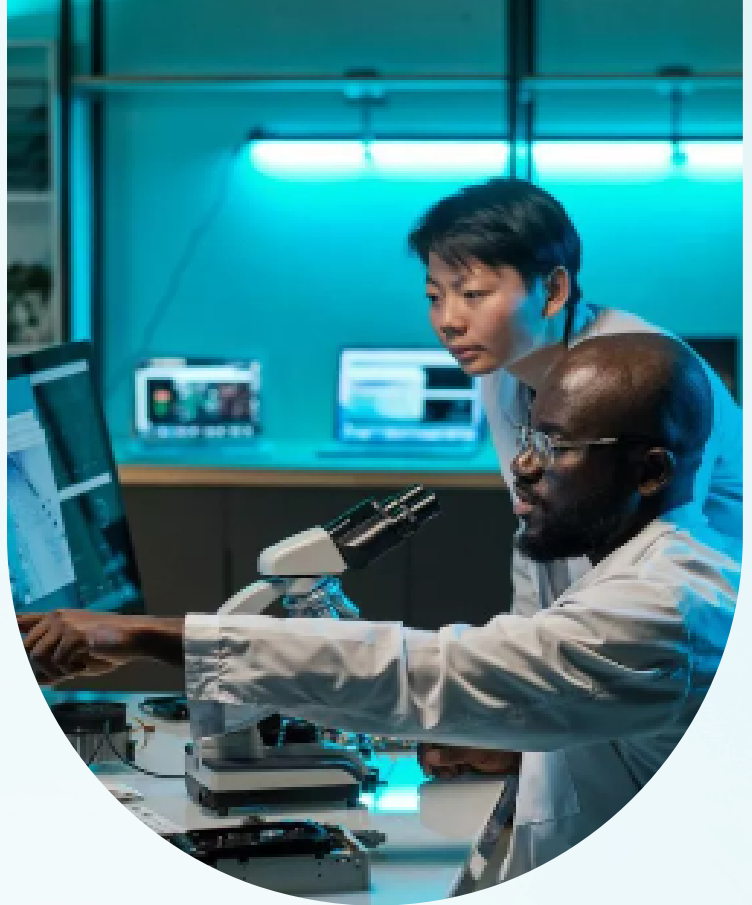


SETU

TU RISE

2025 Research Sabbatical Scheme – CALL DOCUMENT



INTRODUCTION

The SETU Strategic Plan, Connecting for Impact, articulates ambitions for SETU’s research over the period to 2028. The plan includes as Objective 2 the intention to “elevate our research and innovation activity to levels consistent with a top young global university.” One of the actions specified under this objective is to “create and fund a staff sabbatical scheme aligned with research priorities”. The creation of a staff sabbatical scheme is part of a number of actions associated with building research capacity and performance, but it is also closely linked with other objectives in the plan associated with empowering staff and building strong career development opportunities for staff within SETU.

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TU RISE is co-financed by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27 and the Northern & Western Regional Programme 2021-27



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



The Office of Research, Innovation and Impact invites suitable applications from **academic and research staff members** from all campuses (Waterford, Carlow and Wexford) interested in the TU RISE Research Sabbatical scheme. This scheme is funded through the TU RISE programme with a **total of 19 sabbaticals** to be awarded. Sabbaticals will be of a 12-month duration and will be allocated over the three years, with 1 in the year 2025 (January to December 2025), 9 in the year 2026 (September 2025 to August 2026) and 9 in the year 2026 (September 2026 to August 2027).

The overall purpose of this Research Sabbatical programme is:

To provide academics with dedicated research time to engage with enterprise and develop new research projects of relevance to the region and in line with European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) policy. This can include spending time in regional industry and within EU regions to bring new knowledge into the region.

