



**GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND SCHOLARSHIPS IN SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND  
TECHNOLOGY**

**IRCSET 'Embark Initiative' Postgraduate Scholarship**

**Terms and Conditions**

**Second Call**

**2009**



## IRCSET 'Embark Initiative' Postgraduate Scholarship Competition

### **Section 1: General**

1. The Scheme offers opportunities for suitably qualified students to pursue a postgraduate degree by research supported by a Scholarship awarded by the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology, hereafter referred to as 'the Council'
2. The Scheme offers opportunities for suitably qualified students to pursue a postgraduate degree by research in a recognised third-level institution (hereafter referred to as 'the Research Body') as outlined in Section One of the Higher Education Act, 1971 *and/or* be in receipt of public funding and be approved by the Minister for Education and Science for the purposes of the Free Fees Initiative.
3. Successful awardees are selected in accordance with IRCSET's postgraduate Scholarship application process.

#### Eligibility

4. The IRCSET post graduate competition **does not** accept applications from:
  - a. Those currently registered as PhD candidates
  - b. Those currently registered for a Masters degree (by research) with the exception of:
    - i. Students in the IOT sector in receipt of Strand 1 funding wishing to transfer to the PhD register. (In this case IRCSET will support these students for up to a maximum of 2 years i.e. total postgraduate funded research including strand 1 funding can not exceed 3 years).
    - ii. Students registered for a Masters degree (by research) intending to complete and submit for this award and begin a significantly new research proposal to PhD level.



5. Scholarship awardees will normally have a first or upper second class honours primary degree or equivalent. If final examination results are not known at the time of offer, the Council may make a provisional Scholarship offer on condition that the final results achieved are consistent with (or better than) those indicated on the Scholar's application form.

6. Examination results (endorsed by the authorised contact at the Research Body) must correspond to those on official transcripts. For successful applicants to the competition, supporting materials and nonreturnable transcripts of the academic record must be forwarded to the Council for inspection before the Scholarship can commence. Transcripts can usually be obtained from one of the following, or their equivalent: the Registrar, faculty, or department/school of the applicant's institution. All transcripts must be appropriately stamped or endorsed confirming that they are official documents of the Institution.

7. Awardees must be formally accepted by the relevant department/school for the award to commence.

8. The Scheme supports basic research in the broad areas of Science, Engineering and Technology. Research which is deemed not to fall within this remit is not eligible for funding under the Scheme.

9. While a majority of postgraduate Scholarships awarded by the Council will be offered to European Union (EU) citizens or to those who are ordinarily resident within a member state of the EU, a proportion of awards may also be offered to exceptional candidates who are ordinarily non EU member states.

10. Scholars must maintain their principle residence in Ireland during the term of the Scholarship.

Title of Scholarship Award

11. Successful awardees will hold an 'IRCSET Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship in Science, Engineering and Technology'.



## **Section 2: Responsibilities**

Responsibilities of the Research Body

12. The Research Body is responsible for:

- Appointing research supervisor(s) with responsibility for supporting and guiding the research work of the award holder;
- Making the appropriate payments to the postgraduate Scholar;
- Notifying the Council directly should the Scholar discontinue the Scholarship for any reason;
- Providing the facilities needed to carry out the research, including access to and the use of equipment and services available in the Research Body;
- Maintaining accountability for proper use of public funds. A periodic report on all disbursements under the awards will be required by Council and unspent amounts on awards reimbursed to Council at agreed intervals.

13. The Supervisor of the supervisory team should develop a 'Research and Career Development Plan' in collaboration with the Scholar with a view to developing a dynamic career beyond the Scholarship period. Informative guidelines ("Good Practice Guide in the Organisation of PhD Programmes") are available to download from [www.iuqb.ie](http://www.iuqb.ie)

14. The Research Body and the research supervisor will ensure that the research programme complies with the requirements of all national and international regulatory authorities governing the use of sensitive materials or processes-for example (and not intended to be a complete list): radioactive isotopes, ionising radiation, laboratory or other animals, pathogenic organisms, genetically manipulated organisms, toxic and hazardous substances and research on human subjects and human embryos.

15. No monies provided by the Council as part of the grant may be used by the Research Body to cover overhead or administrative costs.



16. The Council is committed to the maintenance of high ethical standards in the research it funds through this Scheme. Qualifying Research Bodies are expected to have in place clear ethical guidelines and assurance procedures designed to manage research under their direction. Where a Scholar's research proposal requires approval by the relevant Research Body Ethics Committee, written evidence of such ethical approval will need to be obtained and available for examination by the Council prior to the funding of any successful research proposal.

