

## Scottish Graduate School of Social Science – Doctoral Training Partnership

### ESRC Funding and Payment Arrangements 2018/19

#### *[Stipend, Fees, Research Training Support Grant, Overseas Fieldwork Support, Difficult Language Training Support & Overseas Institutional Visits]*

ESRC funding for students' tuition fees, maintenance stipend and research training support grant are sent from the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science - Doctoral Training Partnership (SGSSS-DTP) to the Scottish Universities which have ESRC-funded students. If you are in receipt of a Full Award (fees plus maintenance) you will receive stipend payments from the University at which you are registered.

#### **Stipend**

The standard stipend for full-time students in 2018/19 is £14,777.

ESRC-funded students who were successful in the SGSSS AQM Competition will receive the AQM stipend enhancement of £3,000 (full-time).

For students in Economics (pathway awards only) a stipend supplement of £3,000 per annum per student (full-time) will be included.

It is important that you notify your HEI Admin Lead contact at your University of any changes in your banking details so that payments are not delayed. Any overpayment of maintenance stipend must be returned to your University upon notification from them.

#### **Fees**

Fees for full awards and fees only awards are transferred directly to the University at which you are registered.

#### **Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)**

All students are eligible for RTSG. RTSG should not be considered as a personal allocation for each individual ESRC funded student as the RTSG funding is pooled for flexible use across ESRC-funded students from which funds are allocated on the basis of students needs and priorities.

Students applying for RTSG can spend more than £750 in a given year, so long as the overall spend does not exceed the normal RTSG allowance of £2250 over a 3-year (£3000 for a 1+3) studentship award. Otherwise, SGSSS approval is required. You are advised to keep a record of how much you have claimed from RTSG funding.

Students can apply for multiple training activities within the RTSG calls; they are not limited to one event, so long as, in total, these activities fall within the normal annual or studentship term spend.

Applications should be made **in advance** for a **contribution towards funding** for an activity to be covered by RTSG. We have tri-annual deadlines in the academic year – **18th October, 24th January, and 16th May**. The application form should be completed on GradHub and will be approved by the HEI Admin Lead at your home institution on GradHub. SGSSS approval will only be sought where a student wishes to apply for more than the normal RTSG allowance. Applications must be supported by a **full** case from the student's supervisor and should be reflected in the Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

Expenses are claimed via your home institution and you should contact your HEI Admin Lead for a claim form. You will need to provide receipts for all items you are claiming. You can claim on RTSG until the end of your funding period.

The RTSG is intended to be used to pay for expenses which you, your supervisor or department deem to be in direct support of your research. Examples are:

- UK fieldwork expenses
- UK, EU and overseas conferences and summer schools
- Language training courses usually undertaken in the UK prior to an overseas fieldwork trip
- Reimbursement of interpreters, guides, assistants
- Survey costs e.g. printing, stationery, telephone calls
- Purchase of small items of equipment e.g. cameras, tape recorders, films, cassettes
- Gifts for local informants
- Books and other reading material not available through libraries

RTSG funds can also be combined with the funds provided for overseas fieldwork.

If you are unsure as to whether you may claim for a particular item, please contact your HEI Admin Lead at your home University.

If we are unable to fully fund an overseas fieldwork trip, you may use your RTSG to supplement the costs associated with overseas fieldwork. This is entirely at your discretion.

Please note that the SGSSS - DTP regards it as the responsibility of your institution to provide you with computing facilities. In exceptional circumstances, we may consider requests from award holders to purchase laptop or other computer equipment from this allowance. Any such request must be clearly and adequately justified based on the nature of the research being undertaken and as being essential for the successful completion of the PhD. In these instances, any equipment purchased in excess of £200 will remain the property of the SGSSS-DTP following completion of the award.

### **Overseas Field Work Support (OFW)**

SGSSS-DTP receives an annual amount from ESRC towards the costs of Overseas Fieldwork visits made by doctoral students. This applies to Pathway Studentships, Advanced Quantitative Methods Studentships and Collaborative Studentships.

