

Call For Applications

IMLI-Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree Programme Fellowship



About Us

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) was established by IMO in Malta in 1988 to provide legal training of the highest standards and the dissemination of knowledge conducive to the development of expertise in all aspects of international maritime law as well as in legislative drafting techniques to incorporate international maritime instruments into national law.

About the Application

IMLI invites highly qualified and motivated individuals to apply for a Research Degree Programme Fellowship to conduct research on the topic of "A Liability and Compensation Regulatory Framework in the Event of a Pollution Incident by Alternative Fuels". This fellowship, offered generously by Lloyd's Register Foundation, provides an excellent opportunity to contribute to the development of international maritime law in this rapidly evolving field.



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APPLY NOW

Call for Applications: The IMLI-Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree Programme Fellowship

TOPIC: A Liability and Compensation Regulatory Framework in the Event of a Pollution Incident by Alternative Fuels

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) invites qualified and highly motivated individuals to apply for the IMLI-Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree Programme Fellowship to conduct research on a liability and compensation regulatory framework for pollution incidents involving alternative fuels. Studies in the programme are generously funded by Lloyd's Register Foundation.

Context and Importance:

The maritime industry is transitioning towards alternative fuels to meet decarbonization goals. While existing international conventions like the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1992, the International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage, 2001, and the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea, 2010, provide a compensation and liability framework in case of pollution incidents involving traditional fuels and hazardous and noxious cargo, a significant regulatory gap exists concerning the liability and compensation regime in relation to pollution incidents caused in case of spills of new alternative fuels (such as ammonia, methanol, etc.) when carried as bunkers. As these fuels are not covered by the current liability regimes, there is an urgent need to develop a robust legal framework to address liability and compensation matters in the event of pollution incidents.

This research topic is timely and critical, reflecting ongoing discussions within the International Maritime Organization's Legal Committee (LEG). Recent submissions and discussions at LEG 112 underscore the need to examine and address the potential gaps in the existing liability and compensation framework concerning alternative fuels. This fellowship offers an excellent opportunity to contribute significantly to the research in this vital area.

About the Programme:

The IMLI-Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree programme is a prestigious and rigorous programme leading to the degrees of Magister Juris (M.Jur.) in International Maritime Law and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in International Maritime Law. The programme fosters intellectual breadth, refines critical thinking, and cultivates expertise in maritime matters.

Fellowship Highlights:

- **Unique research opportunity:** Conduct in-depth research on the liability and compensation framework for alternative fuel pollution incidents, a critical and emerging area of international maritime law.
- **World-class mentorship:** Work closely with renowned international maritime law experts.
- **Competitive financial support:** The chosen candidate may receive full or partial funding (see details below).
- **Global network:** Join a vibrant community of international maritime law scholars and practitioners.

Eligibility Requirements:

Candidates must:

- Possess a first degree in law or a master's degree in a relevant field from a recognized university or academic institution.
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of maritime liability and compensation regimes, particularly in case of pollution incidents, and the drive of the maritime sector to avail of alternative new fuels.
- Possess proven capacity for legal research in the maritime field.
- Exhibit excellent writing and analytical skills, evidenced by their academic record and research experience.
- Possess a high level of proficiency in English.

Fellowship Duration:

According to the IMLI Research Degree Programme Regulations, studies in the Research Degree programme, may be undertaken in not less than three and not more than five academic years. However, the Fellowship funding offered is strictly limited to three years. The first stage of the Fellowship covers studies for the M.Jur. Degree, which shall not extend beyond a period of one academic year after enrolment. The candidate shall submit the M.Jur. dissertation not later than the end of the second calendar month following the end of the academic year.

The second stage of the Fellowship covers studies for the Ph.D. Degree, which shall extend over a period of not less than two and not more than four academic years after enrolment as a candidate for that Degree (as stated before, however, the Fellowship funding offered is strictly limited to three years, thus covering only two years of the Ph.D. stage of the programme). Admission to the Ph.D. stage of the Fellowship is subject to the candidate being awarded the M.Jur. Degree with a recommendation from the M.Jur. Examiners that the candidate be enrolled in the Ph.D. programme. Thereafter, the candidate is required to register with the Institute each year throughout the programme and such registration shall be allowed only on the submission of a satisfactory progress report from the candidate's Supervisor.

Research Proposal:

- Submit a comprehensive research proposal (max 1,000 words).
- Clearly articulate the research problem (the gap in the liability/compensation legal regime in case of pollution incidents by alternative fuels), primary research questions, scope, methodology, feasible timeline, anticipated outcomes, and potential contribution to international maritime law, supported by a literature review.
- Cover the full study period, emphasizing however clearly the M.Jur. phase goals and how the research carried out during the M.Jur. phase will be expanded in the Ph.D. studies.

Fellowship Cover:

Whilst traditionally, studies in IMLI's Research Degree programme may be conducted remotely, the Research Degree Programme Fellowship allows candidates the possibility of carrying out studies in situ, taking advantage of IMLI's extensive library resources and collaborating with resident staff and visiting fellows who are experts in their field. Accordingly, the IMLI-Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree Programme Fellowship will cover the full costs of tuition (currently at Euro 8,415 per annum). Additionally, the Fellowship will subsidize other expenses such as accommodation (Euro 800 per month), stipend (Euro 500 per month), health and life insurance (Euro 500 per year), and specifically determined field visits (Euro 4,000 for the duration of the programme).

Expected Outcome:

- **M.Jur.:** Dissertation (min. 25,000 words) on the liability/compensation framework for alternative fuel pollution, intended for inclusion in the Ph.D. thesis.
- **Ph.D.:** Thesis (80,000-100,000 words) making original, significant contributions to knowledge on the topic.

It is important to note that the research remains academic in nature and the findings of such research will not necessarily influence the work of IMO.

Application Procedure:

Candidates applying for the fellowship must submit the following documents:

- Completed Application Form
- Research proposal
- Copies of educational and professional experience certificates
- Two letters of recommendation
- Letter of motivation

Applications may be sent via e-mail to: **officeofthedirector@imli.org** Subject Line: **"Application for the IMLI-Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree Programme Fellowship"**

*Or by post to: Director IMO International Maritime Law Institute University of Malta Campus, Triq Roberto Ranieri Costaguti Msida MSD 2080 Malta
(Please do not send applications via multiple routes)*

Deadline for Applications:

Applications must reach the Institute by no later than 22 September 2025.

Selection Process:

Evaluation criteria include:

- Quality and originality of the research proposal.
- Candidate's research potential and experience.
- Relevant academic qualifications and publications.
- Motivation and commitment to the field.

Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview.

Start Date:

The selected candidate is expected to commence studies in **November 2025**.

For further details about this fellowship, please contact:

Dr. Sanjeet Ruhel

Coordinator of the Research Degree Programme/

The Nippon Foundation Lecturer on International Maritime Security Law

E-mail: **sanjeet.ruhal@imli.org**

For general information about the Research Degree Programme visit: <https://imli.org/>