

# UCL, Bloomsbury and East London DTP Co-funded and Collaborative Studentship Competition 2024 entry

## Guidance for Applicants and Pathway Leaders

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## Overview of the application process (Proposals)

1. The UCL, Bloomsbury and East London DTP Co-funded and Collaborative Studentship Competition is a two stage process. At the **first stage**, one or more academics working in the area of an identified DTP Pathway co-operate with a non-academic partner to put together a proposal for a co-funded or collaborative studentship project. This project should address a research topic which is of both theoretical and practical significance, and provide opportunities for a funded PhD student to gain first-hand experience of work outside an academic environment. The student is expected to be supported throughout the project by both an academic and a non-academic supervisor.
2. **The deadline for the submission of the Co-funded and Collaborative Proposal which details the project is Monday 15 January (23:59).**
3. Each submitted proposal is then assessed by the Co-funded and Collaborative Panel, which decides whether or not an award should be made. Academic colleagues will be informed of the outcome of this stage **on week commencing 29<sup>th</sup> January.**
4. The Co-funded and Collaborative Panel will only award a limited number of Co-funded or Collaborative studentships, though the precise figure will be determined in part by the strength of the proposals which are put forward. Project proposals can be in any area of work relating to the DTP Pathways and there is no set limit on the number of projects that can be submitted under a given Pathway. Please also note:
  - (i) Proposals for interdisciplinary projects which involve more than one Pathway are actively encouraged;
  - (ii) This scheme encourages supervisory collaborations between senior researchers and early career researchers (ECRs) and colleagues are asked to indicate if this is the case on their proposals.
5. Pathway Leaders will be asked to comment on the relative strength of submissions in their area in order to assist the Co-funded and Collaborative Panel's judgement of the merit of each.
6. In the **second stage** of the process, successful academic colleagues recruit a suitable student for their award, in consultation with the relevant Pathway Leader, who is responsible for assessing the academic strength of candidates.
7. Colleagues will need to provide contribution levels in the initial contract to enable Research Services teams at the host institution to liaise about a research contract with the non-academic partner.

8. The projects will be advertised through the institution of the designated lead supervisor (where the award will be held) **and** through the DTP website. There is a draft advert template available on the DTP website.
9. All prospective student applicants will need to submit a student co-funded and collaborative application form through the Survey Monkey Apply portal. The studentship application will be available from **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024**, with an application deadline of **Monday 25 March 2024 (23:59)**.
10. Applications will be made available to the supervisor for review. Supervisors can then interview and select a candidate for the studentship.
11. All decisions on Co-funded or Collaborative studentship holders will be subject to confirmation by the DTP Board at its general studentships meeting late in the spring term. Where colleagues are successful in gaining a Co-funded or Collaborative award but fail to recruit a suitable student by the March 2024 deadline, the DTP Board reserves the right to withdraw the award.
12. Students for UBEL DTP co-funded and collaborative awards should be recruited in open competition and proposals should not be written with preferred candidates in mind. Award offers may be rescinded if this condition is not adhered to.
13. Where home students are nominated for UBEL co-funded and collaborative awards by academic departments, approval of the nomination will be considered by the DTP Board at its spring term studentships meeting.

Students classified as international students are eligible to apply for a full award - both the stipend to support living costs, and fees at the UKRI rate. The studentships are open to international students in all disciplines. **The DTP is allowed to make no more than 30% of the total number of studentships (across competitions) to international students – this is an ESRC condition and cannot be waived.**

In cases where an overseas candidate is nominated, awards may only be confirmed following the DTP Board Meeting in the spring term. Overseas candidates will be considered alongside the qualifications and relevant experience of all overseas candidates in the annual UBEL DTP main studentship competition. In such cases supervisors will be asked to provide details of any reserve home candidate(s) for the award. In cases where the application for a fee waiver cannot be provided and there is no available substitute home candidate, the award offer will be withdrawn.

## **Guidance notes for completion of the Co-funded and Collaborative Studentship Application Form**

Please note that all questions are mandatory and should be answered as fully as possible (unless specified otherwise).

