



**POST OF POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER–
G.R.A.C.E. PROJECT
(Fixed Term Post)**

**GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION
Duties and Terms & Conditions of Employment**

1. PREAMBLE

Mary Immaculate College is an autonomous, university-level, Catholic College of Education and the Liberal Arts. Founded in 1898, and linked academically with the University of Limerick, MIC is the oldest higher education institution in Limerick. Significant expansion in recent decades has seen the College's menu of educational programmes expand across two impressive campuses, one based in the heart of Limerick City and one in Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The diverse student community is made up of more than 5,000 learners, participating in twelve undergraduate degree programmes and a wide range of postgraduate programmes up to and including doctoral level. Academic staff members engage in professional academic research activities, and research underpins all teaching and learning at the College.

MIC seeks to prepare its students for professional excellence and to nurture their capacity to lead flourishing lives.

2. CANDIDATE PROFILE & SCOPE OF THE POSITION

Mary Immaculate College wishes to appoint a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Theology & Religious Studies on a fixed-term basis for a period of 28 months. This appointment will be made at New Postdoctoral Researcher (Level 2A) on the Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) salary scale.

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Mary Immaculate College provides undergraduate courses in Theology and Religious Studies to students enrolled in the joint BA (MIC and UL campuses), Education degrees (Limerick campus), and the BA programmes in Education with Religious Studies (Thurles campus). The Department also provides a Graduate Certificate and Taught Masters in Christian Leadership in Education (Limerick and offsite). It also enrolls students for research degrees at both Masters and Doctoral level.

Global Researchers Advancing Catholic Education (G.R.A.C.E.), initiated by MIC staff in 2017, networks staff at Mary Immaculate College with colleagues at Boston College, United States, the University of Notre Dame Fremantle, Australia, and St Mary's University in Twickenham, London, among others. As a community of practice G.R.A.C.E. provides an original opportunity for scholars of Catholic education and theology in their respective countries to affirm, study, collaborate, and respond meaningfully to challenges Catholic educators face in the field. Toward this end, the initiative:

- Seeks a deeper study of ecclesiology and Christian anthropology and its significance for Catholic education;
- Pursues new theories of Catholic education based on empirical research;
- Strengthens a global argument for the importance of faith-based schools in a pluralistic society;
- Attunes educators' abilities to notice, engage, and celebrate the presence of God's grace in the world;
- This partnership promotes research and learning to develop the head, heart, and hands of Catholic education.

The project has secured in excess of €500,000 in funding for PhD scholarships. This post-doctoral position will complement the research being undertaken at doctoral level and is funded by the Irish Jesuit Province and the All Hallows Trust.

Essential Qualifications, Experience & Skills

- a) A doctoral degree in theology and religious studies or a cognate discipline;
- b) Knowledge and understanding of the research environment of Catholic Education;
- c) Demonstrable expertise in quantitative and qualitative data analysis and synthesis e.g., the use of NVivo;
- d) A thorough knowledge of and ability to use a variety of research methodologies;
- e) Fluency in spoken and written English, excellent academic writing skills, and proven ability to communicate research findings to peers in the research community through conference papers and peer-reviewed publications;
- f) Demonstrable ability and motivation to work as part of a research team as well as independently;
- g) Excellent organisational skills;
- h) Excellent IT skills.

It is also desirable, but not essential, that candidates will have:

- a) A degree-level qualification in the social sciences;
- b) Knowledge and understanding of the research environment of Catholic education, including of funding bodies, and be able to contribute to further grant applications;
- c) Particular knowledge of the primary education sector in Ireland;
- d) Leadership and management skills and the ability to contribute to research supervision;
- e) A reading knowledge of other languages e.g., French, Spanish, German.

Please note that current government policy may have implications for the re-employment of applicants who are currently in receipt of a public sector pension.

