

Postgraduate Scholarship Information Sheet

Scholarship Project Title	Molecular Insights in Bat Conservation: A Comprehensive Approach to Irish Bat Biodiversity and Sustainability
Advert Reference number	SETU_2024_235
Supervisor(s)	Dr. Andrew Harrington (SETU Waterford), Dr. Denise O'Meara (SETU Waterford), Dr. David O'Neill (SETU Waterford), Ms. Bernadette Guest (Waterford City and County Council)
Research Group	Molecular Ecology Research Group, Eco-Innovation Research Centre
Department /School/Faculty	Science
Duration	4 Years/48 Months
Status: Full-time / part-time	Full Time
Funding information	SETU 2024 Presidents Scholarship Programme
Value of the scholarship per year for four years	Stipend: €18,500 per annum Fees of €5,750 per annum Research costs: €3,000 per annum
Closing date and time	Wednesday 14th August 2024 at 4pm Irish time
Interview date	To be confirmed
PhD commencement date	To be confirmed
<p>Project Key Words: Molecular Ecology, Bats, Wildlife Conservation, Non-invasive genetics</p> <p>Post summary</p> <p>Bats are considered to be keystone species and an essential part of healthy ecosystems worldwide, particularly due to their role in controlling insect pest populations. Of the nine bat species resident in Ireland, the common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle have been relatively little studied in terms of their genetic diversity and dietary preferences in the Irish context, despite being by far the commonest and most widespread bat species on the island.</p> <p>This project aims to assess the genetic diversity and viability of the soprano and common pipistrelle bats in Ireland, including investigating the possibility of hybridization between these species, using non-invasively collected DNA from bat droppings. In addition, the dietary habits of the soprano and common pipistrelle bats in diverse urban and rural habitats across southeast Ireland will be examined, thereby understanding their role in controlling insect populations and supporting healthy ecosystems. Sampling will be carried out from several bat box schemes across southeast Ireland, and the data collected will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of woodcrete bat boxes in enhancing roosting opportunities for bats, as part of a broader strategy to support bat populations, biodiversity, and sustainable agriculture.</p> <p>This project will include a collaboration with Waterford City and County Council, which will include engaging with local communities and farmers in southeast Ireland, promoting the</p>	

installation of bat boxes and other bat-friendly practices, and assessing the impact of these interventions on local attitudes towards conservation and sustainability.

Knowledge & Experience

Essential

- BSc Hons in a biological discipline e.g. Biology, Molecular Biology, Zoology, Ecology, Agricultural Science

Desirable

- Experience in Molecular Biology and Field work

Skills & Competencies

Essential

- Applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate on application that they meet [SETU's English language requirements](#) and provide all necessary documentation. See Page 7 of the Code of Practice
- In order to be **shortlisted for interview**, you must meet the SETU English speaking requirements so please provide evidence in your application.

Desirable

- Good team player and communicator

Further information

For any informal queries, please contact Dr. Andrew Harrington on email andrew.harrington@setu.ie

For queries relating to the application and admission process, please contact the Postgraduate Admissions Office researchadmissions@setu.ie or telephone +353 (0)51 302883.

For queries relating to the funding programme, please email scholarships2024@setu.ie

University Website <https://www.setu.ie/>

Application procedure

Download the Research PhD/MSc Application Form from the SETU website and return the completed application to researchadmissions@setu.ie quoting **SETU_2024_235** in the email subject line.

Please note that paper submissions will not be accepted.

The University may decide to interview only those applicants who appear from the information they provided, to be the most suitable in terms of experience, qualifications and other requirements of the post.

The University will short-list and interview those applicants who provide the most suitable information in terms of experience, qualifications and other requirements relevant to the scholarship.

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