## Academic Partners

13. The applicant should be the academic who will be the first supervisor on the proposed project. Please provide details of any additional academic supervisor(s).
14. As that this scheme encourages collaborations between senior researchers and early career researchers (ECRs), please note if this is the case in your proposal.
15. Please detail the Institution (UCL, Birkbeck, LSHTM, SOAS, UEL or University of Greenwich) and department of the applicant.
16. Please detail which of the DTP Group Panels the project comes under, and which pathway(s) within these are being used to define research training requirements. **The relevant Pathway Leader(s) should be informed about the application as early as possible.**
17. If known, please indicate whether the proposed project will be full-time or part-time and 1+3, 4-year or +3 in structure, or if a variety of forms of programme will be permitted.

UCL, Bloomsbury and East London DTP studentships can be held on a full-time or a part-time basis, and within a 1+3, 4-year (Integrated PhD) or +3 programme. In a 1+3 studentship, the first year of study is taken up with a Masters research training programme focused on generic and discipline-specific skills, and production of a dissertation. A 4-year studentship also involves Masters level research training, but this is taken alongside the doctoral research in the first part of the programme and there is no separate dissertation component. A +3 studentship means the student can commence on the research project immediately and focus on it throughout, and for this reason, it is the more usual form taken by Co-funded and Collaborative awards.

However, it is important to bear in mind that the development of rounded researchers is a crucial underpinning goal of ESRC studentship funding, and +3 award holders will therefore be expected to demonstrate that they have already undertaken much of the prior research training required in their area of work (see the DTP Guidance on Research Foundation Statements, available on the website). This inevitably restricts the range of potentially suitable candidates, and there may also be specific benefits to students undertaking their research training with a steer imparted by the collaborative project.

Given these points, it is strongly recommended that applicants and their non-academic partners give careful consideration to the expected outcomes from the research, the timing of the availability of data and research results under the different forms of programme, and the advantages and disadvantages that may be conferred by these. If 1+3 and/or 4-year options are to be allowed – or even deliberately sought – the non-academic partner must agree to the studentship being extended by a year to enable the research training to be completed.

18. If known, please indicate whether a request for AQM status is likely.

DTP Co-funded and Collaborative studentships are also eligible for Advanced Quantitative Methods (AQM) status, which entitles the holder to an enhanced stipend during the doctoral research element of their programme (an additional £2000). AQM funding entails a commitment by the student to undertaking quantitative methods training at a level which is clearly above that which is usual in their area of work. For this reason, AQM requests must be made after the studentship holder has actually been recruited. This ensures that students are consulted before making the necessary commitment, and have the skills to support it. If a request for AQM status seems likely, however, applicants are asked to flag this at the proposal stage in order to facilitate the DTP's budgetary planning.

## **Project Partners**

### **Eligible collaborating partners**

19. Please provide details of the name of the collaborating organisation and the principal contact within it. Co-funding or collaborating partners can be private sector companies, public sector bodies or voluntary/ third sector organisations. Because of the requirement for partner involvement in supervision, only non-academic organisations with an operating base in the UK are eligible to support a UCL, Bloomsbury and East London DTP studentship. Beyond this, there are no restrictions, and applicants are encouraged to think inventively about types of collaboration that may be productive.
20. In identifying an appropriate collaborating partner and reaching an agreement on the arrangements for the research project, applicants should consider the following points in particular:
- The nature of the research project, why a collaborative studentship is appropriate, and what form the studentship programme should take (see next section for more detail)
  - How the work is to be conducted, how the academic and non-academic elements relate to each other, and how the academic standards of the work will be ensured
  - The arrangements for joint supervision with the partner, and, where appropriate, between academic supervisors
  - The arrangements for seeking ethical approval, for agreeing on intellectual property arising from the research, and recognising the student's contribution
  - The means of identifying an appropriate student

