**Irish Research Council Enterprise Partnership Scheme
Postgraduate Scholarship 2024 - UCD Help Pack**

Queries: Contact us via email at proposalsupport@ucd.ie

This is an internal UCD document for the use of candidates and supervisors applying with UCD as a Host Academic Organisation. Please do not circulate further.

The deadline for online submissions for applicants to the scheme is before 16:00 (Irish Time) **on 16th November 2023.** We strongly advise you to submit the day before at the very latest as the online system often crashes on the last day of the call.

Work closely with your Supervisor and Enterprise Mentor to help you develop your application. Your Supervisor and Enterprise Mentor must also complete a reference as part of the application.

Review the indicative forms and application guides on the on the IRC website here for your Academic Supervisor and Enterprise Mentor as soon as possible and ensure they understand what they need to do when submitting their forms and references using the online system. Your Supervisor and Enterprise Mentor must complete their specific forms before **16:00 (Irish Time)** on **23rd November 2023. It is your responsibility to ensure all participants submit their online forms before the deadline. Contact your supervisor and mentor now to alert them to this deadline for electronic references.**

Begin your application early and 1. check your UCD supervisor is registered (search for them) and 2. check if your Enterprise Partner is registered. If not register them. Then ignore the online form. Focus on and complete the MS Word indicative application form offline. When this is complete copy and paste the data from Word document into IRC Portal, to avoid any crash or loss of data. Save regularly.

UCD Supports:
- This UCD Help Pack
- Call queries via email at proposalsupport@ucd.ie

Introduction

How to use this help pack

UCD Research & Innovation has developed this document in order to help you with your application. It **must** be used in conjunction with the IRC's Call Documentation, Indicative Forms and Applications Guide on the IRC's website here. Due to the restrictive word counts applicable to most sections of the application form, you will not be able to cover all points listed below in your application. You must be selective and follow the advice which is relevant to your individual proposal. Likewise, this document offers a comprehensive and detailed guide to the various services available throughout UCD. You must determine which services are relevant to your proposal and integrate this information into your application accordingly. Please bear in mind that this pack is based on the layout of the application form as presented in the Irish Research Council's Indicative Forms, which is subject to change. Section numbering, word counts etc. may differ from the on-line form.

General Guidelines on grant writing

All applications should:
- ✓ Be clear – write in plain English.
- ✓ Be concise – stick to the word counts.
- ✓ Be accurately written – **proofread**.
- ✓ Be written for a broad scientific audience or researchers not necessarily in your field.
- ✓ Consistent in use of terminology.
- ✓ Grab the assessors' attention – present key information as soon as possible and stress the innovativeness of the work.
- ✓ Be confident – reflect on your skills and abilities.
- ✓ Have clearly identifiable aims and objectives.
- ✓ Demonstrate feasible projects.
- ✓ Be written with the assessment criteria in mind. See the evaluation criteria in the [Call Document](#)
- ✓ Use the language of the application form throughout e.g. aims, objectives, research question.

When working on your application, you should:
- ✓ Read carefully through all relevant documents on the IRC website (call documentation, Indicative forms, Application guides) before you begin.
- ✓ Register for the online system through which you will have to submit your application as soon as you decide to apply.
- ✓ Contact your Academic Supervisor and Enterprise Mentor as early as possible. The more involved these participants are in the development of your application, the stronger your proposal will be. **A [template document](#) of the research agreement (to be signed between UCD and the Enterprise Partner before the award can commence) is provided. UCD R&I recommend that this is provided by the applicant to the Enterprise Partner for review to prevent issues at contract stage.**
- ✓ Once registered on the online system, you should **fill in all relevant administrative sections** of the form (relevant tabs: Application Overview, Primary & Additional Participants, Academic Qualifications). Doing this at an early stage will allow you to clarify information with the Research Office if necessary.
- ✓ When filling in this information, **if you find that your Academic Supervisor is not registered, please ask them to contact the Research Office for registration via** UCD Research via by emailing proposalsupport@ucd.ie
- ✓ Draft your application form off-line in a word-document. Ensure that you use the headings and word limits as they are found in the online form.
- ✓ Jot down initial thoughts/ideas in bullet points and then flesh these out under the appropriate headings. Develop a narrative and edit your application. This part of the process is time consuming, and you should produce several drafts.
- ✓ Ensure that you stay within the word counts. Make sure every sentence is relevant to the question asked. Be aware of the overall structure of the application form when preparing individual sections. Avoid unnecessary overlap but be aware that some repetition may be required in order to answer each section fully.
- ✓ Check your application against the evaluation criteria (Appendix 2 of the Call Document [here](#)).
- ✓ Does your application clearly demonstrate that you have fulfilled all the criteria?
- ✓ **Ask people to read your application, preferably a specialist, non-specialist and someone who can edit/proofread**.
- ✓ Print off a PDF copy of your application from the online system and read through it before submitting, ensuring that all information has been copied into the form accurately.
- ✓ Run through the checklist provided below before submitting.
- ✓ Plan to submit in advance of the deadline as the system will be heavily subscribed on the final day.

