Irish Cancer Society Research

Cancer Nurse Research Training Fund – Deadline Extended

Applicant Guidelines 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

Cancer nurses are foundational health care professionals, essential to the delivery of care and improvements in quality of life for people affected by cancer. As an evidence-based practice, nursing requires research for continual improvements in care and allows practitioners the opportunity to advance their field and stay updated on best practice.

Despite the benefits of nursing research to people with cancer, nurses often experience barriers in becoming research active, such as a lack of time, resources, or training opportunities. The Irish Cancer Society is committed to supporting and advancing cancer nurses in Ireland by addressing these barriers.

The Cancer Nurse Training Award, as one part of this commitment, provides funding for nurses to pursue research training opportunities at a *pre*-doctoral level. The aim of this award is to encourage more nurses to engage in research and in doing so, expedite the improvements in care that comes from having a research-active workforce.

1.2. Indicative Timelines

Milestone	Date
Applications open	10 February 2022
Application deadline	07 June 2022 – 3pm [extended deadline]
Review	June - July 2022
Outcome announced	Mid-July 2022

Please note: that the above dates are provisional subject to change at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

1.3. Funding and Duration

Awards of up to €15,000 are available for part-time or full-time postgraduate training of between one and three years. Funding will contribute towards university registration fees (EU rates) and a small consumable budget of €1,500 to support the applicant's research training needs.

2. Eligibility

2.1. Applicant Eligibility

Applications from individuals that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be assessed. This award is open to nurses who are working clinically in a cancer related discipline.

Lead Applicant:

Suitability

Applications are sought from motivated nursing professionals who are interested in pursuing a research active career in cancer but who currently lack the necessary skills and experience. A 'research active' career may be the future pursuit of a PhD or may be the incorporation of research into everyday clinical practice.

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

At a **minimum**, the lead applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a professional qualification in nursing and be currently listed on the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland's (NMBI) register of Nurses and Midwives.

- Currently hold a nursing appointment in the Republic of Ireland, for which clinical time is spent working with people with cancer.

The lead applicant must **not**:

- Have previously started or completed a PhD.

Supervision:

Applicants who intend to complete a research programme (e.g. MSc by Research; see Section 2.4) must nominate at least one research supervisor at the time of applying. Applicants who wish to complete a taught programme do not require a research supervisor at the time of applying.

At a **minimum**, the research supervisor must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a contract at the host institution that covers the proposed training period.

- Possess a PhD (or equivalent*) in a discipline relevant to the proposed research project.

- Have a minimum of 2 years post-doctoral research experience or equivalent

*PhD equivalent is defined as three or more senior (first, joint-first, or last) author publications in peer-reviewed academic journals or four years' full time research experience. Alternative research outputs may be considered eligible e.g. monographs. In such instances, please contact grants@irishcancer.ie before applying.

2.2. Eligible Training Programmes

Both taught and research training programmes are eligible, as detailed below. The training may be completed on a full-time or a part-time basis. There are no restrictions as to the discipline of research once it is relevant to cancer nursing.

Taught Programmes

Taught programmes are structured courses that provide training through, for example, lectures, tutorial, and seminars. A taught programme may also include an independent research project, usually towards the end of the programme.

Taught educational programmes at NFQ8 and above are eligible (e.g. Higher Diploma, Post-Graduate Diploma, Master's Degree). The taught programme must include a significant research training component, making up at least 50% of the course credits. Clinically focused or advanced practice courses that do not have a predominant research focus (e.g. MSc in Nursing) will not be eligible.

Research Programmes

A research programme is one in which the student drives forward an independent research project. It may or may not include taught aspects with the majority of time spend conducting research.

If considering a research programme (e.g. a Master's by Research) or similar, it would be expected that the research programme goes beyond '*audit*' or '*service evaluation*' to conduct novel research.[1]

Applicants who intend to complete a research programme must nominate an academic supervisor at the time of applying. Applicants will also be expected to produce a research proposal.

Please contact grants@irishcancer.ie if you are unsure of a course's eligibly.

2.3. Training Institution Eligibility

For research programmes, the training institution must be based in the Republic of Ireland. The institution should be a recognised third level intuition capable of awarding qualifications at NFQ8 and above.

