UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems
PhD Scholarship in Global Health

The UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems (SNMHS) is offering a full-time PhD Scholarship with registration commencing in September 2026.

The PhD programme is focused on investigating how meaningful community engagement operates within health systems globally and identifying approaches to strengthen engagement to improve health equity across international contexts.

The PhD scholarship offers a stipend of €25,000 per annum plus coverage of student fees for four full-time years.

No. 1 for Research
UCD has the highest volume of publications across all Irish universities. These papers are cited by other researchers at a rate that is 75% above the world average (2015 - 2019).

UCD Ad Astra PhD Scholarship

About Us

The **UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems** are committed to developing knowledge that informs health and social policy, advances professional practice and education in nursing and midwifery, and generates impact in the wider health system, both nationally and internationally. To find out more about the School, please visit the website.

The student will be co-supervised by a faculty member in the **School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science**, providing an interdisciplinary research environment and access to complementary expertise in population health and health services research. This collaboration will support a broad, systems-oriented approach to health and healthcare research. To find out more about the School, please visit the website.

UCD IRIS

The successful applicant will also become a member of the UCD IRIS Centre. Our work is characterised by systems thinking, interdisciplinary and intersectoral working, patient and public involvement and robust evidence synthesis, informing the collaborative design of health system interventions and professional development programmes, as well as contributing to methodological innovation and strong networks and partnerships.

To find out more about our work please visit our website.

The Research Programme

This PhD scholarship will support a project on global and community health systems. Applicants are encouraged to propose a research question that aligns with one or more of the following areas:

- **Community engagement and participation**, including how communities shape, experience, or influence health systems

- **Equity and gender in global health**, exploring representation, power, or lived experiences in policy and practice

Projects that are interdisciplinary, cross-country, or that use innovative methods (e.g., realist evaluation, participatory or visual methodologies) are particularly encouraged.

The successful applicant will be supervised by Dr Sara Dada and a supervisory team based across both Schools.

Research Funding

The successful candidate will receive the following financial support for 4 years:

- Full funding for tuition fees for 4 full-time years
- A stipend of €25,000 per annum to assist with living expenses
- Budget of €31,000 to support for research activities

Eligibility Criteria

Entry Requirements

Applications from candidates worldwide will be considered for this full-time position. An academic background in health, social science, or education is preferred. Experience in research using qualitative, quantitative, and/or mixed methods research is required.

The student must fulfil **one** of the following criteria:

a) The applicant has obtained a minimum of an upper second-class degree in a relevant honors Bachelor's degree (e.g. Social Sciences, Health or Education-related fields)
b) The applicant has obtained a Master's degree in a relevant field (e.g. Social Sciences, Health or Education-related fields)

Applications from individuals who have experience as a family carer are particularly welcome.

English Language Requirements

Candidates whose first language is not English and whose primary degree was obtained in a country where English is not the official language of instruction must provide proof of proficiency in English such as IELTS or TOEFL. The original certificate of completion of an English language test must be submitted with the application. In all cases, the test results must not be more than two years old.

UCD is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Learn more here: www.ucd.ie/equality

UCD Ad Astra PhD Scholarship

How to Apply

To apply for this PhD Scholarship, individuals should submit (preferably in PDF format) the following materials in the online form:

- A **Curriculum Vitae** focusing on relevant experience
- A **1-page Personal Statement**
- A **2-page Research Proposal**
- A **generative AI and reflexivity statement**

Application Deadline

Applications are to be submitted via this form: https://tinyurl.com/AdAstraPhD no later than **April 16th 2026.**

Informal enquiries are welcome and should be sent directly to Dr Sara Dada.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted in due course regarding interviews.

Applicants must be in a position to register and commence the full time 4-year programme by September 2026.

Application Assessment Criteria

Personal Statement/CV must include:

- The rationale for pursuing a doctoral research degree in the topic outlined
- Evidence of previous research experience.
- Evidence of relevant transferable skills (e.g., communication, leadership, organisational skills, self-motivation)
- Excellent written presentation (spelling, grammar, graphical)

Research Proposal must include:

- Clear aim(s) of the proposed research
- A potential novel contribution to the field of community engagement or to advancing equity in health systems
- Demonstrate understanding of appropriate research methods
- Excellent written presentation (spelling, grammar, graphical)

Generative AI & Reflexivity Statement describing if and how AI was used (tool name, specific use, reflection on prompts and how this influenced the proposal) as well as general reflexivity and positionality of you as a researcher.

CONTACT

For further details or enquiries please contact:

👤 **Dr Sara Dada**

✉ sara.dada@ucd.ie

🌐 UCD Profile