## Further information about project partners

21. As part of the application process, non-academic partners are asked to provide a brief description of the main activities of their organisation. This information will be used by the DTP Board to place the proposed project in the context of work of the collaborating partner. It is particularly important to have this information about smaller organisations which do not have a high profile and whose activities may not be widely known outside the sector in which they operate.
22. Please give details of any previous experience of collaboration between the partners making this application, and between the partners and any other organisations. Details of any previous involvement in social science research by the non-academic organisation should also be provided.
23. Explain how the collaborating partner will be involved in the management and supervision of the research project. Please include a description of arrangements for the confirmation of supervision and management of the project in the event of changes in key personnel during the project. The extent of their involvement should be discussed and agreed with the collaborating partner in the first instance, and then confirmed with the chosen student when the nomination process has been completed. The non-academic partner will be expected to provide an induction programme for the student similar to that provided for new employees and, during the tenure of the award, the student will also be requested to spend time on the organisation's premises. For a full time three-year award, the expected minimum is three months per year, but not necessarily as a continuous period. During this time, the student must be engaged in activities which comprise an integral component of the research to be presented in the thesis.
24. The information provided here should include: brief details of any special materials and facilities which will be made available to the student by the non-academic partner; a description of the work to be undertaken at their premises; a proposed time-table showing the duration and frequency of visits; and an indication of the part of the organisation to which the studentship will be attached.
25. There should be real and measurable benefits to the non-academic partner from the outcomes of the project. Expectations of how these will benefit the organisation should be made clear.

## Supervisors

26. The expertise of the academic supervisors relevant to the project must be shown. It is important that the proposed project is clearly within the research strengths and expertise of the proposed supervisory team. Please also provide an outline of how the proposed research links into the main supervisor's research community, to show how the studentship holder will be integrated into related activity that will support their development.

27. Co-funded and collaborative students can place higher demands on the time of supervisors than standard research studentships. Applicants should provide details of the current supervisory workload for each proposed supervisor and explain the arrangements that will be put in place to ensure that an appropriate level of supervision is available to the proposed collaborative studentship. Please also provide information about the number of completions for each supervisor.
28. Please explain how supervision duties will be shared between the academic supervisors.

## Project proposal

29. Please detail the title of the proposed project.
30. Please upload a document detailing the goals, approach, timeline and likely outcomes of the proposed research project. This outline should be clear and concise (**maximum two pages**), and include:
  - The rationale for the project and the research questions being asked
  - An account of the methodologies and techniques that might be employed
  - The timetable for conducting the research
  - The anticipated outcomes from the project, in terms of its contribution to knowledge and understanding, new methodologies and techniques, data etc
  - Plans for the dissemination of outcomes and, where relevant, achieving non-academic impact
31. This information will allow the DTP Board to assess the significance of the research, and also to see whether the proposed work is practicable within the period of a studentship (e.g., for a +3 award, three years funding plus one year for submission of the thesis). It is important to make clear the social science content of the proposal, to enable the Board to determine that the field of study falls within the remit of the DTP.
32. Note that the outcomes should have wider relevance than the needs of the non-academic partner, and therefore the envisaged intellectual as well as commercial benefits should be emphasised. The UKRI 2020 Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training says “The collaborating organisation and academic partner should undertake to develop a research project of the same challenge as that of a doctoral programme undertaken solely in an academic institution.”
33. The project should therefore contribute to the creation, development and application of new techniques or ways of working, or relate to the broader environment in a way that improves the effectiveness and efficiency of individuals and organisations. It should also contribute to the ESRC’s mission to provide trained social scientists that meet the needs of users and beneficiaries, thereby contributing to the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom, the effectiveness of public services and policy, and the quality of life.

34. Finally, it must fulfil the aim of a collaborative studentship to provide a real opportunity for a student to gain first-hand experience of work in a non-academic environment, and to contribute meaningfully to that environment as part of a genuine process of knowledge exchange. The completed research should be published as widely as possible, to both academic and non-academic audiences.

