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**Call for PhD Project Proposals 2023 – Updated 14/09/2022**

*Please read carefully the guidance notes at the end of this document BEFORE completing your project proposal.*

**Project Proposal Form**

***Section 1: For all projects (all fields must be completed).***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Principal Supervisor** |  |
| **Institution and Department**(*e.g. Dundee, School of Life Sciences*) |  |
| Principal Supervisor **Email address** |  |
| Current number of PhD students and year of study |  |
| **Lab website/Online Profile URL** |  |
| **Name of Second Supervisor***In case of a third or fourth Supervisor/s, please insert more lines below*. |  |
| Institution and Department(*e.g. Dundee, School of Life Sciences*) |  |
| Current number of PhD students and year of study |  |
| Lab website/Online Profile URLs |  |
| Email address |  |
| **PhD Project Title***Please note this title will be used to advertise the project to students so consider a succinct title with broad appeal* |  |
| **Project Description for Find-A-PhD Advert (max 400 words)**.*This will be the text that will be advertised to prospective students***.** |
| *[description here]* |
| **Project Description for Management Group review, if different to above** (*max. 500 words and up to 3 references*):*Please provide a description of the PhD project, including information and the research training it will provide*. |  |
| **Could this project be a part-time PhD if requested by the student?** | Yes |  |
| No |  |
| If the PhD is a part-time project, and the recruited student is based outwith an EASTBIO partner, **please indicate** **where the student will be based** **or enter N/A**. |  |
| **[BBSRC Remit Area](https://www.ukri.org/councils/bbsrc/remit-programmes-and-priorities/our-research-portfolio-and-priorities/)**Please indicate the remit area closest to your project by entering 1 for best fit. If relevant, enter 2 if your project happens to also fall under a second area. Note that the selection will determine the thematic panel shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by.*During the project review, project supervisors may be asked to confirm or amend the project Remit Area. EASTBIO may also use this information to assign appointed students to a thematic group for training purposes.* | Bioscience for Renewable Resources and Clean Growth  |  |
| Crops and Soil (within Bioscience for Sustainable Agriculture & Food) |  |
| Bioscience for an Integrated Understanding of Health*Please note that this may be an oversubscribed area*. |  |
| Livestock & Aquaculture (within Bioscience for Sustainable Agriculture & Food) |  |
| Understanding the Rules of Life (within Advancing the Frontiers of Bioscience Discovery) *Please note that this may be an oversubscribed area*. |  |
| Transformative Technologies (within Advancing the Frontiers of Bioscience Discovery) |  |
| Please explain in max. 300 words how your project is **relevant to the BBSRC remit** **and strategic priorities**, using the call text for guidance. |  |
| **BBSRC Transformative Technologies***Please select which of the BBSRC Transformative Technologies will be covered by your project*. | New tools and facilities |  |
| Data-driven biology |  |
| Integrative and systems biology |  |
| Synthetic Biology |  |
| Not applicable to this project |  |
| **Interdisciplinarity***Please select supervisor disciplines if other than biological/biomedical sciences*. | Chemistry |  |
| Physics |  |
| Mathematical Sciences |  |
| Computer Science/Informatics |  |
| Psychology/Neuroscience |  |
| Ecology |  |
| Engineering |  |
| Veterinary Science |  |
| AI /Machine Learning |  |
| Medicine |  |
| Other (please specify here)… |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **Cross-institutional collaboration***Please indicate whether the two (or more) project supervisors will be based in different institutions*. | Yes  |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **Standard Collaborative Studentship with an industrial/non-academic partner***Please indicate whether this will be a Collaborative Studentship project. If Yes, you must also complete Sections 2 and 3.*  | Yes (*please read guidance notes carefully, esp. Section D, below*) |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **50% Industry Match-funded Collaborative Studentship** *Please indicate whether this will be a Collaborative Studentship project, where the industrial/non-academic partner offers 50% of the total project costs. If Yes, please complete Sections 2 and 3.* | Yes (*please read guidance notes carefully, esp. Section D, below*) |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **BBSRC Classification for JeS**Please select ONE BBSRC classification as that closest to your project. | Animal Systems, Health and Wellbeing |  |
| Plants, Microbes, Food and Sustainability |  |
| Technologies and Methodological Development |  |
| Molecules, Cells and Industrial Biotechnology |  |
| **Would the project involve the use of vertebrate animals or other organisms covered by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act and do you have sufficient funds to cover the animal costs, given that the project RTSG is £5,000 per year for 3.25 years?** | Yes |  |
| No |  |
| **Subject areas for Find-a-PhD**Select at least 1 and up to 10 to help searchers find your project. | Agricultural Sciences |  |
| Biochemistry |  |
| Bioinformatics |  |
| Biomedical Engineering |  |
| Biophysics |  |
| Biotechnology |  |
| Botany/Plant Science |  |
| Cancer/Oncology |  |
| Cell Biology/Development |  |
| Dentistry |  |
| Ecology & Conservation |  |
| Endocrinology |  |
| Evolution |  |
| Food Science/Nutrition |  |
| Genetics |  |
| Immunology |  |
| Marine Biology |  |
| Medical/Biomedical Physics |  |
| Medical/Clinical Science |  |
| Medical Imaging |  |
| Microbiology |  |
| Molecular Biology |  |
| Neuroscience/Neurology |  |
| Obstetrics, Gynaecology & Reproduction |  |
| Palaeobiology |  |
| Parasitology |  |
| Pathology |  |
| Pharmacology/Toxicology |  |
| Pharmacy/Pharmaceutics |  |
| Physiology & Sports Science |  |
| Psychology & Psychiatry |  |
| Public Health & Epidemiology |  |
| Structural Biology |  |
| Veterinary Medicine |  |
| Virology |  |
| Zoology/Animal Science |  |

***Section 2: Additional Collaborative Studentship Proposal Details (for industry-linked project proposals only)***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company/Non-Academic Partner Information** |  |
| **Legal Name** |  |
| **Registration Number** |  |
| **Full legal address** |  |
| **Type or organisation: SME (<50 employees) or non-SME (≥50 employees)** |  |
| **Website URL** |  |
| **Name of Supervisor at Partner, incl. title** |  |
| **Partner Supervisor work (postal) address** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Recruitment**Does the Non-Academic Partner wish to be involved in the recruitment of the candidate selected for their Collaborative Studentship? *This may entail being involved in any* local *selection processes at the partner institution before nominating a candidate to EASTBIO, or co-signing the EASTBIO Supervisor Support Statement that is part of the required nomination documentation.* | Yes  |  |
| No |  |
| **Industrial Sector and Challenges***Please describe in max. 300 words the industrial sector this project aligns to and the specific industrial challenge or development opportunity it is addressing*. |  |
| **Risks***Please detail risks to successful completion of the project, including an assessment of impact, as well as proposed mitigations. Note that you may be directly asked to provide further details by the EASTBIO Industry Engagement Group whose role is to review Collaborative Projects.* |  |
| **Risks considered and electronically signed off** by the Business Development or Engagement Executive/Manager locally:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name:  |  |

 Date:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Outcome: |[ ]  No obvious risks identified |
|  |  | OR |  |
|  |[ ]  Risks identified: |
|  |  |[ ]  Suspect company or contact is on a sanctions list |
|  |  |[ ]  High risk sector |
|  |  |[ ]  High risk country |
|  |  |[ ]  Potential reputational risks |
|  |  |[ ]  Credit report |

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***Section 3:* *Collaborative Partner Support Letter Template (Collaborative Studentship project proposals only)* *Compulsory submission for industrial/non-academic partner***

Please provide **a** **letter from the industrial/non-academic partner** using this format.

[COMPANY HEADING]

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby confirm that the [COMPANY NAME] is committed to supporting a 4-year BBSRC studentship starting in Academic Year 2023/24 on the project [NAME OF PROJECT] with [NAME OF SUPERVISOR] on the following basis, should a student be successfully recruited by the EASTBIO Doctoral Training Partnership.

I will ensure that the associated student will spend at least three months and up to a maximum of eighteen months at the [COMPANY NAME]. I understand that this placement will be part of an Industrial Collaborative Studentship, supported by the UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and subject to the BBSRC terms and conditions. I confirm that we will provide suitable supervision and training, as well as covering any travel, accommodation and subsistence costs during this period.

Option [SELECT ONE]:

1. UKRI BBSRC Standard Collaborative Studentship

2. 50% Industry Match-Funded Collaborative Studentship

3. Part-time Collaborative studentship

[As relevant] In addition, we will provide £..….\* towards project costs in total to support a full 4-year UKRI BBSRC studentship starting on the following basis. We will also provide £…..\* per annum in enhanced stipend for the student.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year | Company Support £ |
| 2023/2024 |  |
| 2024/2025 |  |
| 2025/2026 |  |
| 2026/2027 |  |

A formal contract to this effect will be entered into with the University hosting the PhD Project in due course.

Yours faithfully [NAME OF CONTACT] [ROLE OF CONTACT IN COMPANY, e.g. Finance Director]

**Guidance Notes**

***A: Introduction to EASTBIO***

The UKRI BBSRC East of Scotland Doctoral Training Partnership ([EASTBIO](http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/) DTP) comprises the Universities of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Stirling, St Andrews, along with SRUC, IBioIC, the James Hutton Institute and the Moredun Research Institute as Full Partners. The Cool Farm Alliance and SULSA are Associate Partners.

For the DTP3 funding, the EASTBIO programme will award a minimum of 50 standard 4-year Studentships and 4-year Collaborative Studentships - collaborative with industrial/non-academic organisations - to start in October 2023. For DTP3 we have developed a part-time doctoral study route, plus a flexible model for industry partnering that offers three routes for industrial studentships.

The studentships cover:

* UK fees;
* stipend of **£17,668.00** (at [UKRI level](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/developing-people-and-skills/find-studentships-and-doctoral-training/get-a-studentship-to-fund-your-doctorate/) and subject to UKRI increments). **Please note that we have amended this figure following the** [**UKRI BBSRC announcement about the increase of the minimum stipend levels from 1st of October 2022**](https://www.ukri.org/news/ukri-increasing-the-minimum-stipend-from-1-october-2022/)**, made in September 2022 after this call was live**);
* research training support costs of £5,000 per year (reduced to £1,500 in the final year), and
* a small travel & conference allowance of £230 for each student (financial details can be found on the current [Student Handbook](http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-handbook), p. 18, reviewed in time for the [Induction Day](http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-induction-day)). Studentship levels are subject to increments announced annually by UKRI.

Note that although studentships cover UK-level tuition fees only, EASTBIO partner institutions are committed to support international fees. For full student eligibility criteria, please refer to the [UKRI guidance](https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-170321-InternationalEligibilityImplementationGuidance.pdf)and Annex B of the [UKRI Training Grant Terms and Conditions](https://www.findaphd.com/common/clickCount.aspx?theid=1048&type=185&url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.ukri.org%2fwp-content%2fuploads%2f2020%2f10%2fUKRI-291020-guidance-to-training-grant-terms-and-conditions.pdf). Students are a part of the EASTBIO training programme and are required to undertake enhanced subject-specific, core bioscience and generic skills training and a 3-month professional internship (PIPS) outwith academia, or a placement (between 3 to 18-months) with their industrial/non-academic collaborative partner. They are required to submit their thesis within 4 years.

Please note that first supervisors with 5 or more PhD supervisees, or those who have an EASTBIO student who started in autumn 2022 are *not eligible* to put in projects this year. An exception to this condition may be made for studentships which are collaborative with industry, in line with the EASTBIO commitment to promote industry collaboration.

**By proposing an EASTBIO DTP project, academic supervisors and any non-academic partners commit to:**

* ***actively support their PhD student’s career development and full participation in the EASTBIO training programme;***
* ***attend the two key training events – EASTBIO Induction (early October) and Annual Symposia (early June) or arrange for the co-supervisor or lab member to attend in their place;***
* ***participate in the provision of training in the relevant BBSRC strategic priority area the PhD project is aligned with (4 annual thematic group sessions, each organised in Year 1 by one or more student-supervisor hosts);***
* ***advise and support their supervisee in their planning of their mandatory placement and, if possible, attend the EASTBIO Placements Q&A event (early February);***
* ***advise and support their student with any self-selected training that EASTBIO advocates within the BBSRC strategic researcher development objectives****.*

For more information about our programme, see our website: <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/> and <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/training>.

***B: Project Eligibility***

Project proposals must:

1. **Align to one of the 5** [**UKRI BBSRC Strategic Priority Areas**](https://www.ukri.org/publications/a-forward-look-for-uk-bioscience/): (I) Advancing the frontiers of bioscience discovery, covering the sub-themes of Understanding the rules of life and transformative research technologies; II) Bioscience for sustainable agriculture and food, covering sub-themes on: Crops and soil, Livestock production, biology and health, and aquaculture; III) Bioscience for an integrated understanding of health; IV) Bioscience for renewable resources and clean growth. EASTBIO allocates studentships on the basis of thematic and institutional quotas agreed in our proposal to UKRI BBSRC.

