



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Geological Survey
Suirbhéireacht Gheolaíochta
Ireland | Éireann



Geological Survey
Suirbhéireacht Gheolaíochta
Ireland | Éireann



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**
Department of Communications,
Climate Action & Environment

**Geological Survey Ireland Research Programme
Masters by Research Scholarship Call 2023
- Terms and Conditions -**

Call Timeline:

Deadline for Expression of Interest: 12noon, Wednesday February 1st 2023
Deadline for Full Proposal: 12noon, Wednesday, March 22nd 2023
Estimated date of results: April/May
Contract signing & project start: August/September 2023

Objectives of the Geological Survey Research Programme, Masters by Research Scholarship Call

The Geological Survey Ireland Research Programme support excellent geoscience research in Ireland. Where research themes are broad ranging, individual applications are expected to clearly define the proposed project within the scope of the call, and describe the added value for relevant Geological Survey Ireland programmes where appropriate.

The aim of the Programme is to address key scientific questions, build capacity, increase research impact and strengthen research teams in the area of geoscience on the Island of Ireland. Under the new Masters by Research Scholarship Call, proposed projects should incorporate GSI data and/or generate research outputs or data, that can be taken-up by GSI programmes (e.g. Tellus, Marine and Coastal science, Groundwater and Geothermal Unit...), and policy makers, the wider research community, or other relevant stakeholders. It is envisaged that all projects funded under the GSI Masters by Research Scholarship Call could lead to further research and development or wider applications in the areas funded. Applicants are expected to clearly define their project within the scope of the call and the GSI Research Roadmap and one or more of the following themes:

Research themes

1. Soil science and health (projects should include the use of Tellus data) **(SS)**
2. Marine geology & mapping: (a) offshore seafloor mapping – large-scale novel approaches using INFOMAR datasets or (b) Coastal monitoring: Assessing coastal change in Ireland **(Ma)**
3. Groundwater resources, protection or climate change impacts, focussing on one or more of the following: (a) quality, (b) quantity, (c) flow pathways, (d) ecosystem support **(Gw)**



4. Minerals, including minerals prospectivity mapping (**Mi**)
5. Geohazards: (a) towards further development of landslide hazard mapping (**Gz**) or (b) Earth Observation and applications to Irish geohazards combining traditional mapping with modern techniques
6. Artificial intelligence and applications to geoscience data (**AI**), e.g. using GSI hyperspectral data
7. The potential application of digital twins in geoscience (**DT**)
8. Geothermal energy resource assessment for Ireland (**Gt**)
9. The potential for geoscience to support education curricula in Ireland (**Ed**)
10. Geological mapping (Quaternary or Bedrock mapping) combining traditional mapping with innovative techniques and datasets (e.g. GSI hyperspectral data) (**GM**)
11. Geotechnical Engineering: (a) Characterising the subsurface in urban environments using geotechnical data or (b) Innovative applications of geotechnical and borehole data (projects should include the use of GSI geotechnical databases) (**GE**)
12. Quantifying Geological Heritage value using audited geological heritage site data (**GH**)
13. Towards improved management of the subsurface in Ireland* (**MS**)

*This topic should support future management of the subsurface in the context of the increasing demand/competing interests for subsurface infrastructure, geothermal energy, groundwater resources etc.

Where relevant, projects are encouraged to utilise national facilities and databases including the Earth Surface Research Lab [Earth Surface Research Laboratory](#), [GSI Core Store and core scanning facilities](#) etc.

The project will be jointly awarded to the Lead Applicant and Scholar. For the purposes of administration, the Grant Agreement will be the responsibility of the Lead Applicant. If a successful Scholar declines the award, the project will be considered to be withdrawn.

Project Criteria

- Projects should align with GSI internal programmes and either use GSI data, provide research outputs that can support GSI programmes, or both.
- Projects must be novel and innovative and must not be previously or currently funded through other funding schemes.
- Projects should include any international aspect of the research where possible and relevant. For example opportunities for internationalising/scaling up the research outputs, and/or including international collaborators.
- Applicants are expected to demonstrate the relevant of the project in a national and international context (e.g. policy, scientific knowledge etc).

