



BBSRC

Postgraduate Studentships Guide

2011

This Guide provides general information and BBSRC web links about the schemes and funding of postgraduate training through Training Grants (TGs) by BBSRC.

It is intended for:

- current and potential **supervisors** in university departments, research institutes or other approved bodies;
- **students** approaching the end of their undergraduate studies who wish to undertake further training and/or research on or after 1 October 2011; and those already holding a BBSRC studentship;
- **academic and research institutions in Great Britain** that are eligible to receive BBSRC studentships;
- **companies and other non-academic partners** wishing to collaborate with academic and research institutions in providing research training;
- **university careers staff** who advise students on career choices.

Revised May 2011

ENQUIRIES

BBSRC Training Grants (TGs) are now administered by RCUK SSC Ltd. Enquiries relating to pre-award application processing, peer review and post-award administration should be directed as follows:

Pre-award application processing queries:

GrantsBBSRC@ssc.rcuk.ac.uk or 01793 867126

Post-award administration queries:

GrantsPostAward@ssc.rcuk.ac.uk or 01793 867121

For enquires relating to BBSRC's scientific remit, email remit@bbsrc.ac.uk

For general enquiries regarding BBSRC Training Grants, email postgrad.studentships@bbsrc.ac.uk

For queries relating to industrially orientated training schemes; exploitation of research results, email business.unit@bbsrc.ac.uk

Please note that BBSRC does not make studentship awards directly to students. Candidates for a studentship should address their enquiries to the university department, BBSRC-sponsored research institute, company or other approved organisation in which they would like to undertake a research degree.

BBSRC TRAINING GRANT (TG) DOCUMENTS AND WEB LINKS

Full information on all aspects of BBSRC Training Grants (TGs) is provided on the BBSRC website (www.bbsrc.ac.uk). Key information can be found at the following links:

Terms and conditions of Research Council Training Grants at

<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Legal/training-grants-terms-conditions.pdf>

BBSRC Training Grants: Frequently Asked Questions at

<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/training-grant-faqs.pdf>

BBSRC Guide to Studentship Eligibility at

http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/studentship_eligibility.pdf

1. BBSRC REMIT

- 1.1 BBSRC supports research and research training relevant to its mission. All studentship projects supported by BBSRC must be within BBSRC's scientific remit. Full information about the science covered by the BBSRC is available on the BBSRC website at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/grants/remit.aspx>. All remit enquiries should be emailed to remit@bbsrc.ac.uk.
- 1.2 BBSRC funds PhD studentships in order to ensure a supply of high-skilled people for the UK research base and the wider economy. Students receive training in cutting-edge areas of research alongside wider scientific and professional development. A full statement of the range of skills which PhD studentships are intended to develop is given in the Researcher Development Framework developed by Vitae:
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/275981/Researcher-Development-Statement-RDS.html>

2. TRAINING GRANT (TG) SCHEMES

- 2.1 BBSRC funds PhD studentships through the following schemes:

- Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs);
- Industrial CASE (annual competition)
- Industrial CASE Partnerships

Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs)

- 2.2 *The BBSRC Quota Doctoral Training Grant (DTG) scheme that previously awarded quota research and quota CASE studentships to universities and research organisations for postgraduate research programmes is now closed. The scheme has been replaced by the Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) scheme, which will fund studentships from October 2012. Further details are below.*
- 2.3 Funding for four-year studentships is awarded to institutions or multi-institutional collaborations wishing to become Doctoral Training Partners. See <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/doctoral-training-partnerships.aspx> for further details. DTPs are awarded to provide PhD training to support BBSRC's Strategic Plan.
- 2.4 TGs awarded through this scheme are subject to standard TG Terms and Conditions which have been agreed cross Council and are accessible on BBSRC's website at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Legal/training-grants-terms-conditions.pdf>.
- 2.5 Further information on the administration of TGs can also be found in the TG Frequently Asked Questions document available on the BBSRC website at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/training-grant-fags.pdf>
- 2.6 Whilst there is no requirement to create a certain proportion of studentships as CASE, collaborative studentships are still very welcome. BBSRC seeks to encourage links in the provision of research training between eligible academic institutions and eligible industrial companies (or other non-

academic partners) – see Section 4 of this Guide - to enable students to experience different research environments. Students spend part of their training period working within the company, and are jointly supervised by an academic and a company supervisor. Provided the conditions relating to CASE are met (see section 8 of this Guide), any BBSRC standard research studentship can be converted into a CASE.

