



Guidelines for Applicants to Irish Cancer Society Research Scholarship Programme 2012

1. General

The objective of the Irish Cancer Society (ICS) Research Scholarship Programme is to offer excellent graduates from science, medical, nursing and other healthcare backgrounds the opportunity to pursue a doctoral degree in cancer research. During the four year programme, Scholars will undertake general and cancer specific training and will have the opportunity to gain experience at national and international research institutions.

Note: Applicants may apply for only ONE ICS Research funding scheme for 2012. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they fulfil the eligibility criteria for the scheme to which they are applying. If you are uncertain about your eligibility to this scheme, please contact us at the Helpdesk (details provided below) in advance of beginning your application.

2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants must fulfil the following criteria:

- Applicants must have obtained (or be about to obtain) a minimum of a first class honours or higher second class honours degree or equivalent
- Applicants must not have registered but propose to do a PhD
- Applicants must have less than 5 years post-graduate experience

3. Research Team's Eligibility

Research teams eligible to supervise a Scholar will include those in Irish higher education institutions as well as other institutions in Ireland who can demonstrate to the assessors a sufficiently high international research reputation.

4. Ineligible Applications

Applications from individuals that do not meet the eligibility criteria, incomplete applications and applications received after the advertised closing date will not be assessed.

5. Application Procedure

Prior to applying, applicants **must** read this document (Guidelines for Applicants) through to completion. Applicants must identify a suitable research supervisor, and discuss the proposed research project with this supervisor before completing the application form.

5.1. How to Apply

In order to submit an online application you are required to register at the following address: <http://www.cri.cancer.ie>.

Step 1: Register

On the right-hand side of the Login section, click '**Register**'. Insert:

1. Your name and email address
2. Your proposed Supervisor's name and email address
3. Click '**Register**'.

Step 2: Activate your Account

When you have submitted your registration, you and your proposed supervisor will each receive an automated welcome email from the Irish Cancer Society. You **must** follow the instructions in this email to activate your account. You will be unable to login if you do not activate your account correctly. The welcome email also contains your username and password, which you will need to login to the online system.

Step 3: Log in

Login at the following address: <http://www.cri.cancer.ie>. Insert your unique username (email address) and password and click '**Submit**'.

5.2. Completing your Application

There are three tabs on the online application system:

1. **Curriculum Vitae**
2. **My Application**
3. **My Profile**

You must complete your CV before you can proceed to your application. Your proposed supervisor must also complete their CV before you can submit your application.

Please note: Your proposed Supervisor has access to your account so that you can collaborate on your application. You do not have access to your proposed Supervisor's account (containing their CV). Details from your CV and your Supervisor's CV will automatically populate fields within your applications, it is therefore imperative that you and your Supervisor complete and update both CVs before you submit your application.

Tab 1: Curriculum Vitae

Mandatory sections are denoted by an asterisk (*). Information added to these sections will automatically populate corresponding sections in your application. Please ensure that the details contained within your CV are correct and up to date. You must input and save your CV before continuing to the next tabs. Once your CV has been completed, you will be able to access your application and My Profile tabs.

The sections within the CV are:

Surname

First (Given) name

Salutation

Country of Residence

Country of Citizenship

Title of current employment

Please indicate the title of your current role (e.g. research assistant, student, etc.)

Tenure of employment

Please state tenure of employment and end date if applicable (permanent, contract). If you are a student, please indicate the end date of your final exams (e.g. May 2012)

Correspondence Address	Please insert the correspondence address of your proposed host institution where future correspondence should be sent.
Email address	This field is automatically populated using the email address you provided when you register your online account. Please use an email address that you regularly check as important correspondence relating to your application will be sent to this email address.
Telephone number	Please provide a number at which you may be contacted in relation to your application.
Mobile number	Please provide a number at which you may be contacted in relation to your application.
Date of birth	Please state your date of birth using the format dd/mm/yyyy.

Third Level Education: Undergraduate degree

If you have completed your undergraduate degree, please give details of all your degree course results including your final year results. If you are currently completing the final year of your undergraduate degree, please give details of results obtained to date. You must state the institution of study, start and end date and qualification.

Third Level Education: Masters Degree Combined Taught & Research or Research-based

Please state the qualification awarded, date of award, institute of study, start and end date, overall percentage mark, placement within class and the total number of students in class.

If your Masters degree was research based, please state the department or school where you conducted your research, name of your advisor, title of your project, and the subject area. Please indicate if a thesis was awarded as part of your Masters degree. If so, you should include the title of your thesis and the award date.

