



Faculty of Humanities

Doctoral Academy PGR Placement Fund

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION GUIDANCE

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1. Introduction

This scheme provides funding for PGRs to undertake placement projects with non-University partners, helping you to develop additional skills and gain a real world understanding and experience of research.

Academic and non-academic job markets are competitive. Whether you aim to continue a career in academia or another sector, the experiences a placement provides can help you stand out and better prepare you for the variety of career opportunities beyond your PhD.

2. Eligibility - PGR

To apply for this scheme, you must be registered on a doctoral programme within the Faculty of Humanities. Applications are welcome from individuals, pairs, or small groups working on the same project.

Individual applicants must meet the criteria below.

- You must be in year 2 or 3 of the PhD programme when the placement takes places.
- You must have successfully completed year 1 of the PhD programme before the proposed placement takes place.
- The placement must be completed before the final 3 months of your programme. PGRs in the final 3 months of their programme at the time a proposed placement would take place are not eligible to take part.
- You must not be in the submission pending period (writing up) when the proposed placement takes place.



- You must not be funded by the AHRC or ESRC Doctoral Training Programmes (NWCDTP and NWSSDTP). There is designated funding available from these DTPs for PhD placements.
- You must discuss the opportunity and have the support of your supervisor to take part. Supervisors will be required to provide a supporting statement in the application.
- PGRs studying on a student visa must consult the Visa Team and provide confirmation by email at the time of application that taking part would not breach their visa regulations.
- Sponsored PGRs must consult their sponsor and check conditions of their funding before applying to take part.

All members of a pair or group must each meet the criteria above in order to apply, and must submit an application form individually (please see section 6 Application Process for more information).

3. Eligibility – Projects and placement partners

The placement must provide benefits to your professional development. The project may or may not relate to your academic background and expertise. It **must** be a separate activity from fieldwork (please see below for activities which are **not** funded through this scheme). Placements may not take place in an academic or research-based department of a university or HEI. Placements in professional services or a cultural institution of a University are permitted.

What kind of placement can I apply to do?

There are two categories of placement you can apply to undertake.

- **Project-based Knowledge Exchange Placements**

Placements in this category must meet the following criteria:

- Placements must offer the PGR the opportunity to develop new or demonstrably enhance skills in an area relevant to their professional development.
- Proposed projects must respond to the partner organisation's strategic agenda and/or business needs.
- Placements must be between 4 and 12 weeks long. Projects may be undertaken on a part-time basis as long as they are completed by 31 September 2025.
- Knowledge Exchange Placements may be:
 - **Researcher-led** – where a PGR approaches a partner organisation and they co-develop a project together. Project planning templates are available to support this – please contact Placements and Partnerships Officer beth.taylor@manchester.ac.uk
 - **Partner-led** – where an organisation advertises an existing project exclusively for PGRs in the Faculty to apply to. Alternatively, they may propose a challenge which an individual or group may respond to, and a project is developed from the response.



- **National scheme** – where a PGR applies directly to a competitive scheme which is open to PGRs across the UK. Examples include, but are not limited to, the [British Library](#), [Kew Gardens](#), and the V&A.

Examples of potential projects for a Knowledge Exchange Placement include, but are not limited to:

- Education, outreach, public engagement
- Curatorial, interpretation, archival, conservation
- Entrepreneurial projects
- Research reports and insight
- Social responsibility projects
- Commercial and business development
- Editorial, creative and digital projects

- **Skills-based Micro-placements**

Placements in this category must meet the following criteria.

- Proposed micro-placements must work with a partner organisation and offer the PGR the opportunity to learn and develop specific practical skills which will be of benefit to the PGR's professional development, and are not already available through the PhD programme.
- Micro-placements must be between 2-4 weeks long to enable suitable practical experience of the specialist skills or equipment in a real-world environment. Training courses are not funded by this scheme.
- Micro-placements may be undertaken on a part-time basis as long as they are completed by 31 September 2025.
- Micro-placements may be:
 - **Researcher-led** – where a PGR approaches an organisation in a sector of interest to develop a specific skill by working on a mini-project or assisting with a particular activity.
 - **Partner-led** – where an organisation advertises a skills development placement exclusively for PGRs in the Faculty, which an individual may apply to.

Examples of potential opportunities for a Skills-based Micro-placement include, but are not limited to:

- Using a new specific software or other digital tool in a real-world environment
- Using a particular piece of equipment of relevance to a chosen career path within its related professional context
- Physical or digital archiving, cataloguing and interpretation
- Object and document handling, curatorial skills
- Hands-on experience of specialist communication channels or equipment (eg. podcasting, audio-visual, directorial, production)



What kind of partner organisation can I apply to work with?

Eligible host partners for a Knowledge Exchange or Skills-based Micro-placement include, but are not limited to:

- Museums, galleries, cultural institutions, including those attached to, or owned by, Universities (including The University of Manchester)
- Heritage, conservation and community organisations
- Charities and non-profit organisations
- Business, commercial and industry
- Associations and professional organisations
- Schools, language and educational organisations
- Non-HEI research and governance organisations
- Non-academic and professional services projects in departments, institutes or cultural assets of universities, including at The University of Manchester

For queries on the eligibility of a potential partner organisation, please contact beth.taylor@manchester.ac.uk to discuss.

What activities are not included in this placement scheme?

