

Griffith Geoscience Research Awards

Guide for Applicants

Closing Date for Applications: Wednesday 18 April 2007 (17.00)

Information Meeting for Applicants: Monday 2 April 2007 (13.45) at Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk, County Louth.

The Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Mr Noel Dempsey, TD, recently announced the establishment of the awards. The awards are due to be advertised on 16 March 2007 with a closing date of 18 April 2007.

The objective of the awards, which will be managed by the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), is to develop overall research capacity particularly in priority areas of geoscience research as outlined in the National Geoscience Programme, 2007-2013 (available at www.gsi.ie). Applications are sought from research groups active in geoscience research and research training, located on the Island of Ireland who wish to expand their activities.

It is anticipated that Higher Education Institutions will be the main applicants. However organisations active in research may apply provided they have suitable arrangements in place with PhD awarding Institutions.

The awards scheme contains a number of features designed to attract mobile young researchers from abroad to Ireland. This includes a possibility of extended funding (up to seven years for researchers), competitive salary and stipends and provision for PhD students to complete part of their PhD studies at international centres of research excellence. The public advertisement can be seen on www.gsi.ie.

This guide provides details of the 4 priority research categories, the information that is required from applicants and the criteria which will be used by a panel of international experts in evaluating the proposals.

Priority Research Categories

Applicants are sought to achieve the following priority research objectives -

- 1. To facilitate open access to GSI data on a web-enabled basis** - Based on innovations in geoscience data management and delivery, and building on the current initiative to web-enable existing seabed data in GSI, to provide for the improved sharing and manipulation of geoscience data within and between GSI and academic institutes. Applicants should be linked to the HEANet network system. It is considered that this activity will require full-time researchers over a 3 year period with experience in digitalising and web-enabling data. In view of the important databases managed by GSI it is anticipated that two full-time researchers from the successful research team will be based at the GSI.
- 2. To establish an Irish Geoscience Graduate Programme (IGGP) on an all-island basis** - which will provide access to specialised geoscience modular

courses for all graduate geoscience researchers in Irish research institutes. Applicants (research group/institution) must have knowledge/experience in the establishment of Graduate Schools. It is considered that this will require one part-time researcher over three years.

3. **To produce and distribute geoscience outreach products to primary and/or secondary schools throughout the island or Ireland** - especially in the timeframe of the International Year of Planet Earth (2008), to stimulate interest by primary and secondary school students in Geology/Geoscience. Applications may or may not be part of a larger integrated proposal under Category 4. Examples might include DVDs, rock specimen sets and classroom posters. Funding will be provided, as appropriate, on the basis of a part-time researcher for up to three years, a number of summer placements and a contribution to the cost of production and distribution.

4. **To conduct high quality research on key geoscience areas** - Applicants are invited to submit research proposals which address key geoscience priorities as outlined in the National Geoscience Programme and which will have major potential impacts on the energy, environmental, marine and infrastructure sectors. Proposals which address deep geothermal energy and deep carbon sequestration, taking account of the intended drilling by EPA/GSI of a deep borehole onshore in the mid-west region, as well as in the area of groundwater resources, will be particularly welcome. Some key research objectives can be summarised as follows:
 - To explore the energy potential of our subsurface, including offshore petroleum and onshore geothermal;
 - To assess the options for carbon storage in deep geological formations;
 - To develop models for the behaviour of groundwater, including the impacts of climate change and intensifying infrastructure on future groundwater supplies;
 - To provide added-value geoscience research based on seabed databases at GSI and elsewhere in support of the optimum use of marine resources;
 - To provide research in support of high resolution assessment and monitoring of hazards such as landslides (see “Landslides in Ireland, GSI, July 2006, for research recommendations) and tsunamis;
 - To ensure aggregates research and assessment methodologies are available to support balanced regional development.

Funding

Funding will be provided for:

- Full time Researchers (up to 7 years)
- PhD studentships for geoscience graduates (4 years)
- Summer student placements (3 months)

The parent Institutions of the research groups selected to receive awards will be responsible for the recruitment of researchers and students according to standard guidelines. A coordinated approach will be made to raise International awareness of the Awards in an attempt to target mobile young researchers.

As this is a new awards scheme an information meeting for intending applicants will be held on 2 April 2007 at 13.45 in the Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk, County Louth (Phone 042 935 8200; email: info@ballymascanlon.com). Intending attendees should inform Michael Kennedy (michael.kennedy@gsi.ie) in advance.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Applicants should use the following evaluation criteria as the principal guide in completing their application focusing on the relevance of the research programme of the group and its ability to provide high quality research training. All applications must have authorised institutional sign off. Applications will be evaluated by an International panel of experts.

