



Irish Cancer Society Research

Irish Cancer Society Underserved Communities in Cancer Research PhD Scholarship 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

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Who can apply?

1. I have a degree in psychology. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, this award is open to all graduates with a relevant background, e.g., nursing, psychology, dietetics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, genetic counselling, radiology, biomedical, life science, dentistry, pharmaceutical, medical, or translational research, etc. graduates. If you have any further queries about your eligibility, email grants@irishcancer.ie for guidance.

2. Can a student with only a 2.2 honours degree or lower apply for a Scholarship?

No, you must have obtained (or expect to obtain) a first or upper second-class honours bachelor degree to apply for a scholarship.

3. I received a 2.2 in my undergraduate degree but received a distinction- or merit-level master's degree, am I eligible to apply?

Yes, you can apply if you have a distinction- or merit-level master's degree.

4. Are the scholarships available for students to study abroad?

No, the research must take place at a host institution in the Republic of Ireland. This must be one of the HRB's [approved host institutions](#). A national or international mobility element is included in this Scholarship, for up to 3 months, which permits a short placement abroad.

5. Are non-Irish citizens living in Ireland eligible to apply?

Yes, if you are a non-Irish citizen but are eligible to study in Ireland, and you meet the eligibility criteria, you can apply for a Scholarship. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they are eligible to study in Ireland.

6. Are Scholarships open to individuals studying in Northern Ireland?

No, only individuals who will study in the Republic of Ireland are eligible to apply.

7. Can I apply for funding if I have already begun my PhD?

No, you can only apply for a scholarship if you have not yet commenced your PhD.

8. Is there an upper age limit to the application?

No, there is no upper age limit.

9. I completed my undergraduate degree a number of years ago, am I still eligible?

You will only be eligible if you have been working in a field relevant to your proposed PhD study, *i.e.*, maintenance of skills and knowledge gained during your undergraduate studies. To discuss eligibility in such cases, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie.

10. I wish to complete my PhD in 3 years, can I apply?

Yes, the Scholarship may be completed over 3 or 4 years in a full-time capacity. Please check with your proposed Host Institution to confirm it permits PhDs of 3 years.

Research Project Eligibility

1. What type of projects are eligible?

The purpose of this funding call is to provide new evidence on improving the inclusion of underserved or marginalised groups and communities in cancer care. In this instance, underserved or marginalised groups include those with a higher healthcare burden that is not matched by the supports and services that are currently available. The Society does not wish to be over prescriptive with the type of research conducted; the focus should be on how the research will provide a tangible benefit to those who need improved access to cancer care. While life expectancy and cancer outcomes have improved, this has occurred unequally. Therefore, research proposals should address the impact of the social determinants of health. Research proposals should not focus on specific poor prognosis cancer types, but rather on the social determinants of health. If you are unsure of your project eligibility, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie

2. I am unsure if my project is eligible, how do I ask for advice?

If you have any concerns please contact grants@irishcancer.ie.

Supervision

1. Can a supervisor sponsor more than one student for separate projects who are both applying for a Scholarship?

Yes, a supervisor can sponsor more than one scholarship applicant.

2. Can a supervisor sponsor a project more than once but with different applicants who are both applying for a Scholarship?

No, a project cannot be submitted more than once. Applications with the same project from different applicants will be automatically discounted.

3. Is it necessary to have two supervisors?

Yes, two supervisors must be identified when completing your application through the Irish Cancer Society [Gateway Grant Tracker](#) online system.

4. What is the purpose of having two supervisors?

It is often good practice for there to be two supervisors for every student, as it provides back up for those situations where one supervisor is ill, leaves, or issues arise with the supervisor-student relationship. In addition, it can provide breadth and support to the project. It is important that all supervisors are aware that they have a responsibility for the student and there is no scope for nominal supervision.

The role of each supervisor will vary according to the research project. In many cases one supervisor will play a major role in directing the research and the role of the second supervisor will be more supportive. However, both supervisors have a responsibility for the student's progress and will be expected to take an active role in the supervision process.

