



Irish Cancer Society Research

Irish Cancer Society Cancer Survivorship Research Scholarship Programme 2023

Guidelines for Applicants

1. Introduction	2
1.1. Overview	2
1.2. Indicative Timelines	3
1.3. Research Project Eligibility	3
1.4. Funding and Duration	4
1.5. Mobility and Capacity Building Element	4
1.6. Patient and Stakeholder Involvement	5
1.7. Research Impact	5
2. Application Procedure	6
2.1. Application Overview	6
2.2. How to Apply	7
3. Application Form	7
4. Submission of the Application	26
5. Application Assessment.....	27
5.1. Conflicts of Interest.....	27
5.2. Assessment Procedure.....	27
5.3. Assessment Outcome	28
6. Next Stage: Interview	29
7. Contact.....	29



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Guidelines for Applicants

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

The objective of the Irish Cancer Society Cancer Survivorship Research Scholarship Programme is to offer excellent graduates the opportunity to undertake postgraduate training in cancer survivorship research. These graduates should be of a relevant background (e.g., nursing, psychology, dietetics, occupational therapy, physio, medical research, etc.), with a project focusing on cancer survivorship research.

During the four-year programme, the Scholar will undertake general and cancer-specific training while participating in a structured PhD programme, and will have the opportunity to gain experience at an international or national research institution through a mobility and capacity building element.

The application form is outlined in **Section 3** of this document. All applications will be reviewed by a panel of external international scientific reviewers and PPI reviewers. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview in Late May/Early June. Interviews will be held virtually.

The application form is accessible through the [Irish Cancer Society Gateway Grant Tracker online system](#). Please ensure that you are using the correct application form.

1.2. Indicative Timelines

Milestone	Date
Full Applications Open	Thursday 16 th March
Full Application Deadline	3pm Thursday 11th May
Review of Applications	May
Shortlisted Applicants Invited to interview	Early June
Interview (will be held virtually)	Mid-June
Announcement of Award	Late June

Please note: that the above dates are provisional and subject to change at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

1.3. Research Project Eligibility

All proposals must be aligned with the [Society's Strategy \(2020-2025\)](#) and [Research Roadmap](#) (please ensure you refer to these documents prior to submitting an application). Proposed projects **must be cancer survivorship** research. We particularly welcome applications on cancer survivorship that also incorporate our strategic priorities. These areas are described below in greater detail:

- a. **Survivorship** covers the period from diagnosis to treatment outcome (including palliative and end-of-life care). Survivorship research seeks to improve the care and outcomes experienced by people living with and beyond cancer. It includes: prevention and early detection of recurrent cancer; long term effects of cancer and its treatment; quality and experience of treatment and care; psycho-social effects of cancer and its treatment; self-management; health information and literacy; genetic risk and counselling; physical and practical needs e.g. financial, employment, mobility; etc.
- b. **Strategic priorities** is a crosscutting theme, which seeks to specifically foster and grow research into areas of high-unmet needs in cancer. For example, cancers which have not benefitted from the huge strides in outcome seen in some malignancies (metastatic disease, rare cancers and cancers with poor response or outcomes); the unmet needs of children, adolescents, and young adults affected by cancer; tackling misinformation and disinformation in cancer; addressing the needs of under-represented groups of people (e.g. Travelling community, ethnic and language minority communities, migrant communities, communities with socio-economic or mental health challenges, or any other socially excluded group).

1.4. Funding and Duration

The total value of the Irish Cancer Society Research Scholarship covering: stipend, fees, running costs, equipment, materials, training, travel & dissemination, and Public and Patient Involvement (PPI), will be €155,000 for a maximum of four years. Please refer to the Irish Cancer Society Budget Guidelines (Appendix 1) for guidance on completing the budget section of the full application. Please note the following budget stipulations specific to this Scholarship Call:

- PhD stipend is funded at a **minimum rate** of €18,500 per year for four years (please see Appendix 1 for further details).
- A maximum budget of €8,500 per annum is allowable for institution registration fees.
- A maximum budget of €3,000 (total) is permitted for small equipment items.
- A **minimum provision** of €1,000 must be allocated to support Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the proposed research project*.

Additionally, funding of up to a maximum of €5,000 will be available to the awardee for a **mobility and capacity building element (Section 1.5)**. Please note this €5,000 mobility and capacity building budget is additional to the €155,000 detailed above.

Each budget application (main grant budget and PPI budget) will be reviewed before a funding decision is made.

Please note: There is a minimum provision €1,000 available for PPI, we encourage researchers to supplement this mandatory provision with additional funds remaining from the student's overall annual budget. However, the annual budget may **not be supplemented with the PPI fund.*

1.5. Mobility and Capacity Building Element

This award provides provision for experience that goes beyond the traditional research environment in developing the researcher, their career, and the wider research environment. In order to encourage well-rounded researchers with varied experiences, applicants are required to develop a Mobility and Capacity Building Element plan as part of their award.

