Strategic Priorities Fund: Centre of Doctoral Training (CDT) in Food Systems
Guidance for Applicants

Submit your proposal through the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system by 13th May 2020, 16:00. Late applications will not be accepted.

Contact: For any questions relating to your application please email the following address food.systems@bbsrc.ukri.org

Call Summary

Applicants should refer to the Centre of Doctoral Training (CDT) in Food Systems call webpage and call text document for details of the background, purpose & aims, call scope and eligibility.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) in partnership with government are pleased to announce a £5 million call to support one Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) focused on developing the next generation of interdisciplinary food systems thinkers. This CDT is part of a wider £47.5 million interdisciplinary research programme seeking to transform the UK food system and is led by the Global Food Security Programme (GFS) and supported by UKRI's Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF). The call is administered by BBSRC, in partnership with ESRC, MRC, NERC, Defra, DHSC, PHE, Innovate UK and FSA.

This CDT will ensure a pipeline of skilled individuals who are able to apply holistic and critical interdisciplinary food systems thinking to health and sustainability challenges in academia, government, business and civil society organisations, and who will lead the way in transforming the UK food system. It will support three cohorts of doctoral candidates beginning in October 2021 and as a legacy will develop the next generation of food system thinkers.

Application and assessment process

Applications must be submitted through the research councils' Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system and their assessment will be managed by BBSRC. Potential applicants should note that eligible individuals and institutions must be registered on the Je-S system to be able to apply. Any eligible institution or individual considering submission of a proposal, but not currently registered to use the system, should consider early registration. Applications should be made by the **Lead Research Organisation** only. For registration or other Je-S related queries, please refer to the Je-S Handbook or contact the Je-S Helpdesk:

- Email: JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org
- Phone: +44 (0) 1793 444164
- Staffed Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm and Fridays 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding bank holidays and other holidays). Out of hours: leave a Voice Mail message

All attachments must be completed using standard font and margin sizes. The sections of

the form not mentioned in the guidance below should be completed in accordance with standard practice when applying for BBSRC grants, further details can be found via the [BBSRC Grants Guide.](#)

How to Apply

Proposals must be submitted using the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system

- **Log in** to the Joint Electronic System (Je-S)
- Select **Documents**
- Add **New Document**
- Select council: **BBSRC**
- Select Document Type: **Studentship proposal**
- Select Scheme: **Training Grants**
- Select Call/Type/Mode: **Centre of Doctoral Training in Food Systems**
- Click **Create Document** and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the form

Please Fill out all Mandatory Sections on Je-S
Mandatory sections to fill in: Proposal Details, Research Organisation, Contact details, Grant holder, Proposal Summary, Attachments.

Proposal Details:
- Start date (Student cohorts should start in 2021/22 academic year)
- Duration (in months) the duration of the grant should be no more than 72 Months (6 years) to cover a maximum of three cohorts of 4-year studentships.
- Your Reference (Assign your own reference to this proposal in order that it is easily identifiable to you in the "Studentship Proposal - Current Documents" menu within Je-S)
- Title (150 characters max)

Research Organisation: Complete details of the lead organisation and department of the individual leading the proposal.
Collaborating Organisations: Where appropriate, complete details for each eligible collaborating Partner organisation and department. You should list all departments whose staff may be involved in student supervision. Please also include details for any Associate Partners.
Contact Details: Give details of the person all BBSRC correspondence should be sent to regarding the processing and outcome of the proposal and to whom any related queries should be directed.
Grant Holder: Complete details of the individual leading the proposal and named on the Portfolio Agreement as responsible.
Proposal Summary: Please provide a high-level summary of the proposed CDT, offering a brief overview of its strategy and vision and description of how this will be managed and delivered across the consortium.
Attachments: Additional Attachment Types- see below for further information on attachments

There will be no specific costings inputted on Je-S as stipend amounts will not be announced until April 2020 but proposed costings must be outlined in the case for support

Additional Attachments:

Additional Attachment	Description
Proposal Cover Letter (Max 1 page)	Applicants should provide a Cover Letter to summarise the application and to describe the aims and its key strengths for delivering interdisciplinary food systems training. **Select 'Proposal Cover Letter' in Je-S.**
Head of Department Statement (any number):	Applicants should provide 1 Head of Department Statement for each Department expected to host studentships (or equivalent in PSREs). **Select 'Head of Department Statement' in Je-S.**
Letter of Support (any number):	Applicants should provide letters of support for all Associate Partners named on the proposal. **Select 'Letter of Support' in Je-S.**
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy document (Max 2 pages):	In this attachment, applicants should provide details of the partnerships strategy for EDI to enable the wide participation of students from all backgrounds, as well as the support systems in place to protect their physical and mental health and wellbeing. Please consider the supplementary Equality, Diversity & Inclusion document when writing your document. **Select 'Other Attachment' in Je-S.**
Case for Support (Max 15 pages):	All of the **assessment criteria** should be addressed in the case for support. **Select 'Case for Support' in Je-S.** Key points to include (please note these are not meant to be comprehensive - please read these in conjunction with the assessment criteria below and the relevant parts of the call text): - Describe how the CDT will ensure interdisciplinarity and coverage across the food system (see 'scope'), including alignment with the wider food systems SPF Progamme in terms of transforming the UK food system for health and sustainability - Details of Working in Partnership with government, business and civil society organisations and strategies for collaborative training (see 'working in partnership') - Strategy for delivering / facilitating student placements in UK food system stakeholder organisations (see 'placements') - Details of research capacity across the potential pool of supervisors, including experience of interdisciplinary research, especially at the interface of the natural and social sciences, the food system and informing policy and practice (see 'scope') - Strategy for developing highly-skilled and employable people, including details of the food systems training that will be delivered, other relevant training and skills development, and details of the research training environment (see 'additional learning opportunities')

	- Strategy for capacity and capability building to ensure students are able to work across the food system and across different disciplines and stakeholders, including how students will be brought together within this CDT and with other related investments, and how they will engage with a wide variety of stakeholders (see 'additional learning opportunities') - Details of the track record of doctoral training and proof that an appropriate level of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) support will be provided to lead and manage the CDT's activities (including project manager) - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion including how you will create an inclusive and supportive training environment for students (see 'equality, diversity & inclusion') - Governance Arrangements (see 'governance') - Monitoring progress and capturing impact, including what success looks like for doctoral candidates and the CDT as a whole, and how the partnership will deliver this (see 'Monitoring and Impact') - Articulate your plan for spending the Flexible Supplement Fund (see 'FSF') - Proposed Costings including details of any collaborative funding secured (see 'costs')

Assessment

The assessment of proposals will include an interview with the management team of the proposed partnerships. This will be scheduled for **June/July 2020** (date to be confirmed) and announcements regarding the allocation of funding are likely to be made **by September 2020.** The first cohort of doctoral candidates will start in **October 2021.**

In making its decisions, the Assessment Panel will assess the information provided by the applicants as part of their CDT proposal against the objectives of the call and judge the Partnership's ability to deliver against them.

Assessment Criteria
1. The extent to which the partnership demonstrates interdisciplinarity and coverage across the food system and how it is proposing to deliver studentships that are at the interface of the natural and social sciences and that cover different parts of the food system.
   o Quality of the Partnerships strategy to ensure all doctoral candidates undertake interdisciplinary research projects integrating aspects of natural and social science and cover different parts of the food system.
   o Ability of the Partnership to demonstrate research capacity and pool of excellent supervisors across the food system for approximately 45 studentships across the lifetime of the CDT.
   o Proven track record of interdisciplinary working, cross-stakeholder ways of working, co-creation and challenge led research.
   o Proven track record of providing excellent career training and development for students.