3. JOB DESCRIPTION

Reporting Relationship

The appointee is required to carry out the duties attached to the post under the general direction of the Head of Department, to whom they report, and to whom they are responsible for the performance of these duties in the first instance. The appointee will report through the Head of Department to the Dean of Arts and to the College President and/or such other College Officers as the President may

designate from time to time. They will also work closely with an inter-disciplinary expert committee appointed by the Head of Theology & Religious Studies to oversee the research component of the GRACE project.

They will liaise with Heads of Departments and those in leadership/management positions within the Faculty of Arts and with other College personnel and relevant College bodies in carrying out the duties attaching to the post. In the case of there being a crossover in terms of the duties and responsibilities of other post holders within the College, the College President will adjudicate on same.

Duties and Responsibilities

The post-doctoral researcher will establish a clear baseline and a set of signposts for the advancement of value-led Catholic education in diverse settings in the Republic of Ireland by

- Complete stakeholder mapping that identifies all the relevant actors, and assesses their vision and roles – actual and potential – in contributing to the provision of Catholic education at both primary and secondary levels;
- Capturing and classifying the values that underpin stakeholders’ approaches; and
- Establishing stakeholders’ capacity to progress and further Catholic education.
- Assisting in the dissemination of research findings including through conference presentation and publication.

In addition, the individual appointed will be required to participate in such programmes as the College will determine in association with the University.

The list of duties and responsibilities as detailed is not exhaustive. The performance of the entire range of duties is not necessarily confined to any one individual, as the work requires that staff function in a flexible manner, and work together as a team. The College retains the right to assign new duties and/or to re-assign staff to other areas of the College, in response to service needs.

4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

General

All persons employed will sign an appropriate contract, which will contain terms and conditions of the employment. A job description is given to all applicants for employment and this will form part of the contract documentation.

Place of Work

The appointee’s primary place of work will be Mary Immaculate College, Limerick while there may be an occasional requirement to deliver programmes on our Thurles campus. The College reserves the right to require the appointee to work from any other location.

It is a requirement of the College that the appointee must reside within a commutable distance of the College. Due to current public health restrictions the appointee may be required to conduct some or all of their work remotely.

Exclusivity of Service and Outside

The person appointed will be required to devote their full-time attention and abilities to their duties during their working hours in the College and to act in the best interest of the College at all times. Therefore, for as long as the successful applicant is working in the College, they may not, without the prior written consent of the College, be actively engaged or concerned in any way, either directly or indirectly, in any other business or undertaking where this is or is likely to be in conflict with the College's interests or the performance of the duties that the person has been employed for.

Apart from the occasional giving of lectures elsewhere, the writing of books and occasional literary materials, the appointee will not, during their tenure of office, undertake paid outside work unless they have received the permission of Vice President Academic Affairs (VPAA) to undertake such work on the terms and conditions as agreed for the particular undertaking in question. In every case, it is the duty of the appointee to seek in writing the prior permission of the VPAA. It is also the duty, in every case, of the appointee to inform the person or body for whom the work is being undertaken, that the work is being conducted in a private capacity and that the College cannot in any circumstances be responsible for such work.

Probationary Period

The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of the standard 9 month probationary period. The probationary period may be extended at the discretion of the College but will not in any case exceed 11 months. Absences during the period of probation will extend the probationary period. Performance and conduct during the probationary period will be monitored through a process of assessment meetings. Termination of employment during the probationary period, for any reason or no reason, will be at the discretion of the College. The disciplinary procedure will not apply to a dismissal during probation where the probationary employee has been employed by MIC for less than 12 months.

Hours of Attendance

The normal working week is 39 hours per week or 7.8 hours per day, Monday to Friday. The appointee is expected to be habitually present and available to staff and students alike during normal College hours, Monday to Friday. The appointee may be required to work occasional evenings and weekends.

Academic staff members are required to supply students with an MIC e-mail address at which they can be contacted. They must also provide the College Authorities with a telephone number at which he/she may be contacted during non-semester times. However, under no circumstances will contact telephone numbers be given to students by College Authorities.