This important element is intended to provide the awardee with experience that goes beyond the traditional research environment, which will aid in developing the awardee's career.

Applicants can nominate either:

Option A) Mobility: a substantial mobility element of up to 3 months in duration at a national or international research group or lab during the first half of the fellowship.

Option B) Non-Mobility Initiative: a substantial and distinct non-mobility initiative that facilitates academic and clinical networking; encourages national and/or international cooperation and collaboration; and promotes the development of new skills and/or perspectives.

The **mobility and capacity building element** funding (up to a max €5,000) may be used for travel to a national or international research institution in furtherance of advancement of the research project aims, and must be used in the first 3 years of the scholarship. Successful applicants must reapply for this funding at least 3 months in advance of the commencement of the mobility element, with a detailed mobility budget breakdown.

If this funding has not been utilised by the end of year 2, a revised mobility or capacity building element plan will be automatically requested as part of the second Year Annual Report. The purpose of this mobility or capacity building element is to allow the applicant an opportunity to spend time working in varied research environments to maximise project impact and to aid the individual in their career development.

An example of a mobility and capacity building element is presented in Section 3.

1.6. Patient and Stakeholder Involvement

The Irish Cancer Society is dedicated to putting patients, families, survivors, supporters, and the public at the very heart of what we do. Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the research process ensures that research is meaningful and of benefit to those affected by cancer. PPI can be involved at any stage of a research project, from development and design to interpretation and dissemination.

In line with this commitment, it is expected that all applicants include a detailed PPI plan (and the associated minimum €1,000 budget allocation) and Sharing of Research Findings plan within their application. **It is strongly recommended that applicants read Appendix 2 ‘Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research’ Guidelines prior to beginning work on an application.**

1.7. Research Impact

Ensuring that the research funded by the Irish Cancer Society creates an impact has always been a key priority to the Society.

In line with our current strategy [2020-2025](#), from 2021 and beyond, the Irish Cancer Society will place a greater focus on maximising and measuring the impact of the research that the Irish Cancer Society funds through our grant schemes. Research impact refers to the potential real-life implications that the research has beyond the lab or academia.

Applicants are required to complete an impact plan as part of the application process (**Section 3H**).

The Research Impact Framework is a guide on research impact and how to monitor it for those applying for funding from the Irish Cancer Society, and for grant holders who are successful in securing a grant. It is strongly recommended that the Research Impact Framework be consulted when completing the impact plan and it is included at the end of this document (Appendix 3).

2. Application Procedure

2.1. Application Overview

Prior to applying, you **must** read this document through to completion.

The application should be initiated by the applicant, with strong input from the supervisors throughout. **The application must NOT be written by the supervisors alone***.

**Please note: If applicants are invited to attend the interview stages of assessment, they will be expected to display an in-depth knowledge of the proposed research project and PPI plan, and they must demonstrate the ability to think independently. Therefore, it is essential that the applicant themselves lead the writing of the full scholarship application.*

There are two stages to the application process:

- i. Application stage
- ii. Interviewing stage

The structure of the application and review process is designed to allow for an iterative development and improvement of applications to maximise their potential.

Stage	Description
Stage 1: Application	The application allows applicants to give a detailed description of each aspect of the proposed project, and its benefits to the applicant as an emerging researcher.

Stage	Description
	<p>An expert international review panel, comprised of both scientific and PPI expert reviewers, will evaluate the full application submissions. Applications will be evaluated based on their quality.</p> <p>Applications that are of the highest quality will be shortlisted to the next stage, interviews. Reviewer feedback will be made available to all applicants.</p>
Stage 2: Interviews	<p>Interviews are conducted between shortlisted applicants and the review panel. Feedback from the full application stage should be used to further improve the application in advance of the interviews.</p>

2.2. How to Apply

Applications must be completed and submitted through the Irish Cancer Society online grant management system. In order to submit an online application you are required to register at the following address: <https://grants.cancer.ie>. When registering, please fill out all fields on the registration form.

When you enter your login details, you will be directed to the portal home page. From here, you can:

1. Update your basic information (please ensure all fields are completed)
2. Make a new grant application
3. Access previous grant applications
4. Manage any active grants

When you have entered your basic details, you will be able to create a new application from the portal home page. Alternatively, select 'New Application' from the 'My Applications' tab.

Next, click 'Apply' for the Funding Round 'Cancer Survivorship Research Scholarship 2023'.

3. Application Form

Prior to starting the application, all applicants should carefully read all sections of the application form. It is recommended that you plan the layout of the research proposal in detail and, where possible, please ensure the full application flows.

There are **11 sections** in the online application form.