Industrial CASE and Industrial CASE Partnership Studentships

- 2.7 For these studentships joint supervision between an eligible academic institution and an eligible industrial company (or another eligible non-academic partner) are an integral part of the schemes.
- 2.8 Industrial CASE studentships are allocated through an annual competition where the company and the academic institution are required to define the project at the proposal stage.
- 2.9 The Industrial CASE Partnership scheme allocates a guaranteed annual quota of Industrial CASE studentships for three years to “Partnership” companies who are not required to define the project and the academic institution at the proposal stage. Once an Industrial CASE Partnership allocation has been made by BBSRC the company selects suitable academic partners for the awards. Each academic department must have 4-year submission rates of 70% or more across the last completed years.
- 2.10 Further details can be found at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/training/industrial-case.aspx>.

Masters Training Grants (MTGs)

- 2.11 *(BBSRC has stopped funding for this programme – current awards will end following the 2012/13 academic year)*
- 2.12 Current MTGs are grants awarded under the Training Grant Terms and Conditions which are accessible on BBSRC's website at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/masters-training-grants.aspx>.

3. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 Full details of the financial arrangements for BBSRC Training Grants can be found in the Training Grant Terms and Conditions at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Legal/training-grants-terms-conditions.pdf> and the Training Grant Frequently Asked Questions at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/training-grant-fags.pdf> (note paragraph 6.1 provides details of national minimum stipend rates).
- 3.2 Funds provided by BBSRC includes provision for the costs of researcher development and transferable skills training for postgraduate research students – see <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/researchcareers/Feesandstipends2011-12letter.pdf> and <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/awardholders/students.aspx> for full details.

4 ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY FOR AND HOST BBSRC STUDENTSHIPS

- 4.1 This section indicates, for each type of studentship, (a) which organisations may **apply to** BBSRC for studentships; and (b) which organisations must provide the principal base (**host**) for the student during the tenure of the award.

Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs)

- 4.2 *May apply / Can host*

Universities and colleges in Great Britain, BBSRC-sponsored research institutes, Main Research Providers (MRPs) and Independent Research Organisations (IROs). Eligible Research Organisations can submit proposals either individually or in collaboration but must hold a minimum of £5M annual BBSRC research grant spend (2009/10). A Research Organisation can only submit one proposal as lead applicant.

Conversion to CASE

Once a DTP has been awarded any individual studentship can be converted into a CASE award providing the following eligibility criteria is met:

UK-based organisations can be considered as the non-academic partner if they can provide students with distinctive research training and experience not available in an academic setting. Organisations eligible for Research Council funding cannot act as a non-academic partner. Where the non-academic partner is a company, it must have an established UK-based research and/or commercial production capability. In exceptional cases, organisations based overseas may be eligible, but only where they can provide the student with an opportunity to gain skills not currently available in the UK. If eligibility remains unclear, applicants should make contact before submitting a proposal.

Industrial CASE

- 4.3 *May apply / Can host*

Universities and colleges in Great Britain, BBSRC-sponsored research institutes and IROs. *With individual approval from BBSRC:* MRPs, other research council establishments, Government research establishments and UK “not for profit” organisations.

UK-based organisations can be considered as the non-academic partner if they can provide students with distinctive research training and experience not available in an academic setting. Organisations eligible for Research Council funding cannot act as a non-academic partner. Where the non-academic partner is a company, it must have an established UK-based research and/or commercial production capability. In exceptional cases, organisations based overseas may be eligible, but only where they can provide the student with an opportunity to gain skills not currently available in the UK. If eligibility remains unclear, applicants should make contact before submitting a proposal.

5 ALLOCATION PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Awards are made on a competitive basis on the advice of the BBSRC's Training Awards Committee (TAC). For new awards starting from October 2011 these are calculated on the basis of costs of 4-year studentships and will include £5k pa research training support costs.
- 5.2 Proposals for BBSRC studentships must be made through the Je-S system at <https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>. and must be submitted through the host institution. Applicants should note that the Je-S electronic form is the only form that will be accepted for BBSRC studentship proposals. The Je-S electronic form will normally be available approximately two months prior to the closing date for each scheme although you should check individual web pages on the BBSRC website for full details of each scheme call.
- 5.3 BBSRC takes all reasonable steps to ensure the contents of studentship proposals are treated as confidential. The proposal form and any associated papers sent by BBSRC to any peer review panels and committees are sent in confidence, although at times it may be necessary for members of these panels and committees to consult in confidence with colleagues. Where this happens confidentiality criteria must be adhered to by the consultees.

