

Research Scholarships Scheme 2013/14

Date: 1 March 2013

Reference: 12/07

To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Consultative Group, institutional Welsh Medium Provision coordinators.

Respond by: 1 May 2013

Contact: Dr Dylan Phillips

E-mail: d.phillips@colegcymraeg.ac.uk

This circular invites applications for Welsh medium scholarships to be funded by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Research Scholarships Scheme. The closing date for applications is 1 May 2013.

This document is available on the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol website

Research Scholarships Scheme 2013/14

Introduction

1. This circular invites applications for Welsh-medium postgraduate scholarships, to start on 1 October 2013. The closing date for submission will be 1 May 2013.
2. The Research Scholarships Scheme was introduced for the first time in 2005, and it was adopted by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol [the Coleg] following its establishment in 2011. The Coleg's Academic Board and Board of Directors agreed upon revised regulations for the scheme in February 2013 and, consequently, the application process for 2013/14 is based on these revised regulations. In this circular, the application process and arrangements for supporting the new Research Scholarships are outlined. The Coleg retains the right in future to append new terms and conditions to those outlined in this circular.

General Principles

3. The scheme will contribute to the Coleg's strategic aim of 'the promotion and development of scholarship, research and publishing through the medium of Welsh' by attracting the most brilliant and enthusiastic graduates to the scheme each year and fostering researchers of the highest calibre.
4. Doctoral dissertations will usually be expected to be researched and presented through the medium of Welsh. Dissertations that are researched, written and presented in Welsh are considered a valuable contribution to Welsh-medium research and scholarship, and may also eventually give rise to scholarly publication in Welsh. Any exceptions to this regulation must be justified, showing in the application what other benefits would the award bring to the language and how it would potentially contribute to the realisation of the Coleg's strategic aims (e.g. contribution to Welsh-medium teaching, the creation of Welsh-medium educational resources, the publication of research

findings in Welsh, promoting the subject as a Welsh-medium subject, etc). In the case of academic schools/departments which have a proven record of Welsh-medium research, it is expected that the work be submitted in Welsh, and the Coleg reserves the right to stipulate this as a condition of the scholarship.

5. To be eligible for a scholarship, applicants will be expected to be graduates of a recognised higher education institution. They will normally have gained at least an upper second-class honours degree (2.i), and have successfully completed a taught postgraduate course before 31 July in the year that the scholarship is due to begin. Other qualifications may be considered in exceptional cases only.
6. Institutions will also be responsible for making arrangements for the supervision of scholarship holders. These arrangements will conform to the institution's own internal mechanisms and to the QAA Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

Funding terms

7. Up to ten scholarships are to be awarded to start in 2013/14.
8. Scholarships will be funded for a period of three years and will be used only for funding doctoral research. These scholarships will not be used for funding Masters degree studies. (Information on Masters degree programmes eligible for Welsh-medium Masters Scholarships is available on the Coleg's website).
9. The Coleg's Research Scholarships are equivalent financially to postgraduate scholarships awarded by the Research Councils. The scheme provides funding for paying the:
 - (i) standard institutional fees, and
 - (ii) the maintenance grant paid to the student.

Institutions are expected to inform the Coleg of its fees for the coming academic year by 1 September.

10. The scheme pays fees to meet tutoring and registration costs directly to the institution. Standard fees do not include accommodation costs, which should be paid from the maintenance grant. No additional payment will be made towards fees for any examination, caution money, or any deposit ultimately repayable. Nor will the scheme pay any charges for typing or binding a thesis, or any fees incurred for training courses other than those arranged under the aegis of the scheme and any costs paid from the additional funding noted under (12) below.
11. Institutions are expected to provide full support for the scholarship holders, equivalent to that which would be provided to research students funded through other means, e.g. office accommodation and computer facilities.
12. The scheme also includes additional funding to support fieldwork and/or laboratory work, attending conferences or contributing towards other research costs. Usually up to £500 can be claimed each year to cover such costs, but if a case can be made for providing a greater sum annually, this will have to be made clear in the application. If external funding can be sought to partially cover the prospective additional costs, the application should clearly note which body will be contributing towards those costs and provide assurances for the funds being provided. It may transpire that it is not possible to provide additional funding for each and every award, and if several awards have significant additional costs it may not be possible to award 10 scholarships each year.
13. The scheme will not fund an 'additional year' (as in previous years). A supplementary scheme is intended by October 2016, if funds allow, to bridge between the Research Scholarships and full-time lectureships. Nor will the scheme fund any extensions if the doctorate has not been successfully completed within the three year allocation of funding.