A. Project Outline

B. Applicant Details

- i. Curriculum Vitae
- ii. Personal Statement
- iii. Reference

C. Supervision

- i. Add supervisors
- ii. Supervisors' CVs
- iii. Declaration of Support - Supervisors

D. Research Programme

- i. Basis for Research
- ii. Hypothesis and Aims
- iii. Methods of Research
- iv. Research Programme References
- v. Gantt Chart*
- vi. SWOT Analysis of Proposed Project
- vii. Ethical Approval
- viii. Research Environment

E. Mobility and Capacity Building Element

- i. Mobility and Capacity Building Element Summary

F. Public and Patient Involvement Plan*

- i. Project Summary (Public and Patient Involvement) *
- ii. Public and Patient Involvement Plan*

G. Sharing of Research Findings Plan*

H. Research Impact Plan*

I. Declaration of Support – Head of Department

J. Budget

- i. Main grant budget
- ii. Public and Patient Involvement plan budget*

i. Validation Summary

Saving your progress regularly is strongly recommended by clicking 'Save' as you go through the application form. Alternatively, the information will be saved when you click 'Save and Close'. By clicking 'Previous' you will be brought to the previous section and by clicking 'Next' you will be brought to the next section.

When uploading supporting documents, select 'attach', choose the appropriate file, select 'open file' and then press 'attach' again, to ensure document is uploaded correctly.

Mandatory sections are marked with a red circle icon. You will not be able to submit the application if these sections are incomplete.

**Please note: An external PPI review panel consisting of people affected by cancer will review the sections marked by an asterisk. It is very important that these sections are written in plain English and are understandable to a non-scientific audience.*

Please see information from the Irish Cancer Society on Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines (Appendix 2) for more information on PPI and on writing in plain English.

Further details on each section of the application form:

A) Project Outline

In this section, you will be asked to provide basic information about your application. Input and save the information as required under the following headings:

- i. Proposed PhD Title**
- ii. Alignment with Irish Cancer Society Priority Research Areas**

Please outline how the proposed research is a cancer survivorship research project (Section 1.3). Please note, if the proposed research project does not align with the strategic goals of the Society it will not be eligible for funding (**200 words max**).

- iii. Has the proposed project been submitted elsewhere?**
- iv. Proposed Start Date** - Must not be before 01/09/23 or after 31/03/2024
- v. Duration** - Must be 48 months
- vi. Proposed Host Institution**
- vii. Cancer Type(s)**
- viii. Research Type(s)**
- ix. Discipline(s)**
- x. Keywords**

B) Applicant Details

- i. Curriculum Vitae**

Please upload your CV - completed using the template provided (the template is downloadable in this section on the online system or on the website). More information on each section is given in the template.

- Name
- Contact details
- Academic qualifications
 - Please complete a table for each year of your qualification. For example, one table for Year 1, another table for Year 2, etc. Example of a completed academic qualifications table for one year is presented below.

Degree/Qualification	BSc Psychology
Year	1
From	01/09/21
To	01/06/22
Subjects	Introduction to Research Methods; Health Psychology; Cognitive Psychology; Practical Skills in Psychology; Developmental Psychology; Theories of Personality; Social Psychology; Experimental Psychology; Historical and Conceptual Issues in Psychology
Institute	University College Dublin (UCD)
Department/School/Division	Psychology
Country	Ireland
Grade	70% or GPA 3.1 (First Class)

- Research experience
- Employment
- Publications
- Research grants

ii. Personal Statement

The personal statement section should include only relevant information which will add merit to your application (**300 words max**).

The following must be covered:

- Reasons for pursuing a PhD in cancer research
- Reasons for choosing the proposed research centre and supervisors
- What opportunities will this Scholarship open for you towards your own personal and professional development?
- Future career plans

iii. Reference

A reference is required from one relevant referee (e.g., Undergraduate research supervisor, head of Undergraduate/Masters' course). **This reference cannot be from your proposed supervisors.** Letter must be one page in length (uploaded in PDF format).

C) Supervision

i. Add supervisors

You **must add two** proposed primary supervisors to the application. One supervisor must be in the host institution, while the second may be from the same institution, or a different university. Your supervisors are required to confirm participation in the application prior to form submission, and approve the application after you complete it and before final submission to the Society.

To add your supervisors, you can search for your supervisors by entering their email address. If the supervisor has already created an account, then they will appear on the list. To add them as your supervisor, click 'Select'. Please note that on saving, the contact will be added to the Application as a Supervisor and they will receive a notification of this via email.

If your supervisor does not already have an account, you can click 'Add a New Contact' and enter their name and email address. Please note that on saving, the contact will be added to the Application as a Supervisor. They will receive a notification of this via email. Please note you must upload a CV from each of your proposed supervisors.

ii. Supervisors' CVs

Please upload the CVs of your two proposed primary supervisors. These CVs must be completed using the template provided (this template* is downloadable in this section on the online system or on the website).

