



CHASE studentship competition for October 2022 entry Briefing note for staff

This document is to assist and inform all staff involved in the CHASE studentship competition. Enquiries may be directed to your institutional CHASE leads, or to enquiries@chase.ac.uk

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Introduction

CHASE will offer up to 56 AHRC studentships for entry in October 2022. This will be the fourth round of studentship funding offered under the DTP2 block grant. This grant will offer studentship awards via the following institutions:

Birkbeck, University of London
The Courtauld Institute of Art
Goldsmiths, University of London
SOAS University of London

University of East Anglia
University of Essex
University of Kent
University of Sussex

All studentships will be allocated on merit, with no pre-allocation to any CHASE institution or discipline. As previously, candidates will apply to the institution at which they wish to study; at this stage, they also need to indicate if they would like to be considered for CHASE AHRC funding.

Each CHASE institution (at departmental level or equivalent) remains responsible for reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, making offers and allocating supervisors. CHASE institutions will follow best practice in equal opportunities, ensuring that all potential applicants have fair access to funding. Proposed candidates will be forwarded to a 'Primary Selection Panel' at the institution to which they are applying.

A main contact supervisor (or two supervisors in the case of co-supervision between institutions) must be identified before the application can be considered by the Primary Selection Panel. All interviews and selection at home institutions must take place before 9 March 2022.

Candidates for CHASE funding must apply using the online application portal at www.chase.ac.uk/apply

The Primary Selection Panels have responsibility for making nominations to one of the CHASE selection panels. CHASE will run 4 selection panels to consider applications forwarded from institutions, as follows:

- A. History, Thought and Systems of Belief
- B. Art History and Visual Cultures
- C. Media and Creative Practice
- D. Literature, Language and Culture

Each CHASE panel will include a range of expertise and one subject specialist from each CHASE institution (i.e. normally a panel of 8, with quoracy set at 5-8); panels will be chaired by a member of the CHASE Management Board (on rotation, with 4 different institutions providing the Chairs each year). The recommendations of the panels will be combined into a single ranked list by the CHASE Management Board at its meeting in April 2022 and offer letters sent out by 21 April 2022.

CHASE will also offer a Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme alongside the main competition. Please see the separate call for projects for details.

Changes for 2021-22

The CHASE Management Board has made the following changes to the selection process for 2021-22:

1. Stuart Hall Foundation studentships

CHASE is delighted to announce a new partnership with the Stuart Hall Foundation (SHF) to support at least two studentships a year for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates to undertake doctoral research in arts and humanities. These are offered in addition to the 56 main competition studentships.

As well as the usual benefits of a CHASE studentship, successful awardees will benefit from working with SHF to develop their career and research profile. Post holders will be able to engage with and contribute to the resources and networks of the Stuart Hall Foundation, including an annual gathering of Stuart Hall Foundation Scholars and Fellows, and privileged access to the work of the Foundation.

The studentships build on existing relationships between the Foundation and member institutions of the CHASE consortium.

CHASE is a consortium of partners committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). As part of its efforts to ensure equal opportunity and access to doctoral study for BAME students and other under-represented minority groups, CHASE also includes a Widening Participation Statement as part of the studentship application form. The intention is that excellent candidates should not be excluded from funding opportunities by their academic record being impacted by known societal factors at any stage of the competition.

2. Single funding application deadline

In order to allow institutions more flexibility to process applications from international candidates, this year the Management Board has set a single deadline for funding applications, and asked institutions to set individual deadlines for applications for study.

Advertising

The CHASE studentship competition will be launched on Monday 18 October 2021, and will be advertised as follows:

Centrally – via the CHASE website, and via the @CHASE_DTP Twitter feed.

Externally – Advertisements will be placed in FindaPhD.com and jobs.ac.uk, the most widely used resources for students seeking doctoral funding.

Locally – via institutional funding webpages. We also welcome notifications on subject-specific mailing lists, and appropriate post-holders in faculties or departmental areas are invited to use the template in the appendix to this document.

