### Post Specification

| **Post Title:** | PhD scholarship  
(ERC research project GEOFIN) |
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post Status:</strong></td>
<td>Up to 4 Years, Full-Time</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Research Group /Department/School:** | GEOFIN (ERC Project 683197) within the  
Finance, Economy & Society (FES) Research Group,  
Department of Geography,  
Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin |
| **Location:** | Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin  
College Green, Dublin 2, Ireland |
| **Reports to:** | Principal Investigator / PhD Supervisor |
| **Salary/Scholarship:** | cca. €24,000 per annum which includes:  
- stipend of €17,000 per annum (tax-free)  
- fully covered academic tuition fees at the EU rates (currently €7,013 p.a.).  
NOTE: Applicants must have been resident in an EU member state for 3 out of the last 5 years to be eligible for EU fees |
| **Closing Date and Time:** | 12 Noon (Irish Standard Mean Time)  
on Monday 4th September 2017 |

PLEASE NOTE: this post is tenable from October 2017, or soon after. The successful candidate should be in place no later than January 2018.
Post Summary

Applications are invited for a fully-funded, 4-year PhD scholarship based at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, Ireland, under the supervision of Dr Martin Sokol, Associate Professor in Geography. The PhD project is tied to a prestigious European Research Council (ERC) research grant GEOFIN (Western Banks in Eastern Europe: New Geographies of Financialisation). The key aim of GEOFIN is to examine how states, banks and households in post-socialist contexts of East-Central Europe have been financialised and to consider what implications this has for the societies in question and for Europe as a whole.

The PhD project will examine sub-national banking strategies of West-European banking groups operating in East-Central Europe. The focus will be on retail banks, geography of their delivery channels (especially bank branch networks) and their lending strategies and practices at local and regional levels (especially lending to households). The PhD project will thus help to explore the ways in which finance is both shaping, and is shaped by, uneven geographical landscapes of post-socialist societies. The successful candidate will engage in both desk-top and fieldwork research, using a range of research methods (including interviews with bank branch managers and other relevant actors). The PhD project will deliver (a) an overview of bank branch networks and retail banking strategies across East-Central Europe and (b) one or more in-depth national case studies of sub-national banking geographies in selected countries of East-Central Europe.

For the purposes of the project, East-Central Europe includes ‘new’ EU member state countries of ‘Central Europe’ (Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia); the ‘Baltics’ (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) and ‘South-East Europe’ (Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia). The successful candidate must be prepared to travel to case study countries during the fieldwork phase of research (Year 2 and 3) on both short-term visits and longer research trips (up to 3 months), as needed for the completion of case studies and as agreed with the PhD supervisor / Principal Investigator.

The successful applicant will become a core member of the GEOFIN team (which will include the Principal Investigator, 4 Post-Doctoral Researchers, 3 Research Assistants and a Research Project Officer). The successful candidate is expected to work closely with the PhD supervisor (Principal Investigator) and the rest of the team, in order to contribute to the overall aims of GEOFIN project, while at the same time developing his/her own research profile. The successful candidates will be hosted in the
Department of Geography, School of Natural Sciences, on the main Trinity Campus and will become a member of the Finance, Economy & Society (FES) Research Group directed by Dr Martin Sokol. It is expected that the PhD scholar will also play an active role in the Global Network on Financial Geography (FinGeo).

INFORMAL ENQUIRIES concerning the post should be addressed to Dr Martin Sokol, GEOFIN’s Principal Investigator / PhD Supervisor: sokolm@tcd.ie with a copy to Ms Paddi Leinster, GEOFIN’s Research Project Officer: geofin@tcd.ie

APPLICATIONS must be emailed to: geofin@tcd.ie by the closing date (please see detailed instructions below). Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered and may be rejected.

