

IOTI Postgraduate Scholarship Initiative

Call Documentation

April 2013



1. Purpose and Background

- 1.1 IOTI invites applications from **academic or research staff members** interested in supervising Masters or PhD students to be funded under the **Postgraduate Research Scholarship Initiative 2013/2014**.
- 1.2 The purpose of this scholarship programme is to promote strategically oriented research of both a fundamental and applied nature which has the potential to impact both on society and the economy across the Institute of Technology sector. Support will be directed towards the generation and application of new knowledge and the provision of research and development training for highly skilled graduates leading to the award of a Masters or PhD degree.
- 1.3 These Scholarships will be awarded on a competitive basis. Research proposals must demonstrate their alignment with the research strategies of their respective individual institutes and their contribution to the strategic direction set out for the IOT sector as a whole in *Sustaining and Growing the Delivery of Strategically Oriented, Impact Focused Research, Development and Innovation in the Institutes of Technology: A Strategic Position Paper Developed by the Heads of Research Group* (April 2013). This paper can be accessed at www.ioti.ie/RDI.

2. Eligibility and Scope

- 2.1 Applications are welcome from research active staff members (i.e. academic and research staff) in the following eleven Institutes of Technology who have subscribed to the IOTI Postgraduate Research Funding Initiative:
 - Athlone Institute of Technology
 - Institute of Technology, Carlow
 - Cork Institute of Technology
 - Dundalk Institute of Technology
 - Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
 - Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT)
 - Letterkenny Institute of Technology
 - Limerick Institute of Technology
 - Institute of Technology, Sligo
 - Institute of Technology, Tralee
 - Waterford Institute of Technology
- 2.2 The initiative is open to research proposals from all discipline areas.
- 2.3 All applications submitted must demonstrate that the research proposed is aligned with the research priorities of the applicant's institution.

- 2.4 The research proposal must also demonstrate that the proposed project is part of a wider development path that will build further capability within the specific research area. Future plans with regard to progression of research activities, expansion of capacity, collaborative links and funding sources to be targeted must be an essential component of each individual proposal.
- 2.5 Applications are welcome from both full time permanent and contract staff from across the institutes. However for contract staff the duration of their contract must extend for the full duration of the proposed project. If this is not the case then the applicant must have an additional supervisor who meets this criterion.
- 2.6 Applications are particularly welcome from supervisory teams involving early stage researchers.
- 2.7 Applicants must have the agreement of their relevant Head of School or Department that they can perform the supervisor role in the proposed research project.
- 2.8 Interdisciplinary and collaborative proposal submissions are encouraged, which can involve industry, academic or other external partners. For such applications a clear rationale must be given as to the added benefit brought by the external partner to the project. Collaborative projects cannot allocate direct funding from the initiative to partners.
- 2.9 Lead supervisors will only be awarded one scholarship per annum. Co-supervisors will be eligible to receive more than one scholarship per annum.

3. Application Process

- 3.1 Applications must be submitted on the application form supplied.
- 3.2 Applications should clearly demonstrate their contribution to development of research capability within the proposed area, the research strategy of the relevant Institute and the stated strategic direction of the wider Institute of Technology sector.
- 3.3 The scholarships will be awarded on a competitive basis.
- 3.4 The upper limit is 9 pages excluding cover sheet, appendices and Declaration sheet.
- 3.5 Appendices may include a Gantt Chart project plan, relevant letters of support and pro-forma supervisor profile sheets only.
- 3.6 Applications which exceed the stated page limit will not be considered for funding.
- 3.7 The supervisor sheet may be duplicated to provide co-supervisor details. Supervisor profiles must not exceed 5 pages.
- 3.8 It is intended that the application and assessment process will progress in line with the following timeframe:

26th April:	Call for Applications Issued
24th May:	Deadline for Applications
w/c 27th May:	Review of Applications by Independent Panel Members
w/c 17th June:	Independent Panel Meeting to Agree Award Decisions
w/c 17th June:	Communication of Results by Applicants and Feedback to all Applicants
w/c 24th June:	Postgraduate Recruitment Campaign Launched

4. Assessment of Research Proposals

4.1 Each research proposal will be scored out of 100. Project evaluation will be based on the following criteria and scoring:

- **Research Quality:** to include the originality, research methodology and technical feasibility of the project and its quality as a vehicle for training in advanced research techniques. A project plan should be provided which will include scheduling of the various research tasks, a statement of the 'deliverables' expected from each task and the incorporation of 'milestones'. Projects must be adjudged to be suitable for a Masters/PhD degree. (35 marks)
- **Postgraduate Training Proposed:** to include details of the discipline specific research and analytical techniques which will be imparted to the student and the range of transferable skills relevant to the successful completion of a research project and to the student's broader career development (10 marks).
- **Strategic Relevance:** this will include demonstration of fit with the stated strategic direction in research, development and innovation across the IoT sector, the research strategy of the relevant Institute and future plans with regard to development of research capability in the proposed area, i.e. progression of research activities, expansion of capacity, collaborative links and funding sources to be targeted (15 marks).
- **Impact Focus:** Research projects must be impact-focused. There should be a statement of the research problem to be addressed, how this is to be achieved and of the likely impact in an economic and/or societal context. Any contribution the project will make in filling an identified gap in the research knowledge base should be emphasised, as should efforts to apply new knowledge to a particular area. (15 marks)
- **Collaboration:** Proposals should detail meaningful collaborations with key research partners and should show how these relationships have been developed and maintained to date, and the advantages that they bring to the research project and the Institute. Collaboration with other HEIs, industry, government agencies,

community organisations or other stakeholders, and any proposed contribution to the costs or delivery of the project should be detailed. Where the project is an institute-industry collaboration plans to transfer new knowledge obtained during the project to the company must be outlined. (10 marks)

- **Dissemination of Outcomes:** Projects should indicate the mechanisms planned to disseminate outcomes (e.g. publications, seminars, social media etc.) (5 Marks)
- **Experience of Supervisory Team:** this will include specialist expertise and the record of the supervisory team in bringing students to successful completion of a research degree. Supervisors with no previous experience will be acceptable provided adequate co-supervision arrangements are made (10 marks).

4.2 Applicants must achieve a minimum threshold of 70% of the total marks available and at least 50% of the available marks for each criterion. Proposals which meet this threshold will then be ranked and scholarships awarded on the basis of the overall scores.

4.3 Applications will be evaluated by a 4 person evaluation panel. All members of this panel will be independent of any of the participating Institutes of Technology. The panel will include appropriate funding agency and external stakeholder representatives.

5. Duration of Project/Award

5.1 Scholarships will be awarded for a period of up to two years for full-time postgraduate students in pursuit of either Masters by Research or PhD qualifications.

5.2 The scholarship will have three elements:

1. Tuition fees paid by the Institute of Technology for all scholarship holders.
2. A maintenance grant of €6,000 p.a.
3. Travel/Consumables/Materials budget of €2,000 p.a. If it is anticipated that a higher consumables budget is required for the project, the source of the additional funds must be identified in Section 2 (Research Proposal) of the project application.

This equates to a total annual award of approximately €12,000 p.a. (actual total award dependent on fee level in respective Institute and the nature of the research discipline)

5.3 IoTs can co-fund from industry or other external partners to provide additional maintenance support or to supplement the travel/consumables budget.

5.4 Postgraduate students receiving scholarships should not be in receipt of another Exchequer funded grant on appointment to the research project (with the exception of the Student Grant Scheme - see section 6.6).

6. Recruitment of Project Postgraduate Students

- 6.1 Postgraduate students must be qualified to undertake the proposed research i.e. Students must have a Level 8 Honours Degree or be due to graduate in 2013.
- 6.2 All scholarships are subject to successful acceptance to the relevant Institute's PhD register (if applicable).
- 6.3 All postgraduate students will be recruited by public advertisement through IOTI's sectoral promotion campaign for the scholarship scheme.
- 6.4 Postgraduate applicants will be shortlisted and interviewed in line with the relevant Institute's own policies and procedures.
- 6.5 Applicants should be advised of the requirements of the programme.
- 6.6 Awarding of these bursaries to students does not affect their eligibility in any application they may make to the Student Grant Scheme.

7. Method of Application/Closing Date

- 7.1 Supervisors must submit applications on the standardised form. Forms must be completed using Arial font and no less than font pitch size 10.
- 7.2 Each application must be approved by the relevant institution.
- 7.3 One electronic copy of the application form in PDF format to be received by IOTI at kate.wiseman@ioti.ie by 5pm on Friday 24th May 2013

Applications will not be accepted:

- If received after the closing date deadline
- If the application has not been pre-screened and endorsed by the Head of Research or equivalent within the relevant Institute
- If the application exceeds 9 pages in length (excluding cover sheet, appendices and declaration sheet)

8. General Conditions of Approval

- 8.1 The decision of the evaluation panel is final.
- 8.2 Awards are not transferable between staff or institutes except by explicit approval of IOTI.

- 8.3 A project should be commenced as soon as practicable following notification of an award. If a project is not commenced within three months of such notification the scholarship approval may be withdrawn.
- 8.4 A condition of a project's funding is that Interim and Final Monitoring Reports (setting out financial details, outcomes and milestones achieved) will be submitted within the schedule of the project identifying key indicators of value for research funding.
- 8.5 It will be an objective to ensure that gender equity applies in respect of this programme.
- 8.6 Applicants who are awarded a scholarship must register with an Institute of Technology (one of 11) as a postgraduate student.
- 8.7 Supervisors should make clear in their supporting documentation if they plan to take leave of absence from the Institute for any period greater than one month during the course of the proposed research.
- 8.8 All intellectual property arising from the research undertaken is the property of the Institute (unless otherwise defined within the IP policy of the Institute).