



Ollscoil na hÉireann
National University of Ireland

NUI Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Sciences and Engineering 2021

Regulations and Procedures

The National University of Ireland (NUI) is pleased to invite applications for the NUI Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Sciences and Engineering, offered for competition in 2021.

This is a two-year Fellowship, tenable at any of the following institutions:

- [A constituent university of the NUI, or a college linked to one of the constituent universities, located in Ireland.](#)
- [A recognised college of the NUI.](#)

hereinafter referred to as “the institution”.

The closing date for the Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Sciences and Engineering competition is **Tuesday, 9 February 2021.**

Section 1: General Regulations of the Fellowship

1. General Regulations

- 1.1.** The Fellowship will be awarded on the basis of a common competition open to NUI graduates in all branches of the Sciences and Engineering.
- 1.2.** All branches of the Sciences will be deemed as including, but not limited to, all academic disciplines within the Agricultural, Biological, Chemistry, Computing, Food, Physical, Medical and Health related Sciences, Natural, Physics, Veterinary.
- 1.3.** All branches of Engineering will be deemed as including, but not limited to, Chemical, Civil, Electrical and/or Electronic, Environmental, Food and Beverage, Materials, Mechanical, Medical and Biomedical; Architecture.
- 1.4.** Candidates applying for the NUI Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Sciences and Engineering are not eligible to apply for the **NUI Dr Éamon De Valera Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Mathematical Sciences** offered in 2021.

2. Value of the Fellowship: €80,000 salary plus €10,000 research support fund

The value of the Fellowship is €80,000, i.e. €40,000 per annum (plus employer PRSI and pension contributions). The salary will be paid in monthly instalments (subject to deduction of taxation and related statutory deductions by the host institution) over a two-year period. Additional

research support expenditure costs of €10,000 will also be made available over the two years of the Fellowship (See Appendix A for a list of eligible expenditures).

3. Objectives

The Fellowship is intended to encourage and support a suitably qualified post-doctoral candidate of proven academic excellence to advance their scholarly research on a full-time basis in their chosen field, under the mentorship of a senior member of academic staff in a constituent university or a recognised college of NUI. It is expected that the research will result in a substantial contribution to knowledge worthy of publication.

NUI welcomes applications from all eligible candidates in all research areas within the broad definitions of the Sciences and Engineering. NUI does not designate preferred thematic research areas for this Fellowship.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1. To be eligible to apply for the Fellowship, candidates must be graduates of doctoral status (awarded no earlier than 1 January 2016 and in any area of the Sciences or Engineering)¹, and holders of any degree of the National University of Ireland, awarded by a constituent university or in a recognised college.
- 4.2. Applications will be accepted from candidates who have yet to be conferred with their doctoral degree but can confirm that they have fulfilled all the formal requirements for the awarding of the doctoral degree by the closing date for the competition, i.e. **Tuesday, 9 February 2021.**
- 4.3. Full-time permanent members of staff of the NUI constituent universities, other NUI member institutions, or other higher education institutions are not eligible to apply for this Fellowship².
- 4.4. Applications will be accepted from interested candidates on no more than two occasions.

5. Application Procedure

Application forms are available to download at www.nui.ie/awards and must be submitted with the following documentation:

- 5.1. **Research Proposal:** Candidates are required to submit a detailed statement (max. 2500 words exclusive of captions, references, and bibliography) concerning the research, which they propose to undertake during the tenure of the Fellowship. The Research Proposal should give details of:
 - (i) the proposed topic, nature and scope of the research;
 - (ii) the proposed methodology of the research;
 - (iii) the relevance and importance of the study;

¹ An extension to the five year period following the awarding of the doctoral degree will be considered on the basis of eligible post-PhD career breaks. Career breaks include maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave, prolonged sick leave and carer's leave. Documentary evidence must be submitted to support the claim and only career breaks of up to 5 years will be considered.

² Where a candidate is employed on a temporary contract at the time of application and is successful in the competition, NUI will require evidence that this contract will be completed before the NUI fellowship can be confirmed.