Timetable for recruitment and selection

Monday 18 October	CDA project call opens to supervisors at CHASE institutions
Monday 18 October	Applications open for 2021-22 studentship competition including SHF studentships
Friday 22 October	Online applicant workshop for SHF studentships
Friday 29 October	Online applicant workshop with for main competition
Friday 5 November	Online applicant workshop for SHF studentships
Friday 19 November	Online applicant workshop with for main competition
December - January	Institutions set deadlines for applications for study
Monday 17 January 2022	Deadline for CDA project proposals from supervisors
Friday 28 January 12noon	Deadline for completed CHASE funding applications
TBC February	Management Board meets and selects Collaborative Doctoral Award projects for advertisement
Friday 18 February	CHASE team notifies Collaborative Doctoral Award project applicants of outcomes - opportunity to revise and resubmit if necessary
Friday 18 February	Online briefing session for CHASE panel members
Monday 7 March	Collaborative Doctoral Award studentships advertised on CHASE website
Wednesday 9 March	Deadline for institutional nominations to be sent to CHASE
Friday 11 March	CHASE panel members receive applications for consideration
Friday 18 March	Deadline for panel members to return individual rankings to CHASE
Monday 28 – Thursday 31 March	CHASE selection panels convene - selection panels to return scores within 24 hours Panel A: Monday 28 March Panel B: Tuesday 29 March Panel C: Wednesday 30 March Panel D: Thursday 31 March
Monday 4 – Friday 8 April	Stuart Hall Foundation read highest-scoring applications for SHF studentship and make recommendations
Monday 4 – Friday 8 April	CHASE Management Board members read selected applications for moderation
TBC early April	CHASE Management Board meets and agrees final list for funding
Wednesday 21 April	All applicants informed of outcome (Successful, waiting list, unsuccessful)
Friday 7 May	Deadline for applications to CDA studentship projects
Monday 10 – Friday 28 May	CDA supervisors assess applications and make recommendations to Management Board
Monday 31 May	Management Board ratifies CDA recommendations via email
Wednesday 2 June	CDA applicants notified of outcome

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Please see the [CHASE statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#).

As part of its efforts to ensure equal opportunity and access to doctoral study for BAME students and other under-represented minority groups, CHASE includes a Widening Participation Statement as part of the studentship application form. This is an optional question that gives candidates the opportunity to provide context on aspects of their preparedness and on their motivation to undertake doctoral study, including obstacles that they may have overcome. The intention is that excellent candidates should not

be excluded from funding opportunities by their academic record being impacted by known societal factors at any stage of the competition.

In addition, eligible candidates may also apply to be considered for the Stuart Hall Foundation Studentships (see below).

We will also be seeking better representation of minority groups in CHASE selection panels at all stages of the competition.

Stuart Hall Foundation Studentships

Applicants who are from a Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic background may apply for a Stuart Hall Foundation Studentship. As well as consideration via the main studentship competition, their application will be considered by the Foundation for one of at least two awards in 2022.

To apply, candidates will complete the application form as usual, and indicate via a check box in the Eligibility question if they would like to be considered for an SHF studentship. If so, they will be asked to complete a short additional statement about how the applicant and the project connect with the aims of the Foundation.

The highest ranking SHF studentship applications from the CHASE selection panels will be shared with the Foundation, and they will provide non-binding recommendations for consideration by the CHASE Management Board.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be judged against the following criteria:

