Placement and Internship Support Scheme Guidance Notes

Quick glance

- Funding to support placements with non-academic organisations, involving a strong knowledge exchange dimension of benefit to both parties.
- Up to a maximum of three months full time (placements can be done part-time).
- Pre-approval of expenses required, usually 3 months in advance of placement. Retrospective applications will not be considered.
- Full-time placements would normally involve a suspension of University enrolment and extension to award (depending on length and award arrangements).
- Expenses of up to £1,000 per month for the duration of the placement may be provided to support the internship (e.g. for accommodation not covered by studentship stipend, and travel).
- Paid placements would normally involve a suspension of award, rather than support through this scheme (your DTP Office can advise).

Overview

Knowledge Exchange is defined as a demonstrable and meaningful two-way flow of information/knowledge that is of mutual benefit and provides added value to the working relationship between both parties. The ESRC has provided funding to DTP's to support Knowledge Exchange (KE) and collaboration with non-academic organisations.

Students may apply for support to undertake a placement or internship (loosely defined) with a non-academic organisation, which has a significant collaborative/knowledge exchange element at its core. This might involve research that directly contributes to your project, or working on a specific policy relevant project that does not link directly to your PhD but where you use your skills to address a policy issue.

Benefits for students of placements/internships include networking and the development of transferable skills and knowledge, including in time management and, report writing. Benefits for hosts include the generation of real outputs, production of briefing papers and adding to the organisation's policy evidence base.

Students may apply for DTP placement support **once** during their studentship and must have the support of their supervisor. The supervisor will need to confirm that by undertaking the placement, the final submission of thesis should not be delayed by any longer than the length of the placement. The student must have been offered the placement already (at least in principle), prior to applying for financial assistance.

The placement must be completed prior to a student's current fund end date. It should be for a minimum of one month and no more than three months (12 weeks). It would be expected that full-time placements would involve a suspension of University enrolment.

The DTP may approve an extension to a student's funding period equal to the placement length, depending on their award length. Please note that the total period of extensions on any award will not exceed 12 months, and the funding end date will not exceed the University enrolment period or thesis submission deadline.

Students are required to complete an end of placement report within three months of its completion, in which they must indicate how the placement/internship has assisted them with their research, and what contributions they made towards KE within the work of the organisation.

Travel arrangements
Please ensure you have read your University's health and safety guidelines and policies relating to travel. You should also check with your Department for any University and Departmental risk assessment rules concerning travel for study-related purposes.

The DTP cannot provide support for overseas travel if the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against visiting the country or area concerned. Details are available at https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

Application Process

You should apply to the DTP Office for your home institution by the relevant deadline which allows approximately **three months before the proposed placement,** by submitting an application form available on the DTP website. Applications must be submitted prior to the start of placement, retrospective applications will not be considered.

The application deadlines can be found on the DTP website. If an opportunity arises outside these deadlines your DTP Office may be able to consider an ad-hoc application; please contact them for advice.

If a grant is approved, funds will be distributed as per local practice at your home institution and only upon satisfactory completion of any required risk assessments for your travel. It is your responsibility to ensure that risk assessments are completed prior to your intended dates of travel. We recommend that you complete the risk assessment prior to or while you are completing your application.

Once an application is approved, no further funding will be provided beyond the amount confirmed in the award letter.

Ensure you have discussed the timing of travel with your supervisor in relation to the progress of your studies and any formal programme assessments. On the application form, you should explain why you feel the timing is appropriate.

Details of placement/internship
The student must have been offered the placement already (at least in principle), prior to applying for financial assistance and relevant supporting documentation should be submitted with the application.

Students must indicate whether the placement is paid or unpaid, so that the level of financial support can be adjusted accordingly. If the placement pays more per month than the ESRC stipend, payment of the studentship will be suspended for the relevant period.

University status
Please note that approval of an application and any subsequent extension to your studentship relates only to your funding arrangements, and will not affect your University status and deadlines. Any suspension of University status would be at the discretion of your Department (as per University procedures), so we recommend discussing this with them before you submit an application.

Completing the application form

When completing your application, think of it as an opportunity to practice grant-writing skills. You must make a strong case, demonstrating careful planning and investigation of costs options to ensure value for money.

Summary of Proposed Activity

Students should provide details on the placement, including information about the organisation and position offered.

Level of Funding Requested
Provide estimates of the costs you expect to incur that are above those usually covered by your funding arrangements, e.g. travel costs. The costs of the visit should be reasonable and dependent on the country, time period and activity proposed. The maximum that can be provided for expenses is up to £1,000 per month for the duration of the placement.

You must provide evidence to support your cost estimates and amounts requested, e.g. printout from a price comparison website etc. For overseas travel, the DTP expects students to apply for travel insurance through the relevant scheme at their institution, rather than request support through the internship scheme.

For successful students with fees-only ESRC awards, the DTP Office will take into account the full funding arrangements when determining the grant, including the estimated level of support available for living expenses if a funding extension is approved.

Case for Support
In the application, the student should provide a statement indicating what they hope to gain from the placement, and how it is relevant to their research. They should also explain how it will be of benefit to the organisation.

The DTP will be considering how your application shows value for money therefore you should ensure you justify the cost estimates listed, particularly if they are not the most cost-effective options.

Any Other Relevant Information
Please list anything further that you may feel is relevant for consideration of your application.

Supporting documentation from organisation
A signed letter from the host organisation must be included with the application which outlines the following, along with any other relevant information:

- How the placement/internship will be of benefit to the organisation, focussing primarily on the expected two-way flow of knowledge between the student and organisation, with substantive user engagement on both sides, and how this will be achieved.
- Start and end dates
- Terms and conditions of the placement
- Rates of pay