Other terms

14. The starting date for scholarships will normally be 1 October.
15. Scholarship holders will be expected to undertake any activities which are customary for research students, such as undertaking any compulsory training, attending academic conferences, and if relevant, publishing and drawing in external funding.
16. Scholarship holders will be expected to contribute to Welsh-medium teaching on undergraduate programmes (up to 5 hours a week, or no more than 60 hours a year) within their academic schools/departments in the second and third year of their award. Holders will not usually undertake any teaching duties in the first year. In the second and third years, the number of hours should reflect the nature of the allocated teaching (which will usually be comprised of Part One seminars, explanatory tutorials, laboratory exhibition work, etc) and the preparation time required. Teaching responsibilities should be discussed and agreed with the award holder at the end of the previous academic year, and also with the Coleg. However, institutions should ensure that the teaching load does not over-burden the holders nor prevent them from completing their research programmes and obtain the PhD qualification as soon as possible.
17. The holders will be remunerated by the academic school/department for this teaching at an hourly rate consistent with the usual rates afforded to postgraduate students. Holders will not teach through the medium of English under any circumstances
18. Every scholarship holder will be required to attend the Coleg's Research Skills Programme. This will include attending a minimum of 12 two-hour training workshops during the scholarship's first year, as well as the Coleg's annual research conference during each year of the scholarship.
19. During the award period, scholarship holders will be afforded the opportunity of attending a formal training course to improve and enrich their Welsh-

language skills. This training will be provided by the Coleg free of charge. If during the interview with the award panel (see 40 below) it is felt that the applicant requires language-skills training before the award can be recommended, the Coleg reserves the right to make language-skills training a condition of the funding.

20. Scholarship holders will be encouraged to contribute to activities designed to promote Welsh-medium provision and scholarship within their disciplines, and become involved in Welsh-medium marketing and promotion activities held locally within their institutions, and nationally under the auspices of the Coleg.
21. Progress will be carefully reviewed throughout the scholarship period. To facilitate this, the Coleg will expect to receive copies of all monitoring reports produced internally on the scholarship holder by the academic school/department or the institution. If the Coleg is not permitted access to these, the scholarship holder and the academic school/department will be required to complete the Coleg's annual monitoring reports confirming the satisfactory progress of the research project and that the holder is likely to complete on schedule, or outlining what steps are to be taken to ensure successful completion within a revised timetable.
22. If a situation was to arise where the conditions of the scheme were breached in some way, the financial responsibilities for the scholarship would be transferred from the Coleg to the institution. Institutions therefore need to be aware that they could be expected to maintain the scholarship themselves in such situations, or that the award could be terminated.

Regulations

23. Full regulations apply to the scheme, copies of which are available from the Coleg. In general, these follow the pattern of Research Council regulations, and include regulations in relation to maternity leave, illness, holidays, etc.

Applications

24. Every higher education institution is eligible to submit up to five applications to this scheme each year.
25. Applications for Research Scholarships will usually be submitted jointly by prospective students and the academic school/department where the award will be located, and will include full details on the applicant, the proposed research project, and the academic school/department's record with respect to the supervision of research students.
26. Prospective students will be expected to discuss their proposed research projects with the academic school/department where the research will be located. Prospective students will be required to follow the institution's customary processes for applying for supervision by one of the institution's academic schools/departments. Applicants are not required to be full-time students at the academic school/department where the research is to be located BEFORE applying for a Coleg scholarship (e.g. applicants could be postgraduate students at higher education institution outside Wales, they may wish to move from one university to another, or they may have left the higher education sector for a period of time and now hope to return to full-time study). However, applicants will be required to have secured the formal support of the academic school/department where they intend to conduct their research before applying to the Coleg for a scholarship. Applications from individuals who have not already secured the support of an academic school/department will not be considered under any circumstances.
27. Scholarships will be open to any discipline, but institutions will be limited to a maximum of 5 applications each. The Coleg expects individual institutions to make internal arrangements for receiving and considering applications and, if required, to decide upon a process to select up to five applications to submit to the Coleg. Such arrangements must be based on a clear timetable which will allow applications to reach the Coleg by the closing date. Applications arriving at the Coleg after the closing date will not be considered.