Purposes and Definitions:

- By “Sabbatical”, we understand, two continuous academic semesters (some schemes only apply to one semester of research) free from teaching and associated administrative duties that allow the staff member to focus solely on research activity full-time and uninterrupted.
- The purpose of the SETU TU RISE Research Sabbatical Scheme is to create opportunities for research active staff to pursue their research plans with the overall objective of elevating the university’s research performance, while at the same time contributing to the staff member’s own professional career development. Specific performance indicators associated with the TU RISE project will be incorporated into the specification for this particular Research Sabbatical call. The university is required to report on set metrics for the TU RISE funding and this scheme contributes to these metrics.

- Sabbatical leave may be pursued in Ireland or abroad subject to the reporting conditions outlined elsewhere in this document and the normal conditions of SETU employment contracts. Note that sabbatical leave cannot be granted for the purpose of taking up other employment.

Eligibility

The TU RISE Research Sabbatical Scheme is open to applications from all academic or research staff from all Faculties within SETU. To be eligible for the research sabbatical, an applicant must:

- Be a researcher, part-time or full-time or pro-rata academic staff member (all lecturing grades included up to SL3 or any new ones introduced during this scheme);
- Have a minimum of 4 years of continuous service at the university;
- Formally commit to remaining within the university for a minimum of 2 years following the conclusion of the sabbatical;
- Have a post-graduate research qualification, typically but not necessarily a PhD; note that the sabbatical is not awarded for the purposes of completing a PhD;
- Demonstrate a track record of research activity and a clear workplan that demonstrably contributes to increasing SETU's research performance, which might include details on new publications, grant applications, initiatives with industry, or other enterprises;
- Have an up-to-date research profile in the university's PURE system or equivalent if not available;
- Have no outstanding other commitments that require the staff member's presence on campus;

Note that while the applicant is freed from all teaching responsibilities for the period of the sabbatical, the impact of leave on the supervision of continuing PhD candidates will be taken into account in assessing the application. The applicant may be required to continue to supervise certain continuing PhD candidates as a condition of the leave.

Definition of 'Industry':

Differentiation between industry and enterprise

The terms "industry" and "enterprise" are distinct but interconnected concepts within the context of economics and business. "Industry" refers to a group of businesses or organisations that are engaged in the production of similar goods or services. Industries are often categorised based on the primary sector they serve, such as manufacturing, technology, healthcare, or finance. Industries play a critical role in the economy by creating jobs, driving innovation, and contributing to economic growth through the provision of goods and services.

On the other hand, "enterprise" typically refers to an individual business entity or organisation, regardless of its size or sector. Enterprises are the actors within industries, responsible for organising resources such as labour, capital, and technology to produce goods or services for profit. They can range from small, sole proprietorships to large multinational corporations. While an industry encompasses all enterprises within a specific field, an enterprise refers to a single unit driving innovation, competition, and production within that industry. Both terms highlight the interaction between businesses at the micro (enterprise) and macro (industry) levels, contributing to the overall structure and functioning of the economy.

It should be noted that the term "industry" and "enterprise" can be used interchangeably, however, for this call document the applicant needs to differentiate between the terms and how their industry or enterprise collaboration is positioned in the project. To ensure that the project meets the TU RISE objectives insofar as the collaborative objective with industry or enterprise as well as commercialisation, it is strongly suggested that contact is made with Dr James O'Sullivan, SETU Head of Innovation and Commercialisation at the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) (James.OSullivan@setu.ie) prior to submission (please copy the TU RISE email account also; (TURISE.WD@setu.ie)).

Overview of the ERDF policy

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) policy plays a significant role in supporting industries and enterprises across the European Union, aiming to reduce regional disparities and foster economic cohesion. The ERDF focuses on funding initiatives that enhance innovation, sustainability, and competitiveness in various industries, particularly those lagging behind in development. By financing projects in infrastructure, research, and technological advancement, the ERDF helps strengthen industries, which are composed of enterprises that operate in specific sectors like manufacturing, technology, or services. These enterprises, whether small startups or large corporations, benefit from ERDF funding, which enables them to improve productivity, access new markets, and innovate more effectively. The policy's primary focus is to support enterprise-level growth, which in turn stimulates the overall development of industries. In this framework, industries and enterprises are intertwined: industries provide the larger economic environment for enterprises to grow, while enterprises drive industrial progress through innovation, job creation, and competition. Thus, ERDF's impact spans both the macro (industry) and micro (enterprise) levels, supporting sustainable growth and reducing regional inequalities across the EU.