- (iv) a preliminary literature review;
- (v) where the research will be conducted and reasons for choosing that centre;
- (vi) other investigators involved in the research, including mentor, where appropriate;
- (vii) potential future developments for the study;
- (viii) a proposed timeline or workplan (Gantt charts will be accepted) for the duration of the Fellowship.
- (ix) Appendices may be included in addition to the research proposal but should not exceed a further 2,500 words.

5.2. Abstract of Research Proposal: Candidates are required to submit a short abstract of the research proposal (max. 300 words) and highlight **key words** that can be used to source appropriate experts in the field(s) of study. Where the proposed research is interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary in nature this should also be highlighted.

To note: the abstract will be included in the invitation to prospective independent subject specialists and it may also be used by non-specialist members of the appointed Selection and Interview Panel(s).

5.3. A brief statement outlining how the Fellowship will contribute to your plans for academic career training and development (max. 1,000 words).³

5.4. Curriculum Vitae (CV): to include (i) relevant work experience, (ii) academic and research achievements to date, (iii) previous research grants awarded and (iv) scholarly publications awarded, (v) other relevant experience (max. 6 pages / c. 3,000 words).

5.5. Letter of Support for Application: A letter from the relevant Head of Department/School in the host institution should also be submitted indicating (i) support for the application, (ii) details of the nominated academic mentor and (iii) confirming that necessary resources will be provided should the application be successful.

5.6. Certified Academic Transcripts: electronic/scanned copies to be submitted for each degree and diploma awarded.

5.7. Reports of Two Academic Referees: a specific NUI report form (available at www.nui.ie/awards) is to be completed by the referee(s) and emailed directly to awards@nui.ie. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that the references are submitted to NUI by their referees by the closing date. Nominated academic mentors may not act as academic referees. If references are not submitted by the closing date, a candidate's application may be deemed ineligible for consideration.

6. Selection Process

- 6.1. The NUI Registrar and designated NUI staff will administer the competition for the Fellowship.
- 6.2. A shortlisting process will apply, and shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for interview.
- 6.3. Two independent subject specialists will assess the applications of each eligible candidate.

³ [The Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#) (VDF) may provide a useful resource for completing this statement.

- 6.4. The reports of the subject specialists will be made available to the NUI Registrar and will inform the decision on the long list of candidates to be made available to the Selection Panel for consideration.
- 6.5. Where there is a divergence of 20 - 29 marks based on the reports of two independent subject specialists, the application will be referred to the Selection Panel for consideration. Where the diverging score is greater than 30 marks a third subject specialist will be appointed. Where a third subject specialist cannot be appointed⁴ in good time, then the application will be referred to the Selection Panel for consideration.
- 6.6. The Selection Panel, to be appointed by NUI, will be chaired by an independent (i.e. non-NUI) senior academic with relevant experience and expertise in funding competitions of this nature. The full Panel will comprise experts in a range of relevant discipline areas and will include representatives from within the NUI federal system and other higher education institutions. At least one panel member will be appointed internationally.⁵
- 6.7. A long list of applications, including applications impacted under section 6.5, will be confirmed by the NUI Registrar in consultation with designated NUI staff.
- 6.8. The full application and subject specialist reports for each candidate included in the long list will be made available to the Selection Panel who will carry out a shortlisting process in accordance with defined and published criteria.
- 6.9. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview by the Selection Panel.
- 6.10. Following the interviews, the Selection Panel will finalise its recommendations to the NUI Registrar on the awarding of the Fellowship. The NUI Registrar will inform the successful candidate in writing of the Senate's decision regarding the awarding of the Fellowship.
- 6.11. Following the completion of the assessment process, all candidates will be informed of the outcome and feedback from the assessment process will be available on request.
- 6.12. The decision of the Senate on the awarding of the Fellowship will be final.
- 6.13. NUI has an Appeals Process in place to guarantee that the University has acted fairly and reasonably and followed the appropriate steps in its selection process. Further details can be found on the NUI website.

