



Ollscoil na hÉireann
National University of Ireland

NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentships 2021

Regulations and Procedures

The National University of Ireland is pleased to invite applications for the NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentships, offered for competition in 2021. The Studentships will be awarded on the basis of a common competition open to NUI graduates.

Section 1: General Regulations of the Travelling Doctoral Studentship

1. Travelling Doctoral Studentship Scheme

- 1.1. Three Travelling Doctoral Studentships will be allocated in all branches of the Humanities and Social Sciences, which will be deemed as including, but not limited to, all academic disciplines within Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, including Business, Law and Psychology.
- 1.2. Two Travelling Doctoral Studentships will be allocated in all branches of the Sciences and Engineering. 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. 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, and Architecture.

For queries on subject eligibility, please contact NUI at awards@nui.ie

2. Tenure of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship

A Studentship is tenable for up to four years.

3. Value of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship

The maximum value of a full Studentship is €96,000 (i.e. €24,000 per annum for up to four years, to include a stipend of €16,000 and a contribution towards tuition fees of up to a maximum of €8,000, where appropriate and on submission of fee payment receipts) to be paid in quarterly instalments. Where a recipient has other substantial funding, the Senate may take into account the value of the

Studentship to be awarded (see section 6.3). All funding awarded by NUI must be used exclusively for the purposes of the Travelling Doctoral Studentships.

4. Objectives

The Travelling Doctoral Studentship Scheme, in existence since 1910, has as its main objectives:

- to encourage the most able students in the NUI federal system to pursue research;
- to enable these students to undertake postgraduate research abroad, in the most reputable universities, towards a doctoral degree, or
- to assist students registered in NUI institutions to foster international partnerships by undertaking substantial research periods overseas as part of their doctoral studies;
- to attract these scholars back to enrich the learning community within NUI.

5. Eligibility Criteria

- 5.1.** To be eligible to apply for an NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentship, candidates must be holders of an honours bachelor's degree (placed in the NFQ: Level 8) and be graduates of the National University of Ireland holding any degree from an NUI constituent university (or linked college) or a recognised college of NUI.
- 5.2.** In addition to 5.1 above, candidates applying for a Travelling Doctoral Studentship in the Humanities and Social Sciences must have obtained First Class Honours in one of the following: (i) an honours bachelor's degree as a whole or (ii) a relevant subject/specialisation of the degree or (iii) a taught master's degree. Where candidates have been awarded a master's degree by research, this will be accepted in lieu of a First Class Honours grade classification at bachelor's or taught master's degree level.
- 5.3.** In addition to 5.1 above, candidates applying for a Travelling Doctoral Studentship in the Sciences must have obtained First Class Honours in one of the following: (i) an honours bachelor's degree as a whole or (ii) a relevant subject/specialisation of the degree or (iii) a taught master's degree. Where candidates have been awarded a master's degree by research, this will be accepted in lieu of a First Class Honours grade classification. The following exception applies: graduates of the MB BCh BAO¹ and BDS² must have obtained Second Class Honours in the honours bachelor degree or Second Class Honours in a taught master's degree or have been awarded a master's degree by research.
- 5.4.** Candidates awaiting the final results of a degree in order to meet the eligibility criteria outlined in sections 5.1 and 5.2 or 5.3 may apply for a Studentship on the basis that confirmation of these results is submitted to NUI no later than Friday, 25 June 2021, or immediately following the scheduled summer exam board meetings in their institution.
- 5.5.** Candidates who have commenced doctoral degrees must be at an early stage of their studies.
- 5.6.** Applications will only be accepted from interested candidates on no more than two occasions.
- 5.7.** Previous applicants must include a separate statement with their application detailing the changes made to the research proposal. It is expected that these changes would have taken account of, but are not limited to, the feedback provided by the subject specialists on the research proposal included in the original application.