28. Up to 10 Research Scholarships will be awarded each year, based on the:
- (i) academic excellence of the applicant,
 - (ii) subject / originality of the proposed research project,
 - (iii) experience and record of the academic school/department where the research will be supervised, and
 - (iv) the award/award-holder's potential contribution to realising the Coleg's strategic aims.
29. The Coleg will also consider applications from academic schools/departments that have not yet identified a suitable award-holder for a scholarship. In such applications scholarships will be awarded based on the criteria outlined in 28 (ii), (iii) and (iv), and the awarded scholarship will be advertised openly in the press. These scholarships will be subject to all the scheme's usual terms and conditions, and will have to prove their value in terms of their potential contribution to realising the Coleg's strategic aims.
30. Applications to this scheme may also be made for matched-funding to support doctoral projects partly funded from another source (e.g. research council, departmental resources, university research funds, industry, etc). In such applications scholarships will be awarded based on the criteria outlined in 28 (ii), (iii) and (iv), and applications should clearly note which body will be funding the remainder of the scholarship and provide assurances for the funds being provided. The Coleg will not fund more than 50% of the value of such a scholarship. These scholarships will be subject to all the scheme's usual terms and conditions, and will have to prove their value in terms of their potential contribution to realising the Coleg's strategic aims. All scholarships, whatever the funding arrangements, will be treated as completely Welsh-medium.
31. Similarly, the Coleg would be willing to divide the funding for a scholarship between two award holders, on condition that the institution provides assurances that matched funding will be provided to allow two scholarships to

be fully funded. The scheme's terms and conditions would still be applicable to BOTH award-holders sharing the scholarship. All scholarships, whatever the funding arrangements, will be treated as completely Welsh-medium.

Criteria

32. Scholarships will be awarded based on scholarly excellence (criteria 28 (i), (ii) and (iii) above), and potential contribution to the realisation of the Coleg's strategic aims (criterion 28 (iv) above).
33. That contribution could be towards research, scholarship, teaching, provision and/or promotion of the discipline through the medium of Welsh. Applications must explain how the award would advance Welsh-medium strategic aims and the mid-term planning requirements of the academic school/department, the Coleg, and/or the wider discipline, allowing the awarding panel to assess the value of the Coleg's proposed investment.
34. It is required that each application, in providing evidence of the potential contribution to the Coleg's strategic aims, must show how the award relates to the key themes of the Coleg's Strategic Plan, and is consistent with the objectives and targets of the Coleg's Academic Plan and relevant subject Development Plan.
35. The Coleg will welcome applications where:
 - (i) evidence is provided showing insufficient staffing capacity within the subject nationally, and a shortage of suitable applicants with the required experience and/or expertise to be appointed to Welsh-medium posts; and/or
 - (ii) evidence of continuation planning and that the institution is preparing for the retirement of a member of staff within the academic school/department, and intends to appoint a successor that will undertake duties including Welsh-medium teaching and provision development.

36. Institutions will not be required to commit to creating an academic post at the end of the funding period for which the scholarship holder may apply, **apart from** cases where the award was created specifically for the purpose of continuation planning within the school/department (as outlined in 35 (ii) above). In such cases the institution will be required to openly advertise a post following the retirement, and fund the post from their own resources. Institutions will not be permitted to apply for funding from the Academic Staffing Scheme to fund a post at the end of this type of scholarship.

Applications

37. Applications should be submitted (on the appropriate form) by noon on **1 May 2013. The form must be submitted in Welsh or bilingually. Applications which break this rule will not be considered.**
38. A hard copy of each application should be submitted, signed by an authorised representative of the institution. Electronic copies are permitted by the closing date as long as the hard copy is sent within five working days. **Late applications are not permitted under any circumstances.**
39. **If institutions are unsure of the validity of a proposed application, they should contact Coleg officers for advice before 19 April 2013. Every effort will be made to resolve any issues before the deadline. It is not possible to guarantee a response to enquiries received after this date.**

Awarding

40. Individual applications will be sent to subject experts to evaluate the scholarly excellence of the application, and recommend a short-list of the best applications to the awarding panel. The awarding panel may decide that applicants on the short-list should be interviewed in order to assess the potential contribution of the award/award-holder to the realisation of the Coleg's strategic aims, and their abilities in Welsh.

41. The membership of the awarding panel, which will consider the final applications, will be approved by the Chair of the Coleg's Board of Directors and will be chaired by a member of the Board. The panel's recommendations will be submitted to the whole Board for approval. The panel's decision will be final.

Disclaimer

42. The Coleg reserves the right to set terms and conditions, that are not necessarily included in this circular, for any scholarships funded partly or wholly by the Coleg.
43. At the end of the scholarship, it may be possible (conditional upon the funding situation) for institutions to apply for a post through the Coleg's Academic Staffing Scheme, for which the scholarship holder may apply. Any such applications would be considered in accordance with the Academic Staffing Scheme's regulations and, consequently, no guarantees can be made that such applications would be successful. Awards to the Academic Staffing Scheme follow processes that are appropriate to that scheme.