Other details	Please list any skills, techniques, distinctions or awards that you acquired during your Masters degree.
Other educational training courses	Please state any additional educational training courses that you may have completed during your Masters degree.
Referees	You must provide the contact details of two referees, one to be your proposed supervisor. Please ensure that you supply the correct contact details for each referee.
Your current photo	Please upload a current portrait photo. This photo may be used for internal and media communications. Accepted formats include jpeg or gif format only.

Supervisor's CV

Please note: Only the proposed supervisor will have access to their account containing their CV. Applicants will not be able to edit any information contained within their proposed supervisor's CV. Details of the required sections of the supervisors CV are below:

Surname	
First (Given) name	
Salutation	
Country of Residence	
Country of Citizenship	
Title of current employment	
Tenure of appointment	Please state tenure of employment and end date if applicable (permanent, contract).
Employment address	

Correspondence address	Please state a suitable address to which correspondence relating to your application may be sent.
Email address	This field is automatically populated from the registration stage when you created your account. Please use a current email address that you regularly check as correspondence relating to your application will be sent to this email address.
Telephone number	Please give your personal office number, do not give general switchboard numbers etc.
Mobile number	Please provide a number at which you may be contacted in relation to your application.
Date of birth	Please state your date of birth using the format dd/mm/yyyy.
Brief biography	Please provide a brief biography (250 words max)
Current photo	Please upload a current portrait photo. This photo may be used for internal and media communications. Accepted formats include jpeg or gif format only.
Qualifications	Please list your qualifications, dated most recent first. Please state where you obtained your qualifications.
Employment history	Please provide a history of employment including post held, location, start and end date, type of employment (permanent or contract). (200 words max)
Membership of Boards or Professional Bodies	Please list any memberships you hold on boards or professional bodies (scientific or other) (200 words max)
Media interest/ability	Please indicate your willingness to participate in media or other communications in relation to this application. Please indicate all language in which you are fluent. (250 words max)
Your select publications	Please enter the Pubmed IDs (PMID) of up to 30 research publications. Most recent first.
Research Grant History	Please list the most recent grants you have received Please include the title of grant, granting body, amount awarded, end date of funding (250 words max)
Grant which you are currently applying to:	Please state any other funding to which you are currently applying. (100 words max)
Current projects	Please provide a brief describing of the current project in which you are currently involved.
Record of Supervision	Please complete the Record of Supervision in detail and as accurately as possible. Particular attention is paid to this section during the evaluation of each application by the peer-review panel.
Number of persons currently working in your research group	Please give the total number of people who are currently working within your research group. The following sections will allow you to expand on the breakdown of your research team.
Number of Master students	Please state the number of Masters students currently working under your supervision.

Number of MD students	Please state the number of MD students currently working under your supervision.
Number of PhD students	Please state the number of PhD students currently working under your supervision.
Number of post-doctoral researchers	Please state the number of post-doctoral researchers currently working as part of your research team.
Number of technicians	Please state the number of technicians currently working as part of your research team.
Number of years supervising research projects	Please indicate the number of years you have spent supervising research projects
Completed Masters theses supervised	Please provide a list of Masters theses supervised. Please use the following format for this information. Student Name / Thesis Subject Area / Year Thesis Awarded e.g. Ann Smith / Breast cancer progression and metastasis / 2010
Completed PhD theses supervised	Please provide a list of PhD theses supervised. Please use the following format for this information. Student Name / Thesis Subject Area / Year Thesis Awarded e.g. Ann Smith / Breast cancer progression and metastasis / 2010

Tab 2: My Application

The details of your application are entered into this section. Each section in the My Application tab must be fully completed. Input and save the information as required under the following headings:

1. Proposed Host Institution and Research Supervisor
2. Proposed Doctoral Degree by Research
3. Financial information
4. Personal Statement
5. Declaration of Support

Information relating to each section is detailed below.

