

Soillse PhD Scholarship

Following a successful proposal to the Scottish Funding Council, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the Soillse initiative will promote an enhanced research capacity to inform public policy concerning Gaelic in Scotland. The initiative is supported by SFC's Strategic Research Development Grant Horizon Fund scheme. Activities and outputs will build upon, collaborate with, and transfer knowledge to existing efforts to maintain and revitalise Gaelic language and culture.

Soillse involves a consortium consisting of UHI Millenium Institute (in particular, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig), and the Universities of Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh.

The aims of Soillse are:

- To further develop a research capability in Gaelic language development for the benefit of the Highlands & Islands and beyond
- To develop a national network, bringing in new researchers, linking with international research and influencing policy.

Five PhD scholarships, including one in Aberdeen, will be awarded in 2010 in terms of the criteria set out below. The Aberdeen scholarship will cover the UK/EU rate of tuition fees and an annual stipend. The stipend is in line with the figure set by the Research Councils (£13,290 in 2010-11). All international students who apply for the scholarship must be able to demonstrate the availability of funds to meet the full overseas tuition fee.

Funding will extend for four years. Students may apply on a 1+3 or 3+1 basis, i.e. a Master's by Research followed by a three-year PhD, or a three-year PhD followed by one year of postdoctoral study. Students choosing the 1+3 option will only be permitted to progress to the PhD if performance on the Master's by Research is satisfactory.

Full-time applications are preferred but anyone wishing to apply on a part-time basis should contact Dr Rob Dunbar r.dunbar@abdn.ac.uk +44(0)1224-272677 in the first instance.

Criteria

Applications are encouraged in relation to the following three research topics:

1. Implementation of Gaelic language plans under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (which could have a comparative element based on the Welsh and/or Irish experience with similar policy mechanisms).
2. Gaelic education policy at the national and local authority level: successes, failures, gaps and contradictions.
3. Gaelic language use in the family and immediate neighbourhood setting: e.g. what motivates and de-motivates people from using Gaelic in the family and at a neighbourhood level.

Applicants may also propose a different research topic but this must fit clearly within the parameters of the Soillse initiative and its overarching research themes: Gaelic as a family and community language; Gaelic language use; Gaelic identity and self-confidence; Gaelic in education; and policies for Gaelic.

Applicants should be able to speak, read and write Gaelic. Applicants who do not currently have all of these skills will be expected to develop competence in Gaelic such that they can conduct and present academic research through the medium of Gaelic. Appropriate language training will be provided.

Informal enquiries about the award and the application procedure can be made to Dr Robert Dunbar, r.dunbar@abdn.ac.uk, +44(0)1224-272677.

Application Procedure

To apply, candidates should submit the following:

- a CV including grades achieved to date, and a covering letter
- a personal statement - please give reasons why you believe you should be considered for the scholarship, and highlight your interest and ability in your future degree programme
- name and contact details of two academic referees
- a research proposal

Please send completed applications to Dr R Dunbar, School of Language & Literature, Kings' College, Aberdeen, AB24 3UB

Completed applications (including references) must be received no later than **21 May, 2010**.

Please note that in order to be considered for this scholarship, your application for postgraduate study must also be submitted by 21 May 2010.

Applications can be made on line at the following web address:

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/sras/index.shtml>

Selection Procedure

A Selection Committee will meet by the end of May 2010 to select the scholarship holder. The winner of the scholarship will be announced as soon as possible thereafter.