## **Ethical considerations**

35. The ethical issues that are likely to arise in the design and conduct of the proposed research must be fully addressed. You should demonstrate that consideration has been given to: honesty to researchers and participants about the purpose of the work; the methods and possible uses of the research, and the risks involved; confidentiality of information supplied by research participants, anonymity of respondents, and independence and impartiality of researchers. You should specify the professional code of ethics governing research which will be used as the guiding framework.

There is a word limit of 250 words for this question.

## **Proposed Training and Support**

36. Please provide an outline of the likely training arrangements that will be made available to the student. The academic and non-academic supervisors will be expected to agree the arrangements for the delivery of formal research training, regular formal progress meetings and briefing meetings with the student, throughout the period of research. The DTP Board will therefore be looking for evidence of a structure that will also be responsive to the needs of the individual student.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

37. Please provide a description of how property rights issues will be addressed. An official agreement between the academic and non-academic partner concerning the distribution of proceeds from commercially valuable research is considered an essential element of any Co-funded or Collaborative studentship. It is expected that an agreement covering IPR will need to be completed, and a copy sent to the UCL, Bloomsbury and East London DTP prior to the recruited student's commencement of studies. It is important to note that the responsibility for safeguarding the student's rights is deemed to rest with the HEI. Failure to address this issue will severely weaken an application. At the very least, consideration of IPR issues should be shown in the proposal, making it evident that the student will be protected by the IPR agreement.

Note that the student retains all student-generated IPR and the ability to publish all findings.

**Please ensure a letter of support from the proposed project partners is included with your application. This is a mandatory for submission.**

## **Financial contributions**

38. UBEL requires match funding for the co-funded and collaborative scheme, calculated as 50% of the total fees and subsistence (before any 'AQM' supplement), calculated using the most recent rates publicized on the UBEL website. Non-academic partners can contribute towards the cost of each project they support at a lower or zero level, but these will be classed as Collaborative studentships, and may have a lower priority attached to them by the DTP Board when making funding decisions. Co-funded awards may also attract higher quality candidates, particularly where experience of employment as well as an appropriate academic background is being sought.

Please note that financial contributions from collaborative partners are preferred. It is essential to provide as much information about the intended contribution as possible and in particular to complete the "initial contract" form as part of the application.

39. For both Co-funded and Collaborative awards, it is expected that the company will meet the travel, subsistence and accommodation costs incurred by the student associated with visits to the non-academic organisation.
40. In kind contributions will not count towards co-funding arrangements. All co-funding must have a direct cash value. Contributions other than to fees and maintenance might include UK or international travel and subsistence, specialist training resources or access to data and resources. In such instances the target 50% co-funding will be calculated as half of home fees and subsistence (before AQM supplement – see below). Office space or consultancy services (including supervision costs) will not be accepted as a form of in-kind contribution.

## **Recruitment and Selection Process**

41. **Please upload a draft of the advertisement that will be used for recruitment purposes. The template for an advertisement is available on the DTP website.**

It is anticipated that advertisements for successful applications will be made available by the local institution of the lead supervisor as well as on the DTP website.

Keep in mind that academic and residential eligibility constraints apply - for more information please refer to point 13 of this document and/or contact [ubel-dtp@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ubel-dtp@ucl.ac.uk).

Prospective student candidates will need to complete the UBEL DTP co-funded and collaborative student application form in Survey Monkey Apply by 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The form will allow the student to indicate which project they are applying to. This form will be made available in January 2024 and supervisors will be sent a link for reference.

After the deadline, prospective student submissions will then be made available to supervisors for review. Supervisors must nominate a candidate for an award by the date of the DTP Board (w/c 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024).

## Outcome of applications

42. The closing date for Co-funded and Collaborative Project Proposals to be submitted is **15 January 2023 23:59**.

**The closing date will be strictly adhered to.**

43. Results of the competition to be announced later in **late January 2023**.
44. Successful applicants should ensure prospective students that have shown interest in the advertised project apply to the UBEL DTP by 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (using the Survey Monkey Apply portal).
45. Supervisors will then review applications from students during April and nominate a candidate for the award. The DTP Board will consider the nominated students at the Board meeting w/c 13<sup>th</sup> May.