Salary

This post is subject to external funding. The Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) salary scale has been adopted by the College for this externally funded research appointment. The annual salary for the post may be increased or decreased in line with Government Policy on Public Sector remuneration. In keeping with all other branches of the Civil and Public Service, individual bargaining for salary increases is not allowed.

Starting salary will be determined commensurate with the appointee's relevant research experience, subject to a maximum of the 4th point of the scale.

With effect from 1st October 2021, the annual salary scale for New Postdoctoral Researcher (Level 2A) is:

€39,131; €39,686; €41,525; €42,700; €43,911; €45,157 (6 points).

Increments are awarded in line with national pay agreements.

Salary will be paid on a monthly basis on the 25th of each month, or the previous Friday if 25th falls on a weekend, using the Paypath facility. Payment of salaries and wages are subject to statutory deductions, i.e. Income Tax (PAYE), Superannuation Contributions, Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) and Universal Social Charge (USC).

Superannuation

New entrants appointed will be required to participate in the Single Public Service Pension Scheme and pay Superannuation contributions at the appropriate rates in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012. Details of this scheme can be obtained from the College's website.

All other eligible appointees are automatically included in the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme on taking up appointment. In compliance with the Colleges of Education Pension Scheme, deductions amounting to 6.5% are made from salary. Details of the regulations concerning the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme may be obtained from the College's Human Resources Office.

The appointee will be required to pay Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) under the provisions of the Public Service and Pensions Act 2017.

Appointees who commenced employment in the public service between 1st April 2004 and 31st December 2012 and have not had a break in employment of greater than 6 months will have no mandatory retirement age. All other appointees will have a mandatory retirement age of 70.

Staff who are not eligible for membership of the Colleges' of Education Pension Scheme or the Single Public Service Pension Scheme may avail of a PRSA (Personal Retirement Savings Account). A designated PRSA provider has been nominated by the College and staff who are not eligible for membership of the aforementioned schemes should contact the Finance Office for further information on PRSA.

Annual Leave

In addition to Public Holidays, a minimum of 20 working days will be allowed per annum. Annual leave should be taken when students are off campus and the taking of leave must have the prior approval of the relevant Line Manager. Public Holidays are granted in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

Sick Leave

Employees who have a minimum 3 months continuous employment with the College may be granted sick pay subject to the terms of the Public Service Sick Leave Scheme. Sick pay is contingent on full cooperation and compliance with the Colleges absence management procedures.

Termination of Employment

At least **three** calendar months written notice is required to resign this post.

On the termination of employment but before departing from the College, staff members are required to return to the College all books, reports, memoranda, correspondence, papers, records, reports, files including data held on electronic files, computer disks, electronically recorded discs, and any other documentation, and all other property, including office keys, belonging to the College or relating to its business or affairs which are in the possession of a staff member or under his/her control when the employment is terminated.

Confidentiality

In the course of working in Mary Immaculate College, the person appointed may have access to or hear information concerning staff and/or students and/or the functioning and the business of the College. Such information acquired in the course of employment with the College, including any aspect of the College's responsibilities or operations, is considered to be confidential information. On no account must information concerning students, staff or other College business be divulged or discussed except in the performance of normal duties and, unless authorised to do so, this information shall not be communicated to a third party. In addition records must never be left in a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them and must be kept in safe custody when no longer required.

Health & Safety

Mary Immaculate College attaches the highest regard to the safety, health and welfare of its employees. It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and of other people in the workplace. Each employee must comply with all health and safety policies and procedures in operation in Mary Immaculate College and familiarise him/herself with the Safety Statement.

Employees are obliged to wear any PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) that they may be provided with and no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any appliance, protective clothing or other equipment provided in the workplace for health and safety purposes. Employees are statutorily/legally obliged to ensure that any accidents/incidents which may occur are reported promptly to the Health and Safety Officer on the MIC Accident/Incident Report Form.

College Policies, Rules and Regulations

The College is a Public Sector employer and is bound by National Agreements. It is also bound by regulations, circulars and directives issued on behalf of Government by the Department of Finance, the Department of Education, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Higher Education Authority.

