



Irish Cancer Society Research Fellowship 2020 - Social, Nursing, and Allied Health

Expression of Interest (EOI) - Guidelines for Applicants

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UPDATED 20/02/2020

1. General

1.1. Introduction

The Irish Cancer Society is now accepting Expression of Interest (EOI) applications for the Social, Nursing, and Allied Health Sciences (SNAH) Research Fellowship 2020.

The objective of the Irish Cancer Society Social, Nursing, and Allied Health (SNAH) Research Fellowship is to support excellent **early- to mid-stage** (0-6 years' experience post-PhD or equivalent) cancer researchers and clinical professionals (nurses and allied health professionals) to develop as independent researchers. This Fellowship (2 years full time or 3-4 years part time) is specifically intended to fund research that seeks to reduce the burden of cancer. Applications in the areas of basic or translational biomedical research are not eligible.

Please see the FAQ for more information. Projects deemed to be ineligible will not be considered further.

All eligible EOI applications will be reviewed by an international scientific panel. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application. There is funding available for one fellowship in 2020.

Key Dates	
Call opens for EOI	30-January-2020
EOI deadline	UPDATED: 10-March-2020 @ 3.00pm
Shortlisted applicants invited to submit full application	Early April 2020
Full application deadline	Early May 2020
Interviews in Dublin	Mid June 2020

Dates are provisional and subject to change. Further details of important dates for the full application stage will be given to shortlisted applicants. Applicants must be available to attend the interview in Dublin.

1.2. Funding and Fellowship Duration

The maximum funding granted for this fellowship is €160,000 to be undertaken either 2 years full-time or 3-4 years part-time. A part-time fellowship (0.5 FTE) is allowable for applicants who hold a concurrent clinical post in their professional field.

Included in the fellowship budget is a €7,000 allowance for mobility funding in order to travel to a national or an (preferably) international research institution for up to a maximum of six months during the fellowship (this trip must take place during the first half of the fellowship). The purpose of this mobility funding 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 prospects.

The mobility fund is considered separate to the travel and dissemination budget. Detailed budget information will be requested at full application stage. Shortlisted applicants will be provided with Irish Cancer Society spending guidelines.

In addition to mobility funding, a provision of €1,000 is included in the fellowship budget to cover costs associated with Public and Patient Involvement (PPI). See section 2.6 for further details.

Payment to the host institute will only be released on receipt of all necessary institutional ethical approvals. However, a small provision of allocated monies may be made available at the start of the award to facilitate the ethical approval process where necessary.

2. Eligibility

2.1. Applicant eligibility

The objective of the Irish Cancer Society SNAH Research Fellowship is to support excellent **early-stage (0-6 years' experience post-PhD or equivalent*)** cancer researchers to develop as independent researchers in their chosen area of social, nursing, and allied health sciences.

Applications from individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be assessed. We therefore strongly recommend you read the following criteria carefully to be made aware of requirements for the applicant, mentor, host institution, and research area.

The Irish Cancer Society SNAH Fellowship is open to:

- untenured academic researchers in the social, nursing, or allied health sciences; and
- clinical professionals in a social, nursing, and allied health science.

Academic researchers must:

- possess a PhD or equivalent* in a relevant social, nursing, or allied health sciences field;
- have a maximum of 6 years' post-doctoral research experience (from date of graduation)**;

- have an established track record in research exemplified by, for example, a history of grant awards, research supervision, peer-review publication, national/international collaboration, presentation at national/international conferences, etc.;
- attain an academic appointment in a higher education institution in the Republic of Ireland for the duration of the proposed study (applicants are not expected to hold this appointment at the time of applying).

Clinical professionals must:

- possess a clinical qualification in a social, nursing, or allied health science enabling registration with CORU (e.g. dietetics, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, speech and language therapy) or relevant professional body (e.g. Psychological Society of Ireland, Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland);
- possess a PhD or equivalent* in a relevant social, nursing, or allied health sciences field with a maximum of 6 years' post-doctoral research experience (from date of graduation)**;
- hold a relevant clinical appointment for the duration of the proposed study consisting of substantive clinical contact with cancer patients and/or their families (for part time applicants only);
- have a track record of research involvement exemplified by, for example, recruitment and data collection in research studies, conducting clinical audits, presentation at research meetings or conferences, academic publications, completion of research training, etc.