For taught programmes, the training institutions may be located in the Republic of Ireland or abroad (distance learning). If selecting an institution abroad, the qualification and institution must comply with local national qualification frameworks.

Please contact grants@irishcancer.ie with any questions regarding course or institution eligibility.

3. Application Procedure

3.1. How to Apply

Applications must be completed and submitted through the Irish Cancer Society online grant management system. In order to submit an online application you are required to register at the following address: https://grants.cancer.ie. When registering, please fill out all the fields on the registration form.

When you enter your login details, you will be directed to the portal home page. From here, you can:

1. Update your basic information (please make sure all fields are completed)

2. Make a new grant application

3. Access previous grant applications

4. Manage any active grants

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[1] Twycross, A., & Shorten, A. (2014). Service evaluation, audit and research: what is the difference? *Evidence-based nursing*, *17*(3), 65-66.

When you have entered your basic details, you will be able to create a new application from the portal home page. Alternatively, select 'New Application' from the 'My Applications' tab.

Next, click 'Apply' for the Grant Type detailed as 'Cancer Nursing Research Training Award'.

3.3. Eligibility Criteria

Once you click 'Apply' you will be required to tick that you meet all of the eligibility criteria before you can proceed to make an application. If you do not meet all criteria then you will be unable to make an application.

4. Application Form

There are five sections outlined on the left hand side of the page:

   a) Applicant Details and Personal Statement

   b) Training Programme Details

   c) Academic and Professional Support

   d) Budget

   e) Validation Summary

Saving your progress regularly is strongly recommended by clicking 'Save' as you go through the application form. Alternatively, the information will be saved when you click 'Save and Close'. By clicking 'Previous' you will be brought to the previous section and by clicking 'Next' you will be brought to the next section.

Mandatory sections are marked with a red circle icon. You will not be able to submit with the application if these sections are incomplete.

Further details on each section of the application form:

a) Applicant Details and Personal Statement

In this section, you will be asked to complete and upload your CV. The CV must be completed using the template provided (this template is downloadable in this section on the online system or on the website) and be no more than three pages long.

<u>Personal Statement:</u> You will be asked to complete a personal statement. The personal statement should include only relevant information, which will add merit to your application.

The following must be covered (500 words max):

- Motivation for pursuing training in research.

- Your career plans.

- How the skills attained will contribute to your career plans and how you intend to become research active in your career.

- How the skills attained will contribute to patient care in your clinical work.

- The next steps following the completion of the proposed training programme.

<u>Time Management</u>: Please describe how you intend to manage your time while on the training programme (300 words max). If you intend to maintain clinical workload (either full- or part-time) concurrently, please describe how you will balance competing demands. Please also outline what, if any, arrangements need to be secured to ensure your release from clinical duties.

b) Training Programme Details

In this section, you will be asked to provide basic details of the proposed training institution and programme, including a) name of training programme, b) qualification earned, c) attendance format, d) full-time or part-time programme, e) start date, f) programme duration, g) taught or research programme, and h) whether the programme is taught or research.

For applicant intending to complete a <u>research programme</u> (e.g. MSc by Research), you will be asked to provide a research proposal. When developing a proposal, applicants are encouraged to consult the <u>Irish Cancer Society Strategy 2020-2025</u> and the <u>National Cancer Strategy</u>. Please provide a research proposal, outlining the following (500 words max):

- Background information/existing literature.

- The hypothesis, aims, and/or objectives.

- Project plan and methodology, including research techniques that will be used.

- Timelines.

- Research outputs.

For applicant intending to complete a taught programme, you will be asked to provide a detailed description of the taught programme and the skills/knowledge that you will attain (500 words max).

c) Academic and Professional Support

Supervision and Mentorship

Applicants intending to complete a taught programme are not required to add a supervisor to the application. However, such individuals may choose to *optionally* include a supervisor who will provide either professional or research mentorship.

For applicant intending to complete a research programme (e.g. MSc by Research), you must identify an appropriate supervisor, add them to your application, and upload a letter of support from them. You may add more than one supervisor and upload a letter of support from each.

Your supervisor must confirm participation in the application and approve the application after you submit it and before it is finally received by the Society. This must be completed before the application deadline.