Employees are at all times subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Staff, College policies, rules and regulations. These policies include but are not confined to Disciplinary & Grievance Policies, Dignity at Work, Examination Rules & Regulations, Policy on Responsible Computing and

Use of Information Technology Facilities. All policies are outlined on the College's Staff Portal for College employees. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with the contents of Policies and Procedures, on the College's Staff Portal.

5. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Method of Selection for Recommendation

Shortlisting

An expert group will convene to conduct shortlisting of applicants, measured against pre-determined criteria.

The criteria that will be used to shortlist candidates for this appointment are:

- A doctoral degree in Theology and Religious Studies or a cognate discipline;
- Knowledge and understanding of the research environment of Catholic Education;
- Demonstrable expertise in quantitative and qualitative data analysis and synthesis e.g., the use of NVivo;
- A thorough knowledge of and ability to use a variety of research methodologies;
- Fluency in spoken and written English, excellent academic writing skills, and proven ability to communicate research findings to peers in the research community through conference papers and peer-reviewed publications;
- Demonstrable ability and motivation to work as part of a research team as well as independently;
- Knowledge and understanding of the research environment of Catholic education, including of funding bodies, and be able to contribute to further grant applications;
- A degree-level qualification in the social sciences;

Normally the number of applications received for a position exceeds that required to fill the position. While a candidate may meet the eligibility requirements of the competition, if the numbers applying for the position are such that it would not be practical to interview everyone, the College may decide that a limited number will be called to interview. This is not to suggest that other candidates are necessarily unsuitable to undertake the job, rather that there are some candidates, based on their application, appear to be better qualified and/or have more relevant experience. It is incumbent, therefore upon the applicant, to ensure that all relevant information is included in their application and that they clearly identify how they meet the specified candidate criteria.

Interview

A recommendation for appointment will be made by an Interview Board. The appointment will be based on this recommendation, except where considerations of health or an unsuitable record in previous employment warrants a departure. A panel will be formed from which appointments for the position of Postdoctoral Researcher – G.R.A.C.E Project will be filled during the life of the panel (12 months).

Medical Examination

For the purpose of satisfying requirements as to health, successful candidates, before being appointed, will be required to undergo pre-employment health screening.

Garda Vetting

Successful applicants may be required to participate in Garda vetting. Specific instruction on this process will be given at the appropriate time. Applicants who do not comply with the College's

requirements in this regard will be excluded from consideration for appointment. Applicants who have resided outside Ireland for a cumulative period of 36 months or more over the age of 18 years must furnish a Foreign Police Clearance (FPC) from the country or countries of residence. Please note; any costs incurred in this process will be borne by the applicant.

Making of Applications

Applications must be submitted on an official application form in typed format. Application forms for this post may be downloaded from the Mary Immaculate College website. www.mic.ul.ie/about-mic/vacancies. Handwritten or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted by e-mail to recruitment@mic.ul.ie with the subject title **Postdoctoral Researcher – G.R.A.C.E Project** no later than:

2pm on Wednesday, 15th December 2021

Late applications **cannot** be accepted.

Applications will be acknowledged within 2 working days of submission. Please be sure to check Spam and Junk folders as it may be redirected here by your account preferences. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 2 working days of submitting your application please contact the HR Office by emailing hr@mic.ul.ie.

The College will not be responsible for any expenses, including travelling expenses, which candidates may incur in connection with their candidature.

Canvassing will disqualify. Any attempt by a candidate either personally or through any other person, on their behalf, to canvass or otherwise influence the outcome of the selection/interview process in his/her favour will lead to disqualification from the competition. Any representations made on behalf of a candidate, without their knowledge will be ignored.

Mary Immaculate College is an equal opportunities employer. Mary Immaculate College holds an Athena SWAN Bronze Institution award in recognition of our commitment to advancing equality and opportunity for all in higher education.

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