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| NORTH WEST CONSORTIUM  DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP |
| COLLABORATIVE DOCTORAL AWARD GUIDANCE NOTES  (October 2020 entry) |

**Introduction**

North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership (NWCDTP) CDA Studentships provide an opportunity for PhD students to gain first-hand experience of work outside an academic environment, with the student working on a doctoral project supported by both academic supervisors and a supervisor from a non-HEI partner organisation.

**Application Process**

The NWCDTP CDA studentship competition process is as follow:

1. The proposal stage, where an academic and a non-HEI partner organisation collaborate to develop a proposal for a CDA Studentship and submit a CDA Application Form. **Deadline: October 18, 2019**

2. Pathway Panels

The CDA proposals and applications will initially be assessed by Pathways Panel consisting of Pathway Lead and Pathways Reps from each institution. Each application is judged on its own merits based on the information provided in the AHRC CDA Application Form and the prospective student’s transcripts / references (if a student is nominated in the application). The Panel agrees a mark for each CDA proposal and application and the applications are then ranked. The Institutional Pathway Panels will then forward their selected applications to [NWCDTP@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:NWCDTP@manchester.ac.uk) so that they can then be considered by the NWCDTP CDA Panel.

3. NWCDTP CDA Panel

This consists of the institutional lead academic for each NWCDTP institution. The CDA panel will decide which proposals will be accepted.

4. Recruitment

If the proposal is successful, the academic and the non-HEI partner organisation can then recruit a suitable postgraduate candidate to undertake the project (if one has not already been proposed with the CDA application). The project will need to be advertised and a recruitment process undertaken in formal consultation with the relevant Institutional Pathway Representative (see Recruiting a Student below) .

**NB Prospective PhD students can also propose their own CDA projects with a non-HEI partner organisation through the NWCDTP Standard Studentship Competition. However, CDA proposal submitted to the CDA competition cannot be submitted to the Standard Studentship Competition in the same year.**

**Non-HEI Partner Organisation Eligibility**

Collaborating partners can be private sector companies, public sector bodies or voluntary organisations. A private sector company is defined as being at least 50% privately owned with a ‘wealth creation’ base in the United Kingdom. Certain public sector bodies, e.g. UK owned companies in which the government holds more than a 49% stake but which generates at least 60% of its income from outside UK government or other UK public sector sources, are also included in this definition.

A sole trader will not *normally* partner with the NWCDTP however each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In exceptional cases, organisations based overseas may be eligible; however they must have an established UK-based research and/or production capability and be able to provide the student with an opportunity to gain skills not currently available in the UK. In identifying an appropriate collaborating partner(s) and reaching an agreement on the arrangements for the research project, applicants should consider:

* The description of the research project(s),
* The arrangements for joint supervision (with the partner and possibly cross DTP institutions),
* The arrangements for seeking ethical approval and for agreements on intellectual property arising from the research,
* The means of identifying an appropriate student (see guide on eligibility).

**Pathways**

CDA Studentship Applications must go through an eligible NWCDTP Pathway (please see Appendix 1 for a list of DTP pathways).

Prospective applicants must contact the relevant Institutional Pathway Representative prior to submission of any CDA application, to discuss the project.

If the application is successful, the Institutional Pathway Representative and ideally the Institutional Lead should be involved in the recruitment and the Overall Pathway Lead should sign off on the choice of candidate, on behalf of the NWCDTP.

**Studentship Allocation Committee Membership**

The CDA Allocation Panel which will meet in November to make the decision on funding, will include all NWCDTP Academic Leads from each institution (members of the Academic Management Committee).

**Recruiting a Student**

If an academic and a non-HEI partner organisation’s CDA application is successful in the first phase of the competition, they will be invited to recruit a student to undertake the project. It is permissible for a postgraduate candidate to be connected to the project from the outset, but the candidate’s details must be noted on the CDA Application Form. If a specific candidate was not mentioned on the CDA application Form, a formal recruitment process must be undertaken to find a candidate. CDA Studentships can be advertised on FindAPhD.com or jobs.ac.uk. Availability of funding for such adverts should be discussed with Schools/Faculties in advance, as there is no funding available from the NWCDTP for advertising studentships. Academics should also utilise their own contacts and disciplinary mailing lists for publicity purposes.

When a suitable candidate is recruited, the academic lead (the primary supervisor) must submit a Nomination Form to the NWCDTP via email to [NWCDTP@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:NWCDTP@manchester.ac.uk) . The deadline for the submission of the CDA Student Nomination Form is **13 March 2020**. The Student Nomination Form should be signed by the Pathway Lead. Applications that are received by the NWCDTP after the deadline will not be accepted.

**Nominated students would need to be approved by the Allocation Committee in March. The Allocation Committee reserves the right to make a final decision regarding selected candidates.**

This nomination form needs to be submitted in all cases, even when a named student has been detailed on the original application form. Should an academic applicant be successful in gaining a CDA award but fail to recruit a suitable candidate, the NWCDTP has the right to withdraw the award from the project and potentially reallocate the funds.

**Studentship Structure**

CDA Studentships can be held on a +3 basis and may be either full-time or part-time.

**Student Eligibility**

If a project is successful and the applicants are invited to recruit a student to undertake the project, please be aware that usual NWCDTP studentship eligibility rules will apply.