¹ Honours Degrees of Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Obstetrics (MB BCh BAO)

² Honours Degree of Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS)

- 5.8. 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 these awards.³
- 5.9. Previous recipients of NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentships or the NUI E J Phelan Fellowship in International Law are not eligible to apply for these awards.
- 5.10. Successful candidates must be registered in an NUI constituent university (or linked college) or a recognised college of NUI, or in a higher education institution outside of Ireland for the duration of the NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentship.
- 5.11. Successful candidates who are undertaking their doctoral studies on a part-time basis must transfer to full-time on receipt of an NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentship.

6. Application Procedure

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

- 6.1. **Research Proposal:** Candidates are required to submit a proposal concerning the research they propose to undertake during the tenure of the Studentship.
 - (i) The Research Proposal should give details of:
 - the proposed topic, nature and scope of the research;
 - the proposed methodology of the research;
 - the relevance and importance of the study;
 - a preliminary literature review;
 - where the research will be carried out, and other investigators involved in the research, where relevant;
 - the proposed duration of the research.
 - (ii) The research proposal should be max. 5000 words for applications in the Humanities and Social Sciences and max. 2000 words in the Sciences. Word counts are exclusive of captions, references and bibliography.
 - (iii) Candidates are advised to consult either (i) their supervisor or (ii) the Professor/Head with appropriate subject expertise in the relevant Department/School concerning their proposal in advance of making an application.
 - (iv) The research proposal must be anonymous. The candidate's name must not be included in the title, headers or footers; it can be included in references and the bibliography in reference to publications and other materials created by the candidate.
- 6.2. **Abstract of Research Proposal:** Candidates are required to submit a short abstract of the research proposal (max. 200 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. The abstract must be anonymous. The candidate's name must not be included in the title, headers or footers.

To note: the abstract will be included in the invitation to prospective independent subject specialists and may also be used by non-specialist members of the appointed Interview Panel.
- 6.3. **Personal Statement:** The personal statement (max. 400 words) will complement the formal academic documentation submitted with the application and should provide the Interview

³ 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 Studentship can be confirmed.

Panel with a deeper knowledge of the formative experiences, ambitions, goals and motivations of candidates invited to interview.

- 6.4. Curriculum Vitae (CV):** to include academic and other relevant achievements to date.
- 6.5. Certified Academic Transcripts:** electronic/scanned copies to be submitted for each degree and diploma awarded.
- 6.6. Reports of two Academic Referees:** a specific NUI confidential academic reference 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. If references are not submitted by the closing date, a candidate's application may be deemed ineligible for consideration.

7. Selection Process

- 7.1.** The NUI Registrar and designated NUI staff will administer the competition for the Travelling Doctoral Studentships.
- 7.2.** A shortlisting process will apply and shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend for interview.
- 7.3.** Two independent subject specialists will assess the research proposal of each candidate. The reports of the subject specialists will be made available to the NUI Registrar and will inform the decision on the shortlisting of candidates for interview.
- 7.4.** 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 NUI Registrar 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 NUI Registrar for consideration.
- 7.5.** Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by a Selection Panel to be appointed by NUI.
- 7.6.** Two Selection Panels are convened to interview shortlisted candidates for the Studentships, i.e. one panel for the Humanities and Social Sciences and one for the Sciences. The Panels consist of NUI Heads/Deans/Principals of the Faculties/Schools/Colleges, or their representatives, from each of the constituent universities and are chaired by an independent specialist outside of the NUI federal system. Additional experts may be invited by NUI to sit on a Panel, if required.
- 7.7.** The full application and subject specialist reports for each shortlisted candidate will be made available to the relevant Selection Panel in advance of the interviews.
- 7.8.** Following the interviews, each Selection Panel will finalise its recommendations to the NUI Registrar on the awarding of the Studentships. The NUI Registrar will inform the successful candidates in writing of the Senate's decision regarding the awarding of the Studentships.
- 7.9.** Candidates whose applications are unsuccessful will be informed of the outcome in writing and offered feedback on the assessment of their application.
- 7.10.** The decision of the Senate on the awarding of the Studentships will be final.

