



Guidelines for Applicants

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Irish Cancer Society Summer Studentship 2021 – Social, Nursing & Allied Health Sciences

General Introduction to the Irish Cancer Society Summer Studentship Awards 2021

The Irish Cancer Society is now accepting applications for the Summer Studentships 2021 programme.

The objective of the Irish Cancer Society Summer Studentships is to offer excellent undergraduate students the opportunity to undertake a cancer research project and to work with researchers in high-quality research environments.

There are **four** summer studentship awards available: **two translational biomedical science** summer studentships and **two social, nursing, and allied health sciences** summer studentships. Applicants can only apply for one type of studentship award.*

Applications to the summer studentships are accessible through the Irish Cancer Society Gateway Grant Tracker online system. Please ensure that you are using the correct application that is relevant to the specific field of your research.** This document outlines the process for applying to the social, nursing, and allied health sciences summer studentships only. Further details on how to apply for the translational biomedical science studentship and other grants are available on our website.

***Note:** Applicants that submit applications to both awards will be rejected. If you are unsure of which award category is applicable to your project, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie before Thursday the 11th February and we can advise.

****Note:** Applicants that apply using the incorrect application form for their specific field of research (i.e. translational or social and allied health sciences) will be rejected.

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Irish Cancer Society Summer Studentship 2021 – Social, Nursing & Allied Health Sciences

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

The Irish Cancer Society Social, Nursing, and Allied Health Sciences Summer Studentships 2021 programme offers undergraduate students (who are not in their first or final year) the opportunity to undertake a cancer research project and to work with researchers in high-quality research environments. Given the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, 'virtual', or 'desk-based', projects will also be considered for this award, once they fulfil all eligibility criteria. This programme is open to students undertaking a degree in the area of social, nursing, or allied health sciences. This programme will give students the opportunity to gain research experience at an early stage in their career path.

1.2. Objectives

The objective of this summer studentship programme is to provide students with the opportunity to conduct a small social, nursing and allied health-based cancer research project in an experienced research group/lab or virtually. Upon completion of the project, the students will gain both a practical research experience and gain an insight into the cancer research environment.

Following the completion of the studentship, the student is required to provide the Irish Cancer Society with a written scientific report and a financial report from the finance office of their host institution.

1.3. Funding

The total amount available is €2,500 to support the student for a maximum period of eight weeks. Payment to the student throughout the project will be made through the host institution. There are **two** Social, Nursing, and Allied Health Sciences Summer Studentships available in 2021.

1.4. Timeframe

Thursday 14 January 2021	Opening of call for applications
Thursday 11 February	Deadline for project eligibility queries
3pm Thursday 25 February 2021	Deadline for online submission of applications
Early-March 2021	Detailed review of applications
Early-April 2021	Outcome announced

2. Eligibility Criteria

2.1. Lead applicant (student)

The student is responsible for preparing the application with support from their supervisor. Applications from individuals that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be assessed. We therefore strongly recommend you carefully read the following eligibility criteria and become familiar with the studentship requirements.

The eligible lead applicant **must** fulfil the following criteria:

- You must be a full-time or part-time undergraduate student in your second or third year of your degree;
- You must be studying for a degree in social, nursing, or allied health sciences e.g. dietetics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychology, social science, social work, speech and language therapy;
- You must be planning to work on a nursing, social, or allied health research project in cancer;
- You must be based in a university/third level institute in the Republic of Ireland;
- You must have the support of an appropriate, suitably-qualified supervisor in a university/third level institute within the Republic of Ireland;
- You must identify a suitable host institution to administer the award. This must be the university/third level institution of your academic supervisor;
- You must undertake the studentship on a full-time* basis for a maximum of eight weeks during the summer of 2021.

****Note:** Both full-time and part-time students must be able to undertake the studentship on a full-time basis for a maximum of eight weeks during the summer of 2021.*

The eligible lead applicant **must not** fulfil the following criteria:

- Be in the first or final year of your undergraduate degree course
- Have previously conducted a Masters or PhD;
- Have held an Irish Cancer Society Summer Studentship previously;
- Hold a summer studentship/internship/scholarship from another organisation at the same time during the summer of 2021.