**Please note this template is different to the Applicant CV Template.*

Please ensure that you first have the permission from your supervisors to upload their CVs.

iii. Declaration of Support - Supervisors

Please upload a declaration of support from each of your two proposed primary supervisors. The Declaration of Support Template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the website. This must be completed on headed paper.

Please note, reviewers will use this declaration of support to help assess supervisory support and the research environment.

D) Research Programme

i. Basis for Research:

Please clearly state previous research carried out by the associated research team or others, that forms the basis of your research proposal **(300 words max)**.

You may also upload up to five relevant research images/figures to support your application (one-page each, in PDF format). Please ensure that figures are legible when uploading. Illegible figures may be difficult for the peer review panel to assess and could detract from your application. Please do not upload large multi-page documents.

ii. Hypothesis and Aims

Please outline the hypothesis and the aims of your research proposal. Please ensure that the aims are realistic and achievable for a PhD project **(300 words max)**.

iii. Methods of Research

Please **describe and justify** the methods, procedures, and experimental design you will use to conduct your research **(1,000 words max)**.

For quantitative research, please provide statistical analysis for each part of your experimental plan: power calculations, sample size, number of matched controls (if applicable), etc. Additionally, please discuss the feasibility of obtaining or accessing sufficient numbers of participants and controls that will result in statistically meaningful results.

For qualitative research, please describe the planned sample size, rationale and data collection methodologies. Additionally, please discuss the methodology and feasibility of recruiting the planned sample size.

iv. Research Programme References

Please cite any literature referenced in the sections above.

v. Gantt Chart*

You must upload a Gantt chart detailing the timeline for your scholarship. This should include the Mobility or Capacity Building Element, and PPI activities (one-page max, PDF format).

Please note the Gantt chart will also be reviewed by the PPI panel to ensure that PPI activities have been appropriately incorporated into the research project timeline.

vi. SWOT Analysis of Proposed Project

Please provide a SWOT analysis of your proposed project outlining the potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the project.

Please describe the contingency plan that you will employ if initial investigations prove unfruitful **(300 words max)**.

vii. Ethical Approval

Please indicate if ethical approval is required for the research application. If it is required, please upload proof of approval/application for approval (in PDF format) **or** outline your plan/timeline for obtaining ethical approval for the project.

viii. Research Environment

Please detail how the research group and the overall research environment in your proposed host institute is best positioned to support you and facilitate the cancer research detailed in your application **(300 words max)**.

Things to consider:

- The number of researchers in your group and their core research focus and expertise.
- The established relationship between academic and healthcare institutes (if appropriate).
- The support you will receive from your research group e.g., post-doctoral supervision.
- Will you be participating in a structured PhD programme at the host institute?
- Are training courses offered at the host institute?
- The research theme at your centre/department and the different research groups in your immediate environment with which you could collaborate.
- Is there any special infrastructure or are there local factors that make your research environment a particularly good place to carry out the research?

E) Mobility and Capacity Building Element Plan

This award provides provision for experience that goes beyond the traditional research environment in developing the researcher, their career, and the wider research environment. In order to encourage well-rounded researchers with varied experiences, applicants are required to develop a Mobility and Capacity Building Element plan.

Option A) Mobility: a substantial mobility element of up to 3 months in duration at a national or international research group or lab during the first half of the Scholarship.

Option B) Non-Mobility Initiative: a substantial and distinct non-mobility initiative that facilitates academic and clinical networking; encourages national and/or international cooperation and collaboration; and promotes the development of new skills and/or perspectives.

Please describe the Mobility and Capacity Building Element Plan, addressing; (i) how the placement will aid the professional development of the applicant (i.e., new techniques/skills to be acquired), (ii) how the placement will contribute to the personal development of the applicant and their future career and (iii) develop/nurture international/national collaboration (**300 words max**).

Note: you may change the details of this element during the research scholarship. Successful applicants must re-apply for this funding closer to the period of travel or the initiative start date (at least three months in advance of this element commencing).

An example of a previously funded mobility and capacity building element is included below:

During the 2-week research visit at University of Stirling, the applicant benefited from expertise and feedback from researchers specialised in lung cancer screening issues such as Prof X, who is an expert in lung screening intervention development. The applicant also visited the University of Glasgow to develop further collaborations with Dr Y, who established and leads the Lung Cancer Screening Research Group that aims to improve adherence to lung cancer screening through the application of behavioural science and multi-disciplinary collaboration. This mobility element was an excellent opportunity to disseminate the applicant's research work and to develop international collaborations by carrying out the following activities:

- Presentation of the intervention and receiving feedback from experts;
- Organisation of a meeting with cancer screening experts from University of Stirling and University of Glasgow;
- Participation in relevant research activities hosted by the University of Stirling and the University of Glasgow at the time of the research visit (e.g. research group seminars).