Remember:
- ✓ The Assessors! This is who you are writing for. Be sympathetic to the assessors and write in a

manner that is easy for them to digest. Make your application form clear, concise and to the point.
✓ You must understand the goals of the IRC and the specific goals associated with the Enterprise
✓ Partnership Programme and demonstrate that you are the best candidate to fulfil those goals.
✓ In order to do this, you must demonstrate excellence in four distinct areas: the research proposal, the individual researcher, the research environment and skills and career development.
✓ Support is available within your School and from UCD Research & Innovation – make use of it
Useful Links
✓ [Individual Training and Development Plans](#) are provided by the UCD Graduate Studies Office. They provide general information on planning a research project and guidelines on professional development. The latter will be particularly useful when completing the **Career Training and Development Plan**. The development plans can be used to map and monitor your development. You should mention your intention to use this document in writing this section.
✓ The [UCD Transferrable Skills Portal](#) contains details of workshops and other training opportunities. There are many websites which provide hints and tips for staying within the word limits, for example [wikiHow](#).

Tabulated sections on the application form

Academic Qualifications
Other Education section (Max. 300 words)
The IRC states: *Please include any additional information relevant to your academic background (e.g. training courses, please provide name, location and dates etc.).*
UCD R&I suggests including:
✓ Refer to any additional courses carried out during education/research including during work/internship experience for example project management, computer skills, discipline specific courses. Think about general courses you have completed that will contribute to your overall competency to complete this project.
Research Achievements section (Max. 200 words)
The IRC states: *Please provide any additional information regarding your research achievements (e.g. publications to date, research awards achieved, creation of data sets & databases, conference papers, patents, excavations, public broadcasts, stage performances, creative writing (such as novels, poetry), creative productions, exhibitions, etc.).*
UCD R&I suggests including:
✓ Honours/Awards
✓ Student Projects/summer projects
✓ Poster presentations
✓ Giving presentations to scientific or non-scientific audiences
✓ Contributions to relevant websites or blogs
Relevant Work Experience section (Max. 200 words)
The IRC states: *Please include details of any relevant work experience (including voluntary work) to date. This should include employer names, job titles, nature of duties and responsibilities, as well as duration of employment.*
UCD R&I suggests:
✓ Reflect on jobs you have had in the past and consider what competencies you developed.
✓ Make sure the jobs held are relevant your goal of embarking on a Masters or PhD.
✓ Link the duties and responsibilities to skills developed.

Personal Statement (Max. 400 words)
The IRC states: *The personal statement provides an opportunity for the applicant to highlight additional information that has not been provided elsewhere in the application for example:*   • *Why do you wish to pursue a higher degree by research?*   • *Why have you proposed this research topic?*   • *Why are you particularly suited for this research field?*   • *Why have you chosen an enterprise partnership scheme research award?*   • *Discuss any additional aspects which you feel will provide a better picture of your capability, including personal skills, motivation, interests, overcoming adversity etc.*   **UCD R&I advises:**   ✓ This is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the assessors and to demonstrate that you, personally, fulfil the evaluation criteria, have given due consideration to your research topic and career development and are committed to your research.   ✓ Offer your personal perspective on why you chose the research topic and why you chose to pursue a research degree.   ✓ Outline your future aspirations and how the research proposed, and the skills developed will help you achieve your goals.

