



Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland

Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme 2021/22

STAGE 1
Applicant Guidance Note

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STAGE 1 Guidance Note

Please read through this document carefully, and in its entirety prior to completing the application form.

1 The benefits of studying in Ireland

Ireland is an English-speaking European country which has been a member of the European Union since 1973. Situated on the Western edge of Europe, Ireland is a relatively small, though highly connected, island nation with a population of just five million people.

Ireland is an advanced knowledge economy whose focus on education has been at the core to government policy since the country gained independence from Britain in 1922. As a result Ireland boasts one of the most highly educated populations in the world, ranking 6th globally for the percentage of our population who have completed tertiary education - with 54% of 24-35 years olds having attained at least an undergraduate degree. In this regard, Ireland lies ahead of all other English speaking countries in the world with the exception of Canada and has the second most educated population in Europe.

Ireland is an open economy and our location, combined with our highly educated workforce, has served to attract significant inward investment over recent decades. Today, Ireland is a leader in the technology, bio-technology and pharmaceutical sectors, with most leading international companies choosing Ireland for the location of their European headquarters. With many of the world's biggest and best companies locating their key strategic research facilities here, Ireland offers an unparalleled ecosystem that sees academic researchers working hand-in-hand with small home-grown and startup companies in partnership with some of the most powerful multinationals on the planet, through shared research projects and programmes, often supported by the Irish government.

Ireland's consciousness of its unique historical legacy has resulted in a higher education system which offers globally recognised expertise in a broad spread of programmes around development, conflict studies, gender, diversity and human rights. Ireland's universities lead the world in terms of their social and economic impact. The 2019 Times Higher Education university impact rankings (based around adherence to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ranked Ireland second in the world due to their strength in promoting good health and well-being, sustainable cities and communities, climate action and partnerships for the SDGs.

All eight Irish universities are ranked in the top 5% globally. The Irish Government invests more than €800 million annually in research in our higher education institutions, thus ensuring that Ireland's higher education institutions now lead the world in an increasing number of fields. Irish universities stand in the top 1% of research institutions in the world.

Studying at postgraduate level in Ireland offers a unique opportunity to join programmes that are driving innovation and changing lives worldwide.

For more information on studying in Ireland please see: <https://www.educationinireland.com>

2 Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme – 2021/22

The Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme is a South African strand of a broader **Ireland Fellows Programme** managed by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs.

The Ireland Fellows Programme enables early to mid-career professionals from eligible countries, with leadership potential, to benefit from a prestigious, world-class, quality education contributing to capacity building. It offers selected students the opportunity to undertake a fully funded one-year master's level programme at a higher education institution (HEI) in Ireland. The award covers programme fees, flights, accommodation and living costs. Eligible master's level programmes in Ireland commence in August or September each year and, depending on the programme, will run for between 10 and 16 months. The Ireland Fellows Programme promotes equal opportunity and welcomes diversity.

The aims of the Programme are to nurture future leaders; to develop in-country capacity to achieve national SDG goals; and to build positive relationships with Ireland.

On return home, graduates are expected to bring their acquired skills to contribute to capacity building in their home countries. It is also envisaged that they will contribute to building enduring positive personal and professional relationships with Ireland, promoting institutional linkages.

Eligibility

To be eligible for an Ireland Fellows Programme Kadar Asmal Fellowship award commencing at the beginning of the academic year 2021, applicants must:

- Be a resident national of South Africa
- Have a minimum of two years' work experience that is relevant to your proposed course(s) of study (this can include internships, see Page 6 for details).
- Hold a bachelor's level academic qualification from an accredited and government-recognised higher education institution, with a minimum grade point average of 3.33 (4.0 scale) - i.e. first class honours, or second class honours, Grade 1 (in some cases a second class honour Grade 2 may be accepted, if the applicant has sufficient directly relevant work experience).
- Not already hold a qualification, have started a programme, or due to start a programme in the academic year 2020/21, at master's level or higher.
- Be applying to commence a new course at master's level in Ireland no sooner than August/September 2021.
- Be able to demonstrate leadership abilities and aspirations, as well as commitment to the achievement of the SDGs within your own country.
- Have identified and selected three **relevant** programmes from the Ireland Fellows Programme Directory of Eligible Courses, see [course list](#).
- Have a clear understanding of the academic and English language proficiencies required for all programmes chosen.

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- Must not have applied for the **Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme** on more than one previous occasion.
- Be in a position to take up the Fellowship in the academic year 2021/22.

The **application process** consists of three stages:

- **Stage 1 - preliminary application:**

Opens Thursday 23rd July 2020 and closes Monday 31st August 2020

The stage 1 application form can be found below. This is a short application form which allows our selection panel to assess your eligibility under the various criteria of the programme.

