



Irish Aid

Rialtas na hÉireann

Government of Ireland

Kader Asmal Fellowship
Programme 2024/25

STAGE 1
Guidance Note for
Applicants

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

1 The benefits of studying in Ireland

Ireland has been a member of the European Union since 1973. Situated on the western edge of Europe, Ireland is a small, globally connected island nation with a population of five million people. While Ireland has its own language and distinct cultural identity, English is the universal spoken language.

Ireland is a friendly, safe, deeply welcoming country, steeped in a rich heritage and culture.

A focus on education has been at the core of Irish government policy since the foundation of the State in 1922. Ireland has a longstanding international reputation for high-quality education, built on a solid foundation of commitment to excellence. Ireland's higher education system is in the top-twenty worldwide, offering globally recognised expertise, and at 65%, Ireland has one of the highest educational participation rates at third level in the world. Studying at postgraduate level in Ireland offers a unique opportunity to join programmes that are driving innovation and changing lives worldwide.

Education has been a driver of Ireland's economic transformation. 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, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sectors, with many leading international companies choosing Ireland for the location of their European headquarters. With some 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 home-grown start-up companies. These work in partnership with some of the most innovative multinationals on the planet, through shared research projects and programmes, often supported by the Irish government.

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

It takes independent thinkers and doers to succeed in today's world – and it takes a pioneering, creative and agile country to produce them. That country is Ireland: [Why Should I Study In Ireland? - Education in Ireland](#)

The Education In Ireland Student Ambassador Programme - Meet some of our students and read their latest blog posts: [Home | Study in Ireland | Education in Ireland Blog](#)

Hear from Ireland Fellows Programme awardees about their experiences and the benefits they gained studying in Ireland: [Ireland Fellows Programme \(irishaidfellowships.ie\)](https://irishaidfellowships.ie)

2 Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme – 2024/25

The Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme is a South African strand of a broader **Ireland-Africa Fellows Programme** managed by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The main aims of the **Ireland-Africa Fellows Programme**, are to nurture future African leaders, women and men, to develop in-country capacity to achieve national SDG goals, and to build positive relationships between Ireland and Africa.

Through the programme, early career professional women and men, with leadership potential, from South Africa will avail of relevant postgraduate study opportunities in Irish higher education institutions. On completion of their studies, graduates will have acquired relevant skills and knowledge and be better capacitated and positioned to influence the advancement of national social, economic and development priorities. Fostering women's leadership capacity will be a priority. On return home, graduates are expected to resume work and put their acquired skills to good use for the benefit of their home countries.

The programme offers selected students the opportunity to undertake a fully-funded one-year master's programme at a prestigious higher education institution (HEI) in Ireland. The award covers course fees, accommodation, living costs, and flights. Applicants can choose from almost 200 postgraduate programmes especially selected to enhance capacity in line with stated country development goals and the strategy of the relevant Irish Mission.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a **Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme** commencing at the beginning of the academic year 2024 applicants must:

- Be a resident national of South Africa
- Have a minimum of two years relevant work experience (this can include internships and volunteering positions, see Page 6 for details).
- Hold an honours' level academic qualification from an accredited and government-recognised higher education institution, with a minimum grade point average of 75% - i.e. a first class honour, or second class honour, Grade 1 (in some cases a second class honour Grade 2 may be accepted). It must have been awarded in 2012 or later (i.e. within the last 12 years).
- Not already hold a qualification at master's level or higher.
- Be applying to commence a new course at master's level in Ireland no sooner than August/September 2024.
- 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 two **relevant** courses from the Ireland-Africa Fellows Programme Directory of Eligible Courses, see course list. [Directory of Eligible Programmes](#)
- Have a clear understanding of the academic and English language proficiencies required for both courses chosen.
- Must not have applied for **Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme** on more than one previous occasion.

- Be in a position to take up the Fellowship in the academic year 2023/2024.

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

- **Stage 1 - preliminary application:**

Opens 03 July 2023, closes 31 July 2023

We will only accept Stage 1 applications submitted online. Please apply via the link to the application form available here [Kader Asmal Fellowship Programme — Canon Collins Trust](#).

You will be contacted by Canon Collins Trust once final decisions have been made and informed whether you have been successful or unsuccessful at Stage 1. Please do not otherwise contact the Irish Embassy during this period.

- **Stage 2 - detailed application:**

Opens 25 September 2023, closes 20 October 2023

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. (*Please see note on page 8 which provides details of all stage 2 requirements.*)

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

(*Please see note on page 9 which provides details of all stage 3 requirements.*)

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. **Official identification:** either 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.** Please also include the explanation of the grading system, where provided with your transcript or otherwise available.