F) Public and Patient Involvement*

PPI is a **fundamental** aspect of the application, a full-detailed public and patient involvement plan and a PPI plan budget are required at this stage. **PPI plans should also be incorporated into the project Gantt chart (Section D part v.)**. Failure to provide a comprehensive PPI plan may affect your chances of getting through to the interview stage. It is important to note, that this section and any other section to be assessed by the PPI panel be written in **plain English**.

Please note: While patient participation and engagement activities are permitted and encouraged as part of an application and can be detailed as part of the PPI plan, **the Society will only fund applicants who predominantly include involvement activities** as part of their plan. Please see Appendix 2 for further details and examples. The successful recipient of this award will be expected to attend a public and patient involvement development workshop upon commencement of their Scholarship.

We strongly recommend that applicants consult Appendix 2 before completing these sections.

Please detail the following:

i. Project Summary (Public and Patient Involvement)*

The project summary section will be used to set the context for the PPI reviewers.

When completing this section, please carefully consider the following questions: **(350 words max)**

- What is the background information to your research? Briefly outline the background of your research proposal, i.e., how and why your proposal came about, and the context in which your proposal will take place.
- What is the overall aim of your research project?
- Describe the specific problem, issue or question that you are asking in your research proposal and describe how you are addressing it (including the variables being measured, and why you have chosen these specific variables).
- What steps are involved in the research project?
- How is the proposed research relevant and important to people affected by cancer and the public?

ii. Public and Patient Involvement Plan*

The involvement plan should detail how people affected by cancer and any other relevant stakeholder will be **involved** in the study as partners. It should be well thought out, as detailed

as possible, and given as much consideration as the scientific sections in the form. Vague plans are to be avoided.

When completing this section, please carefully consider the following questions:

Aims and objectives (300 words max)

- What is the overall goal of your PPI plan?
- What are the aims and objectives of your PPI plan?

Plan delivery (400 words max)

- At what stages (e.g., planning, design, implementation, management, evaluation and/or dissemination) in the research process will people affected by cancer be involved in your research project?
- What are the planned timelines for each of the stages detailed above?
- What are the steps or procedures for integrating PPI into these aspects/areas?
- What are the proposed logistical plans (e.g., venues, timings, locations etc.) for your PPI plan?

Stakeholder involvement (400 words max)

- What do you want from the people involved, and how will it influence your research?
- What key stakeholders will be approached, and from where?
- How many stakeholders will be involved throughout the project?
- What steps will be taken to ensure public and patient involvement is **not tokenistic**?
- Were public and patient stakeholders involved in the design and development of this proposal? If yes, please upload a letter of support from the stakeholder using the template provided (PDF format, one letter max (one page in length)).
- Were patient organisations involved in the design and development of this proposal? If yes, please upload a letter of support from the patient organisations using the template provided (PDF format, one letter max (one page in length)).
- What PPI infrastructure is available within your university, and how will it be utilised?
- What supports will be available for PPI contributors involved (should they be needed)?
- Please identify any challenges that might arise from involving PPI in your research, and how any issues will be prevented.

**Please note: The PPI Review Panel will review this section. Feedback from the application PPI review will be given to shortlisted applicants prior to the interview stage. A PPI reviewer will use this section during the interview stage.*

Please see information from the Irish Cancer Society on Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines (Appendix 2).

G) Sharing of Research Findings Plan*

As the largest voluntary funder of cancer research in Ireland, the Irish Cancer Society relies on the generous donations from the public in order to fund cancer research. A key priority is, therefore, to ensure that the public (including people affected by cancer) are kept up to date on research that is funded by the Society. In line with this, it is a requirement that all applicants produce a Sharing of Research Findings plan to include communication of their research to **all** relevant audiences, in particular the public and people affected by cancer.

Please describe your plan for sharing your findings. This may include printed or electronic articles, presentations, public engagement events, social media content, etc. **(250 words max)**.

**Please note: The PPI Review Panel will review this section. Feedback from the application PPI review will be given to shortlisted applicants prior to the interview stage. A PPI reviewer will use this section during the interview stage.*

Please see information from the Irish Cancer Society on Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines (Appendix 2).

H) Impact Plan*

Please consult the Research Impact Framework (Appendix 3) when completing this section.

Creating impact from the research that we fund has always been of great importance to the Irish Cancer Society. The purpose of including an impact plan at the application stage is to focus all projects on working towards achieving impact from the outset in line with the Irish Cancer Society's strategic objectives 2020-2025.

The impact plan details how the input of research funding ultimately results in meaningful impact for people who are affected by cancer. Therefore, it is the impact of the research beyond academia, i.e., the real life benefit of the research and how this may improve the lives of people who are affected by cancer.

**Please note: The PPI Review Panel will review this section. Feedback from the application PPI review will be given to shortlisted applicants prior to the interview stage. A PPI reviewer will use this section during the interview stage.*

Please see information from the Irish Cancer Society on Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines (Appendix 2).