Only full-time PhD students undertaking the +3 element of their award are eligible for this allowance. It cannot be applied for by Masters' students (including those in the 1 of a 1+3 and the first stage of a

2+2 award). Part-time students can become eligible for an overseas fieldwork grant if they transfer for a fixed period to a full-time status for the duration of the fieldwork.

Full-time ESRC studentship award holders undertaking the +3 element of their award may be able to make **one claim for Overseas Fieldwork Expenses in the life of the award** (funding cannot be provided for students in their writing-up year).

**The Overseas Fieldwork visit must have been outlined in the original proposal, or at the end of the first year of the 1+3 award.**

The purpose of the visit should be to carry out fieldwork that is essential to the successful completion of a student's thesis and be an integral part of the PhD. Applications will only be considered where the supervisor's case for support provides evidence that the Overseas Fieldwork Visit is essential to a student's research.

The Overseas Fieldwork application is for a contribution towards the cost of an overseas fieldwork visit. As there are limited funds available, not all costs will necessarily be met. The allocation of funds is at the DTP's discretion - typically for fieldwork up to 3 months. Students may use their Research Training Support Grant to supplement the costs associated with overseas fieldwork, entirely at the student's own discretion. Standard allowable expenses are as follows:

- **Airfares:** The expectation is that students travel economy, try to use low-cost airlines where possible, and book well in advance. In order to avoid problems with monitoring airfare costs and the possibility of overpriced quotes, students should as a matter of course accompany their request with a print-out/screenshot of possible airfares for a given itinerary and dates from established websites (Opodo, Expedia, etc.). The expectation is that students travel to and from the field only once.
- **Internal travel:** The expectation is that students use public transport. In cases of particularly remote settings where there are no practicable public transport options, a separate case will have to be made for alternative arrangements.
- **Related travel and health expenses:** Visas, research permits, inoculations and insurance will be covered. Students should check with their own University first for insurance as University policies cover student travel.
- **Accommodation:** The normal expectation for fieldwork periods between 6-12 months is that students move out of their UK address to cover overseas accommodation with their stipend (students with families who remain in the UK will not be penalised). Students to look for the most economic accommodation must be sought. AirBnB accommodation or equivalent in the first instance. Self-contained flats will only be supported in exceptional circumstances
- **Subsistence:** The expectation is that students cover these expenses with their stipend. Requests for partial support in cases where the cost of living is significantly higher than in the UK will be considered.
- **Research assistance:** These expenses (e.g. translation and transcription) should be met more appropriately through other sources e.g. RTSG.
- **Communications and equipment:** Students may need to buy a mobile phone sim card for the country they are visiting, but we can't cover phone calls and internet access, etc.

If a student's application for a contribution towards an Overseas Fieldwork Visit is successful, a student may not change the dates or details of the Overseas Fieldwork Visit without first informing the nominated contact at the relevant institution where the student is registered.

Students may include visits to more than one country on their one application. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that appropriate visas are obtained. Applicants should consult the Foreign & Commonwealth Office guidance relating to their intended destination. If the FCO advises against visiting the country concerned, payment of any contribution towards the fieldwork costs will not be authorised. All students must comply with their University's policy on Health & Safety in fieldwork and undertake appropriate risk assessments. A Health & Safety risk assessment will be undertaken with your Supervisor prior to applying.

The duration of an Overseas Fieldwork Visit should not exceed twelve months.

It is strongly recommended that students take out insurance to cover their period of fieldwork and should check with their University's insurance office in the first instance. If for any reason the Overseas Fieldwork Visit is cut short or cancelled, the nominated contact at the relevant institution where the student is registered must be informed immediately. The University may demand a refund less any reasonable expenditure already incurred.