17. The Research Body must have in place adequate systems for assuring that scientific misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, falsification of data, improper selectivity of data) can be prevented. The Research Body should have effective mechanisms for identifying scientific misconduct and clearly publicised and agreed procedures for investigating allegations of such misconduct.

18. The Research Body must establish rules and procedures such that any Intellectual property arising from the research work will be protected and managed appropriately. The design of such rules and procedures must be in accordance with Research Body and the Council's policy relating to intellectual property management.

19. The Research Body will accept full accountability for the management, monitoring and control of all the research work funded under the Scholarship award.

20. The Research Body will obtain all necessary permissions prescribed by Local and /or National Authorities and will comply with all requirements of such permissions together with all statutory requirements which may be necessary in relation to the protection of the environment, the prevention of pollution and ensuring wider societal health and safety protection.

21. The Research Body may be liable for reimbursement to the Council of the Scholarship award, in whole or in part, if it is deemed to have failed to meet any of its responsibilities as set out in this document.

### **Section 3: Conditions of the Scholarship**

Value of the Scholarship Award



22. The Scholarship award will be valued up to a maximum of €24,000.00 in any approved year for the award. Of this amount €16,000.00 will be paid as a maintenance award to the Scholar. The remaining €8,000.00 will be allocated to cover:

- Payment of fees to the Research Body;
- Support for the research to be carried out including the purchase of a moderately priced computer in the first year of research (up to a maximum of €1,500.00). Otherwise Scholarship funds are not intended for the purchase of capital items.

23. Unspent expenses may be carried forward from Year 1 to Year 2 of the award, but with this exception funds may not be carried forward from one year to the next.

#### Taxation

24. The award will be administered through the appropriate office within the Research Body. Compliance with national regulations on taxation will be a matter for resolution between the Scholar, the Research Body and the Irish Revenue Commissioners.

#### Non EU Fees

25. In the case of non EU Scholars the Scholarship will include full non EU fees as normally applied by the Research Body concerned. The value of the expenses portion of the Scholarship will be incremented by the difference between the cost of non EU and EU fees to accommodate for this.

#### Duration of the Scholarship

26. The duration of the award will normally be 36 months for PhD Funding. Partial funding may be extended beyond this time for a specific period of months. Any such extension will be subject to an extension request being made during the third year of registration for the PhD. Consideration may also be given to longer funding periods for those Scholars registered on IRCSET funded structured PhD programmes.

27. Funding for a M.Sc. (by research) will normally be for 12 months. An extension for a specific period of months may be granted subject to an extension request during the first twelve months. Recipients will be encouraged to continue to a PhD (or re-register if



the regulations of the Research Body permits this), providing that the additional funding period is agreed with IRCSET in advance.

28. Requests for the Scholarship to be for a duration other than 36 months for a PhD award or 12 months for a M.Sc (by research) award will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where written submission together with all relevant supporting documentation is forwarded to the Council.

29. Allowances as to the duration of the award may be made for those who have taken approved leave from their degree programmes or who have temporarily withdrawn from them for duly certified medical reasons. These circumstances must be brought to the attention of the Council as soon as is practicable after they become known to the Scholar.

Location of Scholarship Research

30. Scholarships must be held at a recognised third-level institution in Ireland.

31. A recognised third-level institution must be within the meaning of Section One of the Higher Education Act, 1971 *and/or* be in receipt of public funding and be approved by the Minister for Education and Science for the purposes of the Free Fees Initiative.

32. Scholars must maintain an actual presence within their respective departments/schools during the academic years of their Scholarships and are required to have regular contact with their supervisors.

33. However, the Council recognises that Scholars may benefit from spending part of the term of the Scholarship away from their registered institutions. Such periods may involve:

- Attending courses which are relevant to the Scholar's training. Except in special circumstances, such courses may only be taken prior to the commencement of the research phase of the degree and providing that the case for taking such courses has been made to the Council by the Scholar's supervisor. The Council will not normally sanction such courses longer than one academic term in duration and will not be liable for paying any additional fees or expenses associated with such courses;



- Spending part of the academic year engaged in research in Ireland or abroad. If the overseas component of this research proposed is to exceed 3 months, the prior permission of the Council will be required;

34. While it is expected that a Scholar will pursue his / her research work to completion at the Research Body originally nominated, it is recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances in which a change of research supervisor or research location may be desirable. In such circumstances the Scholar and the proposed new supervisor / Research Body must present a written submission to the Council and present the case for the change requested. The Council will examine each such submission on its merits and will respond with a decision as to continued funding in the new circumstances.

