

The St. Michael's House Scholarship 2023 – Terms and Conditions

THE BACKGROUND TO THE SMH SCHOLARSHIP

Disability Services in Ireland

Background St. Michael's House

St. Michael's House (SMH), which started with one facility in 1955, now provides services and supports to people with disabilities and their families and/or supporters in the Dublin area. Currently we support 2026 people (2021 figure) including c900 children and this has an impact on thousands of family members. The services we provide include residential homes in community settings and independent supported living, day services, respite services, training and education services including six special national schools and clinical/therapeutic supports.

We employ c1,900 staff across a wide range of roles and grades including direct support workers, social care workers and leaders, persons-in-charge, nurses, doctors, managers, clinical staff, administration, IT, transport and maintenance. We are funded by the HSE, Tusla and the Department of Education. In 2021 our HSE allocation was over €100m and while we are a large and complex organisation we continually strive to work by listening to what people want and need and operating in a person-centred way.

The SMH Scholarship

The SMH Scholarship aims to support the expansion of the knowledgebase of children and adult disability services and is a major new initiative as part of SMH's research ambition. The foundation of our 2022 strategy is a rights based approach to service delivery for service users and planning for the duration of the lifecycle with a particular focus on key transition points. The focus of research outlined by the successful candidate should align closely with this foundation, and with the SMH Vision, Mission and Values as outlined below:

Vision: A society in which people of every ability can live the life of their choosing.

Mission: SMH works with Services Users (or people with disabilities) to understand their needs and wishes and help them achieve their goals - *"Your Life, Your Rights, Your Choices"*.

Values: Respect, Kindness, Honesty, Excellence, Creativity

1 - OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

1.1. The SMH Scholarship "The Scholarship" is a one-off scholarship, with funding provided for up to

two years.

- 1.2. The aim of the SMH Scholarship is to support a suitably qualified PhD candidate (“The Scholar”) to pursue/complete full-time research in the area of Child and Adult Disability Service Provision.

2 - GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

- 2.1. The expectation is that the funding will commence in September 2023 and run for 2 years. However, the commencement of funding may be deferred up until and no later than January 2024. The project duration may only be deferred for reasons of an eligible career break, including but not limited to maternity leave, paternity leave, adoptive leave, sick or carers leave.
- 2.2. Students in their first year of a PhD project (i.e. who registered as a PhD candidate in 2022) are encouraged to apply. In the event that a student has already commenced a project, the funding will only apply prospectively.
- 2.3. The Scholarship will be subject to these Terms and Conditions and any supplementary conditions set out in the award offer. If any of these Terms and Conditions are breached, SMH reserves the right to suspend or terminate the award and may require reimbursement of payments already made.
- 2.4. The Scholarship will be awarded to an individual Scholar who must be under contract with a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the Republic of Ireland.
- 2.5. The HEI will be responsible for ensuring that The Scholar has access to effective procedures for resolving problems arising from the administration or supervision of The Scholarship. Serious problems with supervision from the Academic Supervisor should be addressed using the relevant HEI grievance process.
- 2.6. If The Scholar is unable to pursue their project in accordance with these Terms and Conditions, the Scholar and their supervisor must inform SMH and their HEI.

3 - LOCATION OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

- 3.1. The Scholar must be affiliated with an Irish Higher Education Institution in the Republic of Ireland
- 3.2. An academic supervisor at an Irish HEI/RPO must be identified to supervise The Scholar before applying for The Scholarship.
- 3.3. The HEI is responsible for the provision of professional guidance, support and mentoring to the Scholar.
- 3.4. The HEI associated with the research project cannot be changed without discussion with and the agreement of SMH.
- 3.5. SMH will not be liable for any expenses related to the research project in excess of the agreed funding within the Scholarship proposal.
- 3.6. The scholar will be expected to support the research function in SMH through engagement with staff, service users and family members on aspects of research. It is envisioned that this would involve one day a week based on SMH sites.

4 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

- 4.1. The SMH Scholarship requires that The Scholar be supervised by a lead academic supervisor based at the same HEI as The Scholar.
- 4.2. SMH requires The Scholar to submit a progress report every 6 months to the SMH Research Committee.
- 4.3. It is the responsibility of the Scholar's primary academic supervisor to ensure that if the Scholar leaves their HEI or is not dedicating sufficient time or effort to the award, SMH is informed immediately.