An impact plan can be designed using a sequence of steps, as follows:



What you need

Resources required to do your research e.g. funding, staff, equipment.

What you do

Activities involved in doing your research, using the inputs e.g. data collection, analysis etc.

3a. What you deliver

What you produce from your research activities e.g. publications, training programmes.

3b. Impact-Enabling Activities

How you drive outputs to outcomes.

What you change

The meaningful change your research causes for those affected by cancer e.g. increased survival, quality of life, etc.

What impact you have

Working toward a unified goal. Achieved through bringing about a series of changes to outcome.

3c. Evidence of progress – from outputs to outcomes

This is how you know the research is making a difference e.g. the development of a trial to further examine the research or the submission of a grant application to continue the research.

It is important to start thinking about the pathway to impact from the start of the project. We are aware that the impact plan provided by researchers at the application stage may be somewhat limited as the project has not yet started, and it can be difficult to predict research results or how a research landscape may change over time. When applying for a grant or planning a research project, you usually have a goal or question that you aim to answer by completing the project. It is the Society's duty to ensure that the research we fund makes a difference to the lives of those who are affected by cancer. Therefore, all research funded by the Irish Cancer Society should aim to have an impact on the lives of those who are affected by cancer and make steps towards a positive change. It is important that you are realistic; there is no need to overstate the impact of your research. Impact can be direct and indirect and it may happen slowly over time. The Irish Cancer Society is aware of this and understands every project is different.

For the Irish Cancer Society, research impact is defined as:

'Research being used to bring about a positive change to the lives of people affected by cancer'.

Therefore, thinking about the tangible impact of your research will provide you with a strong foundation when a grant gets underway. As such, plans should be as comprehensive and considered as possible. The recommended approach is to develop the impact plan by working backwards, from goal to inputs.

As such, the impact plan consists of:

5. Goal

4. Outcomes

3a. Outputs

3b. Impact-enabling activities

3c. Evidence of progress

2. Activities

1. Inputs

Please note: Both the PPI and Scientific Review Panels will review this section. **It should be written in a manner that is accessible to both reviewer groups.** Further details on each section follows:

Section**Description & Information given to applicant**

5. Goal This is the goal of the Irish Cancer Society. It is pre-determined by the [Strategy 2020-2025](#) and cannot be changed. This goal is that ‘by 2025, 3 out of 4 Irish cancer patients will survive their diagnosis and everyone affected by the disease will have access to world-class treatment, care and support. In future, no one in Ireland will die from cancer.’

This is the goal that all research funded by the Irish Cancer Society should be working towards. Please note, you will not be required to add anything additional to this category of the impact section.

4. Outcome To reach the above goal, a number of core changes or ‘outcomes’ must first be accomplished. These outcomes, identified through stakeholder consultation, will drive us toward our goal.

You must select at least one outcome from the below list:

- Treatments and diagnostics increase survival.
- Treatments and diagnostics increase the quality of life of people affected by cancer.
- Increased numbers of patients accessing clinical trials and early access programmes.
- Screening increases survival.
- Improved care and support increase survival.
- Improved care and support increase the quality of life of people affected by cancer.
- People affected by cancer feel more empowered in their cancer journey.

You may choose ‘other’ if you feel strongly that none of the other outcomes covers the potential outcome of your research. If ‘other’ is selected, then more detail will be required on the proposed outcome.

By targeting a strategic outcome, every funded study funded is contributing to the Society’s goal.

3a. Outputs Planned outputs for the project e.g., publications, newsletters, a website policy document, patents, information leaflets, reports, and training programmes etc. (**150 words max**).

These are just examples and are not a comprehensive list. The appropriate outputs will vary for each type of project and what outcome has been selected.

b. Impact-enabling activities

An output is unlikely to achieve a desired outcome on its own. Impact-enabling activities bridge the gap between **outputs** and **outcomes**.

Please detail what activities need to occur for the outputs to impact the identified outcome. When will these activities take place? Information can be provided in narrative or bullet point format (**300 words max**).

c. Evidence of progress

Please detail how you will measure the effectiveness of impact-enabling activities? i.e., how do you know your activity made a difference? What evidence can be used to show this? Indicators may be qualitative (descriptive or non-numerical) or quantitative (numerical) (**300 words max**).

2. Activities

Please outline the activities that will take place as part of the research project. As a lot of this has been provided in detail as part of the methodology section of your application, a high-level summary of what will be done over the course of the funding period is sufficient. Bullet points may be used (**150 words max**).

1. Inputs

Please detail the resources needed for the project. As a lot of this has been provided in detail as part of your application, a high-level summary is sufficient. Bullet points may be used (**150 words max**).

I) Declaration of Support - Head of Department

Please upload a declaration of support from the Head of Department in which the proposed project will take place. The Declaration of Support Template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the website. This must be completed on headed paper.

The declaration of support required from the head of department is simply a standard letter stating that they are aware of and support the application.