GEOFIN Project Summary
GEOFIN (Western Banks in Eastern Europe: New Geographies of Financialisation) is a €1.8M five year project funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the Consolidator Grant call. Financialisation, or the growing power of finance over societies and economies is increasingly recognised as the key feature of contemporary capitalism. However, significant gaps in our understanding of this process remain. Indeed, despite growing recognition that financialisation is an inherently spatial process, a geographically-informed view of financialisation remains underdeveloped. In addition, and related to this, the extent and the ways in which post-socialist ‘transition’ societies in East-Central Europe have been financialised remains under-researched and under-theorised. Yet, the examination of former state-socialist societies (built on the very opposite economic logic to that of financialisation) provides an unmatched opportunity to learn about financialisation itself, how it ‘penetrates’ societies and with what social and spatial implications. East-Central Europe in this sense constitutes a unique terrain for frontier research. GEOFIN will address the above shortcomings by producing empirical and theoretical insights to develop a geographically-informed view of financialisation. The objective is to examine how states, banks and households in post-socialist contexts have been financialised and to consider what implications this has for the societies in question and for Europe as a whole. The project will pilot a novel approach based on the concept of ‘financial chains’ which are understood both as channels of value transfer and as social relations that shape socio-economic processes and attendant economic geographies. A set of interlocking case studies will be mobilised to reveal the different ways in which banks, states and households across post-socialist East-Central Europe are interconnected by financial chains with each other and with a
wider political economy. GEOFIN will fundamentally advance our understanding of new geographies of financialisation, opening up new horizons in studies of finance and its future role in the society.

**Standard duties and Responsibilities of the Post**

In addition to delivering the PhD project (outlined above) to an excellent standard, the successful candidate will also:

- contribute, in appropriate ways, to GEOFIN’s dissemination plan (via solo and co-authored publications) as agreed with the Principal Investigator / PhD Supervisor. (GEOFIN’s overall dissemination plan includes 15 articles in leading international academic journals; 1 research monograph book; Working Papers; international conference papers; and blogs).
- help co-organise GEOFIN events which will include research meetings, workshops, seminars and meetings with the members of GEOFIN’s Academic Advisory Panel (involving top academics in the field of financialisation) and Stakeholder Advisory Panel (involving experts from ECB, national central banks, EBRD, European Investment Bank and other financial institutions).
- disseminate his/her research through, and play an active role in, the Global Network on Financial Geography (FinGeo).
- contribute to GEOFIN’s website and promote GEOFIN’s research via social media dissemination channels.
- participate in the GEOFIN’s final-year project conference.
- attend local and international conferences, research seminars and other relevant events.

**Note:** There is no requirement for a successful candidate to engage in any teaching. However, limited engagement with undergraduate teaching can be arranged upon successful candidate’s request (for the purposes of building the scholar’s academic profile and experience).

**Funding Information**

- GEOFIN project (2016-2021) is funded by the European Research Council (ERC) Consolidator Grant under the Horizon 2020 (H2020-EU.1.1 – Excellent Science) Programme (Project ID: 683197).
- The overall value of the scholarship is just over **€24,000 per annum** which includes:
  - **€17,000 per annum tax-free stipend**, for up to 4 years.
  - Fully-covered academic tuition fees at the EU rates (currently €7,013 per annum). **NOTE:** Applicants must have been resident in an EU member state
for 3 out of the last 5 years to be eligible for EU fees. For non-EU students, any costs for fees above the EU rates must be borne by the scholar.

- In addition to the scholarship itself, some direct research expenses and conference travel will be covered within the available budget.
- The continuation of the award is subject to annual reviews of scholar’s progress and university’s procedures for review of postgraduate research.
- The scholarship is tenable from October 2017, with the exact starting date open to negotiation. The successful candidate should be in place no later than January 2018. The PhD project must be completed by November 2021. The scholarship is available for up to 4 years, but funding must end on 30th November 2021 (the end date of GEOFIN project funding).