Supporting Data

GSI Masters by Research Scholarship projects should aim to answer a focussed research question within the relevant topics above. Applicants should provide evidence that existing datasets are available and accessible (either reference open databases, statement of



ownership or letter from data owner to say it will be made available). All projects must clearly define the research question, methodology, expected outputs, expected impact and dissemination activities. Applicants are encouraged to contact relevant GSI staff in advance of submission. In particular, for GSI hosted data the relevant members of GSI staff should be contacted prior to submission to ensure availability (contact aoife.braiden@gsi.ie if you require information/contact details).

Duration of project

Masters Scholarship may be 18 or 24 months duration. The duration of the project must be appropriate for the project described. Projects are expected to start in September 2023 and align with the academic year.

Definitions

Lead Applicant – the Lead Applicant is the person responsible for leading and managing the project. They must be employed in the host organisation for the duration of the project and will act as the point of contact. They must be an academic expert who will host and supervise the Scholar during the Masters by Research degree. They must hold a relevant qualification and have experience supervising students (this must be demonstrated in their cv) and be able to support the Scholar throughout the project. Individuals can be named as Lead Applicants on a maximum of two applications.

GSI Scholar & Co-Applicant – The Scholar will be the Masters student and Co-applicant. The Scholar does not have to be identified at the Expression of Interest stage, however they must be named in the Full Proposal stage. They must be registered for a full time academic Masters qualification for the duration of the project. Scholars can be named on a maximum of one application.

Collaborators – Collaborators have a specific role in the project but do not receive funding. They may be providing expertise, data etc. as appropriate to support the project.

Host organisation – this must be a Higher Education Institute on the island of Ireland. Valid tax clearance certificates must be supplied on request.

Authorised person – the application must be signed by the Research Office of the host organisation. The signature indicates the organisation's willingness and ability to host the award in terms of financial, human and physical resources required.

Eligibility

For Masters by Research Scholarships, the Lead Applicant must have a contract of employment with the Host Organisation for the duration of the award and the Scholar must be registered for a Masters qualification at the Host Organisation by the start of the academic year 2023/2024.



Applications from Scholars who are currently outside the island of Ireland are eligible only if the Applicant will be physically and administratively hosted in the Host Organisation on the island of Ireland, full-time, for the duration of the award.

CVs for the Lead Applicant and Scholar must be submitted with the proposal and must demonstrate the ability of each to carry out their responsibilities and role within the project.

Researcher profile and CVs

The Lead Applicant must attach a CV which should be no longer than 4 pages and must include;

- Contact details
- Academic qualifications or equivalent experience
- Publications
- Recent employment history
- Other information relevant to the proposal*

The Scholar must attach a CV which should be no longer than 2 pages and must include;

- Contact details
- Any relevant employment/work experience
- Academic qualifications or equivalent experience
- Key Publications or projects
- Other information relevant to the proposal*

A 2 page (max.) CV must be included for each collaborator involved in the project. All cvs must be merged and uploaded as one pdf.

* For all information regarding funding secured to date;

- You must clearly state your role in any project listed (Lead/PI/Partner)
- If you were an unfunded collaborator this can be included but it must be clearly stated you were not funded.
- Any funding awarded/decision pending must clearly state how much funding has been/may be awarded to the Applicant and not the total value of the project to the whole consortium or institute.

Misrepresentation of research grants awarded/pending is considered a serious breach of ethics and terms and conditions. Any misleading information found in applications for funding will result in the application being returned without review. Information provided may be queried with other named funding agencies if necessary.

Submission

The call comprises a two-stage application process: (i) Expression of Interest and (ii) Full Proposal.

The Expression of Interest will be used (i) to identify suitable reviewers, and (ii) to assess eligibility of the topic. Eligibility assessments will be carried out as soon as the EoI is received



and a rapid response provided to ensure as much time as possible for the proposal development.

A Full Proposal can only be submitted if an Expression of Interest has been received and the project topic has been deemed eligible. All submissions must be received before the relevant deadline.

Expressions of Interests (Appendix 2) must be submitted by email to research@gsi.ie by 12noon Wednesday February 1st 2023.

Full Proposals must be submitted via email to research@gsi.ie before the call deadline. Any applications not adhering to submission and formatting rules, or received after the deadline, will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed.

Full proposals must be submitted by email to research@gsi.ie by 12noon, Wednesday March 22nd 2023.

Format and Layout for Full Proposal

Text font should be no smaller than Arial 11 with page margins no less than 2.5cm (please do not alter the layout of the template file). All word limits outlined in the application template must be adhered to. Only PDF files will be accepted. All documents and appendices must be included in one file which must not exceed 5MB. Any pages beyond the limit will be excluded from review.