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 NUI Registrar for consideration.

- 7.11. 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 at <http://www.nui.ie/awards/>.

8. Lodgement of Documents

- 8.1. All applications and associated documentation must be submitted by email to awards@nui.ie. The email should state the NUI Award being applied for, e.g. NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentship in the Sciences.
- 8.2. Candidates should ensure the electronic documents included in their application (as per section 6) are:
- i. saved as separate files
 - ii. compressed into a folder (max. size 20MB)
- 8.3. The closing date for receipt of the full application is **Friday, 12 March 2021**.

Section 2: Terms and Conditions of the Travelling Doctoral Studentship Tenure

9. General Conditions

- 9.1. The holder's first duty is to the successful completion of the Studentship for which they have been awarded funding.
- 9.2. The Studentship is held subject to these terms and conditions and any supplementary conditions set out in the Studentship 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 Studentship and may require reimbursement of such payments as have already been made. See also section 9.13.
- 9.3. 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.
- 9.4. It is the responsibility of the holder to inform NUI of any change of address, telephone number, or email address within a month of any change.
- 9.5. Conduct of Research in Approved Venue
A Studentship will be held upon the condition that the holder during each year of their tenure thereof apply themselves to research in the subject area in which they obtain a Studentship, or in some cognate line of research approved by Senate. Such research shall be pursued wholly or partly outside Ireland, and under the direction of a Professor/Head (or nominated supervisor) in the relevant Department/School of a university or appropriate venue as approved by the Senate, or by such authority as the Senate may direct.
- 9.6. The approved venue is responsible for ensuring that the holder has access to effective procedures for resolving problems that may arise and prevent the holder from effectively carrying out the research and main duties associated with the Studentship.
- 9.7. In the event that the holder experiences serious problems with academic supervision or any other academic matter that cannot be resolved at the department/school level, the holder should follow the institution's own grievance procedures. Should these problems prove to be intractable, the holder should inform the NUI Registrar directly.

9.8. If the holder is unable to pursue their research in accordance with these terms and conditions, the holder and their supervisor must inform the NUI Registrar and the relevant office(s) in the institution. The holder 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 holder is based; however, it reserves the right to suspend or terminate the Studentship.

9.9. Studentship Payments

Payments are advanced quarterly for each year of the tenure of the Studentship in accordance with the terms of the fixed purpose contract with NUI. Where payments are made in foreign currency, they will be made at the prevailing exchange rate on the date of payment.

9.10. Taxation

- (i) Successful applicants are required to complete the Irish Revenue Scholarship Exemption Declaration Form, which is retained on file by the National University of Ireland for Revenue review if required.
- (ii) Applicants are invited to seek Revenue clarification in relation to compliance with Irish laws and regulations on taxation if required.
- (iii) Regulations were signed on 10th June 2011 that require Government Departments, all bodies established under statute and any other body which is involved in the disbursement of public funds to make annual returns to Revenue providing details of all payments made in each calendar year, subject to certain conditions. The legislation that allowed for these regulations to be made is Section 891B Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. Travelling Doctoral Studentships and other similar payments are subject to these provisions and accordingly are returned to Revenue on an annual basis.

9.11. Postponement of Tenure

In special circumstances, the Senate may consider an application from the recipient of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship for the postponement of the tenure of the Studentship, for a period of not more than one year. Such applications must be accompanied by a letter supporting the postponement from the Professor/Head of Department/School (or nominee) in the institution in which the holder is registered for the doctoral degree.

9.12. Change of Venue

Holders of Travelling Doctoral Studentships are expected to complete their research at the institution originally proposed in their application. It is accepted that in exceptional circumstances there may be a call for a change of location or supervisor. In these cases, the holder and the proposed new supervisor and/or representative of the institution must write to the NUI Registrar stating the case for change. The Registrar will request to examine the submission on its merits and respond with a decision on whether funding will continue in the new circumstances.