1. Proposed Host Institution and Research Supervisor

Competition Group	} Automatically populated from your CV	
Details of Host Institution		
Name of host institution		
Address		
Supervisor's Name		
Salutation		
Surname		
Given (first) name		
Supervisor's correspondence address		} Automatically populated from your Supervisor's CV
Dept		
Institute		
Town		
County	} Automatically populated from your Supervisor's CV	
Postcode		
Supervisor's email address		
Supervisor's telephone number		
Supervisor's mobile number		
Name of Principal Investigator in Research Team	Please state the name of the Principal Investigator in the research team	
Cancer Type	Please select the cancer type that is most appropriate for your proposal (e.g. breast cancer, lung cancer, all cancers)	
Keywords	Please list up to five keywords	
Research Type	Please select the most appropriate research type for your proposal using the Common Scientific Outline (CSO). Please consult http://www.cancerportfolio.org/cso.jsp for further details on each research type.	
Discipline	Please select the most appropriate discipline for your proposed research from the drop-down menu.	
Research Location	Please state the primary location where you will conduct your proposed research even if your research will be carried out over multiple sites.	
Methodologies	Please select the methodologies that you will employ in your proposed research from the drop-down menu. You may select more than one methodology by holding down the 'Ctrl' button and clicking on appropriate headings.	
Start date	Please select the start date of your proposed research (e.g. 1 st October 2012)	

End date Please select the end date of your proposed research (e.g. 30th September 2016)

2. Proposed Doctoral Degree by Research

Proposed PhD Title Please state the title of your Research Scholarship.

Scientific Abstract (Summary of Research Project) It is extremely important to put time and effort into this section as your abstract will be used to assess your application at the short list stage. (250 words max)

Relevance of research to patients The Irish Cancer Society is focused on improving the lives of cancer patients through research. Please state how your research will be relevant to cancer patients in Ireland. (100 words max)

Lay Description Briefly describe your proposed research project in plain english. Your description should be written as if you are writing a letter to an 8-12 year old describing what your research involves and what you want to achieve. Do not use scientific or technical language. (200 words max)

Research Environment Please list the different research groups in your immediate environment. Is there an overall research theme to your centre? How many researchers are in your group? What is their core research focus? What is the break down of research groups in your department / centre? What special infrastructure / local factors make your research environment a good place to carry out this particular cancer research? (200 words max)

Biostatistics Please pay particular attention to this section when completing your proposal. We recommend that you seek advice from your Supervisor or an individual experienced with biostatistics before you submit your application. Where relevant, please provide biostatistical analysis for each part of your experimental plan. Power calculations, numbers of samples, number of matched controls, and strategy of different controls to be used should all be discussed. Additionally, please discuss the feasibility of obtaining /accessing sufficient numbers of samples and controls that will result in statistically meaningful results. (200 words max)

Ethical Approval Please indicate if ethical approval is required for your research. If ethical approval has been granted at the time of application, please upload the ethical approval documentation.

Project outline

1. Basis for research Please clearly state previous research carried out by the research team or others which forms the basis of your research proposal. (1000 words max)

2. Hypothesis and Aims Please outline the hypothesis and the aims of your research proposal. (500 words max)

3. Research Strategy Clearly state your strategy to achieve your aims. Also, please include a fall-back strategy that you will employ if initial investigations prove unfruitful. (500 words max)

4. Methods of Research Please describe the methods of research you will use to conduct your research. (1000 words max)
5. Objectives for First Year In this section you need to set out a series of objectives that you hope to achieve in the first year of your Research Scholarship. The objectives should be precise and concise statements, just one line with a projected date for completion. In some cases, you can enter alternatives in case a pitfall arises. Ensure that you set a realistic work plan for the time period.
e.g.
Collate all patient records and tissue samples by March
Isolate DNA and RNA from all samples by June
Genotype by August
Set up bioinformatics platform in collaboration with X,Y,Z by September (1000 words)
6. References Please cite any literature referenced in the sections above. (2000 words max)
7. Details of collaboration with other PhD students/ departments/research bodies Please provide details of any collaboration you will partake in as a Research Scholar within your research group, department and other research groups. (500 words max)
8. Generic and cancer-specific training modules Please provide details of education and training modules at your institution and other research institutions in Ireland which you wish to avail of during your research scholarship. These can be generic post-graduate training modules and cancer-specific modules. Please note: Applicants must plan to complete a defined number of credits during their 4 year Research Scholarship. The Irish Cancer Society will provide a list of available training opportunities at the beginning of the Research Scholarship. You will be required to participate in courses organised by the Irish Cancer Society such as cancer prevention, epidemiology and clinical research courses. (1000 words max)
9. Mobility Elements Please note that Mobility Elements are required as part of your application. Please outline two separate periods of mobility whereby you plan to travel to a visiting research group to conduct research or gain expertise during the course of your Scholarship. Mobility elements must be from one up to three months each in duration. The first mobility element should take place during the first two years of your Scholarship, with the second mobility element taking place during the final two years of your Scholarship. Applicants must select one national and one international research group to visit and the name of the Principal Investigator and the Research institution must be detailed in your application. Please describe your research plan or expertise you wish to develop while visiting each research institution.
- Please note that applicants may change the details of the mobility elements during the Research Scholarship and for this reason applicants must reapply for this funding closer to the period of travel (at least three months in advance of travelling). Funding will not be automatically available for successful applicants. (1000 words max)
10. Clinical /Industrial element Please note this element is optional and subject to approval by assessors. Applicants may apply to spend up to six months at