Budgets

All values must be presented in Euro. Maximum allowable budget is €40,000 *per year*: for projects of 18 months the maximum total budget is €60,000 and for projects of 24 months it is €80,000, including up to 12.5% contribution to indirect costs.

In the event that the Scholar is from a non-EU country, an additional top-up can be requested towards the registration fees.

Scholarship maximum contribution: €24,000 per year.

Maximum contribution towards registration fees: €7,500

Indirect costs maximum of 12.5% of direct costs (excluding subcontracting)

Projects can be co-funded by cash/in-kind contributions by the Host Organisation or from partner organisations though this is not a requirement; in such cases, the total cost of the project including the partner contributions and GSI funds requested must be included.

In-kind contributions can include personnel time, access to facilities, access to existing data, etc.

Eligible costs

- Total stipend costs of the Scholar



- Registration fees
- Consumables (e.g. access fees, lab consumables, consumable items for fieldwork)
- Travel (including fieldwork travel costs)
- Subcontracting for services (e.g. lab analysis)
- Indirect costs (maximum 12.5% of direct costs, excluding subcontracting)

Examples of non-eligible costs (not exhaustive)

- Protective clothing
- Salary/staff costs for other staff in the Host or partner organisations (including Mentors)
- Maintenance contracts
- Office equipment/furniture
- Durable equipment
- Administration costs

If there are any queries regarding eligible and non-eligible costs please contact aoife.braiden@gsi.ie before submitting your proposal.

Financial reports signed by the Host Organisation finance office will be required. Payments will only be made once these are received and approved by GSI, in accordance to the table below:

Payment #	Scheduled (approx.)	dates
First Payment	September/October 2023	Only made after enrolment of the Scholar
Second Payment	September/October 2024	Expenses from year 1
Third Payment	September/October 2025	Expenses from year 2 – final balance

Budget Justification

This section should clearly justify the planned expenditure including expected timings for significant payments.

Reporting

The project must be completed within the designated time. A mid-term review will be scheduled before the start of the project. A final report must be submitted as requested at the end of the project. Failure to submit these reports on time will result in payments being withheld and/or exclusion from subsequent GSI calls. Reporting templates will be provided. As part of the reporting procedures, successful applicants may be asked to present their results (oral or poster presentation) at a GSI event.



If the mid-term review indicates that the project is (i) not adhering to the terms and conditions, (ii) is significantly behind schedule, and/or (iii) is not adhering to the projects described in the contract, GSI reserves the right to withdraw funding.

Project information

Project description

This section is a maximum of 3000 words excluding figures and references and should comprise:

- (i) Strategic context and rationale for the project including background information, state of the art and reasons for addressing the issue now. Projects should clearly demonstrate how the research will be relevant to GSI programme(s) and it will bring added value to the wider research topic.
- (ii) Objectives and scientific/engineering targets *beyond* the state of the art. This should outline how the project will expand our knowledge beyond current understanding and clearly outline the objective of the planned work.
- (iii) Methodology & Implementation plan should include the approach to be used along with timelines, milestones for the project and any information relevant to the efficient management of the project.
- (iv) Outputs. In addition to a Masters research thesis, the project outputs should be well defined, ambitious and realistic. They should link clearly to the milestones and timing of the project as well as the budget

Details must be provided but some examples include:

- Maps and digital data set(s) (including where these will be available open access)
- Development of new methods, equipment, techniques, technology or cross-disciplinary applications
- Patents, trademarks, licenses, database rights
- Policy relevant outputs e.g. working papers, policy recommendations etc
- Presentations at international conferences (clearly including work funded by the GSI Scholarship programme). A copy of the presentation should be submitted to the GSI following the conference and/or with the final report.

Expected impact (max. 1000 words)

The outputs of the project should positively impacts two or more of the following;

- Scientific discovery and potential up-scaling, development or implementation of the outputs
- Development of new methodology/toolkits
- Development of new software/prototypes
- Future larger scale research funding applications e.g. SFI, HorizonEurope (in this case, the relevant Horizon Europe calls or programmes should be identified)
- Contribution to policy and governance
- Research training and development



This section should clearly show how the project will impact these areas and whether the expected impact is short, medium or long term.

