

# Doctoral Training Partnerships: Background and evaluation

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Head of Research Careers

DTP2 – Town Hall Meeting

30 January 2018



# NERC's training portfolio

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## Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs)

'Responsive' (i.e. discovery science)

240 new studentships per year

## Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs)

'Directed' (i.e. strategic)

24 new studentships per year

## Advanced Training

Short Courses, Policy Internships, Research Experience Placements (REPs)

## Other

Strategic investments to address emerging skills needs




# What is a DTP?

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“DTPs provide excellent postgraduate research opportunities across the [NERC science remit](#), as well as varied professional and technical skills and personal development training.”

## Key aspects of DTP training

- Research topics chosen by students and supervisors
  - Students trained in cohorts
  - Training provided in a multidisciplinary environment
  - Collaboration between organisations and departments, and between academia and end-users
  - Students develop skills and experience to equip them for their future careers (both inside *and* outside academia)
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# DTP1 – investment

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- DTP1 = 15 DTPs funded for 5 annual intakes. Total of 240 four-year studentships awarded per year



- Limited specification from NERC – encouraged innovative approaches
- Wide variety of DTP training models in place
- Increased student starts due to matched funding from DTP partners



# DTP1 – mid-term evaluation 2016/17

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## Objectives

- Monitor individual DTP performance
- Assess success of DTP scheme and inform future commissioning

## Methodology

- Surveys & Interviews



[Full details online](#)

## Outputs

Independent report on success of scheme (Has informed DTP2)

NERC Management response to report & recommendations

Individual DTP feedback on performance

## DTP1 evaluation outcome

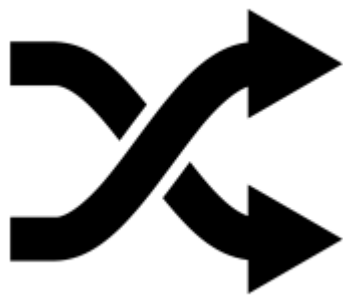
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- Good practice identified
- No one model more successful or preferred
- Lessons learned – opportunity to address through DTP2



### Conclusion:

DTPs are an effective training mechanism



DTP2 should enable change and innovation



# DTP2 call

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**Vicki Durbridge**

Senior Programme Manager, Doctoral  
Training

DTP2 – Town Hall Meeting  
30 January 2018



# DTPs phase 2 – Announcement of Opportunity

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## Key dates:

8 Jan – Launch

7 Mar – Notification of Intent

16 May – Proposals

Mid-Jul – PI response

End Sep – Awards announced



### Doctoral Training Partnerships Announcement of Opportunity

Issued on: Monday 8 January 2018  
Notification of Intent deadline: 16:00 on Wednesday 7 March 2018  
Proposals deadline: 16:00 on Wednesday 16 May 2018

#### 1. Summary

NERC invests in Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) to provide excellent postgraduate research opportunities across the NERC science remit as well as varied professional and technical skills and personal development training. Proposals are invited to host and deliver the second phase of NERC DTPs student intake of this second phase of DTPs will begin in October 2019.





# What's the same?

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## Funding available:

- Min. 240 notional studentships per year, all with 4 years' worth of funding
- Five annual student intakes (2019–2023)
- Expect to fund 10–20 DTPs, each with between 12 and 24 notional studentships per year
- NERC contribution to management costs (£1500 per notional studentship)
- Flexibility to support individual students for 3–4 years



# What's the same?

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## ‘Notional studentships’ vs. actual studentships (i.e. funded period of study):

Notional studentship	Individual/actual studentship
Method of calculating amount of funding awarded through a Doctoral Training Grant (DTG)	Expected funded period of study, agreed between Research Organisation (RO) and student at outset
Always 4 years' duration – in line with NERC's thesis submission window	Can be between 3 years (min.) and 4 years (max.) duration (submission window still 4 years for all)
Comprises stipend, fees, RTSG* + management cost contribution	Comprises stipend, fees + RTSG
Fixed amount each year (based on RCUK minima)	Stipend and RTSG amounts may vary depending on project and training requirements
Determines the duration of the DTG (i.e. the award given by NERC to the DTP)	Determines the duration of an individual student's award (i.e. the award given by the RO to the student to complete a PhD)

\*Research Training Support Grant – contribution towards costs of research (e.g. consumables, specialist equipment, fieldwork etc.) and training (e.g. conference attendance, training course costs, etc.).



