



**Biotechnology and
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Research Council**

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Sent on behalf of the Director of the EASTBIO Doctoral Training Partnership, Professor Clare Blackburn (University of Edinburgh).

Edinburgh, 14 September 2020

Dear EASTBIO students,

I am emailing you on behalf of the BBSRC EASTBIO Doctoral Training Partnership Management Group to welcome you as the 2020 EASTBIO cohort of PhD students. As we all know, these are very difficult times and all of us have been affected in some way by the COVID pandemic. We're therefore delighted to be able to start 'as normal' this year, but with flexible arrangements for individuals requiring a deferred or remote start.

There should be sixty of you starting your PhD studies this autumn as part of the EASTBIO community. You will be part of a cohort of PhD students based at the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Stirling, SRUC, the James Hutton Institute and Moredun Research Institute. You will be joining the EASTBIO community of 117 students who started their PhD in 2017, 2018, and 2019 while 33 fourth-year students are currently completing their studies. We are very proud of the four EASTBIO cohorts of 129 students who have now graduated.

Once you complete the matriculation process at your local institution, please email Maria Filippakopoulou at enquiries@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk to notify your confirmed university e-mail address. All EASTBIO communications regarding training events and opportunities, research news and other developments will be sent *solely* to the email address you will be given upon matriculation so please make sure to check your inbox regularly. It is your responsibility to keep EASTBIO informed of any changes in your contact details.

Induction & Training Days in October

We are delighted to confirm the launch of our Training Programme with an online **Induction** event that will span two half days, **the 7th and the 8th of October** (10:00-13:00; via Blackboard Collaborate), expected to be attended by our new students and their primary supervisors. The Induction provides information about the EASTBIO training programme, timelines and requirements via interactions with other students, supervisors, the academic representatives of the Management Group, as well as current EASTBIO student representatives. The first day includes a general overview of the programme and our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion plans, a student team-building session and a Q&A session with student reps and members of the Management Group. On the second day, you will join a separate break-out digital classroom to discuss the online thematic training sessions you will help to organise with your supervisors throughout your first year. Induction will be followed on the **9th of October** by a foundation masterclass on **"Statistics & Experimental Design"** (10:00-13:00; *students only*), delivered by Dr Graham Horgan, Biomathematics & Statistics Scotland (BioSS).

Induction & Training registration link: <https://forms.gle/iBHsscFVCqHyAlq97> (by 25 September)

To counteract the limitations of the remote format of this year's Induction, we are introducing some additional measures, which include the following:

- You will be invited to an optional **pre-Induction** session (*students only*), held via Zoom on the **30th of September, between 12:00 and 14:00**, for an informal chat with our current student representatives (second- and third-years) and the EASTBIO Administrator. Over a mug of coffee or tea, you can ask your questions about anything EASTBIO that preoccupies you, seek some initial answers to practical questions or concerns, find out about our student reps, their own experiences and get to know people from your cohort! Note that this is meetup is not in lieu of our Induction events.
- By the final week of September, you will receive our **2020-21 Student Handbook** containing detailed information about our EASTBIO Training Programme. You are advised to take the time to read this carefully so that you come prepared for our Induction and benefit from the talks and Q&A sessions; our aim is to keep these sessions as interactive and responsive to your concerns as possible.

- You are asked to send a short paragraph about yourselves *by the end of September*, for our **website student profiles**; for details of the minimum of information we expect (name, affiliation, project title, personal note & photo), see current student profiles at <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-student-cohort-2019>.
- Although it is customary to ask for **first-year student volunteers** to represent your local institution (at least one per partner institution), we'd like to ask you to think about this in advance; if you are interested, we would encourage you to either ask at the pre-Induction meet-up or email any of the team with your questions.

Individual links with joining instructions to the various parts of the online Induction event, plus details of the sessions, will be sent out to all later on in September and updates will also be published on our website, at <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-induction-day>. When you register (link above), please tell us whether you have any special requirements that may hinder you from accessing the online event without additional support so that we can explore how best to support such requirements. Upon confirmation of the Induction schedule, we need you to tell us if you have reasons to believe that you cannot attend. Our plan is to record some of the talks and circulate recordings accordingly.

You are warmly invited to contact directly the second-year student representatives at your local institution to ask a question or simply join the local student group in case they may have plans for meetups, online or not (for details, see <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/student-representatives-2019>).

EASTBIO Training Programme and requirements

The EASTBIO website carries information about all our training, contacts and relevant news. We hope to have updated these pages fully by the time of the Induction; for details, see <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/year-1-foundation-training>. At the conclusion of the Induction, you will be sent our **Training Sign-Up Form** with an online link and a closing date the end of October. You should complete the editable form with the EASTBIO courses of your choice (both mandatory and optional) to enable EASTBIO to manage training events, whether online or face-to-face. In September 2021, we will ask you to send a similar form with your training choices in Year 2 of your PhD.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the EASTBIO programme, your studentship or any other matter, please contact Maria at EASTBIO, or your local institutional contacts; for details of key EASTBIO contacts, consult the list below (also at <http://www.eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk/eastbio-contacts>):

- **EASTBIO Administrator:** Maria Filippakopoulou at enquiries@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk.
- **Doctoral Training and Industry Engagement Manager:** Dr Caroline Pope at Caroline.Pope@ed.ac.uk.
- **Aberdeen Academic Lead** Dr Sam Miller; Admin contact: Mrs Karen Slessor at k.e.slessor@abdn.ac.uk.
- **Dundee Academic Lead** Dr Edgar Huitema; Admin contact: Mrs Gail Guild at g.guild@dundee.ac.uk.
- **Edinburgh (College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine) Academic Lead & EASTBIO Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Champion** Dr Jo Stevens; Admin contact: RDSVS.PGR.Admin@ed.ac.uk.
- **Edinburgh (College of Science & Engineering) Academic Lead Professor Clare Blackburn; Managerial contact & EASTBIO EDI Officer:** Dr Caroline Proctor at caroline.proctor@ed.ac.uk.
- **St Andrews Academic Lead** Dr Rafael Guimaraes da Silva; Admin contact: Ms Jessica Fitzgerald at pgrecbiology@st-andrews.ac.uk.
- **Stirling Academic Lead Professor Dave Little; Admin contact:** Ms Moira Maron at moira.maron@stir.ac.uk
- **James Hutton Institute:** Academic Lead Dr Craig Simpson; Admin contact: Ms Laura Logie at Laura.Logie@hutton.ac.uk
- **Moredun Research Institute** Academic Lead Dr Stewart Burgess at stewart.burgess@moredun.ac.uk
- **SRUC Academic Lead Professor Eileen Wall; Admin contact:** pg.research@ruc.ac.uk.

You can also find us on social media:

- Twitter **@EastbioDTP**
- Facebook closed group **'EastBio Doctoral Training Partnership students'**
- LinkedIn **'EastBio Alumni'** group

Best wishes with the start of you PhD studies,

Maria Filippakopoulou

EASTBIO DTP Administrator