**Person Specification**

**Qualifications (Essential)**

- Applicants must hold a first-class (or strong 2.1 / upper second-class) undergraduate degree with honours (minimum GPA 3.7/4.0 or equivalent international qualifications) and, ideally, a Master’s degree (at merit level or above) – in Human/Economic Geography or a closely related discipline (e.g. Business Management/Finance Studies, Economic Sociology, Political Economy).

**Knowledge, Skills & Experience (Essential):**

- Good knowledge of financial geography literature (including literature on financial exclusion, redlining and financialisation more broadly)
- Excellent research skills relevant to the post, in particular:
  - Ability to conduct and analyse interviews (e.g. with bank branch managers, advocacy groups and other relevant actors and organisations)
  - Ability to analyse and interpret secondary data (e.g. basic economic indicators or lending data)
  - Ability to perform documentary analysis (e.g. banks’ corporate strategy documents, annual reports, press releases, policy or regulatory documents)
  - Ability to present research findings at local and international conferences
  - Potential for publishing in peer-reviewed journals
  - Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
  - Excellent command of the English language (in both written and oral form); if English is not their first language, the required English proficiency certificates are: IELTS Academic: 7.5+; TOEFL iBT: 110+; CPE: 191+; CAE: 191+; or equivalent.
• Ability to work both independently and in a team
• Ability to think independently and to overcome difficulties in research process
• Enthusiasm for the project and willingness to acquire new skills as required for the implementation of the project

Knowledge, Skills & Experience (Desirable):

In addition to the essential attributes described above, the following knowledge, skills & experience may be of advantage (but are not essential):
• Ability to use statistical techniques to analyse quantitative data
• Ability to use GIS or other mapping software
• Ability to manage websites
• Ability to use social media for research dissemination purposes
• Experience in organising research seminars, workshops and/or other events
• Knowledge of other European languages pertinent to the project – e.g. those used by relevant banking groups, such as German, French, Italian etc. (parent banks) or Eastern European languages (subsidiaries)
• Knowledge of Western banking groups (or their East European subsidiaries)
• Knowledge of post-socialist transformations in East-Central Europe
• Pre-existing contacts in Western or East-Central Europe pertinent to the project

Further Information for Candidates / URL Links:

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<tr>
<th>GEOFIN project</th>
<th><a href="https://www.tcd.ie/Geography/research/gof/GEOFIN.php">https://www.tcd.ie/Geography/research/gof/GEOFIN.php</a></th>
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<td>GEOFIN project (EU CORDIS website)</td>
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<td>GEOFIN project on Research Gate</td>
<td><a href="https://www.researchgate.net/project/GEOFIN-Western-Banks-in-Eastern-Europe-New-Geographies-of-Financialisation">https://www.researchgate.net/project/GEOFIN-Western-Banks-in-Eastern-Europe-New-Geographies-of-Financialisation</a></td>
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<td>FES Research Group</td>
<td><a href="https://www.tcd.ie/Geography/research/gof/gof.php">https://www.tcd.ie/Geography/research/gof/gof.php</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>PI (Martin Sokol)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.tcd.ie/Geography/staff/MartinSokol.php">https://www.tcd.ie/Geography/staff/MartinSokol.php</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>FinGeo Network</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fingeo.net/">http://www.fingeo.net/</a></td>
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<td>TCD Geography</td>
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<td>Trinity College Dublin</td>
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<td>Human Resources</td>
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The Discipline / Department of Geography

The Department of Geography in Trinity is one of the leading Geography departments in Ireland and Europe. It is the only Geography department in Ireland that simultaneously holds two prestigious European Research Council (ERC) grants (SHARECITY and GEOFIN). The Department has 13 full-time academic staff, 7 postdoctoral and research staff and a vibrant Ph.D. body, in addition to support and technical staff. Particular research strengths in human geography include urban and economic geography, development geography and environmental governance. In QS 2015 Subject Rankings, Geography ranked in the top 100 in the world. The Department is located within one of the university’s architectural gems, the Museum Building, next door to the Old Library (Book of Kells). The scholar will be based on the main Trinity Campus, which is situated in the Dublin’s city centre.

