

ESRC/NERC DTPs Joint-DTP Studentship Proposals October 2021 Entry

15/06/2020



Primary Supervisors should complete the **online form**.

Due to the limitations of Microsoft Forms, you will not be able to edit your submission once sent. We recommended **keeping a copy using the separate indicative form supplied in Word format**, so you can revise and re-submit the online form if necessary. Please do not submit the indicative form.

Online form opens: 1st July 2020

Deadline for final submission to ARIES (via online form): Friday 11th September 2020

Primary supervisors may only submit one project, but they may also submit project proposals to the general ARIES studentship round and/or to the SeNSS collaborative studentship competition. There are no such limitations for secondary supervisors.

One joint ring-fenced studentship will be funded annually.

Project and candidate selection criteria

The Sift Panels will consider the following criteria in making their selection:

- A. Projects must **fall within the NERC/ESRC remit**, and specifically within one or more of the **five ARIES Research Themes** (see <https://www.aries-dtp.ac.uk/work-with-us/aries-research-themes/>). The project must also fall within one or more of the 13 SeNSS Pathways (www.senss-dtp.ac.uk/about-senss).
- B. The primary supervisor must be from a hosting partner in ARIES and the second supervisor must be from a SeNSS partner offering the relevant pathway. The primary supervisor does not need to be from an institution offering the relevant SeNSS pathway (but can be); the second supervisor does not need to be from an institution that is part of ARIES as well as SeNSS (but can be). For example, Kent (which is not in the Human Geography pathway) may lead a project in the NERC remit and Human Geography pathway, with a second supervisor from Human Geography at Sussex (which is not in ARIES). For all joint studentships under this scheme, supervisors must be appointed from hosting partners of both DTPs, and supervisors should in all cases be from a different university/institute (ideally), different department, or, as a minimum, a clearly distinct unit or centre within the same department. To clarify: the purpose of this scheme is to promote collaboration, and inter-institution proposals will be prioritised. Proposals must clearly demonstrate a genuine cross-Council and cross-disciplinary approach, and the multidisciplinary nature and strength of the collaboration will be a deciding factor in project
- C. The following criteria, which are **equally weighted**, are used to score the project:
- 1. Excellence of the Project Experience**
 - The Supervisor has excellent expertise and experience **in the topic of the research project**, and this is complemented, where appropriate, by that of the Supervisory team
 - The student will be engaged in rewarding and relevant research that will provide them with a **first class research experience**

- The student will be able to demonstrate a level of **independence and originality**, to test ideas and hypotheses, and to make a contribution to learning that would be potentially worthy of publication
- A high-quality research environment exists that will support the student on all levels (i.e. intellectually and practically)

2. Suitability, Feasibility and Quality of the Project

- The project should be **well-suited to a PhD**. It must provide opportunities for intellectual challenge, whilst having a clear expectation that objectives can reasonably be met by a student at postgraduate level
- The proposal should have **clearly articulated aims**, with a methodology that is well defined and **rigorous**
- The project is feasible within the given **financial and time constraints**
- Risks to the project are identified, and **robust contingency plans described** that would allow the student to successfully conclude a programme of doctoral level research in the event of delays or failure of the original work plan

3. Excellence of Training

- Proposals should demonstrate a high level of commitment to excellence in provision of **appropriate and necessary research training** by the Supervisory team and their research groupings
- Training offered should lead to the development of **advanced research skills**, and not necessarily only within the narrower focus of the project (i.e. they should also be **multidisciplinary**)
- Good prospects for **employability** identified

D. The advertisement should be compelling and intelligible to potential applicants, and meet all stated requirements. The proposal may otherwise be rejected, or returned for amendment before the submission by the final deadline date above.

Final selection

Final acceptance of projects submitted by Institutional Sift Panels is made by the ARIES-SeNSS Studentship Selection Panel, which reserves the right to reject proposals or return them for amendment, and to apply strategic criteria as outlined below. The decision of the Panel is final.

Match-funding and CASE Awards

ARIES-SeNSS awards Studentships primarily on the basis of **applicant excellence** (with some variances described below), and offers are made in accordance with the rank-ordered list provided to the ARIES Strategy Board by the Studentship Selection Panel. ARIES has a target of 35% CASE awards and a second target of 70% of awards to be either CASE or Collaborative. Where candidates are equally (or very closely) ranked then the Panel may give priority to the candidate of a CASE or Collaborative project in order to maintain these targets.

ARIES-SeNSS Studentships

ARIES-SENSS studentships include tuition fees and a stipend at standard NERC rates for 3.5 years but a special case may be made for an extended studentship (of up to 4 years) where there are significant training needs in social sciences that might require additional time to complete (for example, taking relevant Masters level modules). For the avoidance of doubt, though, 1+3 studentships cannot be funded under this scheme.

Research Costs

ARIES-SeNSS allows for a **notional** £5,300 research costs per studentship. The actual costs required must be **fully justified in sufficient detail** using the ARIES DTP Research Costs Form. UKRI states that funding is “not intended to relieve you (the awardee) of any part of your normal expenditure”. Our understanding is that UKRI expects host institutes to provide ‘standard’

computer facilities to PhD students. Exceptional cases of need can, however, be considered where justified. For example, the SeNSS has available separate funds to support overseas fieldwork, and ARIES will consider requests for higher costs where required. Requests for funding above the notional value will be considered. Costs that the Strategy Board considers excessive, unnecessary or insufficiently justified may also be disallowed. In addition to the above, ARIES also holds funds of up to £2,500 for the student's attendance at conferences and external training events (conditions will apply).

Supporting Documents

All information on how to submit your supporting documents and relevant forms can be found on the [ARIES website](#).