the beginning of the final year of their Research Scholarship within a clinical or an industrial setting. The proposed work at the clinical/industrial setting must be relevant to the Research Scholarship. This element may be particularly suitable for clinician scientists in training or researchers who wish to explore the commercial potential for their research. Applicants must describe how the proposed clinical/industrial element will be beneficial for the overall objectives of their Research Scholarship. If the clinical/industrial element involves any payments to the applicant, the student stipend should not be requested for the duration of this element. (750 words)

11. Letters of Support

Please note that the Declarations of Support by your supervisor and Head of Department/School in Section 5 must be completed as part of this application, and applications that have not completed this section will be deemed incomplete and ineligible.

Additional letters of support (other than the Declaration of Support) are optional. Additional letters of support must be scanned copies (in PDF format) of original letters on official letterhead with signatures. Originals may be requested if proposal is accepted. Please use cogent and succinct file names for your documents. Do not use symbols in file names (e.g. &, “”, ‘, ;, etc) as files containing these symbols will be unreadable. Uploaded documents should be brief as assessors may not read unnecessarily long documents. You may upload up to five different letters of support.

12. Research Images

You may upload up to five Research Images. Please ensure that figures are legible when uploading. Illegible figures may be difficult for assessors to review and could detract from your application

13. Other Sources of Funding

a) Please list all support for this research from other sources, including support that has been requested. Please include name, funding source, total amount requested and date of request.
b) If this scholarship application is part of an ongoing programme, then please detail the programme and show how this funding will contribute.

3. Financial Information

There are five allowable budget headings as follows:

- A) Applicant's Stipend (maximum €18,000 per annum)
- B) Registration fees
- C) Consumables
- D) Training and conference
- E) Mobility Element
- F) Dissemination

Reason for support requested

A full detailed breakdown of costs and justification for all costs must be provided for each budget heading in your application.

Funds may be requested for the following:

A) Applicant's Stipend

A student stipend up to a maximum value of €18,000 per annum may be requested.

B) Registration fees	A maximum of €6,000 will be funded for student registration fees.
C) Consumables	Please allow sufficient budget for all materials and consumables required to carry out your research proposal.
D) Training and conferences	Please provide details of costs involved in attending training and education modules (if at research institution other than host institution) and meetings and conferences that you will attend during your Scholarship.
E) Mobility	Allowable costs include travel, accommodation and running costs. Applicants may request up to a maximum of €3,000 for a national and up to a maximum of €6,000 for the international mobility element. Please note that funding for this proposed mobility element will not automatically be available to successful applicants. Applicants will be required to reapply for this mobility funding at least three months in advance of travelling.
F) Dissemination Costs	Please detail the dissemination costs for your research e.g. printing, posters, publication costs and public awareness lectures.

4. Personal Statement

There are five headings within the Personal Statement section. This section should be completed by the applicant. The personal statement sections should include only relevant information which will add merit to your application. The sections are:

Reasons for pursuing a PhD in Cancer Research	Please describe your reasons for pursuing a PhD in cancer research (250 words max)
Reasons for choosing proposed research centre and supervisor	Please describe why you chose to conduct your PhD research under the guidance of your proposed supervisor at the proposed research centre (250 words max)
Expectations upon completing PhD	What do you hope to have achieved by completing a PhD in cancer research and what do you expect to do upon completion (250 words max)
Other achievements or interests	Do you have any other achievements or interest that could support your application (250 words max)
Awards received	Please list any awards received (academic or other) (250 words max)

5. Declaration of Support

Declaration of Support from Proposed Supervisor	Please include the reasons why you believe this applicant should receive an Irish Cancer Society Research Scholarship and details of how you will support the applicant if he/she is awarded a Research Scholarship (100 words max)
Declaration of Support from Head of Department/School	Please include details of the support your department/school will provide to the applicant to support them and their research project during their proposed Research Scholarship e.g. relevant equipment and technologies, training facilities, provision of education and training modules, and support for structured PhD programme (100 words max)

Tab 3: My Profile

Your name and current email address and password are contained within the My Profile tab. Applicants may change their automatically generated password for something more memorable within this tab. Please ensure that you confirm your new password by re-entering it into the appropriate field and by clicking the 'Update' button.