For further information, visit: http://www.tcd.ie/Geography/

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Trinity is Ireland’s premier university, with a proud tradition of excellence stretching back to its foundation in 1592. The oldest university in Ireland, and one of the oldest in Europe, today Trinity sits at the intersection of the past and the future, and is ideally positioned as a major university in the European Union. Our 47-acre campus is located in the heart of Dublin city centre and is home to historic buildings dating from the University’s establishment, as well as some of the most cutting-edge teaching and research facilities in Ireland. Students at Trinity benefit from a unique educational experience across a range of disciplines in our three faculties – Arts,
Humanities, and Social Sciences; Engineering, Mathematics and Science; and Health Sciences. The pursuit of excellence through research and scholarship is at the heart of a Trinity education, and our researchers have an outstanding publication record and strong record of grant success.

Trinity has developed 18 broad-based multidisciplinary research themes that cut across disciplines and facilitate world-leading research and collaboration within the University and with colleagues around the world. These internationally recognised themes include such diverse areas as Cancer, Immunology, Telecoms, Identities in Transformation, Nanoscience, Neuroscience, and Making Ireland. Researchers from across the University work together in innovative ways to develop new and exciting approaches to their research and explore the frontiers of knowledge in the 21st century. In creating these dedicated research themes, Trinity’s researchers are able to become a more powerful force on the global stage, successfully competing for large-scale grants and attracting top students and faculty to the University. Trinity is home to Ireland’s first purpose-built Nanoscience research institute, CRANN, which opened in January 2008. This state-of-the-art facility houses 150 scientists,
technicians, and graduate students in specialised laboratories, fostering creative innovations that have seen Trinity’s researchers make significant breakthroughs.

The Trinity Long Room Hub for Arts and Humanities Research Institute is the University’s flagship institute for research in the Arts and Humanities, providing a world-class environment for cross-disciplinary collaborative projects. The Long Room Hub provides a central location through which the University’s internationally respected Arts and Humanities research can become more visible, demonstrating its relevance for contemporary and future societies. Researchers from across the University regularly participate in debates on topical issues facing the world today. As well as operating an International Visiting Research Fellowship programme, the Long Room Hub also hosts major EU-funded Digital Humanities projects.

One of the most instantly recognised parts of Trinity’s campus is the famous Old Library, home to the historic Book of Kells as well as other internationally significant holdings in manuscripts, maps, and early printed material. Trinity’s Library is the largest research library in Ireland and is an invaluable resource to Trinity’s students and research community. Built up over the four centuries of the University’s existence, the Library’s collections have benefitted from its status as a Legal Deposit library for the past 200 years, granting Trinity the right to claim a copy of every book published in Ireland and the UK. At present, the Library’s holdings span approximately 4.25 million books, 22,000 printed periodical titles, and access to 60,000 e-journals and 250,000 e-books.

Trinity attracts top students from Ireland and abroad and prides itself on the consistently high standard of student admitted to the University every year. These students are drawn to Trinity for the excellence of our research-led teaching and for the quality and prestige a degree from this University confers. Trinity has also pioneered accessibility to education in Ireland, becoming the first university in the country to reserve 15% of its undergraduate places for students from non-traditional learning groups. Trinity is the top-ranked European university for student
entrepreneurship and Europe’s only representative in the world’s top-50 universities.

Our alumni have gone on to shape the history of Ireland and of Western Europe in a wide range of fields. These include such notable figures as Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, William Rowan Hamilton, Edmund Burke, William Stokes, Denis Burkitt, Louise Richardson, Lenny Abrahamson, and Anne Enright. Three of Trinity’s graduates have been awarded Nobel prizes: Ernest Walton for Physics in 1951; Samuel Beckett for Literature in 1968; and William Campbell for Physiology / Medicine in 2015. Trinity also counts the first female President of Ireland among its alumni in Mary Robinson, as well as other notable former Presidents Douglas Hyde and Mary McAleese. At Trinity we are justifiably proud of our tradition, and we strive to uphold this excellence as we face the demands of the 21st century.