2. The extent to which the CDT will align its research training to define and deliver transformative change within the UK food system.
    o Evidence of how well the CDT will align its research training to the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund 'Transforming the UK food system' key aims
    o The extent to which the proposals involve collaboration with key stakeholders in the UK food system: including UK government (including devolved administrations), business and civil society organisations. The level of financial and/or in-kind support for the CDT.
    o Ability of the Partnership to address UK policy and practice with its research capacity.
3. The extent to which the Partnership will develop highly skilled people with the specialist understanding and technical capability to produce, manage, interpret, disseminate and use new knowledge and technologies relevant to food systems including:
    o Quality of the Partnership's strategy for centralised training in food systems and the importance of interdisciplinary and cross-stakeholder working to tackle current challenges in transforming the UK food system
    o Ability of the Partnership to link through to current and predicted future skills and knowledge gaps, ensuring that the pipeline is future-ready
    o Evidence of training and support in applying quantitative and qualitative techniques to the production, management, analysis and dissemination of research data.
    o Evidence of provision of relevant training to develop expertise in research design and statistics and/or econometrics appropriate to discipline to ensure research results are robust and reproducible.
    o Evidence of underpinning training relevant to research ethics and reproducibility.
    o Quality of research training environment (staff, infrastructure and facilities etc.).
    o Evidence of the provision of an appropriate level of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) support to lead and manage the CDT's activities for the number of studentships they are allocated.
4. The extent to which the Partnership will produce a cohort of researchers with the capability, awareness and openness to work collaboratively across disciplines & sectors to understand and address academic, economic and societal challenges. Partnerships will provide opportunities and encouragement for doctoral candidates to seek out these experiences, including:
    o Arrangements for establishing and maintaining cohorts of doctoral candidates across the Partnership, including plans for digitising resource material across the Partnership.
    o Evidence of training and experience in communication and engagement with different UK food system stakeholders and description of how these opportunities will be made available.
    o Evidence of access to wider transferable skills development in response to doctoral candidates identifying personal training needs along with the method of how these training needs will be identified by the Partnership.
    o Quality of the proposed policy for doctoral candidate placements through collaborative studentships and PIPS schemes.
    o Quality of the Partnership's strategy to facilitate placements within organisations working in the UK food system, including government, business and civil society organisations.

5. The extent to which the Partnership creates an inclusive and supportive training environment for doctoral candidates, including:
   - Equality, diversity and inclusion plan enabling the wide participation of all doctoral candidates from all backgrounds, including polices for doctoral candidate recruitment, induction, monitoring and thesis submission and completion.
   - Evidence of support systems in place to protect doctoral candidates' physical and mental health and wellbeing.
   - Policy for supervisor selection and training and arrangements for developing supervision skills for academic, postdoctoral and technical staff.
6. The extent to which the Partnership will deliver outcomes / impact from its public investment, including:
   - Description of what success looks like for doctoral candidates and how the Partnership will deliver this, including creating a legacy.
   - Identification of the different impacts the Partnership expects to achieve.
   - Processes in place to measure progress against the programme's purpose and aims and the process of capturing the data and emerging impacts.
   - Processes to integrate doctoral candidates with cohorts from other UKRI doctoral investments through already existing DTPs/ CDT programmes, and evidence provided for mutual benefit to both existing programmes and this CDT.
7. Governance and Monitoring Arrangements
   - Evidence that the Governance arrangements for the management of the Partnership will enable effective decision-making and engagement with all relevant stakeholders.
   - Arrangements for ensuring good practice is shared among the Partners.
   - Arrangements for ensuring UKRI gets value for money in the delivery of PhD training.
   - Arrangements for returning accurate and timely data to UKRI on studentships (i.e. via Je-S Student Details), and for capturing, and reporting, on the outputs and impacts of PhD training across the Partnership.

Further Information

If you have any queries regarding the completion of the Je-S studentship application form, please contact the Je-S Help Desk:

- Email: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk
- Phone: 01793 444164
- Staffed Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm (excluding Bank holidays and other holidays)

Contact

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