<p>1. Research proposal (50%)</p> <p>(evidence: Research proposal, supervisor statement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is clearly-written and demonstrates engagement with an academic field at a high level of sophistication. • The project demonstrates original thinking in its field (or fields) • The project is clearly situated in its field (or fields) • The methodology proposed clearly demonstrates the viability of the planned research. • The planned research is described in a way that inspires confidence that it will definitely be completed within the funded period. • The application demonstrates excellent motivation for the research project. • The proposed research may be timely or urgent in nature, but not all excellent projects will be time-critical or topical.
<p>2. Preparedness for research (25%)</p> <p>(evidence: academic record, professional achievements, Widening Participation Statement, references)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant demonstrates understanding of appropriate research skills required for successful completion of the project. • The applicant has appropriate training at Master's level or equivalent (including experience gained outside of higher education) to undertake the project. • The applicant's references fully support the applicant's preparedness for doctoral study. • The applicant demonstrates outstanding competency in organisational skills and initiative through their previous activities, and a capacity to overcome obstacles. • Where a widening participation statement is provided, it gives context on aspects of the candidate's preparedness and on their motivation to undertake doctoral study. CHASE is committed to addressing inequalities in participation in our DTP, and encourages applications from all under-represented groups, including people with disabilities, ethnic minorities (especially Black British), lower income families and mature students. Assessors should consider information provided in the widening participation statement alongside other answers in this section.
<p>3. Suitability of research environment (25%)</p> <p>(evidence: Research proposal, supervisor statement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research environment (as constituted by the proposed supervision, the home department(s) or equivalent, the institutional support (including available archives, sources, research centres), any external organisations) is appropriate to the project. • The applicant has given clear thought to the fit between their project and their proposed research environment. • The supervisor statement fully supports the project's fit with the proposed research environment.

References and supervisor statement

Candidates are asked to nominate two referees. Referees will be asked to comment on the academic record of the candidate, and on their preparedness for doctoral study. References from non-academic sources (e.g. publishers) are welcome but must cover these areas. One or both referees may be the candidate's prospective supervisors.

In addition, the primary supervisor will be asked to provide a statement in support of the candidate's application for funding for their proposed project. This is separate from any reference supporting the candidate's application for a place at the home institution.

While references will focus on the quality of candidates and their preparedness for research, the supervisor's statement should focus on i) the quality of the proposal, including the research environment (at both 'home' institution and, where possible, within CHASE) and the 'fit' with supervisor's expertise and interests. This statement does not need to be lengthy (500 words) but it does need to address the candidate's proposal directly in terms of its strength, interest and feasibility. It may draw on interview performance.

Additional requirements for supervisor statement

- If the proposal is highly technical and its significance unlikely to be fully appreciated by a non-specialist reader, the supervisor statement should be clear on the proposal's merits within its disciplinary field.
- Supervisor statements should support the necessity of any period of language study applied for.
- Supervisors of creative practice projects are asked to provide details of the regulations under which the project will be assessed (e.g. relationship between creative work and critical commentary). This will help reviewers to compare projects from different institutions.

Process for recruitment and selection using the online application system

Stage 1: Application

As previously, access to the application form will be controlled by CHASE institutions. Candidates must have applied for a postgraduate research programme at their chosen institution to be given access to the CHASE application form. Institutions will allow access to the CHASE form at different stages in their selection process; please check your institutional process and deadlines. Please note that as in previous years there is a single deadline for all parts of the process, rather than separate deadlines for applicants and supervisors/referees.

- 1) Once a candidate is approved, administrators can send them the access code for the system. (Note: candidates can create an account on the system without the access code, but they will not be able to complete or submit an application.)

- 2) Once registered, the candidate will create an application with six tasks to complete:
 - Contact details
 - Project proposal
 - Preparedness for research
 - Equality monitoring form
 - Reference request form
 - Supervisor statement request form

These must be done in sequence: the project proposal task must be complete before the candidate can request a supervisor statement. All tasks must be completed before the application can be submitted, including receipt of references and supervisor statement.

Applicants will be asked if they wish to be considered for a Stuart Hall Foundation Studentship. If so, they will be asked to provide a short additional statement about how their project connects with the aims of the Foundation.

References

Candidates must nominate two referees to provide references via the system. The candidate completes referee details (name and email address), and the referee receives an email with instructions to complete their reference. The candidate may resend this email as a reminder if necessary. Referees may copy and paste an existing reference if preferred. References should describe the qualities of the candidate, and their preparedness for research. The candidate is notified by email when references have been submitted.

Supervisor statement

The candidate completes supervisor details and the supervisor receives an email, as above.

Supervisor statements should complement the references, commenting on the project's fit with the supervisor's interests, and the institutional/CHASE research environments, as well as providing context for technical proposals. The candidate is notified by email when the supervisor statement is submitted.

Once all tasks are complete, the candidate may submit the application. The application automatically transfers to Stage 2 on submission. The candidate receives an email confirming submission. The deadline for funding applications is 12 noon on Friday 28 January.

Stage 2: Institutional Selection

This stage is managed locally by CHASE academic and administrative leads. Due to factors of size and institutional policies and procedures, CHASE institutions will have different processes to arrive at the shortlist to progress to Stage 3. Please check your institutional process and deadlines. Guidance will be available

- 1) Institutional selection processes will result in a shortlist of 17 candidates to go forward to Stage 3, and will also identify the panels to which they will be submitted.
- 2) The administrative lead completes an online form to identify candidates to progress, and provides a list via email for the central CHASE team to double-check. Central CHASE team manually transfers these candidates to Stage 3 after 9 March 2022.

Stage 3: CHASE selection panels

- 1) Panel members attend a briefing webinar on 18 February (or view online afterwards). This will include a calibration exercise to help reviewers use the grading scale consistently.
- 2) Panel members log in to SM Apply and view applications assigned to their panel, and score them against the criteria.
- 3) The CHASE team collates all scores and circulates to panel members in advance of the panel meetings. Scores are only circulated once all panel members have ranked the applications.
- 4) At the panel meetings, panels consider a list of applicants ranked by average scores, and amend scores based on discussion.
- 5) The Management Board receives a consolidated list of applications with panel scores for each, ranked by score. The Board also receives a sample set of applications across the scoring range to assist with moderation across panels.
- 6) At its meeting, the Board considers the consolidated list. It receives a report from the external observer who has attended all four panel meetings, and reports from the four panel chairs. Based on these reports, and on consideration of the sample set of applications, the Board is able to moderate the scores assigned by the panels as it sees fit. The Board also receives and considers recommendations from the Stuart Hall Foundation for award of SHF Studentships.
- 7) The Board issues a final list. AHRC funding is applied to the highest-scored applications. Institutions will contribute 1/3 of each studentship in matched funds, and fee waivers to International candidates awarded studentships.
- 8) Candidates will be informed of the initial outcome of the process by 21 April 2022.

Application process – roles and responsibilities

Task	Institution	CHASE	Notes
Promoting the opening of application period	Ensure relevant information on website and provide link for CHASE website.	Ensure relevant information on CHASE website, pointing towards institutional contact/application pages. Produce template for institutional website pages.	
Application enquiries	Log and answer enquiry (according to institutional procedure).	Forward any enquiries to relevant institution.	Automated emails will be sent to supervisors/ referees .
Applicant registration on online system	Provide approved applicants with access code.		Technical support available from tech@fluidreview.com .
Institutional selection	Download applications (if selecting based on CHASE form) and circulate. Manage internal selection process. Register selected applications on system.	Check and transfer selected applications to CHASE panel stage.	Emails will be sent out automatically informing applicants of outcome.
CHASE panel assessment		Manually create logins for all panel members – send email to panel members inviting to view and rate applications.	

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I apply to more than one AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP)?

Yes. There is no limit on the number of DTPs to which you can apply.

What does CHASE stand for?

Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England.

Can I apply to more than one institution within CHASE?

CHASE discourages applications to multiple institutions within CHASE. Candidates are advised to research which CHASE member institution offers the best fit for their project, in terms of supervision and resources. CHASE also supports co-supervision between institutions.

Can I apply directly to CHASE?

No, you must apply through and with the support of the CHASE institution at which you have applied to study.

Does CHASE fund Master's programmes?

No, but there are a number of non-CHASE scholarships for Master's available at the member institutions.

Can I apply if I have started a PhD?

Yes, you may still be eligible for an AHRC studentship funding providing that, at the start of the award, you will have at least 50% of your period of study remaining.

If I am unsuccessful this year, can I reapply for funding in 2022-23?

Yes, providing that, at the start of the award, you will have at least 50% of your period of study remaining.

Can I apply this year (2021-22) for deferred entry in 2023?

No, candidates seeking AHRC funding for 2023 entry should apply to the 2023 CHASE studentship competition.

How does the CHASE AHRC studentship selection process work?

There will be two stages to the selection process. The first will take place within the CHASE institution(s) to which you are applying for a PhD place during February 2022. If you are shortlisted by the CHASE institution, your application will then be submitted to a second selection process at CHASE level.

If I already have a PhD from an overseas university can I still apply?

If by the start date of a studentship you will have already gained or completed the requirements for a doctoral degree in any subject, however funded, you will not be eligible to receive doctoral studentship funding under any scheme.

I am from the EU, can I get a full award?

Students from the EU are eligible, but may be classed as Home or International depending on their residency arrangements. See the [Guidance Notes](#) for further information on eligibility.

I'm an international student – am I eligible?

Yes, a limited number of awards are available for International students. See the [Guidance Notes](#) for further information on eligibility.

How many references do I need altogether?

You need two references to be completed via the application system, and also a supervisor statement by your primary supervisor. These can be the same referees that supported your PhD application. One or both of your proposed supervisors can also be your referees if appropriate. Further information about what is needed to support your CHASE funding application can be found in the [Guidance Notes](#).

When will I know if I have funding?

CHASE will inform all applicants of the outcome by 21 April 2022.

Is there an appeals process?

The decision of the CHASE Management Board is final and there is no recourse to any further appeal process.

Does the CHASE DTP promote interdisciplinary research?

Yes, we welcome proposals that work between disciplines.

What makes a good application?

Please see our [Guidance Notes](#) and discuss with your supervisor.

Is my personal information secure on the CHASE application system?

The system is UK GDPR compliant, and personal data will be treated in line with our data handling policy

Does CHASE offer London weighting for stipends?

As per UKRI policy, CHASE offers London weighting to eligible students who are studying at London institutions (Birkbeck, SOAS, the Courtauld Institute and Goldsmiths). It is not available to students who are studying at other institutions but choosing to live in London.

Version tracker

Version	Change
0 DRAFT	
1	Introduction: change to wording Changes for 2021-22: detail added Timetable for recruitment and selection: timetable amended Selection criteria: change to wording for 1. Research proposal

Annex A: Sample posting to subject mailing list

Subject: CHASE AHRC PhD Studentships at [institution]

The Department of [department] at [institution] invites applications for October 2022 entry to our PhD programme.

[institution] is part of the CHASE AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership (alongside The Courtauld Institute of Art, the Universities of East Anglia, Essex, Kent and Sussex, Goldsmiths, University of London, Birkbeck, University of London and SOAS University of London [delete your own institution!]) and successful applicants for PhD study will be able to apply for studentship funding.

Our intellectual environment fosters the problem-driven and cross- and interdisciplinary research vital to addressing the new challenges of a world shaped by the speed of technological innovation and global change. Understanding and promoting the value of human culture and creativity in addressing such challenges is central to the CHASE vision of postgraduate research and professional development.

We support discipline-based projects, but also specialise in interdisciplinary research and research in emerging fields of study and creative practice. Our research and training environment encourages our doctoral students to develop interdisciplinary methodologies and to explore how to integrate their research with developments in digital technologies. In addition, our network of partnerships with leading arts and humanities organisations and creative industries provides an outstanding resource for future CHASE scholars.

Applications for funding will be considered by [institution] with the best applicants put forward to four CHASE selection panels. Applications will be considered on a competitive basis. In addition, we are offering ring-fenced studentships for BAME candidates in partnership with the Stuart Hall Foundation.

For UK and International students, these awards cover both fees and maintenance. The funding will cover professional development opportunities, including the enhancement of public engagement skills and placements with CHASE partner organisations in the UK and overseas.

To be considered for one of these awards, please note that you need to have applied to a PhD programme by [institution deadline]. We encourage you to contact us as early as possible to discuss your proposal.

For any enquiries to the PhD programme of the Department of [department] please contact the PhD admissions tutor, [admission tutor name and email]; and to see staff expertise please consult our website [URL for staff directory].

For full details of the subject areas covered, and how to apply, please see the CHASE website: www.chase.ac.uk