Students must comply with their University's auditing processes and provide receipts as required – your HEI Admin Lead will be able to provide advice on this. Receipts must be provided on return from the Overseas Fieldwork Visit – if the costs are found to be less than the contribution provided, a repayment will be required. Where costs are incurred in advance, receipts must be provided before all funding can be released. If there is any residual funding left in the grant after allocation, then award holders may be entitled to receive a further contribution to their costs.

Applications should be made **in advance** for a **contribution towards funding** for an Overseas Fieldwork Visit. We have tri-annual deadlines in the academic year – **18th October, 24th January, and 16th May**. The application form should be completed on GradHub and will be approved by the HEI Admin Lead at your home institution on GradHub before it is assessed by SGSSS. Applications must be supported by a **full** case from the student's supervisor. Applications will be assessed by the DTP Directorate after which students will be informed of the result of their application via GradHub. The SGSSS-DTP would normally expect to communicate funding decisions within 3 weeks of application.

When assessing applications, the SGSSS Directorate offer the following guidance:

- 1) They will monitor the number of applications but prioritise those where OFW was highlighted in the original research proposal.
- 2) Students and their supervisors must take responsibility for submitting applications that are based on reasonable and accurate costings including appropriate justification of costs. There has been considerable variability in supporting statements provided by supervisors – those with more attention to detail are most helpful in assessing applications.
- 3) Any variations from original plans in the research proposal should be explained in the application.
- 4) Difficult Language Training should be undertaken within Scotland wherever possible rather than in the field. Exceptions need to be fully explained and costed.

- 5) ESRC guidelines relating to fieldwork typically not exceeding one visit for no more than 12 months be taken as appropriate norm – and communication with supervisors be maintained via Skype or similar media, obviating the need for a return visit to HEIs during fieldwork.
- 6) The expectation is that students will work with their supervisors when drawing up applications and that supervisors will check for completeness. It is helpful to us when applications come in well ahead of planned start dates.
- 7) The Directorate will endeavour to be as transparent as possible in explaining its decisions.

### **Difficult Language Training (DLT)**

The SGSSS-DTP will consider paying up to one year's extra support if a student needs to acquire or develop a working ability with a difficult language in order to carry out fieldwork (including for the purposes of UK fieldwork) or other parts of their research; this is over and above the funded length of the studentship. Students should consult with their supervisor and HEI Admin Lead regarding any request for difficult language training. Students allocated a 2+3 award that incorporates language training cannot apply for a further extension.

ESRC students are eligible to apply for this allowance if they are:

- In the doctoral (+3) phase of their award, and
- The proposed language training was outlined in the original research application. Exceptions to this regulation will be considered on individual merit.

Students in the Masters element of their award are not eligible to apply for a Difficult Language Training extension.

The length of the extension is determined by the type and nature of the language to be learnt, combined with the student's own background. Extensions beyond six months are only normally allowed if the student needs to spend an extended period overseas in order to obtain these language skills. Please consult the ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide for details on how to calculate the length of your Difficult Language Training extension.

Language training may take place in the field and in the UK. If language training takes place while a student is on overseas fieldwork, an application for Overseas Fieldwork expenses will also need to be submitted. Whilst there are often clear advantages to in-country training, options for receiving language training within the UK should be fully considered in the first instance.

Students who have followed a pre-described Masters course are expected to have already made some degree of language progress and may therefore only apply for a maximum extension of six months.

Retrospective claims will not be accepted, including where an extension has been further lengthened once training has begun.

Students must comply with their University's auditing processes and provide receipts as required – your HEI Admin Lead will be able to provide advice on this. Receipts for Difficult Language Training expenses must be provided – if the costs are found to be less than the contribution provided, a

repayment will be required. Where costs are incurred in advance, receipts must be provided before all funding can be released.