Proposed Research
Please complete in full. It is important to note: If you have already started your course indicate which degree you are already ready registered for and fill in the form for the full research proposal for the full duration of this degree.
Will you be a new entrant to the degree for which you are seeking Council funding? If answering no, outline (i) the source and duration of your funding to date if in receipt of any (including start/finish dates) or declare if self-funded, (ii) whether you have been full-time or part-time registered to date and (iii) outline the progress made to date and include completed tasks, chapters etc (Max. 500 words)
UCD R&I advises: ✓ Include information that demonstrates focus, ability to complete tasks in a timely fashion, ability to utilise/acquire necessary skills, feasibility of your aims/methodology/research schedule   ✓ Outline the timeframe for work completed and link this back to your research schedule   ✓ Detail the way in which you have worked with your supervisor (frequency of meetings, feedback etc.) Include details of any collaborative work you have done with a wider research team, including lecturers in your department/school, other postgraduate students.   ✓ Have other members of staff looked at your work, offered feedback on a paper/presentation? This is an opportunity to demonstrate an excellent research environment.
Project Title
UCD R&I offers the following tips: ✓ Ensure the title accurately describes the subject you are writing about.   ✓ Use a title which will catch the assessors' attention – highlight the uniqueness/innovativeness of your project.
Keywords and Areas
The IRC states: *Applications for an Enterprise Partnership Scheme Scholarship can be made in any discipline. In the call document section 1 page 3 consult the research categorisation document [here](#) for further descriptions of the primary areas, disciplines and other research areas covered.*   **UCD R&I advises:**

✓ Use key words effectively to allow the IRC to locate the most appropriate assessors for your application. The keywords should drill down to your specific research area.
✓ The listing provided in call documentation section 1 page 3 Research categorisation, provides further information.

Abstract (Max. 250 words)

The IRC states: *Please provide a lay abstract for your proposed research, which will be used to inform a non-expert audience*

UCD R&I advises:
✓ Work with your Supervisor to ensure that the abstract is as informative as possible.
✓ Define your research area & give a brief overview of the project structure – partners involved etc.
✓ Clearly state your hypothesis/overarching aim of research.
✓ Emphasise the uniqueness/innovativeness of your project.
✓ Briefly state how you are going to go about conducting the research.
✓ Include a sentence on impact and outcomes.

Description of Topic (Max. 400 words)

The IRC states: *Include,* (a) aims, objectives and central research questions of the project and (b) how existing literature on the topic has been used to inform the proposal

UCD R&I advises:
✓ Clearly state your hypothesis/overarching aim of research and break it down to 3-5 central objectives/research questions.
✓ Outline your objectives – the steps you need to take to achieve your aim.
✓ Use the language of the question (aims, objectives, research questions) in your answer.
✓ This section should give a comprehensive overview of your project – covering **all** aims and objectives.
✓ Give a brief statement outlining the originality of the proposed research in terms of hypotheses/research questions addressed, novel technology/methodology and or novel applications of current technology/methodology – this can be developed further in the methodology and state of the art sections.
✓ Briefly detail the nature and size of the problem you are addressing and the interdisciplinary and intersectoral aspects of the project, where relevant.

Methodology (Max. 400 words)

The IRC states: Detail the research design and methodologies to be employed in carrying out your scholarship which should be described in sufficient detail to demonstrate your thorough understanding of the research topic:

UCD R&I advises:
✓ Seek advice and input from your Supervisor.
✓ Include investigative and analytic methods and theoretical frameworks.
✓ Detail the study design – sampling strategy, justification of sample size, survey techniques, resources to be accessed, statistical analysis etc.
✓ Be comprehensive - outline a methodology for all your objectives however brief.
✓ Describe any novel technology/methodology and or novel applications of current technology/methodology.
✓ Include background/ preliminary data if appropriate.
✓ Detail the feasibility of the research approach.