J) Budget

All applications should include a detailed budget. Indirect costs/overheads are not eligible costs for Irish Cancer Society awards. Please consult the Irish Cancer Society Research Budget and Expenses Policy guidelines when developing your grant budget (Appendix 1). The total award for this scholarship is €155,000 over 4 years, with an additional €5,000 provided for the mobility and capacity building element.

Approval of all budget items is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

Direct costs that can be requested for the following budget categories:

Budget Item	Details
Stipend	The Irish Cancer Society will fund the stipend of postgraduate students at a minimum rate of €18,500 per year for four years, full time (see Appendix 1). The funding of part-time post-graduate students over longer periods of time may be permitted depending on the specific funding call.
Registration fees	The Irish Cancer Society will make a contribution of up to €8,500 towards the annual costs of EU or non-EU postgraduate registration fees for up to four years. Some host institutions provide a reduction of fees in the latter years of the postgraduate degree (e.g., a 50% reduction in Year 4 of a PhD) and this should be taken into account when calculating the total registration fees over the four years. The Society is not in a position to fully fund the full registration fees of non-EU applicants. In this instance, it would be the responsibility of the host institution to cover the remaining fee's shortfall.
Running costs	These are the day-to-day costs associated with the running of the research project. The Irish Cancer Society will allow the purchase of reasonable running costs relevant to the specific project. Such costs may include but are not limited to: materials and consumables, research sample costs, access costs, survey costs, costs associated with research participants, transcription costs, data management costs, bench fees etc. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable. All running costs should be itemised within the application budget section and suitably justified.
Equipment	The Irish Cancer Society will allow researchers to purchase small equipment items up to a maximum value of €3,000. A strong justification must be provided for each equipment item, and a rationale must be given as to why this item is not already available to

the researcher at their host institution. Only equipment items that are specific to the research project will be allowed. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.

Requests for large pieces of equipment will not be funded. The purchase of computer equipment will be considered for any grant of over 24 months' duration, provided a strong rationale is given at the time of grant application. The maximum allowed budget for the purchase of a computer or laptop is €1,500.

**Training &
Education costs**

These are the costs associated with the education and training of the PhD Scholar. These include costs relating to technical skills training specific to the research project e.g., statistical analysis etc. In addition, costs relating to the long-term career development of the researchers will also be permitted, e.g., personal and professional development training etc., providing it relates to their future research career aspirations.

All costs relating to training must be outlined and justified as part of the researcher's application budget. When justifying these costs, it is important to provide details on the training type, location and rationale. Please note, for any training elements where travel is required, please detail the travel costs as part of the Travel and Sharing of Research Findings budget.

**Travel &
Dissemination costs**

Travel:

These are the costs relating to the travel of the PhD Scholar. Such costs must be directly related to events as part of the research programme and only the PhD Scholar will be eligible to claim these expenses. As a charitable organisation, we would expect that all costs in relation to travel be reasonable, and must be clearly justified. Please note that the Irish Cancer Society will fund Economy-Class flights only.

An example of permitted travel includes but is not limited to: costs associated with attendance at meetings, conferences, patient engagement events, workshops, fostering collaborations etc.

Reimbursement for costs associated with conference attendance will only be provided if the recipient is presenting their specific Society-funded research project in poster and/or oral format. Exceptions may apply for post-graduate students in the first year of study, whom would benefit from attendance at a national conference.

The applicant should provide as much detail as possible at the application stage. For example, if planning to attend a conference: the

name, location and dates (where possible) of the conference should be detailed, in addition to the reason for attendance.

Dissemination:

These are the costs associated with the communication and reporting of your research results. A key priority of the Society is to ensure that research findings are communicated to all relevant stakeholders. In particular, we are committed to ensuring that the public (particularly people affected by cancer) are kept up to date on our research that is funded. In line with this, we require that all applicants produce a Sharing of Research Findings plan that includes communication of their research not only to the academic community but to all relevant audiences.

Dissemination costs should be clearly planned and articulated as part of your research budget. Such costs may include printing, posters, generation of leaflets, costs associated and hosting of public awareness events etc. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.

Open Access Publication:

The Irish Cancer Society encourage publication in open-access journals and will provide a **maximum** contribution of up to €2,000 towards open-access publication costs. Please note, the Irish Cancer Society will not fund any research published in so-called “predatory journals”. We therefore ask that all researchers be aware of predatory publishers and exercise caution in this regard when publishing their research.

PPI costs

A mandatory minimum provision of €1,000 for specifically costing PPI activities into the PhD grant application. At the very minimum, it is expected that that all costs associated with involvement are covered by the research grant e.g., bus/train fares, mileage, parking charges, and subsistence. These costs should be outlined as part of the PPI section of your grant application. Research **participation** costs (e.g., participant travel) should not be included here as these form part of the running costs of the research project.

