

iCRAG Public Perception and Understanding Research Programme

Call Document

Important Deadlines

Call open	7 th February 2019
Call deadline	12pm, Wednesday 6th March 2019
Evaluation process	5 th March – 20 th April 2019
Notification to applications	End April 2019
Recruitment process	May 2018
Start date: Up to 12 months project 12-18 month project	By 1 st December 2019 at latest By 1 st July 2019 at latest
Completion date (mandatory)	31st December 2020

1. iCRAG Public Perception and Understanding Research Programme

The Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Irish Centre for Research in Applied Geosciences (iCRAG) invites potential research supervisors to submit proposals under the Centre's Public Perception and Understanding (PPU) challenge area. The research will be supported from iCRAG funds. **Please note that all research projects must be completed by 31st December 2020**, which is the termination date for iCRAG's current phase of funding. Please read Section 4 – Project Duration and Budget for more information about the duration and start/end dates for projects.

Established in 2015, iCRAG is Ireland's national geosciences research centre spanning the broad range of geosciences including energy security, raw materials, groundwater, the geomarine environment, and geohazards. Comprising 150 researchers across eight research institutes, and collaborating with more than 50 industry partners, our vision is to become a world leader in applied geosciences research, discovery, and public understanding of Earth's critical resources and environment for a sustainable society. iCRAG is funded by Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and co-funded under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by industry partners.

Up to three (3) research projects will be funded. As all research must be completed by 31st December 2020, we are unable to support PhD or MSc projects but we encourage applications for postdoctoral research and/or, if appropriate, for projects to be carried out by a research assistant.

2. Research Themes

Proposals should address an aspect of the three research themes listed below and should also align with iCRAG's current Public Perception and Understanding of Geoscience research. The current research programme aims to systematically investigate the factors that underlie both the public and expert perceptions and attitudes towards geological activities in Ireland with the aim of enhancing two-way communication between experts and various, identified, publics. These various perceptions and attitudes feed into other research agendas surrounding responses to geoscience activities in Ireland and give context to the multilevel socio-political, market, and community acceptance.

Proposals for research projects are sought under the following research themes, with specific focus on social science research. We encourage interdisciplinary collaborations between social scientists and geoscientists.

- **Public Engagement and Citizen Science**

Public engagement is an important mechanism to involve the public in the geosciences. In some interpretations, public engagement is thought to influence the public's attitude to and acceptance of science and science-related activities. Citizen science projects, which include the voluntary involvement of the public in scientific research, are often positively received by scientists and by project participants. However, these groups may not represent the broader public. This research theme seeks to assess efforts to encourage public engagement with the geosciences, with a particular emphasis on citizen science, in order to identify best practices

for structuring citizen science activities in Ireland and for involving the public, or subsectors of the public, in geoscience research activities.

- **Public Perception and Public Acceptance**

Topics such as climate change, fossil and renewable energy developments, the quality and quantity of water resources, mining, and quarrying often produce strong public reactions. Understanding the context in which public debates take place is thought to aid communication between experts and non-experts, which in turn can support informed and empowered decision making by all stakeholders. Research under this theme aims to develop a better understanding of how the general public and/or selected subsectors of the public perceive, understand, and receive information about geoscience activities in Ireland, and how the recipients respond and react to that information. Research may consider factors that influence the risk perceptions and public acceptance of geoscience-related projects. The goal is to provide information on the social and cultural values of public(s) that can be factored into geoscience communication strategies.

- **Risk Communication and the Geosciences**

Given Ireland's growing population and changing climate, the need to identify, monitor, mitigate, and communicate about geohazards including flooding, landslides, karst ground conditions, sea level rise, radon, natural or anthropogenic water contamination, and other factors, becomes increasingly important in protecting the public. Research under this theme should strengthen our understanding of how to communicate and develop communication strategies about geohazards, both to enhance public understanding of the hazards and how they may affect life and property, and to support informed decision making at all levels in emergency situations and in longer term planning.