Your application will not be valid unless copies of the above documents are included.

Submitting applications:

Applications for South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Mauritius must be submitted online [Ireland Fellows Programme - Africa — Canon Collins Trust](#)

Relevant Embassy of Ireland	Responsible for applicants from:	Email address
Ethiopia	Ethiopia South Sudan	ethiopiefellowships@dfa.ie

	Djibouti	
Kenya	Kenya Eritrea Somalia Sudan	nairobifellowships@dfa.ie
Liberia	Liberia	monrovia.fellowships@dfa.ie
Malawi	Malawi	malawifellowships@dfa.ie
Mozambique	Mozambique	Mozambiquefellowships@dfa.ie
Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	SierraLeoneFellowships@dfa.ie
South Africa	Lesotho Zimbabwe	Applications must be submitted online
Tanzania	Tanzania	TanzaniaFellowships@dfa.ie
Uganda	Uganda Rwanda	UgandaFellowships@dfa.ie
Zambia	Zambia	Zambiafellowships@dfa.ie

Q1. Personal information:

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

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 **2012** or later (i.e. within the last 12 years).

Preferably your degree should be at first class honour or higher-second class level. A lower second-class degree will be considered if the applicant has sufficient directly relevant work experience. Please include a scanned copy of your undergraduate degree award certificate **and, if available**, 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 will be verified by English language testing. This is necessary for admission to all Irish HEIs, with no exceptions.

English language testing is normally through the International English Language Test (IELTS-www.IELTS.org). IELTS examines competency in the English language across reading, writing, speaking and listening. 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 Programmes](#) will indicate the levels required for each programme. It is the applicant's responsibility to be aware of the IELTS score required for all the programmes selected.

You can apply through Stages 1 and 2 of this process without having completed an IELTS test; however, you must have noted the IELTS score required for your selected programmes and considered whether you can achieve this grade.

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 in September 2022 or later**.

If you already have an English language test result from an exam other than the IELTS exam, this may also be accepted. Please include details with your application.

Further details on English language testing are included in information on the Stage 3 Application Process below.

Q3. Work experience:

All applicants must have a minimum amount of work experience that is **relevant to their proposed programme(s) of study**, but the minimum requirement varies by country. Please consult the table below:

Min. 2 years' RELEVANT work experience required	Min. 3 years' RELEVANT work experience required	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uganda• Rwanda• Kenya• Zimbabwe• Sierra Leone• South Africa• Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Djibouti• Eritrea• Ethiopia• Lesotho• Liberia• Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mozambique• Somalia• South Sudan• Sudan• Zambia

You will be asked to name your employing organisation, provide your job title and indicate (in years and months) how long you have worked with this organisation. You are also asked to provide details of previous work experience you may have. **This may include internships** - 1 year working as an intern will be considered equivalent to 6 months' work experience when evaluating applications. **If you are currently unemployed, please include your previous work experience here.**

You are asked to provide brief details of any leadership positions you hold, or have held in the past. Leadership roles can include those held in work, in volunteer work, within social activism, in community organisations, as class/work representative, or college roles.

- Have identified and selected three programmes **relevant to your academic and professional background** from the.

Q4. Master's programme choices:

Using the Ireland Fellows Programme Directory of Eligible Programmes (available at [Directory of Eligible Programmes](#)), you are asked to list details of the three master's programmes you would like to pursue in Ireland, ranked in order of choice (1, 2, 3). To maximise your chances of receiving a course place offer should you be selected to go forward as a Candidate, it is strongly recommended that the three programmes are in three different Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), where available. In choosing these programmes, please take account of their relevance to your career aspirations and to achieving the SDGs in your country.

Please make sure that you have a clear understanding of the academic and English language proficiencies required for all programmes chosen. Please also ensure you have the minimum amount of work experience that is **directly relevant** to these programmes (see Q3). If you are selected to go forward as a Candidate and are invited to make programme applications to Higher Education

Institutions (HEIs) in Ireland, the HEIs will consider your academic and work experience as part of your application, so it is important to keep this in mind when selecting the three programmes.

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

The final question provides you with an opportunity to show how your goals align with those of the Ireland Fellows Programme, which are to nurture future leaders; to develop in-country capacity to achieve national SDG goals; and to build positive relationships with Ireland.