Note: *Each student can only make one application to this studentship programme in this round. Where two applications are received from the same applicant both will be deemed ineligible. Where two students submit the same projects under the same supervisor in this round, both projects will be deemed ineligible. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria or do not meet the remit of the award will be deemed ineligible.*

2.2. Academic Supervision

Supervision must be by a suitably-qualified individual with a good research track record. The academic supervisor must be affiliated with a university/third level institution within the Republic of Ireland.

Supervisors are eligible to supervise a summer student once they have appropriate experience. Supervisors must have a minimum of four years active research experience (career breaks, flexible working arrangements, change of disciplines or sector, etc., will be taken into consideration) and a good scientific track record. They must be in their current post for the duration of the proposed project and have secured the support of their institution.

The supervisor must guide the student during the studentship period so that they acquire the necessary skills to conduct the research project. The student is required to complete the proposed work and write a concise scientific report within the studentship timeframe.

3. Host Institute

The host institute must be the higher education institute where the academic supervisor is based. 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](#). Support for the summer studentship application must be secured from the appropriate person within the host institute (Section G of the application form).

4. Application Procedure

Prior to applying, you must read this document through to completion. Applications must be completed and submitted through the Irish Cancer Society Gateway Grant Tracker online system. In

order to submit an online application you are required to register at the following address: <https://grants.cancer.ie>.

Applications must be completed and submitted by **3pm Thursday 25 February 2021***.

**Note: before the final submission of your application, the application must be approved by the supervisor on the online system. It is important that the student allows sufficient time for this process to be completed before the closing date as the system will automatically shut down at 3pm on the 25 February 2021.*

4.1. Overview of the Application Process

When registering please fill out all the 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 make sure all fields are completed)
2. Make a new grant application
3. Access previous grant applications

4.2. 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 Homepage 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 'Social, Nursing, and Allied Health Science Summer Studentship 2021'.

4.3. 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.

5. The Application Form

Once you have indicated that you meet all eligibility criteria you will then be directed to the application form. The full application form has automatically been created on the system. To enter information into the application form, click the 'Edit' button in the upper right-hand corner. Applications should be completed with the support of the proposed supervisor.

There are 8 sections outlined on the left hand side of the page:

- a) Introduction
- b) Project Outline
- c) Applicant details
 - i. Personal Statement
 - ii. Planned Research Outcomes
 - iii. Applicant's CV
- d) Supervisor
 - i. Add supervisor
 - ii. Supervisory Support Plan
 - iii. Proposed Supervisor's CV
 - iv. Declaration of Support - Supervisor
- e) Project Summary
- f) Lay Summary
- g) Declaration of Support - Host Institute
- h) Validation Summary

These sections are to be viewed and completed. 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.

As you proceed through the sections you will see a small blue question mark icon next to some of the sections. By clicking on this icon you will get more information on the section to be completed.

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

a) Introduction

This section gives overview information on the 'Social, Nursing, and Allied Health Science Summer Studentship'.

b) Project Outline

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

- Proposed Project Title
- Proposed Start Date - Must not be before 2 June 2021
- Duration - Must be a maximum of 8 weeks
- Proposed Research Institute
- Cancer Type
- Keywords

- Research type
- Discipline

c) Applicant Details

i. Personal Statement

The personal statement section should detail why you are applying for the studentship and why you are the best candidate **(300 words max)**.

The following must be covered:

- Reasons for pursuing a studentship in cancer research
- Reasons for choosing your proposed supervisor

ii. Planned Research Outcomes

The studentships will give students the opportunity to work within a research group and gain research experience at an early stage in their career path.

Please state and briefly explain the most significant techniques/skills/training that you are planning to acquire or develop during your summer studentship **(200 words max)**.

iii. Applicant's 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. If the section is not relevant to you, please enter N/A.

Sections to be completed in the template include:

- Name
- Email address
- Current institute of study
- Academic history
- Research experience (including publications, if any)
- Employment history

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 of a degree:

Degree/Qualification	BSc Psychology
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Year	2
From	01/09/19
To	01/06/20
Subjects	Forensic psychology; Health psychology; Personality & individual differences; Research methods & statistics etc.
Institute	Dublic City University (DCU)
Department/School/Division	Psychology
Country	Ireland
Grade	70% or GPA 3.1 (First Class)

d) Supervisor

i. Add Supervisor

You must add your **proposed** supervisor to the application. Your supervisor will have to confirm participation in the application and also approve the application after you submit it and before it is finally submitted to the Society.