Please see Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in Research Guidelines on developing a PPI budget.

K) Validation Summary

In this section, any required fields in the application form that have not been completed will be detailed. You will not be able to submit the application until all required fields are completed.

4. Submission of the Application

The application is ready for submission once the form has been validated on the validation summary page. This will also highlight any supervisors who have yet to confirm their participation. Once the application has been validated, it may be submitted by the **lead applicant**, in this case the proposed scholar.

The application will then be routed to any required signatories. **The application will not be received by the Society until all signatories have approved it.** In this case, primary supervisors are signatories. All signatories must approve the application before the application deadline. It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to ensure that signatories are given sufficient time to approve the application before the deadline.

Applications must be received by the Society prior to the deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Application Checklist

Please ensure you have the following documents/approvals to support your application, and ensure to **plan your time carefully** to allow completion prior to the submission deadline:

- ✓ Completed application form
- ✓ Approval from each signatory
- ✓ Your CV
- ✓ Academic reference (not from your proposed supervisor)
- ✓ CV for each of the two proposed supervisors
- ✓ Letter of Support from each proposed supervisor
- ✓ Letter of Support from Head of Department
- ✓ Project Gantt Chart

N.B: Where applicable, please ensure to use Irish Cancer Society templates for each document upload (e.g. your CV, supervisor CV, Letters of Support). These are available to download from the online application system, or from the Irish Cancer Society research website.

Applications that have been submitted by the lead applicant but not approved by the signatories before the deadline will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that each signatory approves the application before the deadline. Please ensure that the application is submitted with sufficient time allowed for each signatory to approve.

5. Application Assessment

The Irish Cancer Society bases its funding decisions on the recommendations of an external review panel. However, the Society withholds the right to reject any funding application at its own discretion.

Incomplete, ineligible, or late applications will be rejected by the Society and may not proceed to external review.

5.1. Conflicts of Interest

The Society endeavours to ensure that external reviewers are free of any conflicts of interest that might unduly bias the decision making process.

5.2. Assessment Procedure

Applications are reviewed by a panel of international academic/clinical experts (scientific panel) **AND** a panel of experts by experience (PPI panel). The scientific panel will consist of experts in the area of cancer survivorship research. The PPI panel will be made up of individuals with a lived experience of cancer. Sections of the application will be assessed in the following way:

	PPI Panel	Scientific Panel
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public and Patient Involvement Plan • Gantt Chart (PPI Section) • Sharing of Research Findings Plan • Research Impact Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant Details • Supervision • Research Programme (including Gantt Chart) • Mobility and Capacity Building Element • Research Impact Plan
Interviews	Present	Present

Please note:

The main grant budget will be reviewed by the Scientific Reviewers **but not scored**. This is to ensure that they are feasible and that all maximum limits have been adhered to.

The public and patient involvement plan budget will be reviewed by the PPI reviewers **but not scored**. This is to ensure that it is feasible and that all minimum limits have been adhered to.

The Scientific Panel will not be formally assessing any of the PPI panel's sections, and vice versa. As such, it is vital that the sections reviewed by the PPI panel are written in **plain accessible English**. Failure to do this may result in the PPI representatives being unable to accurately score and provide feedback on these sections of your application. The review panel will be asked to provide feedback on the budget, which the Society will take into consideration. The approval of all grant budget items is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

Please note, both Scientific and PPI reviewers will have access to the entire application.

Scientific reviewers will score applications based on:

- The strength and suitability of the research environment in supporting the applicant in their research and career progression.
- The scientific merit of the proposed research, including feasibility of the proposed research, the methods of research and any ethical considerations.
- The impact plan and potential impact of the proposed research.

PPI reviewers will score each application based on:

- Clarity and feasibility of the PPI plan e.g. use of local resources, tokenism of plan, inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, timelines etc.
- A clear understanding by the researcher of the value of involving people affected by cancer in their research project
- Whether the PPI activities constitute true involvement and not participation/engagement.
- Whether the methods for the sharing of research findings are inclusive and appropriate.
- The impact plan and potential impact of the proposed research.

5.3. Assessment Outcome

Review scores and comments will be collated and all applications will be discussed at a review panel meeting. The review panel will select which applications should proceed to the next

stage. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by email. Reviewer feedback will be available to all applicants.

6. Next Stage: Interview

Applications shortlisted at the full Application Stage will be invited to interview by email.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend a virtual interview in Early June 2023. The interview panel will be made up of scientific and PPI reviewers, in addition to an Irish Cancer Society representative.

Applicants will be asked to present a summary of their project, including a response to the review panel's comments. This will be followed by a question and answer session. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate a detailed and critical understanding of their proposed project. The final funding decision will be co-decided by the scientific and PPI reviewers.

7. Contact

If you require assistance with the online grant management system or have any questions about the grant call, please contact the Irish Cancer Society Research Department:

Email: grants@irishcancer.ie