The placement fund does not support applications for:

- Field work activities which are an integral component of the research to be presented in the thesis, for example data collection.
- Training courses and workshops.
- Skills training that is essential for the PhD programme.
- Overseas institutional visits or exchanges with international HEIs.
- Conference attendance.
- Work on academic projects as a research assistant, or work which is ordinarily in the job description of a research assistant.

For information on funding opportunities which may be applicable to you for these activities please visit: <https://www.humanities-pgr-handbook.manchester.ac.uk/funding/>

4. Financial support

Awards are provided as a one-off sum paid directly to the PGR at the start of the placement to support the PGR to undertake the placement.

Knowledge Exchange Placements

- A one-off award supports placements that last between 4 and 12 weeks (1-3 months) full time. Placements may also be undertaken on a part-time basis, provided they are completed by 31 September 2025.



- Placements shorter than 12 weeks full time will be financially supported on a pro rata basis (for example, a 6-week full time project will be awarded £1500).

Micro-placements

- A one-off award supports placements that last between 2-4 weeks full or part time. Placements must be completed by 31 September 2025.
- Placements shorter than 4 weeks full time (or part-time equivalent) will be financially supported on a pro rata basis (for example, a 2 week placement will be awarded £250, and a 3 week placement will be awarded £375).

Match funding is not required.

Expenses

PGRs are not required to apply to the Doctoral Academy for expenses as these are expected to be covered by the award. If the host organisation offers to pay expenses for you to take part, you may accept this. You will not be employed by the host organisation.

If you withdraw from the scheme or the placement is cancelled after the funding award has been provided, you will be required to return the money to the University. Please see section 7, conditions of award, for further details.

5. Scheme timeline/key dates

Date	Activity
22 April 2025	Application deadline - noon
5 May 2025	Outcomes communicated to PGRs
During May 2025	Placement preparation and administration
1 June 2025	Placements may start
31 September 2025	Placements must be completed
31 October 2025	Reflective review and placement report to be submitted

Your placement must be completed within the start and end dates of the current call. Activity which falls outside of this timeframe should be applied for in the next funding round in the 2025/26 academic year. Dates for the next funding call will be posted on the placement section of the [PGR handbook here](#).



6. Application and selection process

How to apply

Applications must be made online here: [Placement Application Form](#)

Applicants are recommended to discuss a potential project with the PGR Placement and Partnerships Officer before applying. Please contact: beth.taylor@manchester.ac.uk

Applicants will be asked a series of questions about their PhD, their experience, the proposed project and their funding. All applicants must upload a current CV and, where applicable, may also be required to submit other supporting documents (see below).

- **Individual applicants** must complete the form in full for their chosen placement type.
- **Applicants applying as a pair or group** – each group member must complete and submit their own application form and supporting information. Please make sure the project information, such as the project title, organisation contact name/details and project summary match on each form for all PGRs applying as part of a group project.
- PGRs who are co-developing their own placement with a partner organisation should apply to the **Project-based Knowledge Exchange Award** for a **Researcher-led placement**. The project questions should be completed in collaboration with the partner organisation. The lead contact from the partner organisation will be required to provide a supporting statement on the benefits of the project to their organisation and how you will work together.
- PGRs applying to the **Project-based Knowledge Exchange Award** for an advertised placement or national scheme must have already applied directly to the placement and have been successfully selected before applying to the Doctoral Academy PGR Placement Fund award.

Supervisor support

Your supervisor will need to confirm their support for the placement by completing section 2 of the online application form. Guidance points to include, such as details of PhD progression, the benefits the opportunity will offer to the applicant's professional development, are detailed on the application form.

Assessment

Applications will be reviewed by a panel and awards will be distributed on a competitive basis. Applications may be returned to the applicant with a request for further information if required. Between applications with equal quality, priority will be given to applicants who have not previously undertaken a placement or knowledge exchange activity.



Application outcome

The outcome of your application will be communicated by email to the email address provided on the application form.

7. Conditions of award

By applying for a Doctoral Academy PGR Placement Fund award, applicants accept and agree to the following conditions:

Reporting, communication and dissemination requirements

- Successful applicants must complete a report form, including a reflective review, and a case study on their placement experience, which must be returned within one month of the placement end date.
- Successful applicants are encouraged to share their experiences whilst on placement on their social media channels and to provide links for the Doctoral Academy to share posts on DA channels.
- Completed projects will be publicised via University social media, news and communication platforms.
- Successful applicants will be invited to share their experiences at a placement celebration event and symposium. Details will be provided to successful applicants.

Administrative conditions

- Placements are optional and do not form an assessed part of the PhD programme.
- Placements will be undertaken during programme time and PGRs will remain registered on their programme for the duration of the placement.
- Participation in this scheme will not be considered as grounds for an extension to the PhD programme.
- If, for any reason, the placement cannot take place during the agreed timeframe, it is the responsibility of the PGR to repay the award funds in full. If you withdraw from a successfully funded placement, and accommodation or transport has already been paid for, the Doctoral Academy is entitled to claim back any unused sums granted for the remainder of the placement period.

8. Data protection

The information you provide in the application for will be used for the purpose of administering the placement scheme. Complete privacy notices are available at: manchester.ac.uk/privacy

9. Contact information

For questions about the scheme, including eligibility of a PGR, partner or project, please contact: beth.taylor@manchester.ac.uk