To add your supervisor, you can search for your supervisor 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.

ii. Supervisory Support Plan

The supervisor must guide the student during the studentship to ensure that they acquire the necessary skills to conduct the research project. Please detail the plans for supervisory support that will be in place during your studentship **(200 words max)**.

This should include summary details of the following:

- The quality and level of supervision/mentorship that you will receive
- How accessible your supervisor will be throughout your project

iii. Supervisor's Curriculum Vitae

The supervisor's CV is required. Please upload the CV of your proposed supervisor. This 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 permission from your supervisor to include their CV.

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

e) Project Summary

Please give a summary of your proposed research project **(1000 words max)**.

This should include summary details of the following:

- Background information/existing literature
- The hypothesis and the objectives
- Project plan
 - Methodology
 - Project timeline
- Summary and conclusions

f) Lay Summary

Please provide a detailed and structured lay abstract **(400 words max)**.

The lay abstract should include the following:

- A lay summary of your proposed research project;
- Details of how your research objectives will have an impact, in particular how the research will benefit people affected by cancer

Note: *The review process is a two-stage process. The full application form will be reviewed in stage 1 and the top applicants will be short-listed to progress to stage 2. Stage 2 will consist of a review of the lay summaries and the personal statements by non-scientific reviewers (please see Section 7 for information on the assessment procedure). It is the non-scientific reviewers who will make the final decision on who should get funding, therefore, it is very important that the lay abstract is written in plain English and is understandable to a non-scientific audience. Please see Appendix 1 for guidelines on writing a lay abstract.*

g) Declaration of Support - Host Institute

Please upload a declaration of support from the host institute. 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 is a letter stating that the host institute is aware of and supports the application.

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.

6. Submission of the Application

Applications must be fully submitted on the online grant system by **3pm Thursday 25 February 2021**.

The application is ready for submission once:

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

The application can be submitted for final submission to the society once:

- The application submitted by the applicant is approved by the signatory (supervisor). The supervisor will be notified by email once the applicant has submitted the application.
- The signatory 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 signatories before the deadline will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application is submitted with sufficient time allowed for the signatory to approve the application before the deadline.

7. Assessment Procedure

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

Assessment Procedure

Stage 1 Review:

The following will be assessed by scientific reviewers:

- Project Summary
- Lay Summary
- Research Experience
- Applicant details-
 - i. Personal Statement
 - ii. Planned Research Outcomes
 - iii. Applicant's CV
- Supervisor details-
 - i. Supervisory Support Plan
 - ii. Proposed Supervisor's CV,
 - iii. Declaration of Support – Supervisor

Stage 2 Review:

Shortlisted applicants will progress to stage 2 of the assessment procedure and will be reviewed by non-scientific reviewers.

The following will be assessed:

- Lay Summary
- Personal Statement

Assessment outcome

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of review by email in April 2021.

8. Application Checklist

- Full application form
- Applicant's CV
- Proposed Supervisor's CV
- Declaration of Support - Supervisor
- Declaration of Support – Host Institute

9. Contact details

If you require assistance or have any queries about the application please contact us prior to Thursday 11 February by email:

Email: grants@irishcancer.ie

Appendix 1



1. Writing a Lay Research Summary?

A lay summary should provide a brief overview of the research proposal, written in a format appropriate and understandable to your audience. It should be written in a manner appropriate to your audience who **do not** have a scientific background. Therefore, ensure the lay summary is written in plain English (please see Section 2). However, an important consideration when writing a lay abstract is to determine the right balance between pitching it to the correct lay audience and oversimplifying it. As such, the abstract should be written in clear plain English, but also adequately conveys the research question and what makes that particular research project important. The abstract may still have some “jargon” or scientific names when necessary, once they are clearly defined in understandable terms.

It is vital that you do not overstate the importance or impact of your research. Lay summaries that are not written in plain English, or that over-state the research’s potential impact run the risk of not being selected.

