



Postgraduate Research Merit Awards

Information Sheet AY2025/6

INTRODUCTION

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) offers three Postgraduate Research Merit Awards:

- MIC Doctoral Award
- MIC Doctoral Studentship Award
- MIC Postgraduate Studentship Award

Any current or prospective postgraduate research student (PGRS) may apply for any or all of the three awards, but the Award can only be taken up by PGRS once they are registered as such in MIC. The scheme is managed by the Research and Graduate School (RGS).

1 Overview of the Scheme

1.1 MIC Doctoral Award

One award per annum subject to contract, potentially renewable annually for up to 3 years, is offered by open competition to eligible applicants.

Eligible applicants may be new or existing PGRS who hold a 1st class Honours undergraduate degree or a 2.1 Honours Master's degree or a Master's degree by research and thesis.

The Doctoral Award provides a 3-year stipend (€12,600.00 per annum in Years 1-3). It also provides a fee waiver (3 years for a Professional Doctorate student and 4 years for a PhD student) within the normal duration of programme. The fee waiver maximum is €6,425 per annum for EU students,¹ and any balance must be paid by the student.

Awardees may volunteer to offer unpaid teaching/tutorial assistance up to 48 hours maximum per annum with the agreement of the Head of Department and Dean of Faculty.

1.2 MIC Doctoral Studentship Award

One award per annum subject to contract, potentially renewable annually for up to 3 years, is offered by open competition to eligible applicants.

Eligible applicants may be new or existing PGRS who hold a 2.1 Honours undergraduate degree or a 2.1

¹ Non-EU students are eligible to apply for Postgraduate Research Merit Awards. The amount of fee waiver is at the discretion of MIC and it is not guaranteed that a fee waiver will defray the full fees in the case of all programmes.

Honours Master's degree or a Master's degree by research and thesis.

The Doctoral Studentship Award current value is a stipend (€6,900.00 per annum Years 1-3) and a fee waiver (3 years for a Professional Doctorate student and 4 years for a PhD student) within the normal duration of programme. The fee waiver maximum is €6,425 per annum for EU students¹, and any balance must be paid by the student.

Awardees may volunteer to offer unpaid teaching/tutorial assistance up to 48 hours maximum per annum with the agreement of the Head of Department and Dean of Faculty.

1.3 MIC Postgraduate Studentship Award

One award per annum subject to contract, potentially renewable annually for up to 3 years, is offered by open competition to eligible applicants.

Eligible applicants may be new or existing PGRS who hold a 2.1 Honours undergraduate degree or a 2.1 Honours Master's degree or a Master's degree by research and thesis.

The Postgraduate Studentship Award current value is a stipend (€6,900.00 per annum Years 1-3) and a fee waiver (2 years for a Research Master's student, 3 years for a Professional Doctorate student and 4 years for a PhD student) within the normal duration of programme. The fee waiver maximum is €6,425 per annum for EU students¹, and any balance must be paid by the student.

Awardees may volunteer to offer unpaid teaching/tutorial assistance up to 48 hours maximum per annum with the agreement of the Head of Department and Dean of Faculty.

2 Call for Applications

The RGS seeks the widest field of applicants inside and/or outside MIC, in consultation with MIC Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM).

The deadline for receipt of applications is **12 noon (Irish Time), 25th April, 2025**. Applications should be sent directly to the RGS the following email address: rgso@mic.ul.ie

The subject line in your email should read "Postgraduate Research Merit Awards AY2024/25" and all documentation in relation to your application should be provided as attachments in a single email.

3 Application Portfolio

Applicants may apply for all three Postgraduate Research Merit Awards if eligible. The Application Portfolio includes the following requirements:

- Completed MIC Postgraduate Research Merit Awards Application form AY2025/6 which must include:
 - Research synopsis not exceeding 750 words
 - Research schedule for all/remainder of the programme of study not exceeding 300 words
 - Personal Statement not exceeding 300 words
 - Career Training and Development Plan not exceeding 300 words

- Letter of support** from the relevant MIC Head of Department, Course Director/ Coordinator or Research Institute Coordinator as appropriate (***these letters are required for incoming PGRS, incoming Professional Doctorate in Educational & Child Psychology students and Year 1 Professional Doctorate in Educational & Child Psychology students to ensure the availability of appropriate supervision for the proposed research. Currently registered MIC Postgraduate Research Students and Year 2 Professional Doctorate in Educational & Child Psychology students do NOT require this letter.*)
- Transcript(s) of academic records (including MIC transcripts).