Your response under the following three headings (no more than 80 words each) should explain your motivation for applying for this Fellowship:

- How the specific programmes of study in Ireland which you have chosen would assist you in your career aspirations;
- How they would help you work towards achieving your country's national SDG goals;
- How you would propose to develop links between your country and Ireland.

You are expected to demonstrate some knowledge of Ireland and Irish higher education.

Declaration

Please read carefully and acknowledge as requested.

***** FOR INFORMATION – STAGE 2 APPLICATION PROCESS*****

Stage 2 opens 25 September 2023 and closes on 20 October 2023.

If, following assessment of Stage 1 of the application process, you are invited to complete the Stage 2 application form, please note that you will be required to accompany that application with a number of important documents. Stage 2 applications and supporting documents are submitted by email.

Documents required:

- 1. One recent passport-sized photograph;**
- 2. A copy of the graduation certificate for all higher education qualifications you have completed;**
- 3. A copy of the academic transcripts for all higher education qualifications you have completed. Please also include the explanation of the grading system, where provided with your transcript or otherwise available;**
- 4. Letters from two academic referees on official letterhead with contact details for the referee and original signatures. These references must be from academics who have taught you personally;**
- 5. A copy of the identity page of your passport. If you do not have a passport at this time, another form of certified official identification must be provided;**

If you are shortlisted following Stage 2 and the interview process you will be required to submit a certified copy of the identify page of your passport. (If your existing passport expires before December 2023, you will be asked to provide a new passport if you are shortlisted after Stage 3.)

6. Your original IELTS score report, if available. Please note that this test must have been taken in September 2022 or later;

If you already have an English language test result from an exam other than the IELTS exam, this may also be accepted. Please include with your application form.

If you are shortlisted following Stage 2 and the interview process and you do not have the English language certification required for your master's programme in Ireland, you will be required to take the examination and pass it to the standard required. Please see the following section on Stage 3 of the Application Process.

7. Your current C.V.

***** FOR INFORMATION – STAGE 3 APPLICATION PROCESS*****

If, following assessment of Stage 2 of the application process, you are invited to Stage 3, please note the following:

- Stage 3 Applicants who do not yet have the English language certification required for their master's programmes in Ireland will be provided with a coupon in order to take the Duolingo English language test. This is an online test that can be taken at home. The Duolingo website has some FAQs, including on how to prepare for the test, and a practice test. In some cases the Embassy of Ireland may provide an alternative English language test for applicants;
- Stage 3 Applicants who either already have the English language certification required for their chosen master's programmes in Ireland, or who achieve a score of 110 on Duolingo, will be invited for interview. Interviews will take place in November and December 2022, and may take place either in person or remotely by video or telephone conference;
- Applicants who are invited to interview will be required to provide certified hard copies of their documents at, or prior to, the interview taking place. The submitted documents must bear the official stamp and signature of the certifying authority. Where original documents are not in English, certified true copies of official English translations must be provided. **Photocopies of certified documents will not be accepted.**

Applicants shortlisted following interview

Applicants shortlisted following interview, who have the English language certification required for their master's programmes in Ireland, will be notified whether they have been selected to go forward to the next stage of the process as either a Candidate or a Reserve Candidate.

Applicants selected to go forward to the next stage of the process as a **Candidate** will be notified that their application will be forwarded to the management agency for the Ireland Fellows Programme. Once their documentation is verified and in order, they will be provided with information on making programme applications to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in spring 2023. Applications should

not be made to HEIs in Ireland until invited to do so. Application fees will be paid by the Department of Foreign Affairs for shortlisted Candidates.

Those applicants placed on a **reserve list of candidates** will be contacted if a place becomes available, and at that point will be invited to commence applications to their chosen programmes of study in Ireland.

When Candidates are invited to apply to HEIs in Ireland, priority will be given to their choices in the order they have listed them in their application. Candidates will be invited to apply to **two** programmes, normally their top ranked programme and either their second or third choice. In the case of more than one offer being received from their programme choices, all candidates will be required, for logistical reasons, to accept the programme which they have ranked highest within their application.

Programme place offers are entirely at the discretion of the HEIs in Ireland. If a Candidate does not receive an offer from either of their two HEI applications, their Fellowship application will have concluded.

Candidates who receive a programme place offer will go forward to the last stage of the application process, which is the confirmation of the award of Fellowship places in June/early July 2023. The academic year in Ireland is from autumn 2023 to summer/autumn 2024.

Please note that a medical form is required for successful Fellows before travel to Ireland so that, where appropriate, we can discuss with them any necessary supports.