7. Lodgement of Documents

- 7.1. All applications and associated documentation must be submitted by email to awards@nui.ie. The email should state the NUI award being applied for, i.e. Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Sciences and Engineering.
- 7.2. Closing dates for receipt of:
 - (i) Applications (excluding research proposal) is **Tuesday, 9 February 2021**
 - (ii) Research proposal is **Tuesday, 16 February 2021**
 - (iii) Academic References is **Friday, 26 February 2021**

⁴ In some cases where the proposed research is focused on a niche area or interdisciplinary in nature it may not be possible to source a third expert. In other exceptional cases where there may be a significant delay in returning a report and hence insufficient time to appoint a third subject specialist, the application will automatically be referred to the Selection Panel for consideration.

⁵ The number of representatives on the Selection Panel will be determined according to the number of applications received and the range of discipline areas included. Additional expert(s) may be invited by NUI to sit on the Panel, if required. International appointments will be made from outside the Republic of Ireland.

- 7.3. Candidates should ensure the electronic documents included in their application (as per section 5) are:
- (i) saved as separate files
 - (ii) compressed into a folder (max. size 20 mb)

Section 2: Terms and Conditions of the Fellowship Tenure and Conditions of Employment

8. General Conditions

- 8.1. The Fellow's first duty is to the successful completion of the Fellowship for which they have been awarded funding.
- 8.2. The Fellowship is held subject to these terms and conditions and any supplementary conditions set out in the Fellowship offer. If any of these terms and conditions are breached, the NUI Senate (Governing Body of NUI) reserves the right to suspend or terminate the Fellowship and may require reimbursement of such payments as have already been made.
- 8.3. These terms and conditions will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Ireland, and all parties will expressly and irrevocably submit to the jurisdiction of the Irish courts.
- 8.4. It is the responsibility of the Fellow to inform NUI of any change of address, telephone number, or email address within a month of any change.
- 8.5. The institution is responsible for ensuring that the Fellow has access to effective procedures for resolving problems that arise and prevent the Fellow from effectively carrying out the research and main duties associated with the Fellowship.
- 8.6. In the event that the Fellow experiences serious problems with mentoring or any other academic matter that cannot be resolved at the Department/School level, the Fellow should follow the Institution's own grievance procedures. Should these problems prove to be intractable, the Fellow should inform the NUI Registrar directly.
- 8.7. The institution at which the Fellowship is tenable should ensure that a clear and reasonable policy on annual leave entitlement exists and that this is made known to the Fellow at the start of their Fellowship.
- 8.8. If the Fellow is unable to pursue their project in accordance with these terms and conditions, the Fellow and their mentor must inform the NUI Registrar and the relevant office(s) in the institution. The Fellow must do this no later than two weeks of such a situation arising. The Senate will have regard to the usual conventions of the institution in which the Fellow is based; however, it reserves the right to suspend or terminate the Fellowship.

9. Tenure and Conditions of Employment

The holder may elect to take up the Fellowship in any of the [constituent universities \(or their linked colleges\) or recognised colleges of NUI](#), subject to the concurrence of the Senate and the institution concerned. The Fellowship will be tenable by way of a fixed purpose contract between the Fellow and the Institution where the Fellow is based. The Fellow will be subject to the terms and conditions as set out in the fixed purpose contract.

9.1. Hours of Work

- (i) Fellows must engage full-time in their Fellowship, and the working time is that reasonably required to fulfil the duties of the post, in accordance with the terms of the fixed purpose contract, taking account of socially acceptable norms.
- (ii) The Fellow is not entitled to hold any other appointment or undertake any work, which in the opinion of the Senate, may impair or hamper the due discharge of the terms of the Fellowship. The Senate expects the research approved for funding under the Fellowship to be completed within the agreed term.