**PhD equivalence is defined as three or more senior (first, joint-first, or last) author publications in peer-reviewed academic journals or 4 years' full-time research experience post-primary degree. Alternative research outputs may be considered eligible e.g. monographs. In such instances, candidates should contact grants@irishcancer.ie before applying.*

***Applicants must have submitted their final post-viva hard-bound thesis at the time of application and must graduate before commencement of this fellowship.*

2.2. Mentor

At least one primary mentor is required for each application. The mentor should be an established senior researcher in an appropriate social, nursing, and allied health field, who will provide guidance and support. They must hold a post, either permanent or on contract basis, at the proposed host institute that covers the entire duration of the research fellowship and provide a letter of support to your application.

2.3. Host institution

The host institution is the organisation that receives and administers grant funding and is responsible for compliance with all general and specific terms and conditions of awards. In order to be eligible to apply for funding, a proposed host institution **must** be a higher education institution in the Republic of Ireland and **must** be one of the HRB's approved host institutions: <https://www.hrb.ie/funding/funding-schemes/before-you-apply/all-grant-policies/hrb-policy-on-approval-of-host-institutions>. Applicants

conducting research out of non-approved sites (e.g. hospital) must nominate an approved host institute and all finances must be managed by this institute.

2.4. Organisational support

In addition to a mentor support letter, all applicants require a letters of support from the proposed host institute. Clinical applicants also require organisational support from their employer. The clinical site may require staffing rearrangements (e.g. to cover the protected research time) or the hiring of staff. A detailed letter of support is required from the clinical site outlining its commitment to support the applicant in all relevant activities within the proposed body of work. Further information regarding the letter of support is provided in Section 4.

2.5. Eligible research areas

Proposed projects should be in the social, nursing, and allied health sciences. This Fellowship is specifically intended to fund research that seeks to reduce the burden of cancer. Research projects in the area of basic or translational science are not eligible. If considering an interventions-based research study, please ensure that the stage of development of the intervention is appropriate and that previous development phases are complete. If considering a complex intervention, please refer to the MRC Guidelines¹.

2.6. Public and Patient Involvement (PPI)

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 patient involvement plan (and an appropriate budget allocation – minimum €1,000) within their application. Details of planned PPI is not expected at the Expression of Interest stage, however, all applicants that are shortlisted to progress to full application will be required to provide a full detailed description of their PPI plan, which will be reviewed by lay reviewers (PPI advocates). Details of PPI will be included in the Appendix of the full application. The successful fellowship recipient will be expected to attend a PPI development workshop toward the end of 2020.

¹ Medical Research Council. Developing and evaluating complex interventions.
<https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/complex-interventions-guidance/>

3. Application Procedure

Prior to applying, you **must** read this document through to completion. You must identify a suitable mentor before completing the application form.

3.1. How to apply

Applications must be completed and submitted through the Irish Cancer Society Grant Tracker online 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 the fields on the registration form.

3.2. Overview of the application process

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 make sure all fields are completed)
2. Make a new grant application
3. Access previous grant applications

3.3. Making an application

When you have ensured that all your basic details are inputted then you can proceed to apply for a new grant application. This can be done by returning to the Portal Home page and clicking to apply for funding from one of our grant streams. Or alternatively through the 'My Applications' tab on the left hand side of the page, and clicking the 'New Application' button.

You will then be asked what Grant Type you would like to apply for. Click 'Apply' for the Grant Type detailed as 'SNAH Fellowship 2020 - EOI.'

3.4. Eligibility criteria

Once you click 'Apply' you will be required to tick that you meet all of the eligibility criteria before you can proceed to make an application. If you do not meet all criteria then you will be unable to make an application.

4. The Application Form

Once you have indicated that you meet all eligibility criteria you will then be directed to the application form. There are 8 sections outlined on the left hand side of the page:

- a) Introduction
- b) Project Outline
- c) Applicant CV
- d) Mentorship Details
- e) Project Summary
- f) Personal Statement
- g) Declarations of Support
- h) Validation Summary

It is recommended that you save the information as you complete each section. This can be done by clicking 'Save' as you go along. 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.

Sections that are required to be filled out have a red circle icon next to them. You will not be able to submit with the application if these sections are not completed.

a) Introduction

This section gives overview information on the fellowship scheme.

b) Project Outline

Details of your application are entered into this section. Input and save the information as required under the following headings:

- Proposed title;
- Proposed start date (ideally in September 2020);
- Fellowship duration;
- Total requested budget;
- Applicant details (name, contact details, affiliation, professional registrations);
- Host Institution;
- Additional research site details;
- Collaborator details;
- Cancer type;
- Keywords;
- Research type;
- Discipline.

c) Applicant Curriculum Vitae

A CV for the proposed fellow must be uploaded – completed using the template provided (the template is downloadable in this section of the online system or on the Irish Cancer Society website).

d) Mentorship Details

At least one primary mentor must be added to each application. The mentor will have to confirm participation in the application and also approve the application *after* it is submitted by the applicant and *before* it is finally submitted to the Society. **Please note that mentor approval must be completed before the application deadline.**

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

If your mentor 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 mentor. They will receive a notification of this via email.

