

EMPLOYMENT BASED PROGRAMME 2014 – FAQ

Similar questions have been grouped below in the following themes:

- Eligibility
- Application form
- Applying to the Schemes

ELIGIBILITY

We are currently reviewing the funding options that may be available to us to support a research project on the development of novel laboratory analytical methodology. The development work will mainly be carried out by our own in-house analytical chemist. Would the Employment Based Programme be suitable for consideration for such a project?

The Council funds excellent Scholars across all disciplines and encourages interdisciplinary research and engagement with enterprise. Ideally, Scholars will be new employees of the Employment Partner in line with the emphasis on creating new jobs in the Government's Action Plan for Jobs (APJ). However, Scholars who are existing employees of the Employment Partner may also be facilitated under this Programme.

As per clause 6.7 in the Terms and Conditions, the Employment Partner must employ the Scholar (either temporarily or permanently) for the duration of the award as a full-time employee on the normal terms and conditions for salaried employees. The Scholar must spend between 30% and 50% of his/her time based in the HEI. As per clause 7.9 Scholars must engage full-time in research during the Funding Term and should not engage in any activity other than completing the Scholarship i.e. they must work full time on the Research Project.

Does the researcher need to be involved in some way with an academic institution in order to be considered for this funding programme?

In order for an application to be deemed eligible the following participants are required: a Researcher, an Employment Mentor (based at the Employment Partner), and an Academic Supervisor (based at the collaborating HEI).

Does the researcher need to conduct a Masters or PhD? In our case, it is likely that the project may not extend to the duration of time covered by such programmes.

The duration of funding to be given for the Scholarship is dependent on the type of Degree being pursued. The following Degrees are funded under the EBP: 12 Month Research Masters Degree (where the Scholar is not registered for structured course work); 24 Month Structured Research Masters Degree (where the Scholar is registered for structured course work); 36 Month Traditional Doctoral Degree (where the Scholar is not registered for structured course work); or 48 Month Structured Doctoral Degree (where the Scholar is registered for structured course work).

I have a company willing to participate in this but the student candidate has a 2:2. Is this acceptable with the IRC?

The Council does not place a minimum requirement on academic grades under the EBP. Please see the Guide to Applicants for more information on the evaluation criteria.

Given that my company pays me a salary in excess of €8,000 per annum does this

qualify as employer funding under the terms and conditions of the programme?

The Scholar's salary, exclusive of Scholarship fees, will be negotiated between the Scholar and the Employment Partner and is inclusive of the Council's contribution of €16,000 to the employment of the Scholar. The net salary must not be less than €16,000, or the net salary for graduate entry to the Employment Partner, whichever is the greater.

As per clause 6.11 in the Terms and Conditions, the Employment Partner is required to contribute a minimum of €8,000, which may be used to cover employment/salary costs, including Employers PRSI, and as a contribution to cover the cost of expenses (e.g. travel and accommodation costs) incurred by the Scholar as a result of travelling back and forth between the Employment Partner and the HEI.

One of our academics has a company from Northern Ireland who would like to work with him but they have no base in the Republic of Ireland.

Is the scheme national or could it extend to the Island of Ireland - specifically to the involvement of a northern University?

If national only: providing that an appropriate/relevant HEI host is identified within Ireland, is it acceptable to factor in the participation of a UK based HEI (not funded) to provide training & expertise that is lacking in Ireland? Would a potential secondment to a UK based HEI be a valid approach? and would it impact in anyway on the likelihood of the proposal being accepted?

Employment Partner shall mean a business, a company, a registered charity, a social, cultural, not-for-profit, governmental or non-government organization with a physical operational base located in Ireland that will employ the Scholar for the duration of the award. As per clause 1.7 in the Terms and Conditions, Ireland shall mean the Republic of Ireland.

As per clause 6.1.3, eligible direct research support expenses include conference travel and participation; generic and/or specialist disciplinary skills training. The exact amount of eligible direct research expenses is subject to sufficient justification being made in the grant proposal up to a maximum of €2,250 per annum.

APPLICATION FORM

The Employment Mentor for an applicant I am helping under this scheme has been in touch asking about the following pop-up question that appears during their registration process for the EBP. The mentor has identified the employer as - a Public Body/Organisation, once this option is chosen the following question is posed:

"Where company is a public body / agency or other publicly funded organisation, company confirms that it does not have the resources available to fund the full cost of the Scholarship / Fellowship (with administration of the award through IRC):
Yes/No"

Can you confirm that the Employer company should in this instance answer this question 'No' (i.e. in this instance the Employer will be able to fund the research should the IRC award be made, if the award is not made the research will not be possible).

Furthermore are there implications for the application as a whole if 'No' is the answer to this question?

In this instance the employer should indicate "No" since they will only be able to fund the Research if the candidate is successful and in receipt of IRC funding. There are no implications for the application if the Company selects "No" in this section of the Company registration form.

It would be beneficial to the project for an applicant to include a non-funding partner. Would this be allowed if it is acceptable to the Employment Partner?

One applicant wishes to share her time between two different organisations (both voluntary organisations). Is it possible to officially link two enterprise partner's to an application? If not, can informal arrangements be made for the applicant to spend some time in a second organisation if the enterprise partner agrees?

As per 7.21 in the Terms and Conditions, a Research Agreement (including reference to Intellectual Property Rights and confidentiality) must be in place between the HEI and the Employment Partner before the Scholarship can commence. As per Clause 6.7, a formal employment contract must be drawn up between the Employment Partner and the Scholar and agreed for the entire period of the award.

Should the participants decide that the Researcher and Project would benefit from involvement of a second organisation they may wish to indicate this involvement in the relevant sections of the application. The online application system does not permit linking two Employment Partners to an application i.e. each application must have an official Employment Partner assigned who is the signatory on the Research proposal and the aforementioned Research Agreement.

See evaluation criteria in the Guide for Applicants for a breakdown of marks allocated to the Host Organisations, including the HEI and Employment Partner.

APPLYING TO THE SCHEMES

If there are work permit costs in place can this be used from such funding or from the €8k contribution from the industry partner?

As per Clause 6.8, payments received by the Employment Partner from the HEI can only be used to cover employment/salary and Scholarship fees costs.

Does the programme offer financial support for anything other than the researcher's salary?

As per clause 6.1 in the Terms and Conditions, the maximum amount of the Scholarship Fund provided by the Council will be €24,000 in any approved year for the duration of the Scholarship and will consist of the following: A contribution of €16,000 to the employment of the Scholar; A contribution of up to a maximum of €5,750 to Scholarship fees; Eligible direct research support expenses to enable the Scholar to carry out the Research Project, including essential research supplies such as small consumables; books and journals; pay as you go access to national research infrastructure; software and hardware critical for the research* - to be obtained in the first year of the award; archival research costs; conference travel and participation; generic and/or specialist disciplinary skills training; publishing and write-up costs. The exact amount of eligible direct research expenses is subject to sufficient justification being made in the grant proposal up to a maximum of €2,250 per annum. Only vouched expenses incurred in actually carrying out the Research

Project will be funded.

* Apart from this exception, Scholarship funds must not be used to purchase capital items.

Is it like last year in that the applicant must nominate 2 referees and that their supervisor cannot be one of these referees?

All applications require a nominated Academic Supervisor who is willing to supervise the proposed research project, and two nominated Referees who know you sufficiently well enough to provide you with a character Reference. The Academic Supervisor may not act as one of these Referees.