ERDR definition of “industry” and supporting the TU RISE scheme

The enterprise is the smallest combination of legal units that is an organisational unit producing goods and services, which benefits from a certain degree of autonomy in decision making, especially for the allocation of its current resources. An enterprise carries out one or more activities at one or more locations. An enterprise may be a sole legal unit. Legal units include legal persons whose existence is recognised by law independently of the individuals or institutions which may own them or are members of them, such as general partnerships, private limited partnerships, limited liability companies, incorporated companies etc...For the purpose of this indicator, enterprises are profit-oriented organisations that produce goods and services to satisfy market needs.

For Policy Objective 4 (Social Europe and a Europe that is closer to its citizens), the indicator includes also social enterprises defined by the Commission (DG GROW) as follows: “a social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives.

The purpose of the TU RISE scheme is to establish, strengthen, and systemise research and innovation offices in Technological Universities (TUs) to enable greater and more structured engagement with local and regional enterprises and community stakeholders.

TU RISE and the Industry definition

Industry Partners for TU RISE can be based anywhere in the South East region of Ireland and include: an established business/company (including SMEs and MNCs), a registered charity, a social, cultural, or not-for-profit or non-governmental organisation, a semi-state commercial organisation, a Government Department, statutory agency, or a Research Performing Organisation (RPO) that will work with the researcher for the duration of the award. Where ‘industry’ is not defined by the funding body, a third party body or entity with a specific knowledge base (in the areas of regional Smart Specialisation) will also be considered legitimate.

Duration, KPIs and Reporting

The TU RISE Sabbatical leave duration is for two continuous semesters (**12 months**).

The next set of sabbatical leave will commence in the second semester of 2025 and the final set of sabbatical leave will commence in the second semester of 2026 ending in August 2027.

The staff member undertaking the research sabbatical is expected to meet certain KPIs, including undertaking training and submitting at least **2 grant applications** over the course of the 12-month period.

On completion of the period of leave, the staff member is required to submit a detailed report describing the outcomes of the leave period, with a focus on demonstrating the additional research outputs or impacts generated through the leave period. Interim inputs to the research office may also be required for reporting purposes. Moreover, the staff member is required to submit another detailed report 1-year post-completion of the Sabbatical. This report must be forwarded to Prof Marie Claire Van Hout, SETU Vice President for Research, Innovation and Impact (VPRresearch@setu.ie) and also to TURISE.wd@setu.ie.

Remuneration

Staff members will receive full pay for the duration of the Research Sabbatical. Sabbatical leave periods are reckonable for superannuation purposes, with regular superannuation contributions deducted from the salary during the leave. Sabbatical leave is also considered reckonable for incremental credit and does not alter normal statutory entitlements.

As a sabbatical cannot be granted for the purpose of taking up other employment, no additional remuneration should be associated with the leave period. If such arises (because of funding attracted by the applicant, for instance) it must be transferred to the university in the normal way.

HR Strategy for Researchers at SETU:

In line with the European Principles of the Human Resource Strategy for Researchers, SETU makes every effort to align the Research Sabbatical with Career Researchers. SETU holds the HR Excellence in Research award from the European Commission, in recognition of the University's on-going commitment to provide an attractive, supportive and stimulating environment in which to carry out innovative, relevant research.