✓ Detail the risk associated with your proposed approach and outline a possible contingency plan or alternative approach, should this be required.

Research Schedule (Max. 500 words)

The IRC states: Provide a schedule to include (a) milestones and deliverables for completion of the proposed research, (b) risks that might endanger reaching these deliverables and (c) the contingency plans to be put in place in order to mitigate these risks.

UCD R&I advises:

✓ Break the project down into specific work packages, if appropriate, with specific milestones and deliverables.
✓ Detail the timetable for completing each work package/experiment – be realistic! You can save space here by offering an overview of the timetable and including a more detailed breakdown of the timeframe on the Gantt chart in the dissemination and impact section.
✓ Allow time for the acquisition of required skills etc.
✓ Include the planned schedule of meetings between yourself and your supervisor.
✓ Outline the steps that you will take to ensure that the project adheres to the project plan and timetable.
✓ Detail the risk associated with your proposed approach and outline a possible contingency plan or alternative approach, should this be required.

Description of the relationship of the project to existing state of the art (Max. 400 words)

The IRC states: Suggest how the project will make a new contribution to knowledge. Do not provide bibliographical lists or footnotes here.

UCD R&I advises:

✓ Outline why/how the project is original?
✓ What are the potential outcomes and how do they relate to state-of-the-art in the research area?
✓ Outline the potential for the creation of new or advancement of knowledge and evidence of benefit to the area covered by the research.
✓ Outline any novel methods or techniques.
✓ Briefly mention any links between your research and work carried out by your supervisor and in your school/college. Refer to UCD Staff Profiles website for further details.

Description of any specialist knowledge/data required to undertake the project (Max. 200 words)

The IRC states: *(e.g. language competence, technical skills, use of specialist software, etc.). Describe plans for acquiring this knowledge/data if it is not already in place. Describe how data required for this project will be accessed.*

UCD R&I advises:

✓ Describe your existing skills that will enable you to undertake the project.
✓ Describe any training you need in order to complete the project and develop your career.
✓ Detail the structured training courses provided in UCD and specify which ones you will undertake (see UCD Training document available within google support folder for full details). Ensure that you relate these back to your Description of Work and Methodology sections.
✓ Detail the training and specialist knowledge available from the Enterprise Partner.
✓ Detail where any pre-existing data is currently located, how you will request and gain access to it.
✓ Specify the equipment and facilities available to you in UCD and from the Enterprise Partner and any agreements that might be in place for the use/allocation of time to these resources.
✓ UCD Facilities (document available within google support folder) – describes the equipment/ facilities available in UCD for the execution of your project. It also details the laboratory equipment that is available in UCD. If you need to use this equipment for your research, it is important that you clearly specify that the equipment is available here for your use. You should also detail the IT Resources and Library resources and collections that are available.

UCD R&I advises:
- ✓ This is your opportunity to demonstrate the excellence of your proposed research environment – something which is central to a successful application. **ENSURE THAT YOU PROVIDE DETAILS FOR THE ENTERPRISE PARTNER AND ENTERPRISE MENTOR AS WELL AS UCD AND YOUR CHOSEN ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR.**
  - **i. UCD**
- ✓ UCD Description – a general description of UCD, also including UCD's track record in research funding. Use this information to compose a **brief** introduction to your answer.
- ✓ How does the project fit into the work carried out in your school/college? Refer to relevant college/school website and look for major research teams in Major Research Programmes document. You should include details of any programmes/centres/institutes that are relevant to your research project. This will highlight to the evaluators that there is a critical mass of researchers already located within UCD in your research area, that your proposed research project will be located within one of these Centres and will benefit from the knowledge and experience already available here.
- ✓ UCD PhD students will be part of a College based Graduate School which provides advice and information to the students throughout the course of their doctoral studies.
- ✓ Other useful websites for PhD students are the UCD regulations which are supported by Policies and Guiding documents on the UCD Registry website.
- ✓ Students are supported outside their academic programme by a wide variety of student facilities and supports.
- ✓ See the UCD Research Support Units document for details of the many Institutional support units that are available in UCD to assist with the implementation and management of your grant. A detailed list of the services available is included here but you must be selective and choose what is relevant to your research in order to demonstrate this excellence without exceeding the word count.
  - **ii. Academic Supervisor**
- ✓ Why is your chosen Supervisor particularly suited to supervise you?
- ✓ Outline a summary of the research expertise and experience of your Supervisor, their research group and School/Centre where located. Describe research projects, diversity of the secured funding, type of research output and its impact. IRC are signatories of DORA (San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment) and recognize that "The outputs from scientific research are many and varied, including: research articles reporting new knowledge, data, reagents, and software; intellectual property; and highly trained young scientists."
- ✓ Include your supervisor's record in supervising postgraduate students (number of Master students, PhD students current and supervised to completion).
- ✓ Detail supervisory arrangements that will be in place.
- ✓ How does the project fit into the work carried out by your supervisor? Refer to UCD Staff Profiles website
  - **iii. Enterprise Partner & Enterprise Mentor**
- ✓ Outline the rationale for working with your chosen Enterprise Partner – why are they particularly suited to contribute to your (a) research project and (b) career development?