#### Additional Duties

35. Scholarships will be awarded only to those who are full-time students and who will engage full-time in research during the period of the award.

- Scholars will not be permitted to undertake paid work of more than a total 312 hours per academic year. These hours can be allocated over the year as required.
- Such work must be relevant to the research funded by the award; IRCSET Postgraduate Scholarship
- The Scholar must obtain written support from his/her academic supervisor before undertaking any such work; IRCSET must support and agree to the work
- The records of teaching or other paid work and approvals for same must be held by the Research Body for examination; Payment for such relevant work will not affect the level of the Scholar's award.

#### Additional Awards

36. The award is not intended to substitute or to augment funds available under programmatic research actions. It may be held in conjunction with other awards provided that:



- The value of such awards will not exceed a total of the value of €16,000.00 in any given year during the period of the Scholarship;
- Should the Scholar apply for further funding to another source, they will state as part of that application (whether or not they are requested to do so) that they hold an IRCSET - Embark Postgraduate Scholarship;
- The source of any other such award agrees that this Scholarship may be held in conjunction with funding provided by it. The Council will not involve itself in the decisions of other funding agencies in this regard;
- The Scholar will inform IRCSET of any additional funding they are in receipt of prior to accepting a Scholarship offer.

#### Publications and Acknowledgement of Scholarship Support

37. All public lectures and/or publications or public interviews given or issued by a Scholar which arise from work supported by the Council must contain an acknowledgement of funding received from IRCSET. Award holders must pay due recognition to IRCSET 'Embark Initiative' funding on email signatures, letterheads, websites, etc.

38. The IRCSET Council has announced a policy relating to Open Access to Publications. When these result in whole or in part from IRCSET funded research they must be deposited in an open access repository as soon as possible after publication. The requirement will be that these should be made openly accessible within a period of 6 months at the latest following initial publication. The policy is available from the IRCSET website.

### **Section 4: Review of Progress**

#### Progress Reports

39. The Council attaches considerable importance to procedures for monitoring research performance and ensuring effective progress under the Scholarship. Excellent progress, combined with other evidence of attainment such as formal institutional approval to progress from stage 1 PhD studies to stage 2 PhD studies, will be conditions of continued funding.



40. Scholars will be required to submit written progress reports to the Council before 30 May in each academic year following commencement of the scholarship.

41. All reports must be accompanied by a confidential and comprehensive evaluation from the Scholar's supervisor on the progress of the research.

42. It will be the responsibility of the Scholar to ensure that all reports are submitted on time. The timely submission of these reports by the Scholar and the supervisor is a condition of holding and renewing the Scholarship.

43. The Council retains the right to terminate the Scholarship if progress reports are not submitted on time or if it receives an unsatisfactory report.

44. Where a Scholarship is terminated, the Council will not maintain any responsibility for continued Scholarship payments to the Research Body and will have leave to seek recovery of some or all monies which have been awarded as part of the Scholarship.

45. On completion of the studies for which the Scholarship was awarded, the Scholar is requested to submit an electronic copy of his/her final thesis to the Council.

46. The Council may require the postgraduate Scholar to attend such meetings as are arranged by the Council to provide an account of the progress or outcomes of the project.

## **Section 5: Deferral and Termination**

### Deferral of Scholarship

47. Scholarships may not be deferred, other than in exceptional circumstances and then only at the discretion of the Council, whose decision on the matter shall be final.

### Termination of Scholarship

48. Scholarships will automatically cease one month after the submission of the Scholar's thesis. The value of the scholarship will be adjusted accordingly if the thesis is submitted more than 3 months before the expiration date of the Scholarship.



49. It will be the responsibility of the Scholar's supervisor to ensure that if the Scholar leaves his/her institution, or is not dedicating sufficient time or effort to the project, the Council will be informed immediately.

50. The Council recognises that for personal, professional or other reasons a Scholar may wish to terminate his/her Scholarship prematurely. This action should not be taken without prior consultation with the Council.

51. Where a Scholar intends to prematurely terminate his/her Scholarship the Council will require evidence of academic progress to the date of departure. In the event of that progress being inadequate, the Council may pursue the Scholar and / or the Research Body for reimbursement of amounts expended.

