The Laidlaw Undergraduate Leadership and Research Programme is an innovative scholarship designed to help undergraduate students from all disciplines and walks of life to develop strong research and leadership skills which will allow them to excel in both their degree programmes and their future careers. Scholars are supervised by members of academic staff who engage with the student to support them in developing their research interests.

The Programme takes place over 18 months from April 2021 – October 2022.

Supervisors support the student to lead on the development and implementation of a 6-week research project in Summer 2021 with the potential for further research-related project work in Summer 2022. Throughout the Programme timeline supervisors have some additional mentoring and administrative responsibilities.

You can find more about the Laidlaw Programme internationally here: https://laidlawfoundation.com/scholars/#undergraduate-scholars

You can find more about the Laidlaw Programme at Trinity, including testimonials from prior supervisors https://www.tcd.ie/Careers/staff/laidlaw.php

Student Profile

- Undergraduates starting in their 2nd year (2nd/3rd year for a five-year degree)
- Approximately 26 students per cohort from a range of disciplines and faculties
- Undertaking an original research project alongside a leadership development programme aimed at enhancing personal and professional competencies
- Required to complete a number of output requirements including leadership sessions, a research poster, and reflective reports on their experience
- Receive a €3,300 stipend during the Summer 1 research project and the equivalent in stipend or other funding in Summer 2
- Receive a €700 project resource fund, payable to the supervisor’s department, for research related expenses
- Can apply to additional funding throughout the programme including for travel, conferences, and expenses arising from the Summer 2 option

Supervisor Eligibility and Responsibilities

Any member of Trinity’s academic staff who is on a permanent contract, or on a contract which extends beyond the duration of the relevant session of the Laidlaw Programme, is eligible to supervise a Laidlaw Scholar. The 2021 cycle of the Programme runs from April 2021 to October 2022. You can supervise a scholar jointly with another colleague (either at Trinity or another institution) for all, or part of the duration of the Programme.
Responsibilities include:

- Providing a statement of support for the application
- Providing regular guidance as part of the application and throughout the Scholar’s time on the Programme if selected
- Supporting the Laidlaw Scholar with their project requirements e.g. ethics clearance, access to department materials and workspaces, administering project related purchases
- Supporting the Laidlaw Scholar to engage with colleagues in your academic and professional network as appropriate
- Engaging with the Laidlaw Programme team to give feedback on the Laidlaw Scholar’s progress and support their development

Laidlaw supervisors will also be invited to join the Laidlaw Network which connects student researchers and academic staff from the 12 international research universities delivering the Programme.

**Letter of support – recommended format**

In submitting a letter of support you acknowledge that you will undertake the responsibilities of a Laidlaw supervisor if the proposal is accepted.

The letter of support can be composed at the supervisor’s discretion, we recommend including the components detailed below as they will strengthen the student’s application and give the selection panel more information with which to distinguish the proposal.

- Approximately 1 A4 page and includes signature (or signatures if the proposal has joint supervisors), contact details, and letterhead if appropriate
- Shows your opinion of the project, including your interest and availability to supervise
- Shows your endorsement that the project has merit: does it address something important or novel in the field? Does it have potential international/interdisciplinary impact?
- Shows your endorsement that the project is feasible: can the Summer 1 component it be completed in the 6-week timeframe?
- Confirms that you will be able to provide/facilitate the resources required
- Confirm that any pre-approval considerations (ethics approval/garda vetting, etc.) will be handled appropriately
- Details any relevant supervisory arrangements (i.e. if there are multiple supervisors, if the applicant will be included in a research group, if the supervisor will be unavailable for a period)