9.13. Power to Withdraw and Right of Appeal

The Senate shall reserve the right to withdraw the award of a Studentship if, in the opinion of the Senate, the holder was guilty of any misconduct in connection with any examination for, or used unfair means to obtain the award of any such Studentship, or otherwise fails to adhere to the General Conditions as outlined above. In such circumstances, the holder of the Studentship shall have a right of appeal to the NUI Registrar who shall refer the appeal to an independent third party.

9.14. Studentship Holder in Receipt of Other Funding:

- (i) Where a candidate is in receipt of funding from other source(s), details should be included with the application, or where appropriate, made known in advance of the interview.

- (ii) Candidates must inform NUI of any existing funding or additional offers of funding throughout the duration of the application process.
- (iii) Where the value of other funding held by a candidate is substantial, this may be considered by the Selection Panel when making recommendations to Senate for the awarding of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship.
- (iv) Recipients of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship must inform NUI of any awards or bursaries obtained before or during the tenure of the Studentship. This information must also be recorded in the appropriate six-monthly reports from the supervisor.

10. Responsibilities of the Supervisor

It is acknowledged that during the tenure of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship, the holder may carry out research in a range of approved venues under the direction of more than one supervisor. However, the responsibilities listed below refer to the principal supervisor appointed in the institution where the holder is registered for the doctoral degree. In these circumstances, the supervisor should be cognisant of institutional policies regarding doctoral supervision.

- 10.1.** The supervisor should have regular contact with the Studentship holder and should be based in the same institution where the holder is registered for the doctoral degree.
- 10.2.** The supervisor shall inform the NUI Registrar in circumstances where the holder does not commit appropriate time and effort to the Studentship.

11. Review of Progress

The Senate is committed to ensuring effective progress for the duration of the Travelling Doctoral Studentship and monitoring the research performance of the holder.

- 11.1.** Six-Monthly Reports: The Supervisor is required to submit a report every six months confirming that the holder of the Studentship is satisfactorily pursuing the research work of their Studentship. Further payment of Studentship instalments may be withheld if the Senate considers such a report unsatisfactory. Failure to supply these reports may result in the payment of the Studentship being suspended until such a time as they are received. NUI will provide a report form for this purpose.
- 11.2.** Where a progress report is deemed unsatisfactory, the NUI Registrar will liaise with the Studentship holder and supervisor in the first instance to seek clarification of the issues that have arisen and agree on an appropriate course of action.
- 11.3.** Where a satisfactory course of action cannot be agreed, the Senate reserves the right to approve the appointment of an independent third party, as recommended by the NUI Registrar, to evaluate the Studentship in accordance with the aims and objectives outlined in the original proposal. In these circumstances, the holder and his/her supervisor must provide an account of the progress made to date. See also section 9.13.
- 11.4.** Following the review, the Senate will then provide feedback to the holder indicating that the Studentship will be
 - (i) renewed for a further limited period after which the holder's progress will be reviewed again, or
 - (ii) terminated.

12. Ethics

- 12.1.** 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 holder will be based during the tenure of the Travelling Doctoral Studentship.
- 12.2.** A Studentship holder 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 registered for the doctoral degree. This regulation may also apply to candidates in advance of the awarding of a Studentship.
- 12.3.** Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly, 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.

13. Protection of Intellectual Property

- 13.1.** The Senate will not make any claim to the intellectual property arising from the Travelling Doctoral Studentship.
- 13.2.** The responsibility for protecting and managing any intellectual property during the tenure of the Travelling Doctoral Studentship will rest with the institution in which the holder is registered for the doctoral degree and must be in accordance with national and/or international guidelines as appropriate.

14. Acknowledgement of NUI Support

The holder of a Travelling Doctoral Studentship 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.

15. 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