4 Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria are used to determine awards:

- Applicant (45%), including:
 - Track record and research potential of the applicant
 - Personal statement
 - Match between applicant's profile and the proposed research project
- Project (45%), including:
 - Clarity and coherence of the research
 - Quality and feasibility of the research design and methodologies
 - Consideration as to how the research will make a contribution to existing knowledge
 - Plans for dissemination of the research
 - Consideration of the relevant ethical issues
- Career Training and Development Aspects of the Proposal (10%), including:
 - Clarity and quality of training and career development plan
 - Capacity to acquire new knowledge and skills
 - Potential for the development of skills relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector
 - Evidence of thought as to how the scholarship would impact the applicant's career path

5 Adjudication of Applications

Applications are first checked by the RGS for eligibility. All applications will be assessed solely on the basis of the material provided at the time of submission.

An External Awards Panel (chaired by a non-voting member of the RGS) consisting of at least three non-MIC members will be convened to adjudicate on and make recommendations for the offer of awards to the College. Applications should be written for an educated but non-subject specific reviewer. The panel will be composed of experienced researchers from a variety of disciplines. Thus, it is important that you write your application so that panel members can clearly understand the research proposed therein and form a fair evaluation and assessment of whether it is of a sufficient standard to recommend for funding. The panel reserves the rights to make no recommendations where the requisite standard of excellence is not reached by any applicant. All eligible applications will be sent for evaluation in the first instance, with the highest ranked applications being referred to a further round of evaluation.

The RGS maintains confidentiality of all information throughout the recruitment and selection process and disposes of documentation, consistent with the requirements of data protection policies of MIC and the GDPR.

6 Offer of an MIC Postgraduate Research Merit Award

Following ET acceptance of the recommendations of the External Awards Panel, offers are made to the successful applicants, who must confirm acceptance of their offers in writing to the RGS at rgso@mic.ul.ie within two weeks. Once successful applicants have formally accepted their awards, the unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of the competition by the RGS.

7 MIC Postgraduate Research Merit Awards Contract

The annually renewable MIC Postgraduate Research Merit Awards Contract includes all information and scheme details. Only those who have completed registration can be awarded a contract. The Awardee must provide bank account and relevant financial details to the College before a payment cycle can be activated by the Finance Office. The duration of each Postgraduate Research Merit Awards Contract is for one academic year with the possibility that it may be renewed subject to satisfactory academic progress, as determined through the annual MIC PGR Research Review (Progression) process.

International Awardees will not be able to receive scholarship payments until they have arrived in Ireland, set up an Irish bank account, and applied for a Personal Public Service (PPS) number.

The College reserves the right to deduct any outstanding fees/other sums due from bursaries payable.

8 Discontinuation of a MIC Postgraduate Research Merit Awards Contract

In addition to unsatisfactory academic progress, a contract may be discontinued where any one of the following circumstances arise:

1. The Awardee is subsequently awarded an Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship, NEPS Bursary, or similar.
2. The Awardee decides to withdraw from their programme
 - The Graduate School Director notifies the supervisor(s), the Dean of Faculty, Head of Department, Student Academic Administration (SAA) and the Finance Office, and payment is ceased.
 - The Awardee is responsible for repayment of any outstanding fees.
3. The Awardee completes and graduates from their programme
4. The Head of Department via the Dean of Faculty, in consultation with the Graduate School Director and Human Resources, requests the discontinuation of the Award.
 - Discontinuation of an Awards Contract must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Dealing with Staff Grievance/Disciplinary Issues.

9 Annual Leave

Requests for annual leave must be approved by the Research Supervisor/Head of Department accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Annual Leave.

10 Leave of Absence

Requests for Leave of Absence must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Leave of Absence. Leave of Absence requests must be supported by the Supervisor and Head of Department and require approval from the Postgraduate Research Sub-Committee and Student Status committee.

Stipend payments will be paused in the semester/s in which the Awardee is on approved leave of absence.

The fee waiver and stipend payments will be carried over to the semester in which the Awardee is approved for readmission following leave of absence so long as all other terms of the Award contract are met.