Application Process for the TU RISE Sabbatical leave:

A formal application for TU RISE Research Sabbatical leave must be made by each individual. The application will comprise two elements – a completed application form using the designated form for same, and curriculum vitae. Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Research Office and their Head of Faculty before submitting the formal application. The form must be signed by the Head of Faculty. The completed form and curriculum vitae must be lodged to HR and TU RISE by the application deadline in order to proceed to evaluation. Applicants must work with SETU Technology Transfer Office (TTO) team in advance of submission, as their sign-off is also required. (Contact James O' Sullivan, SETU Head of Innovation and Commercialisation, via email to james.osullivan@setu.ie)

The evaluation process will comprise a two-step procedure. In the first step, SETU Faculties will shortlist applicants. This will be done at a discipline level in the six proposed faculties/discipline groupings – health science, business, arts and humanities, science and computing, engineering, and education & LLL. The second step is an interview by a university-level panel, with the composition detailed below.

The University-level process interview panel will comprise 3 members from the university – two from Faculties and one from the Office of Research, Innovation and Impact (chair). There will be two external members – one academic and one industry. A presentation may be required as part of the interview process.

Applicants and their respective Heads of Faculty will be notified of the outcome in writing, with unsuccessful applicants having the option to appeal the decision to the President.

Applicants are encouraged to complete the application in full, including a 5-page CV (DORA template provided), a 1-page statement discussing the relevance to the Strategic Plan, and a 1-page statement expressing how the Research Sabbatical will impact their career trajectory.

The evaluation panel **will not consider** incomplete applications, project submissions submitted after the closing date or those which do not use the application form templates provided.

Full applications (a single PDF file) should be sent to Research Recruitment SETU Waterford ResearchRecruitment.WD@setu.ie with TURISE.WD@setu.ie in copy by **5pm on 31 January, 2025**.

Schedule:

APPLICATION PROCESS	DATE
Application Deadline	31 January 2025
HoF Shortlisting Completed	27 February 2025
Shortlisted Candidates Informed	7 March 2025
Shortlisted Candidate Interviews	24 March 2025
Sabbaticals Commence	1 September 2025

An electronic copy of the completed application form (using template provided) with relevant signatures is required. Email subject line should include the applicant's name, followed by the scheme name **TU RISE Research Sabbatical**.

An application will not be accepted if:

- The application is not completed in full.
- The application is received after the deadline.
- The application has not been signed and endorsed by the relevant Head of Faculty.
- The application has not been signed off by the TTO.



A detailed plan for the Research Sabbatical is required as part of the application. Awardee commitment to specific metrics and reporting for the Research Sabbatical will be required.

The evaluation criteria for the application and the interview will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Relevance of proposed Sabbatical to SETU strategic plan and to the TU RISE objectives (all these will be made available to applicants).
- Ability to meet specific metrics in the University's TU RISE commitment appropriate to the Sabbatical scheme.
- Proposed contribution to a research group, centre, institute or at faculty level.
- Proposed contribution to the development of level 10 opportunities for students, if any.
- Proposed contribution to the sourcing of external funding for research or graduate research studies.
- Proposed contribution to the published output of the applicant and impact of same.
- Proposed engaged industry/enterprise elements of the proposal that contribute to knowledge exchange and transfer to industry/society, if any.
- Proposal to spend time at an international university or with an industry partner.
- Impact of the sabbatical on research, teaching and learning and career trajectory of the individual post-sabbatical.
- Innovation of the application.

Evaluation Criteria

Each application is evaluated by the relevant Head of Faculty (HoF). A standardised document featuring person specification, with required academic, research, outputs and funding track record, is used to assess the applicant's eligibility and shortlist. The HoF will evaluate applicants according to the Person Specification criteria.

Evaluators with a Conflict of interest should recuse themselves as soon as they become aware of this conflict and contact the SETU Office of Research, Innovation and Impact to signal that an alternative evaluator for that faculty is needed. Please refer to the SETU Conflict of Interest policy [here](#).

Applications are shortlisted at Faculty level and evaluated by an interview panel, as detailed above. Applicants will be informed of the application outcome no later than 7 March 2025. Shortlisted candidate interviews will take place on 24 March 2025. This date may be subject to change. An email will be sent to applicants in mid-March confirming the specific time of the shortlisted interviews.