Proposals under **Category 1** above will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Knowledge of and experience in relevant aspects of data management and delivery
- Relevance of research programme to national research priorities as set out in the National Geoscience Programme
- Output of the research group as seen by publications, patents, etc

Proposals under **Category 2** above will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Knowledge of and experience in modern methods of structuring graduate school programmes
- Relevance of research programme to national research priorities as set out in the National Geoscience Programme
- National and international research collaboration including North-South collaboration

Proposals under **Category 3** above will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Knowledge of and experience in development of similar products and services
- Output of applicant as seen by recent products
- Relevance of products to supporting primary and secondary school curriculum

Proposals under **Category 4** will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Relevance of research programme to national geoscience priorities as set out in the National Geoscience Programme
- Potential of group as a centre of research excellence
- Ability of research group to provide research training
- Success in international and national peer reviewed competitions (EU Framework programme and others); third party awards and recognition
- Output of research group as seen by publications, patents etc
- National and International research collaboration including North-South collaboration.
- Industrial relevance including track record in product development, services and collaboration with industry.

Applicants should address these criteria in compiling their applications according to the recommended structure as detailed below.

Structure of Application

Identification and contact details of Research Group and Institution

- Name of head of group, address, email, phone, fax
- Identification of Parent Institution and contact details of authorised officer (contractual matters)

Description of Research Group (Four pages, but very brief in the case of Category 3 Outreach products for schools proposals)

- Staff composition (Identify staff members)
- Summary of current work programme and its relevance to national geoscience priorities (2 pages max)
- Publications/Patents (List of recent publications/ patents; identify top 3 cited publications)
- Success in International and National peer reviewed competitions in past 3 years (Project identification and amount)
- Recognition of group (Details of third party awards, prizes etc)
- List current National and International research collaborations including North-South collaboration.
- Description of physical facilities including major equipment (one page max)

Ability of Group to provide research training (For Categories 1 and 4 only)

- Number of current postgraduate students (List of names and degree, eg, second year PhD).
- Output of PhDs and other postgraduates in past 5 years including completion rates.
- Structure of PhD programme (e.g. advanced disciplinary courses and generic skills; supervisory structure).
- Specific placements in collaborating centres at home and abroad including industry placement.
- In the case of a non PhD awarding Institution, describe arrangement with the degree awarding body.
- Success in research training activity (e.g. Marie Curie schemes of EU).

Potential of Group as Centre of Research Excellence (one page) (For Categories 1 and 4 only)

- Describe the impact of the Award on the development of the research group.
- Detail support of the parent Institution towards the development of the group (e.g. strategic priority of the parent Institution, new physical facilities/equipment)

Establishment of an Irish Geoscience Graduate Programme (IGGP) on an all-island basis (For Category 2 only)

- Describe the steps involved in the establishment of a Graduate Programme with details of the modular courses.
- Provide details of relevant experience in graduate school/graduate programme development.

Details of Support Requested

As the Awards are aimed at the development of the research group, funding is provided for additional researchers and students rather than substitution of existing group members.

Funding will be provided for salaries and stipends, and a contribution to cover research costs. **At this stage the calculation of cost of support is not required in the application.**

The indicative guideline for support is as follows. These costs are not definitive and will be finalised following discussions with Institutions.

- Researchers. PhD and 3 years postdoctoral experience. € 55,000 pa with annual incremental increases based on satisfactory performance. In addition employer costs and a contribution to cover research costs. Continuation of funding beyond 3 years will be subject to satisfactory peer review of the individual researcher and the overall performance of the research group. A maximum of 7 years support per individual researcher will be provided
- PhD students. Geoscience graduates. 4 years stipend. € 18,000 pa plus tuition fees. Contribution to cover research costs including visits to international centres of excellence.
- Undergraduate student support. € 1,500 per month.

Applicants should clearly indicate the number of researchers, PhD students and summer student positions which they require. The researchers will carry out full time research and contribute to the supervision of graduate and undergraduate students.

A description of the programmes and projects on which the new researchers and students will work should be presented. The output and likely impact should be highlighted (2 pages max).

Joint or Linked Applications

In the case of joint or linked applications from different institutions, separate applications should be submitted by each partner clearly indicating the nature of the linkage.

Statement by Institution

Please find attached application for Griffith Geoscience Research Awards from the
..... (identify group) of
.....(identity of Institution which will employ
researchers and appoint students)

Signature for Institution:

Name:

Position in Institution:

Contact Details: (Address, email, phone, fax)

Signature of Head of Research Group:

Closing Date

**Applications should be sent by email and signed hard copy to Michael
Kennedy(Michael.kennedy@gsi.ie),
Geological Survey of Ireland,
Beggars Bush,
Haddington Road,
Dublin 4 by 17.00 hours on Wednesday 18th April 2007.**