Canon Collins Trust will contact you once final decisions have been made (in September 2020) and inform you whether or not you have been successful at stage 1. Please do not otherwise contact the Irish Embassy during this period.

- **Stage 2 - detailed application:**

Opens Monday 21st September 2020 and closes Monday 19th October

If your Stage 1 application is successful, you will be invited to move on to stage 2 of the process, and complete a more detailed application form including the submission of all required documents.

- **Stage 3 – English language tests and Interviews:**

If you are successful at stage 2, you will be invited to take an English language test and, if successful, will be invited for interview and to submit certified copies of your documents.

3. Stage 1 Application - Detailed guidance notes for applicants

Please read through these notes fully before you submit your stage 1 application.

Documentation required:

The stage 1 process is a preliminary application which seeks information under the headings detailed below and requires you to submit a scanned copy of the following documents with your application form:

1. **Your passport (only the identity page is required), or other official identification document if you do not have a passport at this time**
2. **Your undergraduate degree award certificate**
3. **Final degree academic transcripts**
4. **(Optional at this stage): Your English language test (IELTS) certificate. Only IELTS certificates dated September 2019 or later are acceptable**
If you already have an English language test result from an exam other than the IELTS exam, this may also be accepted. Please include your certificate with your application form.

Your application will not be valid unless copies of documents 1, 2 and 3 above are included.

Q1. Personal information:

You will be asked to provide your name, gender, nationality, country of residence, date of birth and contact details.

The Ireland Fellows Programme supports equality of opportunity and encourages and welcomes diversity. If you have a disability or belong to a minority or disadvantaged group, please feel free to disclose this information under the relevant section within question 1. All disclosures will be treated in confidence and will not negatively affect your application.

Q2. Education:

This section requests information on your undergraduate qualification, the institution attended and the dates of study. This qualification must be accredited and have been awarded by a government recognised university or college. It must have been awarded by **2009** or later (i.e. within the last 12 years).

Preferably your degree should be at first class honour or higher-second class level. In some cases a lower second class degree will be considered, if the applicant has sufficient directly relevant work experience.

- ✓ You must include a scanned copy of your final undergraduate degree award certificate **and** your undergraduate degree academic transcript indicating your final grade.

English language proficiency:

Irish higher education institutions require a high standard of English language proficiency and this must be formally certified, normally through the International English Language Test (IELTS-www.IELTS.org).

IELTS examines competency in English language across reading, writing, speaking and listening and is necessary for admission to all Irish HEIs – there are no exceptions. Most HEIs require a score of 6.5 overall, but some require a higher overall score, or specific scores within each band. The Ireland Fellows Programme Directory of Eligible Courses, available [here](#) will indicate the levels required for each course. It is the applicant's responsibility to be aware of the IELTS score required for all the programmes selected.

You can apply through stage 1 of this process without having completed your IELTS test, however, you must have noted the IELTS score required for your selected programmes and considered whether you can achieve this grade. You cannot progress to the final stages of the application process without your appropriate English language certification.

If you have completed an IELTS test, provide full details as requested under question 2 of the application form and note that the test is only valid if completed within **24 months of the proposed commencement of your studies in Ireland**.

Q3. Work experience:

All applicants must have a minimum of 2 years' work experience.

You will be asked to name your employing organisation, provide your job title and indicate (in months and years) how long you have worked with this organisation. You are also asked to provide details of previous work experience you may have. You can include internships and previous work experience here if you are unemployed at present.

Q4. Master's programme choices:

Using the Ireland Fellows Programme Directory of Eligible Courses available [here](#), you are asked to list details of three master's programmes in Ireland which you consider relevant to your future, to achieving the SDGs in your country and the objectives of the Ireland Fellows Programme. A **draft** list of courses will be made available when applications open in July. The 2021/22 Ireland Fellows Programme Directory of Eligible Courses will be made available at the beginning of August 2020.

Q5. Why do you wish to be considered for a Fellowship in Ireland?

The final question provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate your leadership potential and show how your career aspirations align with the goals of the Ireland Fellows Programme. In your short response (no more than 250 words) you should explain your motivation for applying for this Fellowship and how being successful would assist you, and potentially your country in the future, especially in relation to national SDG goals. You are also expected to show some evidence of having researched Irish higher education and having some knowledge of Ireland.

Submitting applications:

Applications must be typed and be submitted according to instructions provided on this platform.

The closing date for receipt of Stage 1 applications and accompanying documents is **31st August 2020**.