



Employment Based Postgraduate Programme Research Scholarship - Information for academic staff

The Irish Research Council's new Employment Based Postgraduate Programme Research Scholarship will sponsor a full-time employee of a private or public sector organisation to undertake a Masters by research or a PhD, in any discipline, in an Irish higher education institution. DCU is now inviting potential scholarship candidates and employment participants to enter into partnership with us in application to this scheme

What's involved?

- Interested scholarship candidates will agree a research project in conjunction with an "employment participant" and DCU, and submit the project proposal to the Irish Research Council (IRC) for funding – the closing date is 25th September 2012
- Eligible employment participants include SMEs, multinationals, indigenous Irish companies, and private and public sector organisations with a physical operational base in the Republic of Ireland
- Successful candidates who are awarded IRC funding will be issued with a full-time employment contract with the employment participant, and registered as a full-time DCU postgraduate research student for a period of 12, 24, 36 or 48 months, depending on programme structure
- The candidate will undertake a 12 or 24-month Masters by research, or a 36 or 48 month PhD, in addition to graduate training elements up to a certain number of ECTS credits
- The researcher's salary will be paid jointly by the IRC and the employer, and the IRC will cover payment of DCU tuition fees and costs
- The researcher will be based primarily on the employer's premises (50-70%) and in DCU the remainder of the time
- The researcher will have a DCU Academic Supervisor and an "Employment Mentor" with whom they will agree a Research Career Development Plan to incorporate a detailed project work plan

What are the benefits to the academic?

- An opportunity to host a fully-funded Master's or PhD candidate, for 30-50% of their time, over a 12, 24, 36 or 48 month period
- An opportunity to identify a potential researcher / scholarship candidate, as the researcher does not have to be a pre-existing employee of the employment participant
- An opportunity to define a project in association with the researcher and employment participant
- An opportunity for sharing knowledge with the employment participant
- An opportunity to build research networks and collaborations, and maximise the potential for innovation
- Full support from Research & Innovation Services and the Graduate Studies Office

What are the benefits to the researcher?

- A full-time employment contract with an employment participant for a period of 12, 24, 36 or 48 months
- Maximum exposure to a commercially orientated research environment
- A unique opportunity to define a research project with an employment participant and one of the world's leading universities
- Supervision and mentoring from industry and academic experts

- Registration as a full-time DCU research student and access to state-of-the-art on-campus services and facilities
- Membership of DCU's international, innovative and inter-disciplinary postgraduate community
- Access to training in professional development and the business aspects of research
- A research degree, a broad range of skills and significantly enhanced employability on completion

Things to consider....

- The employment participant has to co-fund the researcher's salary costs for the duration of the award & it can be difficult to secure a commitment to multi-annual funding from companies up front
- It is important for someone in DCU to oversee the funding to ensure University fees & costs are paid by the employment participants
- Companies frequently change direction / focus, and market trends can shift very quickly which can make the researcher's project vulnerable in terms of completing their research degree
- When identifying potential employment partners, it is important to look at the needs / agenda / targets of the organisation
- DCU alumni-owned / run companies often make good potential partners
- Many SMEs don't have the infrastructure to support a long-term research project or a junior researcher and prefer short-term projects, and post-docs / 'fully grown' researchers who can produce immediate results
- Some companies place a greater emphasis on supporting research for its own sake, and are less concerned about actual outputs, thereby making good potential partners
- Some companies are not interested in the theoretical elements of the candidate's project / thesis, and their priority are the research results, thus not making them ideal partners
- Companies may not be aware of the researcher's academic needs, or DCU's expectations for the research award, and these need to be clearly articulated at the outset
- The role of the company in the supervision of the candidate must be delineated at the outset; the most important thing is that the Employment Mentor is committed to the candidate's research and the achievement of their academic goals and research award
- There are frequently IP implications in publishing research outputs where companies are involved, and negotiations to develop an IP agreement with a company can take 3-4 months
- The relevant staff in Research and Innovation Support and the Graduate Studies Office should be engaged at as an early stage as possible to begin work on the various agreements to be established between DCU and the employment participant - if the funding application is successful, a Research and Career Development Career Plan, incorporating a detailed project work plan, and a Collaborative Research Agreement must be agreed between DCU, the researcher and employment participant
- If the funding application is successful, the candidate must submit an application through the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) www.pac.ie before they can register with DCU

If you would like to discuss the scheme in more detail contact DCU Graduate Studies Office at graduate.research@dcu.ie