

## CEELBAS Doctoral Studentships: Application Guidelines

### About the Centre for East European Language-Based Area Studies (CEELBAS)

CEELBAS is a partnership of ten UK universities that was created in 2006 under the UK Funding Councils' interdisciplinary Language-Based Area Studies (LBAS) initiative. With funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the British Academy, CEELBAS delivers national and international research networks, supports language training and research training, and promotes knowledge exchange and collaboration (both within academic research on area studies and global modern languages and with the world beyond universities). The main objectives of the Centre are to realise the UK's strategic commitment to the study of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, to help set the research agenda for the study of the region, and to inform policy, nationally and internationally. For full details of CEELBAS activities visit [www.ceelbas.ac.uk](http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk).

### About the CEELBAS Centre for Doctoral Training in Russian and Slavonic Languages and Culture

The CEELBAS Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) comprises four CEELBAS universities with extensive expertise in and resources for the study of the languages, literatures, cultures and histories of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia:

- **UCL** (School of Slavonic and East European Studies)
- **University of Cambridge** (Department of Slavonic Studies)
- **University of Manchester** (Department of Russian and East European Studies)
- **University of Oxford** (Sub-Faculty of Russian & Slavonic Languages)

in collaboration with four external partners:

- British Library
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office
- openDemocracy
- Pushkin House

For further details about the research environments and resources at each of these universities, and the role of external partners, please visit: [www.ceelbas.ac.uk/students/cdt/consortium](http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/students/cdt/consortium)

The CEELBAS CDT is currently able to offer AHRC Doctoral Studentships to candidates who have been offered a place on a relevant doctoral programme at one of its four partner universities.

### Value and Timeframe of the Studentship

The Studentship will cover the value of Home/EU tuition fees, plus a stipend at standard UK Research Council rates (in 2013/14 this was £15,726 for London-based studentships and £ 13,726 for studentships based outside London). The Studentship will normally be offered for a period of three years (five years part time), although exceptionally an extension of up to another year (or part-time equivalent) may be offered to support specialist research or language training needs (see below under 'Additional Support for Doctoral Research and Training').

### Eligibility

In line with UK Research Council regulations, to be eligible for a **full award** (stipend and fees), you must have:

- Settled status in the UK, meaning there are no restrictions on how long you can stay
- Been 'ordinarily resident' in the UK for three years prior to the start of the studentship grant. This means you must have been normally residing in the UK (apart from temporary or occasional absences)
- Not been residing in the UK wholly or mainly for the purpose of full-time education. This does not apply to UK and EU nationals

To be eligible for a **fees only award**, you:

- Must be ordinarily resident in an EU member state, in the same way as UK students must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

Note: These eligibility criteria are based on the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997 and subsequent amendments. These regulations cover England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

For full details on eligibility, please visit:

[www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Documents/Guide%20to%20Student%20Eligibility.pdf](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Documents/Guide%20to%20Student%20Eligibility.pdf)

### Application Process and Timetable

To be eligible to apply for a CEELBAS Studentship, you must have already received an offer of a place at one of the four consortium universities (UCL, Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford). You will need to **take note of the closing date advertised by the relevant university** for receipt of applications from candidates who wish to be considered for studentship funding.

Applications to CEELBAS for a Studentship will be considered in conjunction with the applications for university admission. Applicants may submit multiple applications for university admission (for the same research proposal), but can only name up to two universities in their application for a CEELBAS Studentship. In such cases, applicants are invited to indicate their preference if they wish.

Please indicate your intention to apply for a CEELBAS CDT Studentship in the appropriate section of the admission application form and follow any additional instructions provided by the university for this purpose. In addition, you will need to ensure that your studentship application reaches the CEELBAS Administrator by the submission deadline: [ceelbas@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ceelbas@ssees.ucl.ac.uk)

The timetable for the next round of CEELBAS Studentship applications is as follows:

Application window for CEELBAS Studentships opens	November 2013
<b>Deadline for submission of applications to CEELBAS</b>	<b>4pm on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014</b>
Funding decisions reported to applicants; Studentship offers made	By early May 2014 at the latest

### Funding Criteria

Studentship applications will be assessed by the CEELBAS CDT Steering Group, comprised of representatives from the four partner universities and an external academic advisor. The allocation of CEELBAS Studentships will be made strictly on the basis of merit and in pursuance of the consortium's strategy and vision. The assessment criteria are:

- Applicant track record (as detailed in the application to the home university)
- Quality and relevance of the research proposal
- Fit with the consortium's strategy and vision (see below)
- Appropriateness of proposed supervisor(s) and home university

Candidates should note that, as with all forms of research funding, competition for these Studentships is likely to be extremely fierce.