5 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE

- 5.1. In the case of the scholarship, it is a requirement of these Terms and Conditions that the HEI enter into a contract of employment with the Scholar to cover the funding term.
- 5.2. The HEI must accept full accountability for managing, monitoring and controlling all research work funded under The Scholarship and financial management of the Scholarship fund.
- 5.3. The HEI must ensure that an academic supervisor is appointed with responsibility for supporting and guiding the Scholar. This academic supervisor would normally be a principal investigator.
- 5.4. The HEI is responsible for providing the facilities and access to the equipment needed for the Scholar to carry out the research, ensuring that all items of equipment and materials provided for the award are adequately maintained and are accessible.

6 - FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT

- 6.1. While the Scholarship will be awarded to an individual Scholar, the scholarship fund will be administered through the appropriate office within their HEI.
- 6.2. Subject to compliance with these Terms and Conditions and to receipt of satisfactory progress reports, the award fund will be paid to the Scholar's HEI, quarterly in advance, with the first instalment to be made as soon as the award commences. It is the HEI's responsibility to coordinate payment of the award fund to the Scholar in a timely manner.
- 6.3. The HEI is responsible and accountable for the proper use of the award fund. No funds may be used by the HEI to cover overhead or administrative costs. The HEI must ensure proper financial management of the award and accountability for the use of public funds.
- 6.4. No additional funds will be made available to The Scholar other than outlined in the original Scholarship Offer.
- 6.5. Funds allocated to fees may not be reallocated to other financial costs.
- 6.6. Scholarships are classified as "scholarships" under Irish Tax Law and as such Tax or Social Insurance charges do not apply. All award holders must comply with the Irish laws and regulation on taxation. Compliance with Irish laws and regulations on taxation will be a matter for the Scholar, the HEI and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.
- 6.7. Funding will only be provided for the research project as presented in the application. The written consent of SMH must be sought in advance of any significant changes to the research project during the funding term. Such requests will be reviewed by the Research Committee and the Research Committee's decision about whether to approve the proposed change(s) will be final.

- 6.8. Funds may only be carried forward from the previous year of the award under the eligible direct research expenses heading. It will not be possible to carry forward funds awarded for the salary/stipend, or unused fee contribution.

7 - REVIEW OF PROGRESS

- 7.1. The Scholar will be required to submit a comprehensive progress report to the SMH Research Committee every 6 months.
- 7.2. It will be the responsibility of the Scholar to make sure that all progress reports are submitted on time, failure to do so may result in suspension or cessation of scholarship funding.
- 7.3. The format for these reports should include;
- research progress and outputs
 - outreach activities
 - research dissemination
 - any adverse events related to the research project
- 7.4. SMH reserves the right to suspend or terminate the award if the Scholar fails to provide biannual progress reports, if there is evidence that the Scholar is not dedicating adequate time or effort on the research project or if SMH has reasonable concern that continued funding of the project may be associated with adverse impact on services users or on the reputation of SMH.
- 7.5. It will be the responsibility of the Scholar's academic mentor/supervisor to ensure that if the Scholar leaves their host institution or is not dedicating sufficient time or effort to the research Project that SMH is informed immediately.

8 - ADDITIONAL DUTIES OUTSIDE THE REMIT OF THE AWARD

- 8.1. The Scholar's first duty is to the successful completion of the research project for which they have been awarded the SMH Scholarship.
- 8.2. The Scholar should be engaged in full-time in research during the funding term.
- 8.3. SMH acknowledges that teaching experience can be of benefit to the academic development of a student and may support the acquisition of skills essential for knowledge transfer. Thus teaching duties may be considered as a valuable addition to the Scholars career and may be allowable during the duration of the scholarship provided the work does not negatively impact on the Scholar's ability to complete the research project.
- 8.4. Where Award holders undertake teaching duties, they should be appropriately remunerated by their Irish HEI. Any such payments will not affect the Scholar's total amount of award. Compliance with Irish laws and regulations on taxation will be a matter for the Scholar, the Irish HEI and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.
- 8.5. Occasionally the Scholar may be required to attend events or meetings arranged by SMH and may be asked to present their research at educational events organised by SMH (if it is deemed appropriate to the stage of their research project).
- 8.6. SMH must be referenced as the funder of the research project during all events of information dissemination, including presenting at conferences, lectures, and publications.