3. Eligibility

This scheme will offer research opportunities for academic researchers affiliated with, or supported by, a recognised SFI eligible research body. The list of eligible SFI research bodies can be found [here](#).

The call is open to the following applicants:

- Current Principal Investigators and Funded Investigators (FIs) in iCRAG;
- iCRAG Investigators;
- Researchers not currently in iCRAG.

For iCRAG Investigators and researchers not currently in iCRAG, the following criteria must be met in order to be recognised as a Funded Investigator by SFI:

- FIs must hold a PhD for at least 3 years by the deadline (6th March 2019).
- FIs must be senior author on 3 internationally peer-reviewed articles. Only original research publications, and not review articles are acceptable.
- The FI is expected to have the experience, capability and authority to mentor and supervise postgraduate students and team members.

In addition to the eligibility criteria above, the FI is expected to have the necessary research management experience, as exemplified by one or more of the following:

- Winning of at least one competitively awarded, internationally peer reviewed research grant.
- Winning of a competitively awarded R&D, innovation or commercialisation award (not including an Enterprise Ireland Commercial Case Feasibility Grant or Clinical Innovation Award)
- Management of an industry funded project or EU award project.

N.B. Only 1 application per applicant is permitted. We welcome applications from co-applicants. In this instance, a lead applicant should be identified and a CV will be required for both applicants. Both applicants must meet the eligibility criteria outlined above.

4. Project Duration and Budget

A summary of the award including duration and value is below:

Award Type	Duration	Value	Start Date
Small – scale projects	Up to 12 months	€100,000	By 1 st December 2019 at latest.
Medium – scale projects	12 to 18 months	€120,000	By 1 st July 2019 at latest.

Important!

All projects must end on or before 31st December 2020. The current funding term for iCRAG will end on 31st December 2020 and it will not be possible to request no-cost extensions beyond this date. Projects must commence by the latest start date indicated above, subject to the award type. It is iCRAG's expectation that all costs should be incurred during the period of the award rather than being built into a budget but with anticipated expenditure after the award has concluded. If the costs are not incurred during the lifetime of the award, the unspent funds must be returned to iCRAG. In addition, depending on the available budget, iCRAG reserves the right to revise requested budgets.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate that the costs sought are necessary to undertake the research project and should think carefully about the time and resources needed to complete the research successfully within the specified period.

Eligible costs include:

- Salaries:
 - Postdoctoral Fellows: salaries (including include provisions for PRSI 10.85% & Employer Pension Contribution 20%) may be requested according to the SFI Team Member Budget Scale at Level 2A (SFI Team Member Budget Scales). The point on the scale requested should be determined by qualifications and experience. Provisions for annual single-points increments and salary increases under the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 may be included.
 - Research Assistants: salaries (including include provisions for PRSI 10.85% & Employer Pension Contribution 20%) may be requested according to the SFI Team Member Budget Scale at Level 1 (SFI Team Member Budget

Scales). The point on the scale requested should be determined by qualifications and experience. Provisions for annual single-points increments and salary increases under the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 may be included.

- Fieldwork:
 - As per current iCRAG practice, costs for fieldwork up to €2,500 per annum may be requested.
- Travel:
 - It is expected that costs would not exceed an average of €1,500 per team member per year, for a total of one year less than the term of an award. For an 18-month project, travel costs can only be included for one year of the award.
- Materials and consumables:
 - This can include lab analysis and supplies, software, publications, external costs including surveys, and any other associated costs.
- Dissemination and knowledge exchange costs:
 - Costs associated with the dissemination of the research, seminar/conference attendance (provide details of name and location where possible) and other channels of dissemination and material e.g. leaflets, reports, websites, etc. and other knowledge exchange activities.
- Equipment:
 - Costs for laptops for team members, i.e. postdoctoral researchers and/or research assistants are limited to €1,200 per person.
 - Costs for voice recorders, etc. may be included in this section.

