pay more than this to the IRC? Can individual arrangements be made between the organisation and the IRC in respect of the annual €9k transfer?**

Employment partners are expected to commit a minimum of €9,000 per annum towards the cost of funding the researcher.

The Award will be paid to the Awardee's HEI by the IRC, quarterly in advance, with the first instalment to be made as soon as the Award commences. The IRC does not transfer any monies directly to the Awardee or the Employment Partner, the HEI will co-ordinate the payment of the award to the Employment Partner. It is the responsibility of the Awardee and Employment Partner to contact the relevant Postgraduate Grants office at the HEI with regard to administration at the HEI level funding.

The Awardee's salary, exclusive of Award fees, will be negotiated between the Awardee and the Employment Partner and is inclusive of the Council's contribution of €18,500 to the employment of

the Awardee. The net salary must not be less than €18,500, or the net salary for graduate entry to the Employment Partner, whichever is the greater.

****New** As EBP students are based in the organisation, while the research expenses are transferred to the HEI, do both the employment mentor and the supervisor have to approve the research spending?**

The Awardee, in collaboration with their Academic Supervisor and Employment Mentor, is responsible for appropriate financial planning and spending under Clause 5.4 (While the Award is made to the individual Awardee, the Award Fund is administered through the appropriate office within the host HEI).

****New** Can you confirm the IRC reporting requirements for EBP awards - is there a 6-monthly report as well as an annual report and do both the employment mentor and supervisor sign off on these?**

The awardee, academic supervisor and employment mentor are each required to submit progress reports annually for each year of the award (generally in March/April). Final progress reports are due one month from the end date of the award, and a final financial report from the higher education institution within 60 days of the end date of the award.

****New** Can a candidate apply for this programme if they are not currently directly employed by the company on the application, on the basis that employment will be guaranteed if the grant is awarded?**

An applicant may apply if they are not currently employed by the Employment Partner, however all applications require a proposed employment mentor designated by the employment partner as being responsible for supporting and mentoring the awardee in relation to the employment partner's involvement.

For the award to be granted, the Employment Partner must employ the Awardee (either temporarily or permanently) for the duration of the award as a full-time employee on the normal terms and conditions for salaried employees. A formal employment contract must be drawn up between the Employment Partner and the Awardee and agreed for the entire period of the award.