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**BBSRC EASTBIO Doctoral Training Partnership**

**Call for PhD Project Proposals 2020**

**Introduction**

There are new partners in the BBSRC East of Scotland Doctoral Training Partnership ([EASTBIO](http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/)) for DTP3. The new partnership 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.

Subject to renewed funding, the EASTBIO programme will award standard 4-year Studentships and 4-year CASE Studentships - collaborative with non-academic organisations - to start in October 2020. We do not know how many studentships we will be awarded, if any, at present.

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 fees, stipend, research training support costs of £5,000 per year (this is reduced to £1,500 in the final year) and a small travel and conference allowance for each student. Students are a part of the EASTBIO training programme and are required to undertake enhanced subject-specific, core bioscience and generic skills training and 3-month professional internship (PIPS) out with academia or a placement (3 to 18-months) with their CASE partner. They are required to submit their thesis within 4 years.

**In proposing an EASTBIO DTP project, academic supervisors and any non-academic partner are committing to actively support their PhD student’s development as outlined. In addition, the academic supervisor is committing to attend the EASTBIO induction and annual symposia and to participate in the provision of training in the BBSRC strategic priority area (thematic group training) to which their student’s project is aligned**. **All studentships can be done either full-time or via a part-time doctoral study route.**

Please note that first supervisors for 2019 cohort students are not eligible to put in projects this year.

**Section A**

***CRITERIA***

***Project proposals must:***

1. Align to **one** of the 4 BBSRC Strategic Priority Areas: **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**.

<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/news/planning/bbsrc-delivery-plan/>

***In addition, projects fulfilling one or more of the following criteria are strongly encouraged and may receive positive weighting at interview:***

1. Exploits/addresses strategic bioscience skills and capacity challenges outlined in the Forward Look for UK Biosciences as defined by BBSRC:

<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/forward-look-for-uk-bioscience-pdf/>

1. Is interdisciplinary (we are encouraging truly interdisciplinary projects), perhaps drawing on a second supervisor’s expertise from another department
2. Develops an inter-institutional collaboration through cross-supervision with another EASTBIO partner or associate partner.
3. Develops a collaboration with an industrial or SME non-academic CASE partner.

**Section B**

**How to submit your project proposal**

Eligible staff[[1]](#footnote-1) in each of the partner Institutions are invited to submit a standard project proposal using the form at Annex 1. Those submitting an Industrial CASE project proposal must also complete the additional form at Annex 2 and a support letter from their industrial partner, template provided at Annex 3.

The deadline for submitting project proposals is the 14th of September 2019. Projects should be submitted in Word format to gradbiol@ed.ac.uk.

Projects will be approved by the EASTBIO Management Group prior to advertisement based on the criteria outlined above.

**Section C**

**Additional information about Standard Academic Studentships**

The ‘standard academic’ studentship is based solely within an EASTBIO partner institution.

**Section D**

**Additional information about Collaborative CASE Studentships**

CASE studentships are developed as partnerships between academia and industry or other non-academic partners. The PhD can be done 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. BBSRC Industrial CASE details: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/skills/investing-doctoral-training/case-studentships/>.

Please check the eligibility of your proposed partner by reading the CASE Studentships Information Pack, downloadable here: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/skills/investing-doctoral-training/case-studentships/>. If you have questions about eligibility, please email [enquiries@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk).

There are three routes for the CASE Studentships.

1) **UKRI-BBSRC ‘standard collaborative’ studentships**. We will prioritise collaboration with SMEs for our UKRI-BBSRC collaborative studentship allocations. The SME > 50 employees will currently provide a minimum of £5,600 towards project costs in total to support a full 4 year BBSRC ‘standard collaborative’ studentship BBSRC. For SME < 50 employees there are no financial contribution required towards project costs.

2) **50% industry match-funded CASE studentships**. We have introduced a new collaborative studentship stream, where the industry partner (> 50 employees) provides 50% of the overall studentship costs. We will ring-fence up to 5 studentships per year for this mechanism. Where industry partners are able to fund at this level, we will pre-commit studentships to that project. 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 industry partner of a 50% industry match-funded studentship will be £51,500 over the total PhD studentship.

3) **Part-time CASE studentships** 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.

For all three routes, all projects must be within UKRI-BBSRC remit. We will inform you of any DTP3-relevant changes to the amounts given in 1), 2) and 3) above as and when known.

This type of Studentship includes 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 three and eighteen 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 stage where the BBSRC funded CASE studentshiphas been awarded to a particular University Supervisor / Industry partnership project, EASTBIO DTP expects the individual department/University to put in place whatever agreement they feel is appropriate in keeping with Research Council UK terms and conditions (outlining agreed IP and publication arrangements). 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 the BBSRC rules.

It will be the responsibility of the partners to establish any possible risk to the project and have contingencies in place should there be changes in the priorities of the non-academic partner, that challenges their meeting project commitments.

Please note that unless requested, EASTBIO will not arrange for there to be a 2nd interview done by the non-academic partner organisation to confirm they are happy with the candidate selected for their CASE Studentship.

**Annex 1: Project Proposal Form**

***All fields must be completed.***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of Principal Supervisor** |  | |
| Institution and Department (e.g. Dundee, School of Life Sciences) |  | |
| Current PhD students and year of study |  | |
| Lab website/Online Profile |  | |
| Email address |  | |
| **Name of Second Supervisor**  In case of a Third or Fourth Supervisor/s, please copy in these lines, as necessary. |  | |
| Institution and Department (e.g. Dundee, School of Life Sciences) |  | |
| Current PhD students and year of study |  | |
| Lab website/Online Profile |  | |
| Email address |  | |
| **Project Title**  Please note this title will be used to advertise the project to students. |  | |
| **Project Description** (max. 500 words and up to 3 references)  Please provide a description of the PhD project which includes information about the project and the research training it will provide; please note this text will be used to advertise the project to students. |  | |
| **Full-time or Part-time PhD Studentship** Please indicate whether this project will be a full-time or part-time PhD. | Full-time PhD project |  |
| Part-time PhD project |  |
| If the PhD is a part-time project please indicate where the student will be based. |  | |
| **Criterion 1A. BBSRC Remit Area**  Please select ONE remit area as that closest to your project. | Bioscience for Sustainable Agriculture & Food (including Crops and Soil; Livestock; Production; Biology and Health; Aquaculture) |  |
| Bioscience for an Integrated Understanding of Health |  |
| Bioscience for Renewable Resources and Clean Growth |  |
| Advancing the Frontiers of Bioscience Discovery (including Understanding the Rules of Life; Transformative Technologies) |  |
| **Criterion 1B. BBSRC Remit and Strategic Priorities**  Please explain in max. 300 words how your project is relevant to the BBSRC remit and strategic priorities, using the call text for guidance. |  | |
| **Criterion 2A. BBSRC Transformative Technologies**  Please select which of the BBSRC Transformative Technologies will be exploited by your project. | New tools and facilities |  |
| Data-driven biology |  |
| Integrative and systems biology |  |
| Synthetic Biology |  |
| Not applicable to this project |  |
| **Criterion 2B. BBSRC Transformative Technologies**  Please explain in max. 300 words how your project will exploit the BBSRC’s Transformative Technologies if applicable. More information here: <https://www.ukri.org/files/about/dps/bbsrc-dp-2019/> (p. 8). |  | |
| **Criterion 3. Interdisciplinarity**  Please select supervisor disciplines where they are other than biological/biomedical sciences. | Chemistry |  |
| Physics |  |
| Mathematical Sciences |  |
| Computer Science/Informatics |  |
| Psychology/Neuroscience |  |
| Engineering |  |
| Veterinary Science |  |
| AI /Machine Learning |  |
| Other (please specify here) |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **Criterion 4. Cross-institutional collaboration**  Please indicate whether the two supervisors are based in different institutions. | Yes |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **5A. Standard CASE Studentship with an SME**.  Please indicate whether this will be a collaborative CASE project with an SME organisation with < 50 employees. If Yes please complete Annex 2 and Annex 3 | Yes (please read information in Section D1 above - a minimum of £5,600 of studentship costs provided by SME with > 50 employee) |  |
| Not applicable |  |
| **5B. Match funded Standard CASE Studentship with Industry**.  Please indicate whether this will be a collaborative CASE project with industry with > 50 employees. If Yes please complete Annex 2 and Annex 3. | Yes (please read information in Section D2 above -50% of studentship costs provided by industry for organisations with > 50 employees) |  |
| 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?** | 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 |  |

**Annex 2: Additional CASE Studentship Proposal Details (for CASE proposals only)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company/Non-Academic Partner Name** |  |
| Website url |  |
| Number of employees (including employees in parent companies or subsidiaries) |  |
| **Name of Supervisor at Partner** |  |
| Partner Supervisor work address |  |
| Email address |  |
| **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. |  |

**Annex 3: CASE Partner Support Letter Template (for CASE proposals only)**

Please provide **a** **letter from the industrial partner** in the form suggested below:

[**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 2020-21 on the project [NAME OF PROJECT] with [NAME OF SUPERVISOR] on the following basis, should a student be 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 CASE Studentship, supported by the 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.

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

*[\*This is the minimum amount required for organisations with > 50 employees.]*

**Year Company Support**

**£**

**2020/2021**

**2021/2022**

**2022/2023**

**2023/2024**

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

Yours faithfully

[**NAME OF CONTACT**]

[**ROLE OF CONTACT IN COMPANY**, e.g. Finance Director]

1. Queries on eligibility should be directed to the local academic management group member for EASTBIO: <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-contacts>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)