9 - SUSPENSION OF THE AWARD

- 9.1. It is expected that The Scholar will complete their research project in the agreed timeframe however it is recognised that there may be reasonable grounds for a break in the project. These reasons may include maternity, paternity or adoption leave, sick or carers leave. Where prolonged leave is taken, it should not exceed 1 year. No scholarship funding would be available during the leave period.
- 9.2. Additional registration or academic fees incurred by the Scholar as a result of suspending their award are a matter for agreement between the Scholar and their HEI. SMH will not be liable for any such additional fees.

10 - TERMINATION OF THE AWARD

- 10.1. SMH recognises that, for personal or professional reasons, an award holder may wish to terminate their award prematurely. In this event all funding will be discontinued and SMH may pursue the Scholar for the Scholarship funds paid up to the date of discontinuing the project.

11 - COMPLETION OF THE 2023 SCHOLARSHIP

- 11.1. Scholarship funding will cease at the agreed end date of the Scholarship or on the date of submission of the final thesis, whichever comes first.
- 11.2. The Scholar is required to inform SMH of the successful completion of their project in writing. SMH is also entitled to obtain this information directly from the Scholar's HEI.

12 - ETHICS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 12.1. Research activity funded under the SMH Scholarship must be contributing to the evidence and knowledge base of disability services and in accordance with the SMH Mission and Values.
- 12.2. The HEI is responsible for ensuring that ethical issues relating to the Scholar's research are identified and brought to the attention of the relevant approval or regulatory body.
- 12.3. Research Ethic Committee Approval at the HEI and other relevant institutions must be obtained before any research requiring approval begins.
- 12.4. All research must be undertaken with due regard to the Health Research Regulations 2019, Data protection and GDPR legislation.
- 12.5. Where necessary, the Scholar will be required to confirm that they have obtained the appropriate ethical approval to carry out their research project from the relevant approval or regulatory body at their HEI.
- 12.6. The HEI is responsible for ensuring that the Scholar's research complies with all national and international regulation requirements governing the use of sensitive materials or processes.
- 12.7. The Scholar and their HEI must follow good practice on data protection, management and security. SMH cannot be held legally liable for any regulatory breaches.

13 - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FUNDING

- 13.1. SMH does not make any claim to intellectual property arising from the award.
- 13.2. All publicity and knowledge transfer, including interviews, lectures, presentations, publications, online materials, press releases, etc. associated with or arising from the research undertaken by the Scholar must contain acknowledgement of funding received from SMH. Where appropriate, SMH's logo should be included.

- 13.3. SMH may choose to actively promote the SMH Scholarship and the Scholar via the SMH Social Media channels.

14 - SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FUNDS

- 14.1. The scholarship will provide partial funding for a student undertaking a postgraduate degree at doctoral level in the area of child and adult disability service provision. Funding is available to cover a fee contribution, tax-free stipend and/or research expenses to a maximum combined value of 18,000 per year for two years.
- 14.2. Only vouched expenses incurred in carrying out the research project during the agreed funding term are permissible.
- 14.3. Eligible direct research costs may include but are not limited to:
- materials and consumables
 - equipment costs
 - software and hardware critical for the proposed research
 - A maximum limit of €1000 for computers or laptops applies and this must be purchased within the first year of the award
 - reasonable travel, subsistence, and conference costs
 - skills training directly related to the research project
 - publishing and write-up costs
- 14.4. Living costs (e.g. rent) are not permissible
- 14.5. The HEI must ensure proper financial management of the award and accountability for the use of public funds. It should also ensure that all unspent funds are returned to the SMH at the end of the funding term.

15 - DURATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE AWARD

- 15.1. The award will support suitably qualified research PhD candidates pursuing, or intending to pursue, research in a subject related directly to disability services.
- 15.2. An award holder who is a new entrant to the postgraduate degree for which they are seeking funding is entitled to apply for funding for up to two years.
- 15.3. For award holders who have already completed part of the doctoral degree for which they are seeking funding, the duration of funding to be awarded will commence from the date of award of the Scholarship and last for up to two years or until completion of the project whichever is shortest.