9.2. Additional Duties outside the remit of the Fellowship

- (i) Notwithstanding point 9.1(i) above, the Fellow may undertake some teaching duties including supervision, education provision and support activities, providing:
 - The additional duties do not adversely affect the Fellow in carrying out their research;
 - The Fellow is suitably remunerated and additional duties are recognised by the institution, as appropriate⁶;
 - The additional duties are not excessive and are relevant to the research funded by the Fellowship and consistent with the training and career development plan agreed by the Fellow and their mentor.
 - Teaching hours do not exceed 50 hours per academic term, including contact and non-contact hours.
 - Suitable training is provided for teaching activities as part of the professional development of the Fellow.
- (ii) Where a Fellow wants to undertake additional, remunerated duties in their host institution e.g. teaching work, this arrangement must be formally agreed in writing with the Head of School or Department in that institution and NUI must be notified of any such arrangement
- (iii) From time to time, the Senate may require the Fellow to attend events or meetings as arranged by NUI.

9.3. Fellowship Payments

- (i) Post-Doctoral Fellowship payments are subject to deduction of Taxation, Pension and all related statutory deductions at source, in accordance with the terms of the fixed purpose contract.
- (ii) Payments are made in accordance with the terms of the fixed purpose contract with the NUI host institution. Specific details including date and method of payment will be as outlined in the fixed purpose contract with the NUI host institution.

9.4. Termination of Fellowship and Right of Appeal

Should the Senate determine that the conditions of the Fellowship are not being fulfilled satisfactorily, it shall reserve the right, on the recommendation of the NUI host institution, to terminate the Fellowship. In such circumstances, the holder of the Fellowship shall have a right of appeal in accordance with the terms of the fixed purpose contract with the NUI host institution.

⁶ Any such payments will not affect the funding of the Fellowship. Compliance with Irish laws and regulations on taxation will be a matter for the Fellow, the institution and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.

10. Duties and Expected Fellowship Outputs

The holder of the Fellowship will be required to:

- 10.1.** complete a substantial piece of research and publish the results in book form, or as articles in refereed journals, with an acknowledgement of the support received from NUI.
- 10.2.** give a commitment that he/she will participate in at least one event arranged with NUI with a view to communicating and disseminating the research outcomes of the Fellowship. NUI will make conference rooms available to the Fellow in the NUI building on 49 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 and the Fellow is encouraged to use these NUI facilities.
- 10.3.** conduct a seminar in the Department/School to which he/she is assigned and/or within the NUI system, and on an occasional basis, to participate in the programmes on offer in the Department/ School, subject to the conditions set out in Section 9.2.

11. Responsibility to the Head of Department / School (and appointed mentor)

- 11.1.** The holder of the Fellowship will be ultimately responsible to the Head of the Department/School (and the appointed mentor) in the institution to which they are assigned and will be required to report on the progress of their work. Thereafter, they will be responsible to the NUI Senate.
- 11.2.** The appointed mentor should be a senior member of academic staff, based in the same institution, and have regular contact with the Fellow.

12. Institutional Support

The Department/School will acknowledge the holder of the Fellowship as an independent investigator who will be assigned the resources and the normal facilities available to members of the academic staff in that Department/School. In applying for the Fellowship, candidates are required to indicate any specific facilities required for their research.

13. Review of Progress

The Senate is committed to ensuring effective progress for the duration of the Fellowship and monitoring the research performance of Fellows.

- 13.1.** The Fellow, with the mentor, will be required to provide comprehensive six-monthly progress reports to NUI, in order to adhere to the payment conditions attached to the Fellowship. Failure to supply these reports may result in the payment of the Fellowship being suspended until such a time as they are received.
- 13.2.** The report will include but is not limited to the following:
 - Research progress and outputs
 - Career development progress / update
 - Outreach activities
 - Financial update
- 13.3.** A confidential evaluation of progress to date of the Fellow will be submitted annually by the appointed mentor.
- 13.4.** Where a progress report is deemed unsatisfactory, the NUI Registrar will liaise with the Fellow and the mentor in the first instance to seek clarification of the issues that have arisen and agree on an appropriate course of action.