### ***How to apply***

- 1) The student and their supervisor should complete the SGSSS-DTP Difficult Language Training Application Form on GradHub. This should contain sufficient detail to show that their home institution agrees with the need for difficult language training and should be reflected in the Training Needs Analysis (TNA).
- 2) The application should be made within 6 months of commencing the PhD programme.
- 3) We have tri-annual deadlines in the academic year – **18th October, 24th January, and 16th May**. The application form should be completed on GradHub and will be approved by the HEI Admin Lead at your home institution on GradHub before it is assessed by SGSSS. Applications must be supported by a **full** case from the student's supervisor. Applications will be assessed by the DTP Directorate after which students will be informed of the result of their application via GradHub. The SGSSS-DTP would normally expect to communicate funding decisions within 3 weeks of application.
- 4) Applications will be assessed by the DTP Directorate after which students will be informed of the result of their application via their own HEI DTP Administrator. The SGSSS-DTP would normally expect to communicate funding decisions within 1 month of application.

**Note:** A Difficult Language Training funding extension will require institutional approval for an equivalent extension to the PhD registration period.

### **Overseas Institutional Visits (OIV)**

All full-time ESRC PhD studentship holders funded through the SGSSS-DTP are eligible to apply for financial support for Overseas Institutional Visits (OIVs) within their studentship period. This additional funding is intended to provide applicants with the opportunity to establish research networks, to disseminate early research findings, to participate in seminars and other academic activities that are directly relevant to their research, or to undertake specialist research training that is not available within the UK.

Applicants are asked to read and note the following OIV scheme guidance before completing the application form.

- Applications can only be considered from 'research' award holders in the +3 component of their studentship. Students in the initial 'training' year of a 1+3 award are not eligible to apply.
- As OIVs are intended to be an integral part of the student's research training, any visit in the first year of the PhD must not commence within the first three months of the studentship period. Additionally, visits taking place in the final year of the studentship must be completed at least three months before the end date of the award and prior to the extension period being implemented. OIVs are best undertaken in the early part of 2<sup>nd</sup> year (for research training) or early part of 3<sup>rd</sup> year (for networking and dissemination).
- Applicants should consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office guidance relating to their intended destination. Visits must not be undertaken if the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

advises against visiting the country concerned. Further guidance can be found at [www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad).

- Only one application can be made during period of the studentship. Repeat visits to institutions will not normally be supported. If applicants are proposing to undertake more than one visit to the same overseas university or research institution they should **provide clear and strong justification as to why more than one visit is required in the case for support**.
- Applications should normally be for a visit to an overseas University; however, in exceptional circumstances, applications to esteemed research organisations will be considered. Applicants will need to demonstrate within their application the justification for visiting the research organisation.
- OIV's are **not** designed to cover fieldwork expenses. Applicants should contact their university's HEI Admin Lead regarding the procedure for fieldwork visits. It is recognised that under certain circumstances an element of fieldwork might be undertaken in what is principally an OIV. These circumstances should be clearly justified in the application.
- Successful applicants in receipt of a full studentship award will receive a paid extension equal to the period of time spent overseas. Fees only students will receive an extension to their fees and thesis submission date only.
- Confirmation of approval and the level of support will be sent to you by your HEI Admin Lead contact prior to your first visit. You must not commence any visit until you have received formal written approval from your nominated HEI Admin Lead.
- Students must comply with their University's auditing processes and provide receipts as required – your HEI Admin Lead will be able to provide advice on this.
- All successful applicants are required to submit an end of award report to the SGSSS-DTP within one month of the end of the OIV. Students undertaking more than one visit should submit a report on completion of each separate visit. It is expected that your supervisor and the main academic contact at the overseas university or esteemed research institution will provide comments on the benefits of the visits. Failure to submit a satisfactory end of award report will result in the SGSSS-DTP withholding repayment of OIV expenses to your home university in the annual claims process.
- Retrospective claims will not be considered.

