

**TUS****Technological University of the Shannon:****Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:

Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY**Project Title: Peer-Assisted Breastfeeding Success (PABS): The Impact of Peer Support on Mothers' Breastfeeding Goals**

Short Project Description Breastfeeding is the natural and biologically normal way of feeding infants and young children. The World Health Organization and the Health Service Executive recommend that infants are exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life with continued breastfeeding to 2 years and beyond. Ireland has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates worldwide, despite the well-known benefits. Breastfeeding has multiple health benefits for infants, young-children and mothers. Breastfed infants are less likely to get sick and have a reduced severity of sickness (e.g. chest infections). For mothers, breastfeeding lowers the risk of certain reproductive cancers and chronic diseases. While breastfeeding is a cornerstone of infant health, many women face challenges in achieving their breastfeeding goals. Research suggests that women have mixed experiences of early breastfeeding supports in the maternity units with a lack of sign posting to specific breastfeeding supports. Currently, there are no Irish data on mother's experiences of individual peer support services, offered by voluntary organizations. This project aims to assess the effectiveness of FoBF breastfeeding buddy program in helping women attain their breastfeeding goals. The proposed project will investigate various aspects of peer support, including its influence on breastfeeding duration, exclusivity, and maternal satisfaction. By examining the experiences and perspectives of breastfeeding women participating in the peer support program, it will uncover barriers and facilitators to breastfeeding success, informing future interventions and breastfeeding policies. It will inform the development of evidence-based breastfeeding support programs, training protocols for peer supporters, and integration of peer support into healthcare systems.

Duration of Project: 24 months

Funding Agency: TUS RISE Scholarship comprises of a monthly stipend, materials budget and postgraduate fee for the duration of the award only.

Type of Degree Offered: MSc**Minimum Qualifications/Experience Necessary/Any Other Requirements:**

Candidates should hold a bachelor's degree classification of 2.1 honours (minimum) or higher in nutrition and/or dietetics, food science, public health, nursing, medicine, social sciences or related field. The successful candidate should be highly motivated and have an interest in lactation. Experience of quantitative data collection and analysis, as well as working with human participants is essential. Experience in qualitative data collection and analysis would be desirable but not essential.

IELTS [International English Testing System] Applicants must have a minimum of 6.0 with no component score less than 6.0.

Research Supervisors:**Dr Áine O'Connor, TUS****Dr Liz O'Sullivan, TU Dublin**Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of IrelandArna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
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HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY

TU RISE is co-financed by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27 and the Northern & Western Regional Programme 2021-27



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For further information, please contact: Dr Áine O'Connor@ aine.oconnor@tus.ie

Closing date for receipt of completed application form is 5pm on Tuesday, 4th June. Interviews will take place within subsequent weeks.

Download TUS RISE application form here:

<https://tus.ie/rdi/research/office/funded-research/>



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