To add your supervisors you can search for your supervisor by entering their email address. If the supervisor has already created an account then they will appear on the list. To add them as your supervisor click 'Select'. Please note that on saving, the contact will be added to the application and they will receive a notification of this via email. If your supervisor does not already have an account, you can click 'Add a New Contact,' and enter their details.

You must upload a letter of support from supervisor. The letter should outline the supervisor's eligibility and suitability and demonstrate their support for the applicant's research proposal and professional development. The letter of support template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the grant webpage.

Professional Support

Applicants who will need to take time away from their day-to-day duties to complete the training programme must upload a letter of support from the appropriate person at their clinical site (e.g. Head of Department). The letter must acknowledge that the organisation is aware of, supports the individual, and will enable the applicant to fulfil training obligations. This support includes the appointment of new staff or staff to cover the time spent dedicated to training. The letter should describe how this support will be accomplished in the context of providing a clinical service. The letter of support template is downloadable from this section on the online system or on the grant webpage.

d) Budget

Approval of all budget items is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

Funding may be requested to cover EU tuition fees and a small consumables budget to a maximum of €15,000 per award.

Budget Item	Details
Registration fees	University registration fees may be budgeted for full-time or part-time tuition. Only EU tuition fees will be covered.
Consumables	Consumables of up to €1,500 may be budgeted to assist the applicant in completing their training. Consumable costs include: - Costs are costs associated with conducting the principal research activities e.g. materials and consumables, survey costs, travel for participants, transcription costs, etc. - Student laptop (only for awards of two or more years in duration). - Books and library costs. - Travel and dissemination expenses for the applicant.

e) Validation Summary

The validation summary page will notify you of any incomplete required. You will not be able to submit the application until all required fields are complete.

5. Submission of the Application

The application is ready for submission once the form has been validated on the validation summary page. This will also highlight any supervisor who have yet to confirm their participation. Once the application has been validated, it may be submitted by the <u>lead applicant</u>.

The application will then be routed to any required signatories. For this application, any included supervisors are considered signatories. The application will not be received by the Society until all signatories have approved it. All signatories must approve the application before the application deadline. It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to ensure that signatories are given sufficient time to approve the application before the deadline.

Applications must be received by the Society prior to the deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Application Checklist

- o   Completed application form
- o   Applicant CV
- o   Supervisor letter of support (where relevant)
- o   Clinical letter of support

6. Application Assessment

The Irish Cancer Society bases its funding decisions on the recommendations of an external review panel. However, the Society withholds the right to reject any funding application at its own discretion.

Incomplete, ineligible, or late applications will be rejected by the Society and may not proceed to external review.

6.1. Conflicts of Interest

The Society endeavours to ensure that external reviewers are free of any conflicts of interest that might unduly bias the decision making process.

6.2. Assessment Procedure

Applications are reviewed by a panel of international academic/clinical experts (scientific panel) **AND** a panel of experts by experience (PPI panel). The scientific panel will consist of experts in the areas of social science, nursing, and allied. The PPI panel will be made up of individuals with a lived experience of cancer.

It is vital that the application is written in **plain accessible English**. Failure to do this may result in the PPI representatives being unable to accurately review your application. The review panel will be asked to provide feedback on the budget, which the Society will take into

consideration. The approval of all grant budget items is at the discretion of the Irish Cancer Society.

Applications will be evaluated based on:

— The applicant's commitment to cancer nursing research.

— The suitability of the proposed course to address the training needs of the applicant.

— The strength of the applicant's professional and education background as it relates to the applicant's proposed training and future career plans.

— How the training course will positively impact the applicant's career plans.

— How the training course will positively impact the patient experience.

— The suitability of the applicant's supervisor and the strength of the supervisor's support (where relevant).

— The strength of support from the applicant's employer and the applicant's plans for managing competing professional demands.

6.3. Assessment Outcome

Review scores and comments will be collated and all applications will be discussed at a review panel meeting. The review panel will select which applications should receive funding. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by email. Reviewer feedback will be available to all applicants.

7. Contact

If you require assistance with the online grant management system or have any questions about the grant call, please contact the Irish Cancer Society Research Department:

Email: grants@irishcancer.ie