52. Should the Scholar be unable for any reason (including medical reasons) to pursue his/her studies in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Scholarship, he/she must inform the Council within two weeks of such a situation coming to his/her attention. In such situations, the Council will have regard to the usual conventions of the Scholar's host Institution. However, given the basis on which Scholarships are awarded, the Council reserves the right to withdraw or suspend the Scholarship.

53. The Council may suspend or terminate the Scholarship and/or require reimbursement of some or all payments as have already been made to the Scholar if any of the terms and conditions as outlined in this document are breached.

## **Section 6: Finance**

### Scholarship Payment

54. Subject to the compliance of the Research Body with these terms and conditions and to the receipt by the Council of satisfactory reports on the progress of the Scholarship:

- The Scholarship will be paid to the Research Body in quarterly instalments, beginning with the first instalment after the Scholarship commences.

### Requirements of the Research Body

55. The Council reserves the right to ask for confirmation from External Auditors of the Research Body of the following:



- That the annual accounts of the Research Body are up to date and have been approved by the Auditors without qualification;
- That the management letter from the Auditors raised no matters that did or could significantly affect the administration of research Scholarships awarded by the Council;
- That monies received under the Scholarship have been used for the purpose for which it was awarded.

56. The Council also reserves the right to commission audits of the participating Research Bodies for financial or other compliance. The Research Body undertakes to fully facilitate these reviews.

57. Annual reporting will be required of expenditure against the approved categories of expenses associated with the Scholarship. A standardised format will be mandated by the Council.

58. The Council accepts no responsibility, financial or otherwise, for expenditure or liabilities arising out of work funded by research Scholarships and the Research Body must fully indemnify the Council against all such expenditure or liabilities and against any actions, proceedings, costs, damages, expenses claims and demands arising from them including, in particular, but without limitation, any claims for compensation for which the Research Body may be liable as an employer or otherwise, or any claims by any person in relation to any intellectual property.

### **Section 7: Knowledge Transfer**

59. The Council encourages the commercialisation of research output as outlined in the “National Code of Practice for Managing Intellectual Property from Publicly Funded Research” ([www.forfas.ie/publications/show/pub132.html](http://www.forfas.ie/publications/show/pub132.html))

The Council makes no claim to any Intellectual Property arising from the Scholarship.



## **Section 8: The Application process**

60. Applications and all materials relating to applications must be submitted through the on-line facilities and must be received before the closing date and time advertised.

61. Applications will not be assessed if they are incomplete or have been received after the advertised closing date.

62. Each candidate may submit only one application per call. Examination results must correspond to those on official transcripts. Supporting materials and nonreturnable transcripts of the academic record must be held available for inspection.

63. In addition to the reference supplied by the applicant's proposed supervisor applicants must ensure that two references are submitted which support their application. These references should be completed by senior research figures in the research domain covered by the application. Referees will be contacted via the email address provided for them by the applicant on the online application form and supplied with details in order that they may complete their reference forms online. The proposed supervisor and 2 referees must be 3 individual and different people.

64. The Council will strive to adopt procedures that are consistent with the policies of the Irish Government in relation to the development of the Information Society and accordingly properly authenticated electronic communications will be treated as legally equivalent to paper submission.

65. Good practices will be observed in relation to data management, protection and security, but the Council can not be held legally liable for interference by any third party. However it will be a condition of application, that applicants grant permission to IRCSET to share application data with government departments and other national funding agencies for statistical and policy formation purposes.

66. Where the possibility exists of co-funding an application with our funding partners, the applicant will be asked to authorise IRCSET to discuss their application with such potential cosponsors correct pl ace for this comment?

## **Section 9: General Considerations**



67. These Terms and Conditions will be governed by and construed in accordance with the Laws of Ireland and all parties will expressly and irrevocably submit to the jurisdiction of the Irish Courts.

68. It is the responsibility of the Scholar to inform the Research Council of any change of address, telephone, or e-mail within two weeks of any such change.

69. The Council reserves the right to revise the Terms and Conditions of this Scheme at any time.

70. Government of Ireland Scholarships are held subject to these Terms and Conditions. If any of the above are breached by a Scholar, the Council may suspend or terminate the award and/or may require the Scholar to reimburse the Council for such payments as have already been made to the Scholar.

71. The award of an IRCSET Government of Ireland Research Scholarship is subject receipt of funding by the Research Council from the Department of Education and Science. In the event of such funding being reduced or being discontinued, neither the Department nor the Research Council will be under any liability to provide funding or to compensate a Scholar for any reduction or cessation of such funding.