6. 2011 CLOSING DATES

Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs)

- 6.1 The competition to be held during 2011 will fix funding allocations for studentships commencing in October 2012, 2013 and 2014.
- 6.2 The closing date for DTP proposals is 4pm, 15 September 2011. Full details can be found at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/doctoral-training-partnerships.aspx>.

Annual Industrial CASE studentships

- 6.3 The competition to be held during 2011 will award studentships for start in October 2012.
- 6.4 The next closing date for Industrial CASE is 4pm, 28 July 2011. Full details can be found at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/training/industrial-case.aspx>.

Industrial CASE Partnership (ICP) studentships

- 6.5 Industrial CASE studentships have been awarded to "partnership" companies which can then choose the university and academic group where TG is to be held (i.e. where the student will be registered). The current allocations cover studentships starting in October 2012, and the next competition will be held in 2012 for company allocations from October 2013.

7 STUDENT QUALIFYING/ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1 **BBSRC does not make awards directly to students.** Awards are made to eligible research training institutions (university departments, research institutes and other bodies), and they are responsible for selecting students for these awards who meet the BBSRC eligibility criteria. The two principal eligibility conditions relate to residence and to academic qualifications. The *BBSRC Guide to Studentship Eligibility* at http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/studentship_eligibility.pdf provides comprehensive information on the criteria for eligibility for a BBSRC training award.
- 7.2 Before confirming the offer of a BBSRC studentship to a candidate, Registrars should be satisfied that the candidate selected meets the eligibility requirements and that the project falls within the remit of BBSRC. BBSRC funds cannot be used to support ineligible students and projects.

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATING TO CASE STUDENTSHIPS

- 8.1 BBSRC, EPSRC and MRC continue to work together to harmonise their CASE programmes, and agree:
- CASE awards will provide PhD students with a first-rate, challenging research training experience, within the context of a mutually beneficial research collaboration between academic and partner organisations e.g. industry and policy making bodies.
 - **Benefits to the student** – CASE provides outstanding students access to training, facilities and expertise not available in an academic setting alone. Students benefit from a diversity of experimental approaches with an applied/translational dimension. Students have an opportunity to develop a range of valuable skills and significantly enhance their future employability; many will become research leaders of the future.
 - **Benefits to the academic / partner organisations** - CASE studentships encourage productive engagement between partners who benefit from a motivated, high-quality PhD student undertaking cutting-edge research relevant to the organisations' priorities and objectives. CASE provides opportunities to explore novel research collaborations and strengthen current partnerships.
- 8.2 Defining an excellent CASE Studentship should include a:
- **High-quality project** – A challenging, feasible and realistically achievable PhD project which stimulates excellent hypothesis-driven research. Through a truly collaborative approach, it provides tangible benefits to all partners.
 - **High-quality training environment** – Through access to distinctive but complementary environments, partners provide a stimulating framework for research training in the proposed field. Joint supervision gives a unique and broadening perspective on the impact of collaborative research.

- **High-quality student experience** – An enriched integrated training experience allows the student to acquire novel skills and expertise. The student gains a wider understanding of, for example, applied research or policy development that will enhance their future career prospects.

Place of tenure

- 8.3 CASE research students are based at universities or other eligible bodies (see Section 4), but must spend part of their time with the cooperating company. This period must be a minimum of three months during the period of the studentship, but should not normally exceed eighteen months.

Financial and other contributions by the company partner (CASE)

- 8.4 As a measure of its interest and commitment, the company partner on CASE awards must contribute to the training of the student. The company must also make financial contributions to the training of the student:

- an annual contribution to the academic institution towards the cost of the project. The minimum rate to be paid on commencement of the studentship and on the anniversary of the start date in subsequent years is £1,400 per annum;
- all additional expenses, such as the cost of travel and accommodation, incurred by the student as a direct result of attendance at the premises of the company;
- in relation to students, a mandatory cash payment, direct to the student, of at least £2,500 per annum as a supplement to the stipend funded by BBSRC.

- 8.5 For Industrial CASE students, the company is expected to demonstrate its commitment to the scheme by:

- an enhancement of the student stipend above the minimum level of £2,500 per annum specified for CASE;
- up to 3 weeks of wider business-related training for the student in e.g. project management, business strategy or the management of people or financial issues;
- a placement within the company for a period of between 6 and 18 months.