Please note you must upload a CV from proposed mentor in PDF format. The CV should be completed using the template provided (this template is downloadable in this section on the online system or on the website). Please ensure that you first have the permission from your mentor to upload their CV.

You may also detail any other mentorship that you will receive (other than your primary mentor) over the course of your fellowship. Please describe the individual, their role and level of involvement, and how they will add value to your fellowship **(500 words max)**.

e) Project Summary

Please give a summary of your proposed research fellowship project **(1000 words max)**. This should include summary details of the following:

- Background information/existing literature;
- Hypothesis, aims, and/or objectives;
- Methodology;
- Why the research is important and how the research will benefit people affected by cancer;
- Summary and conclusions.

f) Personal Statement

The personal statement sections should include only relevant information which will add merit to your application **(400 words max)**. The following must be covered:

- Reasons for applying for the fellowship;
- How the proposed fellowship fits into your career plan;
- What you aim to do immediately following the fellowship;
- A demonstrable commitment to a career in research.

g) Letters of Support

Please upload a declaration of support from your mentor and the head of department at the host institution. The declaration of support required from the head of department is a standard letter stating that they are aware of, and support, the application.

Clinical staff who intend to complete the fellowship on a part-time basis must upload a letter of support from the appropriate person at their clinical site (e.g. Head of Department). The letter must acknowledge that the organisation is aware of, supports, the application and will enable the applicant to fulfil research obligations. This support includes the appointment of new staff, or staff to cover any budgeted buy-out time (if relevant). The letter should describe how this support will be accomplished in the context of providing a clinical service. In addition, the clinical site must agree to provide indemnity cover that may be required by any staff carrying out research at the clinical site.

The declaration of support template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the Irish Cancer Society website. All letters of support should be completed on headed paper. To upload this letter of support click 'Attach', locate the file to be attached and then click 'Attach'.

h) 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.

5. Submission of the Application

The application can be submitted for signatory approval on the system once:

- your mentor has confirmed their participation. An email will be sent to your mentor requesting their participation when they are added to the application.
- it has been verified that all required questions are answered in the correct manner on the application form.

For final submission to the Society:

- The application submitted by the applicant must be approved by the signatory (mentor). The mentor will be notified by email once the applicant has submitted the application.
- The signatories will be able to see the full application in PDF format on their online portal.
- The signatory may approve or reject at this stage. The applicant will be notified of both approval and rejection of the application. Rejected applications will be returned to the applicant.

Applications that have been submitted by the lead applicant but not approved by the signatory 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.

6. Assessment Procedure

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

6.1. Conflicts of interest

We will endeavour to ensure that the international academic review panel chosen do not have any conflicts of interest regarding the applications they are assessing.

6.2. Assessment procedure

The EOI will be reviewed by international academic reviewers. The following EOI will be assessed:

- Applicant CV
- Mentor CV
- Project Summary
- Personal Statement
- Declaration of Support – Mentor
- Declaration of Support – Clinical applicants' employer

EOI applications will be assessed based on:

- The scientific merit of the proposed research
- The applicant's background and experience to date
- Mentor support and suitability
- Organisational support (clinical applicants only)
- The applicant's commitment to a career in research

6.3. Assessment outcome

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of review by email. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

6.4. Full application

Applicants whose EOIs are shortlisted will be invited to submit a full application. For the full application, you will be required to provide greater detail on all aspects of the proposal including the research plan, budget, mobility element, and PPI plan. The full application will be reviewed by international academic reviewers AND PPI advocates. **The final funding decision will be co-decided by academic experts and PPI advocates**

7. Application Checklist

Completed application form, including uploading the following documents:

- Applicant's CV
- Proposed mentor CV
- Declaration of support from mentor
- Declaration of support from head of department

The application must be completed **ONLINE by 3pm 10 March 2020**

8. Contact

If you require assistance with the online application system or have any queries about the application which are not currently addressed in the FAQ document, please contact us:

Email: grants@irishcancer.ie

Telephone: +353 1 2310 583