5.3. Timeout and saving your work

Please ensure that you save your information at least once every 30 minutes. The system will automatically log you out after 45 minutes of inactivity, therefore if you do not save your information you may lose the information you have entered. We recommend that you complete your comments offline (in MS Word, for example) and copy and paste your comments into the relevant sections.

5.4. Helpdesk

If you require assistance with the online system, please contact the Helpdesk:
Email: research@irishcancer.ie
Telephone: +353 1 2310 583

6. Assessment Procedure

Incomplete and ineligible applications and those submitted after the deadline will not be assessed.

6.1. Stages of the Assessment Procedure

Stage 1. Application Check

All applications will be checked to ensure that they have been submitted prior to the deadline and that all sections are completed.

Stage 2. Short listing

Each eligible application will be sent to a number of international (not based in Ireland) peers for review for short listing. The scientific abstract, the applicant's CV and the supervisor's CV including their record of supervision will be used in the assessment of all applications at the shortlist stage. It is particularly important to put considerable time and effort into the scientific abstract.

Stage 3. Detailed Review

Assessors will complete an online assessment form and provide a score for each application under the following assessment criteria.

- Academic Qualifications
Applicant's must have or expect to obtain a minimum of an upper second class honours degree or equivalent in order to apply for a Research Scholarship.
- Personal Statement
This must address the questions outlined in the application form, be clear and coherent, and provide reasoning for undertaking the proposed research.
- Research Environment
The proposed host centre/laboratory, host institution and proposed supervisor will be evaluated on their ability to enable the full implementation of all aspects of the proposed Research Scholarship. This will include the provision of all necessary facilities for the ICS Research Scholar to fully carry out their proposed research project e.g. equipment, office/laboratory space, online access to research journals etc. This will also include the provision of support for the training and education modules of the Research Scholarship. The research track record of the chosen supervisor will be assessed as evidenced by the information provided in their CV, including their record of supervision.
- Research Proposal

All proposals must clearly describe the study design and scientific merit of the proposed research. The feasibility of the research must match the ability of the proposed scholar. It is important that the questions asked by the proposed research are relevant to the current field of research.

- Mobility Elements

The national and international mobility elements will be evaluated on the basis that they will add real value to the training and development of the applicant and will be of overall benefit to the objectives of the research proposal. The proposed research during the national and international mobility period must be realistic and feasible during the proposed time-frame.

- Clinical/Industrial element

As with the Mobility Elements, the clinical and/or industrial elements will be evaluated on the potential to add real value to the training and development of the applicant and will be of overall benefit to the objectives of the research proposal.

- Referees

Statements of support for the scholar from two Referees.

Stage 4. Interview Short list

Assessors will discuss and debate the scoring of applications, and propose a ranking list of applicants.

Stage 5. Interview

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview with the assessment panel and representatives from the Irish Cancer Society.

Stage 6. Awarding of Research Scholarships

Following the interview stage, the successful applicants will be informed that Irish Cancer Society Research Scholarships will be awarded, subject to terms and conditions.

6.2. Conflicts of Interest

ICS will endeavour to ensure that the assessors chosen do not have any conflicts of interest with the applications they are assessing.

6.3. Feedback

Following each assessment stage, unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email. A summary of feedback comments may be requested upon completion of the assessment procedure with the aim of improving the applicant's success should they wish to re-apply in the future or apply to another similar scheme. The Irish Cancer Society will not take any responsibility for any comments made by the independent assessment panel.

7. Application Checklist

The following must be completed **ONLINE by 3pm on Wednesday 1st February 2012**:

1. CV of Applicant
2. CV of Proposed Supervisor (including record of supervision)
3. Application Form Submitted

A PRINTED (HARD) COPY of the following must be received by the Irish Cancer Society by **Wednesday 8th February 2012**.

1. Declaration of Support signed by the Applicant, Proposed Supervisor and Head of Dept/School

INCOMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS AND APPLICATION FORMS SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE OF 3PM WEDNESDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2012 WILL NOT BE ASSESSED.