Ranking Facts

Trinity is the top ranked university in Ireland. Using the QS methodology we are ranked 88th in the world and using the Times Higher Education World University Rankings methodology we are 131st in the world.
Overall

- Trinity is Ireland’s No.1 University in the QS World University Ranking, THE World University Ranking and the Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai).
- Trinity is ranked 88th in the World, and 29th in Europe, in the 2017/2018 QS World University Ranking.
- Trinity is ranked in the Top 100 for Graduate Employability in the QS 2017 Rankings.
- Trinity is in the Top 50 most innovative universities in Europe according to Reuters.¹
- Between 2010 and 2015, Trinity was ranked the top university in Europe for entrepreneurship according to Pitchbook’s independent analysis.²

Internationalisation

- Trinity is ranked 52nd in the world in the THE World University Ranking for international outlook.

Research Performance

- Of the 981 institutions included in the THE World University Rankings for 2017, Trinity is in the top 15% internationally for research performance.
- Trinity is ranked in the top 15% internationally by QS for citations.

In the QS World University Rankings:

- Trinity featured in the world’s elite (Top 200) institutions in 25 of the 28 subjects in which it was evaluated by the QS World University Rankings by Subject in 2015. Of these, Trinity ranked in the top 100 in the world in 14 subjects and in the top 50 in the world in 6 subjects: English Language and Literature; Nursing; Politics and International Studies; History; Biological Sciences; and Modern Languages.
- In three out of the last four years, Trinity has been consistently ranked in the Top 50 worldwide for the following areas: English Language and Literature; Nursing; Modern Languages; and Politics and International Studies.
- In the QS Faculty rankings, Trinity has been consistently ranked in the Top 100 globally for Arts and Humanities over the last four years.

¹ [http://www.reuters.com/article/us-innovative-stories-europe-idUSKCN0Z00CT](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-innovative-stories-europe-idUSKCN0Z00CT)
Employment Permit Eligibility Criteria

Applications from non-EEA citizens are welcomed. However, eligibility is determined under the relevant regulations of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation. Trinity, as an accredited research organisation, can form Hosting Agreements with third country nationals (Non-EEA nationals) for the purposes of conducting research in the University. Non-EEA candidates should note that the onus is on them to secure a visa to travel to Ireland prior to interview. Non-EEA candidates should also be aware that even if successful at interview, an appointment to the post is contingent on the securing of a Hosting Agreement or Employment Permit as appropriate. See: https://www.djei.ie/en/What-We-Do/Innovation-Research-Development/Hosting-Agreement-Scheme/

Equal Opportunities Policy

Trinity College is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to employment policies, procedures and practices which do not discriminate on grounds such as gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or membership of the travelling community. On that basis we encourage and welcome talented people from all backgrounds to join our staff community. Trinity College’s Diversity Statement can be viewed in full at: https://www.tcd.ie/diversity-inclusion/diversity-statement/

Other Relevant Information

Successful candidates will become members of the Finance, Economy & Society (FES) Research Group based in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and directed by Dr Sokol. GEOFIN team members will also be part the Global Network on Financial Geography (FinGeo) of which Dr Sokol is a founding member and Secretary. FinGeo has well over 350 members worldwide. GEOFIN researchers will therefore have unparalleled access to scholars in the field and will benefit from activities carried out by the Network. The members of the GEOFIN research team will also benefit from interdisciplinary interaction within TCD, especially with colleagues in the Business School and Departments of Economics, Sociology and Politics, in addition to vibrant research environment within Geography Department itself.
GEOFIN research team will be further supported by the host institution through training – both in relation to research and professional development. TCD has an excellent capacity to provide complementary skills training to the team through the Centre for Academic Practice (CAPSL). CAPSL provides courses on various aspects of professional development. In addition to this TCD’s Centre for Women in Science and Engineering Research (WiSER) will provide gender-sensitive research training to the team throughout the duration of the project. WiSER was founded to address the under-representation of women researchers in science and engineering disciplines at Trinity College Dublin. It aims to increase retention of women by providing direct support to female researchers and academics; to foster a sense of community within the workplace, and to create a gender-balanced, and ultimately more productive, working environment.