### The CEELBAS CDT Strategy and Vision

The overarching vision of the CEELBAS CDT is to create a national centre of excellence for the postgraduate study of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, thereby helping to realise the UK's strategic commitment to the study of the region. More specifically, CEELBAS aims, through its studentships and training programme to:

- Promote outstanding postgraduate research and top quality training in Russian, Slavonic and East European languages and culture
- Lead in the exploration of new directions for research and serve as a hub for postgraduate training in this field
- Promote inter-regional collaboration covering global modern languages and cultures
- Provide a flow of expertise that augments national capacity to understand and respond to European and global developments

CEELBAS contends that contemporary political configurations, developments in the global economy and transnational flows all attest to the continuing necessity of advanced, nuanced scholarship of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, including in historical, comparative and global contexts. Central and Eastern Europe and Russia should be understood as part of a fluid and dynamic transnational neighbourhood, in which shared historical and cultural legacies continue to be fought over. CEELBAS sees this region as part of an increasingly global space in which new borders and new social relations are increasingly evident. Without the cultural and linguistic dimension, understanding will be incomplete. Advanced research in the humanities offers a uniquely nuanced perspective for understanding these processes and makes a major contribution to the UK's capacity to appreciate and respond to developments in the region.

The CEELBAS CDT encourages postgraduate researchers to see their doctorate as a professional training; to recognise that the end product of the doctorate is not only the research itself, but also the researcher. Researchers are trained to recognise and maximise the potential applicability of their expertise, and their advanced research skills, to a wide range of possible futures, not limited to the Higher Education sector.

### Supervision and Expertise

The CEELBAS CDT is able to draw upon a total of no fewer than 35 supervisors for research in Russian, Slavonic and East European languages and culture. Additionally, Studentship holders benefit from the opportunity to engage with a large cohort of scholars in i) the history of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, ii) the politics, society and economics of the region, and iii) other modern languages, who form part of the larger multidisciplinary and collaborative environment of the consortium.

Further information about the expertise and research interests of these scholars can be accessed via the CEELBAS Database of Expertise. Current and former doctoral students at all CEELBAS universities are also encouraged to register on this Database, which serves as a resource for anyone looking to locate a specialist on Central and Eastern Europe or Russia: [www.ceelbas.ac.uk/databaseofexpert](http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/databaseofexpert)

The CEELBAS CDT works on the basis of a three-member supervisory team model. This is intended to ensure that Studentship holders benefit from a pool of complementary ideas and approaches to research training. Typically, Studentship holders would have a Primary Supervisor based at their home university, plus two more Advisors, of which one might be based at another one of the universities in the consortium. The supervisory teams for successful applicants will be agreed by the

CEELBAS CDT Steering Group, in discussion with the applicant, once offers of Studentships have been made.

Joint primary supervision involving supervisors, including from two different universities, can also be arranged should this be appropriate to the proposed research project. Financial support will be available to cover essential travel costs for purposes of supervisory meetings outside the home university.

### **Additional Support for Doctoral Research and Training**

Where necessary and as far as budgetary constraints allow, the CEELBAS CDT will provide additional financial support to enable Studentship holders to address their individual training and research needs. This support is intended to allow researchers to access the best resources and expertise in their field in the UK, to facilitate their interaction and knowledge exchange with non-academic partners, and to expand opportunities to benefit from specialist training, research resources, scholars and institutions abroad. In this respect, the CDT benefits from already-established CEELBAS funding schemes, including:

- The CEELBAS Internships Scheme: <http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/internships>
- CEELBAS Overseas Research Training Grants: <http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/training-grants>

In exceptional cases, the duration of CEELBAS Studentships may be extended by up to one year (or part-time equivalent) in order to support the acquisition of specialist longer-term research training that is deemed essential to the successful completion of the research project.

Initial training needs should be identified at application stage in discussion with the proposed supervisor(s). For guidance on completing the Application Form, see below. Once on the programme, Studentship holders will be further briefed on the wide range of opportunities provided under CEELBAS through an induction event organised annually. Training needs will continue to be reviewed throughout the period of study, allowing Studentship holders to apply for support where appropriate and to develop an individually-tailored training programme.

### **The CEELBAS Doctoral Training Programme**

The CEELBAS CDT training programme adopts a four-tiered approach to student development, following *Vitae's* RCUK-approved Research Development Framework ([www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/234471/Framework-content.html](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/234471/Framework-content.html)). Researchers receive training that combines the benefits of institutional-level support and additional targeted training provided by the consortium. The four strands of the training programme cover: (i) Generic Research Skills; (ii) Professional Development and Employability Skills; (iii) Subject-specific Research Skills, Language Training & Interdisciplinarity; (iv) Knowledge Exchange, Public Engagement and Impact. For further details see: [www.ceelbas.ac.uk/students/cdt/training](http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/students/cdt/training)

### **External Partners**

The CEELBAS doctoral training programme is enhanced by the following partnerships:

**The Foreign & Commonwealth Office:** Collaborative training activities with the FCO's Eastern Europe and Central Asia Directorate (EECAD) provide an invaluable opportunity for CEELBAS Studentship holders to gain experience of knowledge exchange and of the practical application of humanities research skills to issues of strategic importance to UK diplomacy and foreign policy.

**The British Library:** The British Library's collections in the field of Slavonic, East European and Soviet Studies are the largest in the UK and represent a vital research resource. This partnership enables CEELBAS Studentship holders to benefit from advanced specialist training in the use and application of this resource.