✓ Why is your chosen Enterprise Mentor suited to mentor you?   ✓ What facilities, access, infrastructure etc. can they contribute to the work of your research project?   ✓ What training can they provide to you which will contribute to your career development?
Does your application feature an employment partner that is a public body?   **If answering yes, please outline how the public body has specific cultural or scientific infrastructure that is integral to the conduct and completion of the proposed project, i.e. without which the project could not be realised. (Max. 200 words)**
This section should be completed in conjunction with your Academic and Enterprise Mentors. If the public body does not have infrastructure integral to the project, it is not eligible as an Enterprise Partner.
Description of dissemination plans and potential impact (Max. 250 words)
The IRC States: *Please outline your plans for the dissemination and knowledge exchange of your research, including publications, conference attendance, poster presentations, reports and outreach activities. Details should also be provided as to how the impact of your research will be measured.*   **UCD R&I advises:**   ✓ Outline the Dissemination Plan - see [Dissemination](#) document for assistance with this.   ✓ Outline the target audiences, dissemination media and publicity involved.   ✓ Dissemination to the scientific community might involve publications, conferences, poster presentations, reports, etc. Outreach and public engagement activities might utilise the press, broadcast media, internet etc.   ✓ What is the potential impact of these activities? See [Impact section](#) of UCD Research website for assistance.   ✓ Describe the approach to be taken regarding any Intellectual Property that may arise. [NovaUCD](#) is the Technology Transfer Office for UCD which assists with the management/exploitation of any IP arising.
The IRC states: If you have supplementary information, e.g. GANTT chart, diagrams or a bibliography, which accompany your research proposal, please upload them here in PDF format. Supplementary material should only include essential information required for the interpretation and understanding of the proposed research. **Applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding if they include additional information about the research proposal or applicant.** Please do not disclose your gender in uploaded PDFs, e.g. use initials instead of first names if you have a publication listed in the bibliography.   **UCD R&I advises:**   ✓ For a simple Gantt Chart format, you can use the template provided [here](#)   ✓ It may be useful to include diagrams relating to preliminary data – please ensure that these are not too complicated and are easy for the assessors to understand.
Have you previously submitted all or part of a proposal to an Irish Research Council Scheme and been unsuccessful? [If YES] Description of modifications made to the proposal if the proposal has been previously submitted, but was unsuccessful under an Irish Research Council scheme (Max. 200 words)

The IRC states: *Please note that unsuccessful applicants may only re-apply to the scheme twice in total (with effect from 21 October 2009).*

UCD R&I advises:
- ✓ Reflect on feedback you received on your last application to IRC.
- ✓ If you accept the feedback as accurate and helpful to further your research outline how you have incorporated this into the current version of the proposal.
- ✓ NB – assessors do not have access to your previous application.

