

Maynooth University Arts and Humanities Institute

Early Career Researcher Scheme

2018-2019

Research Initiatives Fund
Call Document

Deadline: Midnight on Monday, 1st October 2018

Introduction

The University Strategy 2018-23 sees the introduction of a research incentivisation fund (RIF) to promote colleagues' research activities and encourage co-operation, networking and interdisciplinarity. This action is in response to a need, highlighted by colleagues, especially early career stage colleagues, to provide seed funding for research activities to incubate new, cooperative research projects in a supported environment. The aim of the Maynooth University Arts and Humanities Institute's Early Career Research Scheme (AHI ECRS) 2018-2019, is to provide seed funding for new collaborative research that will lead to new external funding applications. The scheme is intended to embrace diversity and inclusivity; it will operate across the entire research spectrum in the Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy at Maynooth. The scheme is open to all early career academic staff members and postdoctoral research staff within the Faculty with up to ten years of experience post PhD.

While alignment with the research strategy and themes of the Faculty is welcomed, this programme also seeks to promote ideas for new areas of research. Interdisciplinarity and collegial cooperation are key qualities of this scheme. Successful projects will demonstrate potential for local impact and outcomes, the results of which will add value to the field of research with the potential to attract further funding from external sources. Projects with potential for continuation projects are strongly encouraged.

The purpose of the AHI ECRS is not to replace external sources of research funding, but to provide initial seed funding to bring ideas and concepts to a stage whereby funding applications to external agencies are more competitive. The primary objectives are to:

- Support the development of early research projects to a point where they are considered ready for competitive submission to an external funding agency
- Assist early career colleagues as they integrate into the University's research environment
- Facilitate interdisciplinary research at its earliest stage
- Support the transformation of new ideas from early concepts into viable research projects
- Enhance the University's, the Faculty's and the Institute's research portfolio, profile and impact nationally and internationally
- Facilitate career development and growth, with staff development as a key feature

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for the scheme applicants must:

- Be members of Maynooth's Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy with up to ten years of experience since completion of PhD
- Hold an employment contract at Maynooth University for the duration of the award
- Be affiliated to the Maynooth University Arts and Humanities Institute
- Demonstrate some evidence of engagement in planning in relation to the proposed project
- Have a track record of independent work, publications and ideation

In addition to the above criteria, Postdoctoral Researchers must identify a Maynooth University mentor.

Eligible Costs

The purpose of the AHI ECRS is to nurture and promote the Faculty's research culture by integrating early career colleagues into Faculty, University and external research networks. As such, eligible costs include those involved in organising events (conferences, workshops or seminars) in the AHI, research-related travel and guest speakers (incl. accommodation). The eligible costs should lead to a concrete local impact in the short to medium term with the objective of developing interdisciplinary and/or international collaborations. Equipment, software licenses, teaching buyout and in-kind costs are **ineligible** under this scheme.

Funding Available

The maximum funding available under this programme is € 3,000 per award, with a maximum of four awards for the first round (2018). The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to award more than €3,000 for projects considered to be of outstanding academic quality. Applications with Departmental co-funding are particularly welcomed.

Timelines

The programme will run in pilot form initially and, if successful, will run annually. The deadline for applications will be announced on the opening of each round. The deadline for this current round is: ***midnight on Monday, 1st October 2018.***

Evaluation

The Evaluation Committee will be chaired by the AHI Director and will comprise senior academics in the Faculty with the following profile:

- Track record of research excellence
- Track record of mentorship and development of early career researchers
- Experience of leading interdisciplinary programmes or groups

Evaluation Criteria:

Submitted applications will be assessed on the following criteria.

- a. The application is relevant to the scope and objectives of the ECRS
- b. The application demonstrates potential for supporting a future application to an external funding agency

- c. The application demonstrates clarity in terms of the project plan, objectives, methodology and impact
- d. The application provides a clear dissemination plan, to include event(s) within the AHI (eg. conference, workshop etc.)
- e. The proposed project will contribute to a particular research field
- f. The project has potential for team work and shared objectives

Application Submission – Step by Step Guidelines

Accessing the Online Application

Applications to the ECRS are made online via [this link](#) which is accessed using your MU username and password. The application form has twelve steps which are outlined below. You can complete your application in several sittings. Mandatory fields are marked with a red asterisk.

Step 1 Proposal Title (max. 255 characters): the title should clearly convey the nature of the project for which funding is requested.

Step 2 Project Abstract (max. 200 words): the abstract will clearly pitch the project idea, goals and impact. Explain what is innovative and ambitious about your project.