**openDemocracy Russia** and **Pushkin House**: Collaboration with these two partners is aimed specifically at promoting public engagement and wider dissemination of doctoral research. openDemocracy is a global affairs network whose website is visited by over 2 million unique readers each year; its Russia pages offer contributors a chance to reach a large and influential non-academic audience. Pushkin House is an independent charitable foundation dedicated to showcasing Russian culture and promoting Anglo-Russian cultural exchange; its cultural programme covers Russian literature, art, film, music, theatre and dance, as well as history, philosophy and politics.

In addition, the consortium has links with a wide range of organisations from the public, private and third sectors, both in the UK and overseas, reflecting the successful experience and track record of CEELBAS in creating partnerships for knowledge exchange and internships, and in working actively to enhance user engagement and achieve impact. Further details are available on the following pages of the CEELBAS website:

- The CEELBAS Internships Scheme: [www.ceelbas.ac.uk/internships](http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/internships)
- The CEELBAS Knowledge Exchange Programme: [www.ceelbas.ac.uk/knowledge\\_exchange](http://www.ceelbas.ac.uk/knowledge_exchange)

The input and involvement of these organisations brings an invaluable extra dimension to the consortium's training programme. CEELBAS Studentship holders benefit not only from the enhanced impacts of research informed by the perspectives of non-academic communities, but also from increased awareness of opportunities for dissemination of research and of the various skills and techniques required to make this effective and mutually beneficial.

### **How to Complete the Application Form**

#### Programme(s) of Study for which funding is requested

You should discuss your research plans with several possible supervisors initially and propose the supervisor(s) and home university/universities that will most effectively support your project. You must then complete your application for admission and **must be in receipt of an offer of a place to be eligible to apply for the CEELBAS Studentships**. In your Studentship application you can name up to two universities from the consortium where you would like to take up a place and, if you wish, may indicate your preference.

#### Research Summary (300 words max.)

This should summarise the proposed research and the main questions or themes to be addressed. It will be read in conjunction with the more detailed Research Proposal submitted as part of the application to CEELBAS, as well as the Research Proposal that was submitted with the admissions application to the university programme(s) for which funding is sought.

#### Training Needs Analysis (no word limit)

A key part of the discussions with your proposed supervisor(s) should be the identification of any initial training needs. This is particularly relevant for researchers who want to convert their training into a CEELBAS area specialism, but lack the region-specific knowledge or language competency needed to do this. The CEELBAS CDT is committed to expanding opportunities for such training to be acquired, including, exceptionally (and only where necessary) through extending the duration of its Studentships to up to four years (or part-time equivalent). All applicants for CEELBAS Studentships, in liaison with their proposed supervisor(s), are expected to identify and outline an initial training needs analysis.

#### Fit to the vision and strategy of the CEELBAS CDT (around 300 words in total)

Taking account of the information provided above, applicants should use this section to outline how their proposed research and training will take forward the aims and objectives of the CEELBAS Centre for Doctoral Training and support its remit to enhance knowledge exchange, research interaction, international collaboration and the dissemination of research to multiple audiences.

CEELBAS encourages Postgraduate researchers to see their PhD as a professional training; the end product of which is not only the research itself, but also the researcher. This section should therefore focus not only on the actual research topic but also on the training, professional development and other skills acquisition that it is anticipated the Studentship will support.

#### Impact Summary (around 300 words)

This section offers an opportunity to underline the value and impact of the proposed research project and to make the case for its importance and potential contribution, both to the academic field of Russian, Slavonic and East European languages and culture and also to UK understanding of Central and Eastern Europe and Russia more broadly. CEELBAS encourages a broad and flexible interpretation of impact that recognises the value of all forms of humanities-based research and not only that which is directly concerned with contemporary, policy-focused subjects.

#### Any Other Information

Please use this section to provide details of any other relevant information in support of your application, particularly any achievements, prizes, honours or awards that are not mentioned elsewhere (either in the application to CEELBAS or in the application to the your home university for a place).

#### Research Proposal

All applications should be accompanied by a Research Proposal of up to 1,500 words. The quality of the Research Proposal is a key part of the assessment criteria. Its content should be discussed in advance with the proposed supervisor(s). It is also crucial, however, that the detail of this section is your own work. The Research Proposal submitted to CEELBAS will be read in conjunction with the Research Proposal that was submitted with the admissions application to the university programme(s) for which funding is sought. It is expected that there should be no substantial difference between the research proposed in these documents.

#### **How to submit your application**

Completed Application Forms and accompanying Research Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to the CEELBAS Administrator: [ceelbas@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ceelbas@ssees.ucl.ac.uk) and in hard copy to:

The CEELBAS Administrator  
SSEES  
UCL  
Gower Street  
London WC1E 6BT

Queries relating to the Application Form and applications process for CEELBAS Studentships should be addressed to the CEELBAS Administrator: [ceelbas@ssees.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ceelbas@ssees.ucl.ac.uk) / 020 7679 8802.