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Application Procedure – see overleaf
Application Procedure

Stage 1 – Application must be emailed to: geofin@tcd.ie by the closing date

The application must consist of:

NOTE: Items 1-4 should be submitted as one document (Word or pdf).

1. Cover letter - stating clearly:
   (a) if you are eligible for EU tuition fee rates, and if not, how the difference (currently €6,755 per annum) between EU fees and non-EU fees will be funded;
   (b) if you require visa to study in Ireland;
   (c) if you require visa to travel within the EU;
   (d) full list of items you are submitting as part of your application.

2. Personal statement (1 page) – outlining:
   Your career to date, your reason(s) for applying for this scholarship, and why you think you are a suitable candidate for this project.

3. Research proposal (2 pages):
   This is essentially your elaboration on the PhD project outline set out at the beginning of this Job Specification. Here you should:
   - indicate how you propose to develop the research project, including what specific research question(s) you would be keen to investigate;
   - identify a suitable conceptual and theoretical framework for the research;
   - provide a brief literature review relating to the above;
   - outline methodologies to be employed;
   - set out a research schedule/milestones.

4. Full CV, with details of qualifications achieved, listing any awards received, providing a list of publications (if any) and including contact details of at least two referees (one of which should be your undergraduate dissertation or Master’s thesis supervisor).

5. Academic transcripts (undergraduate and/or Master’s as appropriate)
   A transcript is a document that states the results of all the subjects of all years that you did in your degree. Please note that the transcript is not the parchment that you would have received in your graduation. If you do not have a transcript, you can request this from your University.
6. **Copies of English language proficiency certificate(s)** - Required if English is not your first language. You should have IELTS Academic: 7.5+; TOEFL iBT: 110+; CPE: 191+; CAE: 191+; or equivalent).

7. **Other supporting documents** (optional)
   This may include a copy of your undergraduate dissertation or Master’s thesis, copies of any awards or copies of your publications (if you have any).

8. **Two references**
   It is the responsibility of the applicant to secure references from two academic referees (one of which should be your undergraduate dissertation or Master’s thesis supervisor). These can be (a) submitted by the applicant, together with the application, or (b) send by the referees directly to the email address below, by the closing date.

**DEADLINE: 12 Noon (Irish Standard Mean Time) on Monday 4th September 2017**

Incomplete applications will not be considered and may be rejected.

**Stage 2 – Interview**
Shortlisted candidates will be notified within 1 week of the closing date and will be invited to undertake interview via Skype. It is expected that interviews will take place on Wednesday 13th September and/or Thursday 14th September. Shortlisted candidates must make themselves available on one of those days.

The decision on the scholarship will be made on 15th September.

Complete applications must be sent via email to:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Ms Paddi Leinster</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>GEOFIN’s Research Project Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:geofin@tcd.ie">geofin@tcd.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Telephone Number:</td>
<td>+353-1-896 2355 (until 21st July)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Telephone Number:</td>
<td>+353-1-896 4365 (28th – 31st Aug and 4th Sept)</td>
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</table>

Informal enquiries concerning the post should be addressed to Dr Martin Sokol, GEOFIN’s Principal Investigator: sokolm@tcd.ie, with a copy to Ms Paddi Leinster, GEOFIN’s Research Project Officer: geofin@tcd.ie