Step 3 State of the Research Field (max. 500 words): please describe how the proposed project will advance the current state of the research field. It is important to note that whilst reviewers will be selected from broad discipline areas, they may not be familiar with the exact research areas in question. This section should therefore be written in such a way as to be accessible to a non-discipline specific assessment panel, with all abbreviations, acronyms etc. explained.

Step 4 Project Description (a) Objectives (max. 500 words): the research objectives should be outlined here.

Step 5 Project Description (b) Methodology (max. 500 words): the methodology should include timelines and milestones.

Step 6 Project Description (c) Future Funding Roadmap (max. 500 words): Describe the future funding road map for the project should this internal funding application succeed. For example, which funding agency might fund the research in the future? Who might your collaborators be on such an application to an external funding agency?

Step 7 Project Description (d) Impact, Benefits & Dissemination (max. 500 words): Applicants should detail the potential impact and benefits arising from their research project. How, for example, will this grant help advance the careers and research profiles of the applicant and any named collaborators? Applicants should also outline a clear dissemination plan. In considering this, it should be noted that successful applicants will normally organise a project-related research event (workshop, symposium etc.) in the Arts and Humanities Institute during term time.

Step 8 Budget Justification (max. 500 words): Applicants should justify all costs in words. Applicants should be aware that a consideration of 'value for money' will apply. Unrealistic costs may negatively impact the application.

Step 9 Additional Funding (max. 500 words): Where additional funding is required, in excess of that available under the ECRS Scheme, please provide detail on how this will be sourced. Where matched funding is available, this should be detailed and will be looked upon favourably.

Step 10 Research Ethics and Data Privacy Review (max. 200 words): Applicants must indicate if the research involves humans, animals, human tissue or personal data and/or will be compliant with the current data privacy regulations.

Step 11 Breakdown of Costs (Excel Spreadsheet): Applicants are asked to provide a breakdown of the individual costs required to run the project. Please ensure that the total amount requested in your application does not exceed the maximum funding available under the programme. Applicants should paste a Onedrive (or similar) **link** to the Excel File.

Step 12 Details of Project Team (PDF): Applicants must paste a Onedrive (or similar) **link** to their own CV (max. 2 pages) and to the CV(s) of any proposed team member(s) (max. 1 page for each team member). Once applicants are satisfied with the content of their application, they should click on the 'Submit' button. **Once your application has been submitted, you will no longer be able to make changes.**

Timeline for Assessment

Formal notifications of the results will be sent to all applicants by Thursday 25th October. Feedback comments on each application are recorded and will be provided in the results letters; the purpose of feedback is to help applicants understand how they might improve future proposals. All notifications regarding the ECRS will be emailed to the applicant's MU email account.

Post award Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to submit a project report detailing their outputs and deliverables on completion of the project. Mentors are responsible for ensuring that reports of Postdoctoral researchers under their supervision are completed.

Terms and Conditions

1. The AHI ECRS is open to colleagues from all Departments within the Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies & Philosophy.
2. The ECRS is confined to colleagues with up to ten years of experience post PhD.
3. Applicants must be members of MU Faculty or Postdoctoral Staff with a contract for the duration of the award.
4. Applicants may only submit one application within a given round.
5. Application forms must be complete; incomplete application forms will not be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee.
6. It must be clear from the application that the objectives of the ECRS have been taken into account
7. Funding received under this programme must be used for the project outlined in the application.
8. The Applicant cannot transfer an award to any other person.
9. Funding will be paid in two instalments: seventy-five percent on the granting of the award and twenty-five percent on project completion.
10. All awards made under ECRS will be paid into the awardee's research account. Once the research account has been set up, successful applicants can manage the spending on their award.
11. Researchers may not apply under this programme to reclaim expenses for conference/travel that has already taken place (i.e. before notification of the award).

12. The start date of the project will be automatically activated following the announcement of the awards. The award must be spent either before 1st June 2019 or before the award holder's contract end date, whichever is earlier.
13. Any under-spend must be returned to the AHI Office within 3 months of the end of the project or immediately on cessation of the project for any reason other than completion.
14. The awardee is responsible for ensuring spending does not exceed the budgetary allocation. Any over-spend will be charged to the relevant Department. The Institute will not be responsible for any over-spend on the project.
15. Successful applicants will be required to provide details of their actual spend compared with their budgeted spend at the end of the award period. Auditable back-up documentation, including invoices, cost allocations, etc. must be maintained by all successful applicants. The Institute may undertake annual review procedures in this regard.
16. Requests for the supply of externally sourced goods, services and facilities are subject to the standard University procurement procedures.