Communication and dissemination plan

Dissemination of the project outputs are expected as standard and a clear communication plan should be clearly described including timing of known conferences, events, outreach activities etc.

Review process and criteria

Once received, all applications will be checked for eligibility. Projects that are deemed ineligible, or are beyond the scope of the call, will not be reviewed. Eligible Full Proposals will be reviewed by an expert panel and assessed under the following criteria;

- Quality of Scientific/Engineering project described (40%)
- Impact/value (25%)
- Quality and suitability of the applicant team (Lead Applicant, Scholar and any Collaborators) (20%)
- Implementation, management plan and value for money (15%)

Please remember, review panels will include international experts so may be unfamiliar with specific Irish geology, acronyms etc. The panels may also include non-experts in the specific project domain. The names of reviewers will be kept confidential and will not be released to applicants.

Ethics

All proposals are expected to adhere to reasonable ethics rules (e.g. IAPG or IGI ethics guidelines, national rules and procedures). Where organisational ethics guidelines are in place, the Lead Applicant and Scholar are expected to adhere to their ethics committee guidelines.

Non compliance

Where proposals or awards are found to be non-compliant as per these Terms and Conditions or in breach of Grant Agreement, projects will be deemed ineligible (at initial review stage) or funding will be withdrawn (at mid-term review or after).

Confidentiality

All applications and subsequent correspondence with applicants will be treated as confidential and will follow GDPR regulations.



Acknowledgement

The GSI Geoscience Research Programme must be clearly acknowledged in all activities and outputs including publications, conference presentations, reports, events etc. High resolution image files of the relevant logos will be made available and must be included. All dissemination and communication activities must be recorded and included in the final report.

Intellectual property and data management

Intellectual Property (IP) will remain with the researcher, however, where commercial product(s)/service(s) result from GSI Geoscience Research funding, the product/service will be provided free of charge to the GSI. Where data is collected as part of a GSI Geoscience Research funded project, a copy of the data must be provided to the GSI and, where relevant, standard data formats should be used (e.g. INSPIRE). Specific terms and conditions relating to data use and data storage will be determined before the start of the project on a case by case basis.

Open Access Research

All project outputs (publications, datasets, products etc.) are expected to be available open access as per the [National Access Plan for Open Research](#). If you do not have suitable data hosting facilities, please contact GSI in advance of your application to request data hosting post-project completion.

Programme management & GDPR

The programme will be managed by the GSI Research Manager, Dr Aoife Braiden. Any queries should be submitted by email to research@gsi.ie. By submitting your application you are agreeing to GSI's [GDPR policy](#).



APPENDIX 1 - Financial rules from Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

<https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/10b42-circular-132014-management-of-and-accountability-for-grants-from-exchequer-funds/>



Statement of Principles for Grantees

Are you in receipt of public funding?

This Statement outlines the 4 principles which apply in the case of bodies in receipt of grant funding provided directly or indirectly from Exchequer sources.

Clarity

Governance

Value for
Money

Fairness



This Statement should be brought to the attention of every grant receiving body

If you are in receipt of Public Funding you should

Clarity Understand the purpose and conditions of the funding and the outputs required Apply funding only for the business purposes for which they were provided Apply for funding drawdown only when required for business purposes Seek clarification from the grantor where necessary – on use of funds, governance and accountability arrangements.	Governance <i>Ensure appropriate governance arrangements are in place for:</i> oversight and administration of funding control and safeguarding of funds from misuse, misappropriation and fraud accounting records which can provide, at any time, reliable financial information on the purpose, application and balance remaining of the public funding Accounting for the amount and source of the funding, its application and outputs/outcomes.
Value for Money <i>Be in a position to provide evidence on</i> effective use of funds value achieved in the application of funds avoidance of waste and extravagance	Fairness Manage public funds with the highest degree of honesty and integrity Act in a manner which complies with relevant laws and obligations (e.g. tax, minimum wages) Procure goods and services in a fair and transparent manner Act fairly, responsibly and openly in your dealings with your Grantor



APPENDIX 2 - Template for Expression of Interest – to be emailed to research@gsi.ie
(word version available for download)

Geological Survey Suirbhéireacht Gheolaíochta Ireland Éireann Expression of Interest GSI Masters by Research Scholarship Call 2023 Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment	
Host Organisation	
Project Title	
Lead Applicant	
Related GSI Programme/unit (www.gsi.ie)	
Abstract (max 300 words)	
Keywords (max 10)	