Example Lay Research Summary:

Quality of life is a term used to describe how ‘good’ someone’s life is. It can be studied across different parts of someone’s life, such as their physical wellbeing or their relationships with other people. Unfortunately, when people are diagnosed with cancer and they begin treatment, sometimes their quality of life can change. An important question that research can answer is why it changes, and what can be done to improve a person’s quality of life.

One possible reason for the change in quality of life might be cognitive change. Cognitive change is another term for ‘thinking skills’, such as memory, language, attention, and problem solving. Some people going through cancer treatment might experience changes in how they think, for example, finding it difficult to remember information, or an inability to focus on everyday tasks. Cognitive change can be another side-effect of treatment, which might impact a person’s quality of life.

The aim of this research study is to see if a person’s cognition (thinking skills) is impacting their quality of life (wellbeing).

This aim will be studied by asking people who are undergoing cancer treatment a series of questions. These questions will measure a person’s cognition and their quality of life. The measurement of cognition will involve people completing a series of puzzle-like tasks involving words and pictures.

The measurement of quality of life will involve people answering a series of questions about their life.

I plan to recruit 10 people for my study through advertisements on notice boards at the university and in the community. Once I have collected my data, I will run a statistical analysis on the scores to see if a person's cognitive score is related to their quality of life score.

The upkeep of quality of life is an important goal in cancer care. This study aims to answer why some people with cancer experience changes in their quality of life. If we understand better the reason for this change, we will be better placed to design ways to improve quality of life. For example, if we find that cognition is changing quality of life, then we can develop ways for people to overcome their cognitive change.

2. General notes for writing in plain English

There are many online resources available to guide you in writing an effective plain English summary. Some of these resources are listed below. Here are some general notes on how to write in plain English:

- Avoid using technical language or scientific terminology. Use everyday words to communicate your point and explain the science. If you have to use scientific jargon, be sure to explain it thoroughly and be consistent in its use.
- Use short clear sentences.
- Use paragraphs.
- Use an active voice, and place the person/group/thing doing the action at the beginning e.g. 'We ran an experiment,' rather than, 'The experiment was ran'.
- Don't use 'don't'. You can write in plain English without becoming too casual/unprofessional.
- Use an appropriate tone. This is not a newspaper article, and its purpose is not to entertain.
- Make sure grammar, punctuation, and spelling are accurate.
- Bullet points (like these ones) can make it easy to digest a lot of information.

3. Research Impact

Broadly speaking impact is the demonstrable contribution that research makes to society. Impact can be defined as research being used to bring about a positive change to the lives of people affected by cancer.

The impact research has is specific to each project and therefore, impact is varied and can occur over different timescales, from the short to long term.

Some of the key areas of research impact include:

- academic impact
- health and health systems impact

- health-related and societal impact
- influence on policy making
- economic impact

It is important to not overstate the impact of a research project but rather detail realistic goals and the potential that each project has for creating an impact.

It is recognised that for some research there will be no direct impact on the lives of people affected by cancer in the short or medium term. However, the research will contribute to a wider conversation on cancer with the view to eventually directly impacting the lives of those affected by cancer.

The inclusion of academic impact is also an important consideration when measuring research impact, as it demonstrates the contribution that a particular research project has made towards the advancement of science, and to the cancer research knowledgebase. These academic advances can be measured in terms of primary research related outputs and includes research publications, knowledge dissemination, capacity building, and collaborations.

4. Resources

General resources

INVOLVE – UK National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) initiative to support PPI.
<http://www.invo.org.uk>

NALA (National Adult Literacy Agency)
<https://www.nala.ie>

Access to Understanding: Promoting public understanding of biomedical and health research
<http://www.access2understanding.org>

Writing a Lay Summary

Duke, M. (2012). How to write a lay summary.
<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/HowToLaySummariesDec2012.pdf>

Communicating to patients

NHS England. Language Matters: Language and Diabetes.
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/language-matters.pdf>

Writing in plain English

NALA (National Adult Literacy Agency). *Writing and Design Tips*.
https://www.nala.ie/sites/default/files/publications/Writing%20and%20Design%20Tips%202111_1.pdf