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## Starting the brain gain

**T**he United Kingdom and Ireland are trying to turn the recruitment tables on the United States — and the US stance on immigration may be inadvertently helping (see page 190). Over the past few years, several programmes, such as Science Foundation Ireland and the Royal Society-Wolfson Research Merit Award, have made inroads in reversing the brain drain by bringing back scientists from abroad. But two new programmes aim to go beyond repatriation.

One such scheme, sponsored by the UK government, looks poised to attract some students who, before the antiterrorist clamp-down, may have considered going to the United States. The Dorothy Hodgkin Postgraduate Awards, announced in November, will fully fund more than 100 graduate students from developing countries to study in Britain. The scheme has a budget of £10 million (US\$18 million) and will target young scientists from India, China, Russia and Hong Kong — some of the countries from which students had the most trouble getting visas into the United States after the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. The awards go further than conventional scholarships, as they allow students to stay in Britain for a year after they complete their studies — long enough for them to be recruited by companies or institutions.

And Ireland is hoping to attract scientists in the United States who have biotech management experience or are interested in starting up companies. The government agency Enterprise Ireland last year launched BioNetwork USA-Ireland, which aims to use tax breaks to attract US-based life scientists and managers (see S. Louët *Bioentrepreneur* doi: 10.1038/bioent758).

These programmes challenge other countries to come up with similar schemes to attract the best researchers — and perhaps to make them think about ways to satisfy the ones they already have.

**Paul Smaglik**  
Naturejobs editor



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