Ineligible costs

Ineligible costs, for the purpose of this call, are costs that align with SFI's budget policy. **In line with SFI's budget policy, this call will not provide a contribution towards the salary of the lead applicant, co-applicant or any Funded Investigator, or for Replacement Teaching Costs (i.e. buy-out time).**

Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- Collaborator Salary
- International Collaborator Research Costs
- Replacement Teaching Costs
- Conference Organisation
- Journal Subscriptions
- Membership Fees
- Entertainment and hospitality expenses except such reasonable expenses accepted as wholly and exclusively necessary for carrying out the Research Programme
- Contingency or Miscellaneous Costs.

5. Application Process

A full and complete application comprises the application form and the applicant's 2-page CV including appendix. Applicants must:

- use the templates provided;
- upload the application to the online system in PDF format: [iCRAG Public Perception and Understanding Call](#).

The minimum font size allowed is 11 points in a clearly readable font (Arial or Times New Roman). Please consult the document *Instructions for submitting applications to the iCRAG Public Perception and Understanding Programme* before uploading your application.

An application to this scheme will not be assessed if:

- the applicant is not eligible;
- the incorrect application form is submitted;
- the application is incomplete;
- ineligible costs are included;
- more than 1 application per applicant is submitted;
- end date is post 31 December 2020;
- additional materials other than those requested (application form and CV) are attached to the application form, or if sections of the application form are appended rather than included in the form (additional appended materials will render an entire application ineligible);
- it exceeds the word limit.

Queries

We welcome enquiries about the call for proposals or about iCRAG and its research priorities, please email ppu.call@icrag-centre.org.

Deadline

The deadline for applications is **12pm, Wednesday 6th March 2019**. **Late applications will not be considered.**

6. Evaluation process and criteria

The evaluation process will consist of three phases: (i) eligibility check and fit to research themes; (ii) peer evaluation; and (iii) final funding decision by the iCRAG Public Perception and Understanding Technical Advisory Committee. Each proposal will be reviewed and scored against the evaluation criteria (see below). Evaluators will provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback. The Technical Advisory Committee will select up to three projects for funding.

Criterion

Each criterion will be scored out of 5. Marks can be awarded in integers or halves. Marks will be awarded for each of the three criteria, not for the sub-elements of each criterion. These elements will be considered by the evaluators in the assessment of the criteria. The scoring table is as follows:

0	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
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1	Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2	Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3	Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but several shortcomings are present.
4	Very good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5	Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The proposal will be evaluated against the award criteria, as follows:

Excellence	Impact	Quality & efficiency of implementation
Description of the proposal and quality of the proposal. Including originality, innovative nature and significance of the proposal.	Alignment with the Public Perception and Understanding research themes.	Quality and appropriateness of planned research programme.
Relevance to international leading research in the area.	Potential proposed measures to communicate the results to different target audiences including education and public engagement activities.	Quality and appropriateness of collaboration between social scientists and geoscientists.
Quality of PI's track record to date in the proposed research area.	Potential impact of proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the results.	Quality and appropriateness of stakeholder collaboration if appropriate.
	Potential to contribute to iCRAG's future development	Planned project implementation including schedule, project delivery and management.

7. Conditions of award

Reporting

All iCRAG researchers from MSc students to Principal Investigators are required to provide progress reports. Both researchers and supervisors funded under the Public Perception and Understanding challenge area will be required to adhere to the reporting requirements for iCRAG. This is a condition for holding the award.

Research Integrity

The awardee's institution must ensure that the highest quality of research conduct is maintained. The institution must ensure that systems are in place to manage research misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, falsification of data, improper data selection). The systems in place to manage research misconduct should align with the basic principles that underpin all research integrity and good practice as outlined in the national policy statement on '[Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)' and the '[European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)'.

Acknowledgements

All publicity, including interviews, email signatures, conference presentations, posters, publications, print materials, online materials, press releases, television and radio advertisements, websites, film, and video/audio recordings associated with or arising from the research undertaken by the postgraduate student and supervisor while in receipt of funding must contain acknowledgement of funding received. Advice on wording and logos will be provided to awardees.