One supervisor may have a minimum of 1 year's post-doctoral experience. In having this criteria, we are encouraging more junior members of research teams to be actively involved in the research project and to be recognised as a supervisor.

5. Can there be more than two supervisors?

You can include additional supervisors, but they must have a documented and active role in the research as collaborators. Such proposed relationships should be described in the application.

6. Do supervisors need to be permanent members of staff?

The most experienced supervisor must hold a post at the proposed host research institute that covers the duration of the scholarship.

Ideally the second supervisor should also hold a contract for the duration of the PhD. However, given this person is only required to have 1-year postdoctoral experience, we will consider any co-supervisor who can demonstrate their commitment to the supervision of the student throughout the whole study period.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their supervisors also meet the host institution's requirements for a research supervisor.

7. Why do I need to submit CVs for my two proposed supervisors as part of the application process?

The research track record of the supervisors, relative to their career stage, will be assessed as part of the overall research scholarship application.

Funding

1. Is there an overall limit for the amount of funding granted?

The total value of the Irish Cancer Society Underserved Communities in Cancer Research PhD Scholarship 2024 covering: stipend, fees, running costs, equipment, materials, training, travel & dissemination, and Public and Patient Involvement (PPI), will be **€155,000**. A mandatory provision of €1,500 is also included within this budget to support Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in the proposed research project.

An additional mobility element funding of up to a maximum of €5,000 will also be available to successful applicants. This important element is intended to provide awardees experience that goes beyond the traditional research environment in developing the awardee's career. In order to encourage well-rounded researchers with varied experiences, applicants are required to develop a mobility element as part of their award application.

Please note that full details of budget guidelines are provided in the full application guidelines and appendices of this funding award.

2. How many Irish Cancer Society Underserved Communities in Cancer Research PhD Scholarships are available?

There is one Irish Cancer Society Underserved Communities in Cancer Research PhD Scholarship available in 2024. The application of the highest quality will be awarded funding, regardless of cancer type.

There will also be one Irish Cancer Society-IACR: Translational & Clinical Cancer Research Scholarship awarded this year, and one Irish Cancer Society-IACR: Cancer Survivorship Research Scholarship awarded this year.

Applicants may only apply to **one** Scholarship award.

3. Does the grant cover host institute overheads?

As a charity, the Irish Cancer Society is not in a position to pay for host institution overheads for its research funding.

4. Are there any budget stipulations specific to this call?

Yes, there are multiple budget stipulations to this call:

- The PhD stipend must be a **minimum** rate of €22,000 per year for full-time applicants.
- A **minimum** provision of €1,500 must be allocated to PPI costs.

If you have any questions about the budget for this call, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie.

Application Deadline

1. When do complete applications need to be in by?

Intention to submit forms must be submitted to grants@irishcancer.ie by 3pm Wednesday 13th March 2024. This template can be found on the call website.

Full applications must be submitted online through [Gateway Grant Tracker](#) by **3pm Thursday 4th April 2024**. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered. If you have any concerns, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie.

2. Do the signatories have to approve the application by this deadline?

Yes. All signatories (your two proposed supervisors) must approve the application by this deadline. They can do this through their online portal.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is approved by all signatories before the deadline. Please ensure that the application is submitted with sufficient time allowed for the signatory to approve.

Progression to Interview

1. Will the application review process be exactly as outlined in the guidance document?

This document is used for guidance only. The Irish Cancer Society reserves the right to modify the review process. Applicants will be notified of any relevant modification to the review procedure.

2. When will applicants find out if they have been invited to interview?

Applicants will find out if they have been shortlisted to interview in early May 2024. Interviews will be conducted late May/Early June 2024. Comments from the review of the application will be passed on to applicants, to be addressed during the interview. These interviews will be held virtually.

Start of Research Scholarship Programme

1. When does the successful Research Scholar commence their programme?

The successful Research Scholar will begin their PhD from September 2024.

If you have any queries about start dates, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie.