

2017 Industrial CASE Studentship Competition

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. How long is an Industrial CASE studentship?

A. Successful proposals will be offered funding for a studentship of up to 4 academic years. Individual PhDs must have a duration of between 3 and 4 years (the length will depend on the project and the student) and students must submit within 4 years of registration.

Q. What can the Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) be used for?

A. The RTSG is intended to maximise benefit to the student and their training experience by enhancing the project in whichever way is deemed most appropriate to the individual project/student in question. The RTSG is typically used to support project costs associated with the student's research (e.g. specialist equipment, lab consumables, facility access, fieldwork costs and conference attendance, etc.). If all parties agree, then it is permissible in exceptional circumstances for the RTSG to be used to enhance a student's stipend. The RTSG should **not** be used to purchase laptops or basic computing equipment, unless it is specialist equipment essential for the completion of the project.

Q. Can I be named as the lead academic supervisor on more than one Industrial CASE application?

A. An academic supervisor cannot be named as the lead supervisor on more than one application per Industrial CASE competition round.

Q. Are you able to have multiple academic supervisors from different Research Organisations (ROs)?

A. Yes – one supervisor must be based at the lead RO; additional supervisors can be based at different ROs. The lead RO will be the grant-holding RO and will be responsible for managing the studentship funds.

Q. Is there a limit on the number of supervisors allowed?

A. All proposals should list a minimum of two supervisors – one from the lead RO and one from the non-academic (CASE) partner. There is no maximum number of supervisors per Industrial CASE proposal.

Q. What are the student eligibility rules?

Please refer to the [RCUK Terms and Conditions of Research Council Training Grants](#) for information on student eligibility. The Research Councils place full reliance on ROs to undertake residential eligibility checks and do not comment on individual student eligibility queries. Supervisors and potential students who require advice on eligibility should contact the RO's Registrar's/Admissions Office, or equivalent, in the first instance.

Q. Do you limit how many CASE studentships a non-academic (CASE) partner can have at the same time? (For example, if the non-academic (CASE) partner has one existing NERC and one existing EPSRC studentship, will the partner be eligible to apply with us for this round?)

A. There is no limit to the number of CASE studentships a non-academic (CASE) partner can have, as long as they are able to meet the minimum CASE partner requirements.

Q. What if there is more than one CASE partner?

A. The minimum CASE partner contribution **per studentship** is £1000pa and support of a placement of at least 3 months. This can be provided collectively by multiple CASE partners if they wish. Alternatively, multiple CASE partners may wish to contribute more than this minimum over the course of the studentship. These details should be agreed with the lead RO and made clear on the Non-academic (CASE) Partner Form when submitting the application. Please refer to page 3 of the Applicant Guidance for further details of the CASE partner contribution requirements.

Q. What is the minimum time period a student should spend at the CASE partner?

A. It is mandatory that student spends a part of their training period with the CASE partner. The non-academic placement period must be a minimum of three months, over the period of the studentship, and would not normally exceed eighteen months. The non-academic placement does not have to be completed in one continuous period.

Q. Can IROs act as a CASE partner?

A. Yes, [Independent Research Organisations \(IROs\), as defined by RCUK](#), may act as a CASE partner. As of November 2016, any organisation currently [approved as an IRO](#) for one Research Council is now eligible for all Research Councils.

Q. Will there be a London weighting available to studentships studying at a London-based Research Organisation?

A. Yes, in line with the [Conditions of RCUK Training Grants](#), NERC will add a London weighting to the training grant of students studying at a London-based Research Organisation. To be eligible, students must be studying within the Metropolitan Police District or be based at Imperial College, Silwood Park or Brunel for a minimum continuous period of 12 months.

Q. How will the Industrial CASE proposals be assessed?

A. The key assessment criterion will be the overall quality of the research training environment offered by the academic institution and the non-academic (CASE) partner. There will be no interview or external peer-review of the proposals. Instead, each proposal will be assessed by an expert Assessment Panel based on:

- Research excellence (30%)
- Training excellence and multidisciplinary training environments (30%)
- Collaboration and Impact (20%)
- Student recruitment, monitoring and management (20%)

An overall score out of 10 will then be calculated using the above weightings. Please note, proposals that score less than 5 in any of the above categories may not be funded. For more information on the scoring descriptors that will be used by the Assessment Panel, please refer to Annex A of the [Guidance for Applicants](#) document.

Q. Where can I find information on the assessment panel?

A. The assessment panel will be published online on the [NERC website](#).

Q. When and where will I find out if I have been successful?

A. The Assessment Panel meet 3-5 October 2017, with applicants notified via email of the outcome of their proposal by the end of October 2017. This email can be used as confirmation of funding for the purposes of initiating recruitment. Confirmation of 2017/18 funding levels will be announced around April 2018, at which point NERC will be able to issue official offer letters, with the studentship commencing from 1st September 2018 onwards.