# What's the same?

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## Requirements:

- Any area of NERC remit
- No min./max. consortium size
- No geographical stipulations
- No research income threshold
- No formal matched funding requirements
- Basic training requirements (i.e. NERC remit + transferrable skills)
- Flexibility regarding design of training programme



# What's new – Eligibility

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- Organisations can only act as the **Administrative Lead** on **one** DTP proposal
  - OK to act as partner in multiple bids (feasibility will be considered by panel; must be genuine partnership)
- Harmonisation of CASE partner eligibility criteria with other CASE schemes:
  - Those eligible for research funding will **not** be eligible to act as a CASE partner in DTPs
  - Includes Research Centres and [Independent Research Organisations](#) (IROs)



# What is a CASE studentship?

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Objectives of CASE: “to provide doctoral students with a first-rate, challenging research training experience, within the context of a mutually beneficial collaboration between academic research organisations and non-academic partner organisations in the private, public and civil society sectors”

- CASE partner must be involved in project formulation and bring added value to the studentship.
  - CASE partner must provide supervision.
  - CASE partner must contribute at least £1000 per year to the studentship (payment via Research Organisation towards RTSG) for the duration of the studentship.
  - CASE partner must meet additional expenses (e.g. T&S) incurred by students visiting and working at their organisation and contributes in cash or in kind towards necessary materials whilst students are based at their organisation.
  - The student must spend part of their training period with the CASE partner over the course of their studentship – minimum of 3 months and not normally more than 18 months.
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# What's new – Collaborative training

## NERC response to DTP evaluation:

“CASE studentships present a recognised (and successful) mechanism for supporting collaborative training. NERC will continue to encourage conversion to CASE studentships.”;

“NERC actively encourages all types of non-CASE collaboration within DTPs, which are also highly valued.”

## Changes for DTP2

- CASE conversion requirement now 25% of notional studentship allocation (previously 30%)
  - Applied over duration of DTP award
  - Compliance to be monitored and progress/predicted trajectory reviewed after 2 student intakes
- Collaborative (non-CASE) studentships to be formally recognised and monitored as success measure



# What's new – Training requirements

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## Mandatory training elements:

- Access to internships/placements/work experience opportunities for all DTP students
- Explicit careers and CPD training at suitably early stage of PhD
- Strong end-user engagement with all levels of training (i.e. projects, cohort training, training programme design)
- Dedicated professional skills & innovation/translation training available to all DTP students
- Access to appropriate data skills training for all DTP students
- TNA (or equivalent) at outset of training – programmes to allow tailoring to individual needs
- Opportunities to network across disciplines and across DTP/CDT/Research Council cohorts



# What's new – Operational Management

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## Central DTP management structure:

Relevant end-users to be represented within DTP management structures

## Training costs:

All training activities must be supported using money from DTP grant.

This includes:

- All mandatory training outlined in AO
- RCUK Policy Internship scheme

## Resource:

Adequate support to be committed by DTP for administrative and strategic management resource





# Assessment process

- Right to reply (written comments)
- All proposals treated equally (individual DTP evaluation feedback not provided to panel)
- Panel representation:
  - Research expertise
  - Training expertise
  - End-user expertise
  - Doctoral training management expertise



## Timeline:

Proposals submitted

May 2018

Panel provides written comments

June 2018

PI response

July 2018

Assessment panel

August 2018

September 2018



# Thank you

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