**Academic eligibility:**

For all awards, candidates must have qualifications of the standard of a good undergraduate honours degree at first or upper second class level. The student must also have a suitable Master’s degree. In the majority of cases, candidates will have undertaken an undergraduate course and/or Master’s course at a recognised UK higher education institution. However, some may have qualifications from outside the UK, or be able to offer a combination of qualifications and/or experience. In both cases, it will be necessary to ascertain whether these qualifications can be equated to an honours degree, and at what level.

***Professional Qualifications***

Membership of professional bodies or learned societies usually requires the candidate to have achieved, through formal training or work experience, a level of expertise which can be equated to that achieved by an honours degree student. The NWCDTP will accept such a professional qualification providing the candidate has also undertaken three years' subsequent full-time relevant professional work experience.

***Non-UK Qualifications***

Qualifications which have been attained outside the UK will need to be equated to the UK honours degree standard. Assessments are based on the British Council's NARIC guide. Candidates should be aware that whilst a higher education institution may accept a non-UK qualification for entry to the degree course at the institution, the institution will be required to assess whether the qualification is of sufficient standard for an AHRC award. For non-UK qualifications, transcripts in English as well as details in the original language must be provided with the application form.

**Candidates who have already gained or completed the requirements for a doctoral degree in any subject, however funded, are not eligible to apply for NWCDTP funding.**

Candidates are required to declare whether they have already been enrolled in a PhD programme before and provide an explanation for not having complete it.

**Residential eligibility:**

The legal basis for defining residence eligibility for postgraduate training awards is set down in the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1991. The guidance below is based on the Regulations and on guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES): Candidates for awards must have a relevant connection with the United Kingdom. A relevant connection may be established if, at the start of the course:

* The student has been ordinarily resident in the UK throughout the 3-year period preceding the date of application for an award, and
* Has not been resident in the UK, during any part of that 3-year period wholly or mainly for the purposes of full-time education (EU students – see below) and
* Has settled status in the UK within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971 (i.e. is not subject to any restriction on the period for which he/she may stay).

Candidates who meet all three of the above criteria may apply for a full award. A relevant connection may be established for an EU student if the student has been resident in the UK throughout the 3-year period preceding the start of the course, even if for purposes of full-time education. EU students in this situation may apply for a full award. EU Students who have not been ordinarily resident in the UK for the last three years may apply for a fees only award. Non-EU students who have not been ordinarily resident in the UK for the last three years are not eligible to apply.

**Financial Basis of the Studentship**

A NWCDTP Studentship consists of:

* Payment of academic fees, at the standard RCUK rate for 3.5 years
* Maintenance Stipend (£15,009, in 2019/20) for 3.5 years
* Access to a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) fund for research related expenses including conference attendance, fieldwork expenses.
* Access to Overseas Institutional Visits (OIV) and Placements.
* Access to a Cohort Development Fund (CDF) to support the wider cohort, in organising events such as conference, workshops, public engagement events etc…

**Contribution from the non-HEI partner organisation**

There are no compulsory financial contributions from the non-HEI partner organisation. If a non-HEI partner organisation wishes to contribute financially, the most appropriate financial arrangement for each project should be discussed and agreed with the partner prior to the submission of the application.

There are positive benefits to financial contributions from the partner as the stipend would be increased and as such is likely to attract higher quality candidates, particularly where experience of employment as well as an appropriate academic background is being sought.

If the CDA project requires a significant amount of travel, the non-HEI partner organisation will be asked to make a contribution towards the travel, subsistence and accommodation costs incurred by the student associated with visits to the non-HEI partner organisation.

In kind contributions would include resources such as office space at the non-HEI partner organisation’s offices, provision of specialist training courses, access to data and resources, for example.

Supervision costs from the non-academic partner do not count as an in kind contribution. These are basic expectations from the partner, so cannot count as in-kind. If the partner wishes to contribute financially, details of payments/invoices should be arranged on an *ad hoc* basis with the school where the student will be based, and the details of the process should be part of the formal agreement with the partner, if the application is successful. Please note that the financial and/or in kind contribution of the partner organisation will be assessed during the competition on a case by case basis, taking into account the sector and scale of the partner organisation.

**Formal Agreement**

Once a student has been appointed, a signed formal agreement must be produced between the non-HEI partner and the University at which the student will be based. The academic applicant (i.e. the primary supervisor) is responsible for pursuing this, with the support of their University’s contracts team. This agreement must be finalised and sent to the NWCDTP prior to the commencement of the student’s programme in October 2020. Please submit any queries about the NWCDTP CDA Studentship Competition to [nwcdtp@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:nwcdtp@manchester.ac.uk).

*N.B A copy of the template agreement is available either from the relevant institutional lead upon request. The template NWCDTP is also available from* [*NWCDTP@manchester.ac.uk*](mailto:NWCDTP@manchester.ac.uk) *.*

The CDA Application Form, Process and Guidance Notes and Student Nomination Form can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nwcdtp.ac.uk/engage/collaboration/collaborative-phds/>

**Appendix 1**

A list of NWCDTP Pathways can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nwcdtp.ac.uk/engage/collaboration/collaborative-phds/>