For further information contact your nominated HEI Admin Lead. (Full list available from the SGSSS Website). The ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide also provides information on the studentship funding and training funds at <https://esrc.ukri.org/files/skills-and-careers/studentships/postgraduate-funding-guide/>

## How to apply

The application form should be completed on GradHub and will be approved by the HEI Admin Lead at your home institution on GradHub before it is assessed by SGSSS. Applications must be supported by a full case from the student's supervisor. Applications will be assessed by the DTP Directorate after which students will be informed of the result of their application via GradHub. The SGSSS-DTP would normally expect to communicate funding decisions within 3 weeks of application.

**Applicants must allow at least three months between the deadline and commencing the visit (e.g. if your application was received on 31 January, the earliest you would be able to commence your visit would be 1 May).**

The SGSSS-DTP will aim to process and send applications to assessors within five working days of the deadline. The SGSSS-DTP will normally communicate funding decisions to nominated HEI Admin Leads within three weeks of the deadline.

## **How to complete the application form**

Each OIV application will be considered on its own merits by a panel of academics. When completing the application form applicants are advised to consider the following:

### **Applicant details**

Please ensure that you complete all information in section one including:-

- The start date of your ESRC award
- The year you are in of your PhD
- The type of award you are on (e.g. 1+3 / +3)

### **Details of the visit/s**

Applications can be made for up to three separate OIVs to the same host university or research institution during the course of the studentship as long as the total period of the visits does not exceed three months.

Please ensure you provide:

- The start and end dates for each visit.
- The full address of the host university or research institution
- The total number of weeks for each visit

### **Case for support**

Applicants should indicate the purpose of the visit and how it relates to their doctoral research. Please describe what has been achieved to date and how the proposed visit will extend/enhance this. Reasons for such a visit might include establishing research networks, disseminating early research findings, participating in seminars and other academic activities that are directly relevant to the student's research, or undertaking specialist research training that is not available within the UK.

If applicants are proposing to undertake more than one visit to the same university or research institution they should provide clear justification as to why more than one visit is required.

- Applicants are asked to demonstrate the potential benefits of the proposed visit/s to their current or future academic career and, in particular, to demonstrate how the visit/s will offer 'added value' to their PhD experience and how this contributes to training needs as outlined in your Training Needs Analysis.
- If the OIV is to be undertaken for research training purposes, the applicant must demonstrate why the training is integral to their research, and also why this training cannot be undertaken within the UK.

Please note that the OIV scheme is not to be used for undertaking fieldwork; however in exceptional circumstances there may be a requirement to carry out some fieldwork as part of an OIV. In these cases the applications must be of high quality and be integral to the work of the PhD and the fieldwork component is not being covered from the Overseas Fieldwork application process.

The case for support should not exceed two sides of A4.

### **Detailing visit costs and justifications**

Applicants should clearly break-down the proposed costs of the visit with notes detailing the justification for each cost.

Information on flights and accommodation should be provided, in addition to costs for general living expenses. The costs of the visit should be reasonable and dependent on the country, time period and activity proposed. We expect students to look for University accommodation or apartments/Airbnb rather than hotels. Students should contact their University's insurance office regarding travel insurance in the first instance.

Applicants may wish to liaise with their HEI Admin Lead to complete this section.

### **Monitoring the scheme**

Applicants are asked to provide further information on how they heard about this opportunity and how the application process could be improved.

### **Confirmation of support from the home university**

Supervisors are asked to comment on the quality of the student's research to date and how the proposed visit will extend/enhance this. If the OIV is to be undertaken for research training purposes, please explain why the training is integral to their research, and also why this training cannot be undertaken within the UK.

Students are expected to continue their PhD research and training throughout the course of the visit/s and maintain regular contact with their supervisor. Supervisors are asked to demonstrate what arrangements are in place to meet this requirement.

### **Confirmation of support from the proposed host university or esteemed research institution**

The main academic contact at the host university or research institution should provide written support for the proposed visit. This should include confirmation of the work plan for the proposed visit/s, details of the academic facilities to which the student will have access, as well as the student's registration status at the host university or research institution during the visit period.

***SGSSS-DTP***

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