Career Training and Development Plan (Max. 400 words)
The IRC states: *This Career Training and Development Plan should outline the following:*

- How will you go about acquiring the expert knowledge and transferable skills necessary for your professional development, e.g. technical skills, communication skills, analytical skills?
- What are your career goals and how would this scholarship help you to achieve them?
- How will the postgraduate degree assist you in achieving your goals?
- How would this scholarship enable you to gain skills relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector?
- Detail how this opportunity may enhance your employability.
- How can the scholarship transform your existing skills in those identified as being required to pursue the chosen career?
- If you intend to collaborate with international research groups, you can include this information here and how it may impact your development.

UCD R&I advises:
- This is an opportunity to demonstrate the excellent and broad set of skills you will acquire during your research and the subsequent development of your career prospects. **ENSURE THAT YOU CONSIDER AND ARTICULATE THE BENEFITS OF ENGAGING WITH YOUR ENTERPRISE PARTNER IN ADDITION TO UCD AND YOUR ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR.**
- Detail the skills to be acquired and developed – referring to the Description of Specialist Knowledge section.
- Provide a clear training plan that accounts for **all** the skills that need to be developed and describe the elements to be undertaken. These links will prove useful:
  - Structured PhD programme features can be found here.
  - Individual Training and Development Plans are provided by the UCD Graduate Studies Office.
  - The skill statement by the Irish Universities Association describes the desired learning outcomes and skills that PhD students may develop during their studies.
- Describe how the training undertaken will benefit you.
- How will undertaking the degree enhance your long-term career prospects?
  - Will you gain supervisory experience (e.g. student projects, summer projects)
  - Will the project provide opportunities to collaborate with researchers outside UCD?
  - How will the degree help you expand your networks and enhance career prospects?
- Will skills developed be transferable to a career outside academia (project management, leadership, outreach, intersectoral, intercultural)?
  - Will the project give you an insight into the commercial aspects of research?
  - Outline any Industry/non-academic involvement in the project or Industrial collaborators of the research group/PI.
  - Will completing the degree enhance your inter-sectoral mobility?
  - Transferable skills portal of UCD contains details for workshops and other training opportunities.

Data Management Plan (Max. 500 words)
The IRC states: *Please provide details of the following:*

- What standards will be applied?

- How will data be exploited and/or shared/made accessible for verification and reuse? If data cannot be made available, why?
- How will data be curated and preserved?
- If applicable, how do you plan to make the research data FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable). Applicants should be cognisant of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and any other national guidelines that may be applicable in your jurisdiction. Funded proposals should meet the required standards in this regard.

UCD R&I advises:
The UCD Library have also prepared very useful Lib Guides on [Research Data Management](#) and applicants should also refer to the Horizon Europe Programme Guidelines on [Data Management](#).

Ethical Statement (Max. 500 words)

The IRC states: *Please provide a statement detailing the careful consideration you have given to the ethical implications of the proposed research (where ethical issues may arise) and how you plan to address these over the course of your scholarship.*

UCD R&I advises:
- ✓ Liaise closely with your Supervisor in the completion of this section.
- ✓ UCD R&I suggest sending your application to your Head of Department/School ahead of submission so that they can help you to assess potential ethical implications. Send it along with an email that gives a very brief project description and ethical statement – highlight whether you need ethical approval.
- ✓ See [UCD Ethics Office website](#) for policies and guidelines.
- ✓ Demonstrate to the assessors that you and your supervisor have scrutinized your research project and are mindful of any and all ethical issues that exist now or may exist as the research develops.

Sex/Gender Dimension (Max 200 words)

UCD R&I advises:
- ✓ Read the section on "Sex/Gender Dimension Statement" and the "Checklist for sex and/or gender in research content" in the [IRC Guide for Applicants](#).
- ✓ Read the notes we have prepared on this topic [here](#).
- ✓ Liaise closely with your Supervisor in the completion of this section.
- ✓ Discuss the biological sex and/or gender dimension of your proposal.
- ✓ Your proposal must not necessarily have a biological sex and/or gender dimension but you need to demonstrate that you have considered whether it exists or not.
- ✓ Outline the involvement of women in the project or in the research group.