In addition, projects fulfilling one or more of the following criteria are strongly encouraged:

1. Develop a **collaboration with an industrial or non-academic partner**. Please see additional guidance below.

1. **Exploit/address strategic bioscience skills and capacity challenges** outlined in the [Forward Look for UK Biosciences as defined by UKRI BBSRC](https://www.ukri.org/publications/a-forward-look-for-uk-bioscience/):
2. Are **interdisciplinary** (we are encouraging truly interdisciplinary projects), perhaps drawing on a second supervisor’s expertise from another department or partner institution.
3. Develop an **inter-institutional collaboration** through cross-supervision with another EASTBIO partner or associate partner. Note that collaboration with a non-degree awarding partner institution (JHI, MRI, and SRUC) will presume an explicit understanding between the two institutions of sharing arrangements, in terms of financial and student matters alike, esp. if the collaboration is new. This process is supervisor-guided, with advice from the partner academic lead and support services.

***C. How to submit your project proposal***

Eligible staffin each of the partner Institutions are invited to submit a standard project proposal using the EASTBIO project proposal form shared with all partner institutions in late summer. Queries on supervisor eligibility should be directed to the [local academic management group member for EASTBIO](http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-contacts). Those submitting an Industrial Collaborative Studentship project proposal *must also complete Section 2 and provide a Support Letter from their industrial partner, using a template provided at Section 3*. EASTBIO will follow up the commitment captured in the Support Letter after the project has successfully recruited a student with a request for a Memorandum of Agreement to be drawn according to the local process in place.

The deadline for submitting project proposals is the **16 September 2022** [***or amend to locally preferred date***]. Projects should be submitted in Word format to [***insert host institution email address***]. Collaborative Projects *also to be submitted* to recruitment@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk for a final check by the EASTBIO Industry Engagement Group. This was set up to ensure that Collaborative Projects are within the BBSRC remit, represent viable research and come with mitigation measures for any identified risks to the project’s completion.

Projects submitted locally will be approved by the EASTBIO Management Group prior to being advertised (by the 14 October) based on the criteria outlined above. Supervisors may be asked to review aspects of their proposal to ensure fit with the BBSRC remit; supervisors may also be asked to consider the fit of their proposed project with the BBSRC thematic area and are asked to consider that some of these areas may be oversubscribed. Only projects approved will be advertised via Find-a-PhD and/or through the local partner institutions platforms.

***D. Additional information about Collaborative (CASE) Studentships***

Collaborative studentships are developed as partnerships between academia and industry or other non-academic partners. The PhD project can be either full-time or part-time. The project should be a genuine collaboration of mutual benefit, focused on providing excellent training and supervision to the student. Please check the eligibility of your proposed partner by reading the [UKRI BBSRC Collaborative Studentships Information](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20210901101319/https%3A/bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/investing-doctoral-training/case-studentships/). If you have questions about eligibility, please email recruitment@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk or contact the [EASTBIO academic lead](http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-contacts) that represents your local institution.

There are three routes for the Collaborative Studentships:

1) **UKRI BBSRC Standard Collaborative Studentship with an industrial/non-academic partner**. We will prioritise collaboration with SMEs for our UKRI BBSRC collaborative studentship allocations. Companies that have more than 50 employees will currently provide a minimum of £5,600 towards project costs in total to support a full 4-year UKRI BBSRC Standard Collaborative studentship. For SME that have 50 or fewer employees there is *no financial contribution required* towards project costs.

2) **50% Industry Match-Funded Collaborative Studentship**. We have introduced a new collaborative studentship stream, where the industrial partner provides 50% of the overall studentship costs. Where industrial partners are able to fund at this level, partner institutions may decide to ring-fence a number of these studentships. Only students who reach the standard of candidates in our main interview rounds will be recruited to these pre-committed studentships. Industry will have the option of being involved in recruiting these students. The total estimated costs to the industrial partner of a 50% Industry Match-Funded Studentship will be **£57,226.50** over the total PhD studentship, subject to UKRI annual increments. **Please note that we have amended the estimated figure to take into account the** [**UKRI increase in minimum level of stipend**](https://www.ukri.org/news/ukri-increasing-the-minimum-stipend-from-1-october-2022/)**, from the 1st of October 2022, announced in September 2022 after our call was live**]. The commitment will be captured in a Support Letter signed by the industrial partner and submitted together with the Project Proposal.

3) **Part-time Collaborative studentship** route for industry-based employees. The total estimated current costs of covering fees - but not PhD stipend - will be £40,500 over the total part-time PhD studentship. The partner is expected to continue paying staff salary for the duration of the PhD.

Please note: at the moment of publishing this guidance, the financial contributions were checked; any amendments will be confirmed with stakeholders.

For all three routes, all projects must be within UKRI-BBSRC remit and represent viable PhD-level research, with mitigation arrangements for any project risks. We will inform you of any DTP3-relevant changes to the amounts given in (1), (2) and (3) above as and when known.

**Project Review**

The Collaborative Studentship Proposals will be reviewed by the EASTBIO Industry Engagement Group lead by the IBioIC representative to ensure that the project falls within the BBSRC remit, attains the desired standard of scientific excellence and aligns with the BBSRC EASTBIO DTP3 key strategic themes. Once approved and advertised, PhD project uptake will be driven by student choice.

Please note that unless explicitly requested in this form, EASTBIO will not arrange for a second interview conducted by the non-academic partner organisation to confirm they are happy with the candidate selected for their Collaborative Studentship. EASTBIO assumes that the non-academic partner organisation will be asked by the academic supervisor to be involved in any local selection of candidates before nomination; they may also choose to convey their support by co-signing the Supervisor Support Statement that accompanies the nominations submitted to the EASTBIO after the application closing date (5 December 2022).

**Supervisory Responsibilities**

Academics submitting a Collaborative Studentship project proposal are required to:

Before submitting the Project Proposal form:

* Read the EASTBIO Guidance for Industry collaboration (*attached*).
* Ensure industry partner identified is eligible; for more information on this, see [here](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20210901101319/https%3A/bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/investing-doctoral-training/case-studentships/).
* A Collaborative Studentship must demonstrate how the industry commitment will be achieved within the PhD research project proposed.
* Use the wording/template in Section 3; generic letters of support *will not be accepted*.
* It will be the responsibility of the partners (project supervisors, with support from the EASTBIO academic lead and the local Business/Industry support teams) to establish any possible risk to the Collaborative Studentship project and have contingencies in place should there be changes in the priorities of the non-academic partner that affect their project commitments.
* Any changes to the collaboration agreement, including changes of partners, will require the EASTBIO DTP Director approval. The Director will need to be satisfied that the original aims of the project can still be met and that the project continues to meet UKRI terms and conditions.

After EASTBIO recruits a student to the Collaborative Studentship project, the academic supervisor is expected to:

* Consult the relevant team at the local institution (*see the contacts list table at the end of the EASTBIO Guidance for Industry Collaboration*) with a view to doing the following:
	+ Put in place whatever agreement with the non-academic partner they feel is appropriate in keeping with UKRI terms and conditions, outlining agreed IP, disclosure and publication arrangements.
	+ Make arrangements at the host institution level to invoice the non-academic partner for their financial contribution promised in the proposal, as relevant.
	+ Support the student CASE placement at the headquarters of the non-academic partner and inform the EASTBIO about the specific plans made to carry out the placement in agreement with UKRI BBSRC terms and conditions (more on CASE Placements, below).
	+ Inform EASTBIO ASAP should there be any concerns regarding the Collaborative Studentship or if the non-academic partner pulls out after the start of the project.

**Placements**

Studentships must include a placement with a non-academic partner doing high quality collaborative research work that is *directly related* to the research project in one of the areas of science relevant to BBSRC’s strategic priorities. This period must be between 3 and 18 months long. The student placement at the non-academic partner can be taken in one 3-month block at any point during the PhD or a number of shorter blocks up to a maximum of 18 months giving the flexibility to plan in sync with their business priorities. An integral component of the placement training is that it provides students with a training experience unavailable at the academic institution. The non-academic partner should ensure the student receives the appropriate level of management support, direction and training, especially during their placement at the non-academic partner. This should include training in, for example, project management, business strategy and finance. At the same time, the partner should ensure that the student has access to mental health and wellbeing support services, as needs be, during their placement.

**Liability for Industry Partner Funding**

For the industrial contribution of a Collaborative Studentship, the relevant contract is established between the industry partner and the local institution, *not the EASTBIO DTP3 grant*. For audit purposes, the local institution is required to send a copy of the final signed Collaborative Studentship Agreement to the EASTBIO DTP Manager at recruitment@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk, for information only.

The EASTBIO DTP3 core grant is not liable for any shortfalls arising from changes to the industry partner contribution throughout the studentship or from additional costs for the industry/non-academic partner’s share for sick, maternity and paternity leave. Therefore, the industry partner agreement should comply with UKRI policies on sick, maternity and paternity leave. *It is the responsibility of the local institution to fund shortfalls of industry partner contributions locally* and to include that risk in the assessment of the local recruitment potential.

*It is the responsibility of the Supervisor* of the awarded Collaborative Studentship to initiate the local process for retrieving industry contributions and *the responsibility of the local institution the collaborative student is registered with to collect all financial contributions as committed to in the letters of support from industry partners in Section 3 of the Project Call*.



Figure 1 Post-award process