- 13.5.** Where a satisfactory course of action cannot be agreed, the Senate reserves the right to right to approve the appointment of an independent third party, as recommended by the NUI Registrar, to evaluate the Fellowship in accordance with the aims and objectives outlined in the original proposal. In these circumstances, the Fellow and his/her mentor must attend to provide an account of the progress made to date. See also section 9.4.
- 13.6.** Following the review, the Senate will then provide feedback to the Fellow indicating that the Fellowship will be
- (i) renewed for a further limited period after which the Fellow's progress will be reviewed again, or
 - (ii) terminated.
- 13.7.** The Fellow will be required to submit a final report (c. 1,000 words) to NUI at the end of their tenure detailing the outcomes of their final research and other outputs from their Fellowship.

14. Ethics

- 14.1.** The Senate will not award funding for research activity in any area prohibited by law in Ireland and / or in the legal jurisdiction where the Fellow will be based during the tenure of the Post-Doctoral Fellowship.
- 14.2.** A Fellow may be required to confirm that appropriate ethical approval has been obtained to carry out their research project from the relevant approval or regulatory body at the institution where they are employed as a post-doctoral research fellow. This regulation may also apply to candidates in advance of the awarding of the Fellowship.
- 14.3.** Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and consistent with policies and guidelines set out in the NUI constituent universities. They may include, but are not limited to, appropriate codes of practice; the involvement of human participants, tissue or data in research; the use of animals; research that may result in damage to the environment; and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

15. Protection of Intellectual Property

- 15.1.** The Senate will not make any claim to the intellectual property arising from the Fellowship.
- 15.2.** The responsibility for protecting and managing any intellectual property during the tenure of the Fellowship will rest with the Institution in which the Fellow is based and must be in accordance with national and/or international guidelines as appropriate.

16. Acknowledgement of NUI Support

The Fellow must acknowledge receipt of NUI support in all publicity relating to the research undertaken. The publicity may include but is not restricted to the following: letterheads, office signs, media appearances, press releases, public lectures, interviews, conferences, publications, monographs, print materials, social media and online materials including e-mail signatures, television and radio advertisements, websites, film, and video/audio recordings associated with or arising from the research undertaken. Where possible, NUI's logo should be included in any such acknowledgement.

17. Additional Awards

Fellows must inform NUI of any awards or bursaries obtained before or during the tenure of the Fellowship. This information must also be recorded in the appropriate progress reports.

18. Data Protection

The National University of Ireland is committed to a policy of protecting the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988, the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and the European General Data Protection Regulation (as per the Data Protection Act, 2018).

Personal data supplied by candidates as part of the application process will be shared with independent subject specialists and with selection panel members. Personal data is retained by NUI for a maximum period of five years for successful candidates and three years for unsuccessful candidates. Further information is available in NUI's Data Protection policy, accessible at:

http://www.nui.ie/about/pdf/data_protection/NUI_Data_Protection_Policy.pdf

Appendix A:

Eligible Research Support Expenditures

- 1.** Only vouched expenditures incurred in carrying out the research project during the agreed funding terms will be admissible.
- 2.** These may include:
 - (i) Materials and small consumable items necessary for the research work
 - (ii) Equipment costs and software that is critical for the research work
 - (iii) Access to relevant national research infrastructures
 - (iv) Archival research costs
 - (v) Reasonable travel, subsistence and conference costs (for the NUI Fellow)
 - (vi) Reasonable travel and subsistence costs for invited speakers in conferences/symposia organised by the NUI Fellow
 - (vii) Skills-training directly related to the objectives of the NUI Fellowship
 - (viii) Transcription/Translation/Publishing costs.
- 3.** Living costs (e.g. rent) are not permissible
- 4.** Travel and subsistence expenses must be vouched – a per diem rate is not eligible.
- 5.** Fellows must adhere to any NUI guidelines provided in relation to eligible direct research expenditures
- 6.** The constituent university or recognised college must ensure proper financial management of the NUI direct research support funding.

Note that equipment and computer hardware costs are not eligible costs under the NUI Post-Doctoral Fellowship.