SETU is a signatory to the [San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#). As such, SETU is aligning its review and evaluation processes with DORA principles. To this end, all types of research output are recognised by SETU and we are committed to assessing the quality and impact of research through means other than journal impact factors. SETU has developed a DORA-compliant CV template to assist with compliance to DORA principles as part of the main application form. Furthermore, in the spirit of supporting open research and as a signatory of [Plan S](#), SETU will positively consider where there is a commitment to making data and other types of research open and accessible.

General Conditions of Authorship Rights, Intellectual Property and Funding

1. The decision of the evaluation panel is final.
2. The second set of **TU RISE Sabbaticals must commence on 1 September, 2025.**
3. Awards are not transferable and in the event a Sabbatical cannot be commenced, the relevant Head of Department and the TU RISE project manager must be informed as soon as possible.
4. A condition of this funding is that an annual report is submitted to the office of the VP of Research, Innovation and Impact, and an additional report 1-year post-completion of the Research Sabbatical.
5. Authors should always adhere to the highest levels of research ethics and standards in line with the requirements set out by regulatory bodies, funding agencies and national and local research policy (for additional information see [SETU | Statements & Policies](#)). Authors can refer to the Credit Taxonomy for contribution types <https://casrai.org/credit/>.
6. The protection of intellectual property (IP) should be considered where appropriate. Researchers must comply with the University policy on IP and should seek advice from the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) prior to the commencement of their Research Sabbatical. Consortium agreements need to be managed by the Legal Counsel.
7. Consideration should be given to GDPR and confidential data, prior to any submission.
8. Author(s) must comply with any agreements of the relevant funding agencies when publishing the finding(s) of their work and must disclose the support/agreements given as required.
9. Author(s) must follow the SETU conflicts of interest policy and should declare any conflict of interest in the dissemination activity as appropriate.
10. Author(s) must disclose their affiliation with SETU in all publications, including the full name of SETU and the relevant school, department or research centre. If an author is directly employed by SETU and/or registered as a student, then they must indicate SETU as their primary affiliation and other affiliations as appropriate.
11. The Sabbatical will be awarded on the basis of the veracity of the information provided.
12. Further guidance on requirements and reporting will be provided to successful applicants.

Appendix:

TU RISE Sabbatical Scheme - Person Specification

Person Specification		
Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Academic qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A post-graduate research qualification, typically but not necessarily a PhD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum a Level 10 Doctoral degree or equivalent professional qualification.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be a researcher, part-time or full-time or pro-rata academic staff member (all lecturing grades included up to SL3 or any new ones introduced during this scheme) Minimum of 4 years continuous service at the institution. 	
Specific knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In depth understanding of the research project life cycle and associated requirements. Experience of postgraduate research supervision and bringing PhD/Masters by Research projects to <u>successful completion</u>. Scholarly outputs and evaluation of same Experience of leading and participating in research proposals and projects. Evidence of winning and managing competitive funding awards. Evidence of prior and ongoing industry engagement and collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of managing research project resources and budgets. Improvement and change management skills. Extensive knowledge of cross-cutting issues such as ethics and research integrity issues/training, open research, gender equality and diversity etc. Research-led teaching Background in ethics and GDPR protocols. Ability to lead awarded funding initiatives. Success in PhD student funding, for example, IRC. Prior experience developing innovative ideas with industry and collaborative funding proposals.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in international networks related to the discipline. • Membership of journal editorial boards.
Specific personal qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills. • Ability to take initiative and operate independently, meeting stringent deadlines. • Very high level of rigour and attention to detail. • Strong organisational and project management skills. • Ability to establish and maintain good working relations with internal and external stakeholders. • A commitment to continuous improvement, in compliance with national and international best practice and regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interest in collaborative engagements, particularly with industry and/enterprise. • Awards and scholarships related to academia and/or industry. • Peer recognition.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign off from Technology Transfer Office (TTO) team in advance of submission 	

For more information on the TU RISE Research Sabbaticals at SETU, please visit:
<https://www.setu.ie/research-innovation/tu-rise>



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