

Rocketry Research, Training and Teaching Hub (R2T2)

Additional guidance and clarification

Following the questions raised at the recent webinar, we have put together the following additional guidance and clarification to help applicants write their proposals.

Closing date

UKSA and STFC have decided to extend the closing date for this call by 5 working days. The new closing date is 01 November 2022.

Number of students

UKSA have agreed to fund one cohort of 10 PhD students. Therefore, each application can include up to 10 students. Successful applicants will work together with UKSA and STFC to form the R2T2 Hub

Each PhD will be funded for a maximum of 4 years, starting from October 2023.

Applying as a consortium or individually

Research Organisations (ROs) may apply as part of a consortium as well as individually. UKSA and STFC will consider all applications equally whether they are from individuals or consortiums.

As general advice if you are applying individually, we would recommend still considering means of engaging with other ROs under the R2T2 hub. It is possible that the 10 PhDs will be divided between multiple ROs, and we would like to ensure that these will collaborate to share lessons learned and other useful information (e.g. progress, new training opportunities). Therefore, it is useful to know what collaboration opportunities you would like to undertake as part of the Hub and how it would benefit the academic sector as well as the PhD students participating in R2T2.

All applications should be made through [JeS](#), as usual.

The proposal form is the same length for consortium and individual applications. This has been set at 14 pages and is STFC standard practice.

Linked applications

Linked applications are not possible. Applications can be from individual ROs or as a consortium only.

Allocation of applications

We would award the most suitable applicants, assessed in line with the evaluation criteria included in the grant call. The 10 PhDs can be divided between multiple ROs, and we would like to ensure that these will collaborate to share lessons learned and other useful information (e.g. progress, new training opportunities). For instance, a consortium might be awarded 5 of the 10 PhDs, while the remaining 5 will be divided between 2 other singular applicants, depending on their score and number of PhDs requested.

Student stipend increase

UKSA and STFC have discussed the recent student stipend increase and as this is due to a national increase, UKSA have agreed to cover this. Applicants should include the increased amount in their proposals and explain that it is due to national increase in costs.

Available funding

The £750k advertised is for 10 studentships funded at £75k each, plus a one-off payment of £90k per student or PhD to pay for any consumables. Applications can be for up to 10 of the available studentships. Please note that due to the recent increase in student stipends, UKSA has agreed that the cost per studentship will be increased to £78k.

When referring to costs in an application, please include as much detail as possible in JeS and the proposal form. We appreciate that some information cannot be predicted, so please provide clear reasoning as to why any information has not been included. The additional £90k for consumables should be included in the case for support.

Use of the £90k for consumables per student

The £90k for consumables can also be used to cover the following:

- Student travel.
- Research training support, including consumables, travel and laptops separate from the rocket building costs.
- Field workshops.
- Cohort development costs, including the written and development of new courses costs. This could include recruiting an external developer but not a dedicated in-house FTE.
- Media costs, including the cost of printing course materials.
- Subcontracts for additional training.

Administration staff costs and academic time needed to support and manage the programme are not covered by the consumable funds.

UKSA will cover the cost of a central R2T2 Hub administrator FTE to cover the additional administrative work involved if all grant call recipients see benefit in it. The grant call recipients taking part in the R2T2 Hub will need to agree on whether there is a need for a centralised admin and on where would the said FTE be based (e.g. one of the universities).

Please note that it is against STFC guidelines to fund additional PhDs from money set aside for consumables. Any unspent funds would be returned to UKSA via STFC and be put towards any future cohorts.

Overheads

It is STFC standard practice not to pay overheads on student grants, this includes the additional funds provided for consumables.

International student eligibility

Applications must be from a UK university, but international students are welcome. All students would receive a full award, to include a stipend and fees at the home level, UKSA would not pay the additional amount required for international students.

The [standard UKRI guidance](#) applies to this scheme. As per the UKRI training grant conditions, a 30% cap on international recruitment applies to all students registered on a

single training grant held by the university. This cap doesn't apply to any matched funded students, who are exempt from the UKRI eligibility criteria.

However, STFC recognises that in many cases the numbers on individual applications are quite small. The application of the cap is constrained by the number of studentships that can be supported. Consequently, our guidance is that where 30% of the number of studentships on the grant is equal or greater than 1 (i.e. if there are 3 or more studentships on the grant), then the cap of 30% applies. If 30% is less than 1 student (i.e. if the grant comprises 1 or 2 studentships), a maximum of 1 international student can be recruited.

Industrial partners

Applicants must be UK registered academic institutions and the PhDs must be mainly delivered in the UK, but they can partner with both UK and international industry stakeholders.

Research areas

Not all PhDs need to be in the same research area. It would be beneficial if there are overlaps in PhD research and training, but they do not need to be completely co-ordinated. We would encourage students to share information and lessons learned across the R2T2 hub.

Postdoctoral Research Assistants (PDRAs)

PDRAs can only be funded by the student training grants under consumables if there is a clear benefit to the delivery of the PhD project. However, this is not the case for additional academic time, which would not be permissible. Administrative support to manage the award and placement can be applied for as additional costs. As mentioned previously, if all grant recipients consider it necessary to have a central R2T2 Hub FTE to cover the additional administrative work, the UKSA will cover the cost for this request.

Additional guidance for some of the criteria

There has been some concern that some of the criteria appears more difficult for individual applications to address. STFC have single university CDTs that have answered these questions and operate successfully to these criteria. We have provided some further details below on how best to approach certain criteria:

- *Evidence of the effectiveness of the plans for the management and governance of the centre including the suitability and commitment of the director and senior management team, plans for obtaining independent strategic oversight and the involvement of students in the management process.*

We would suggest demonstrating how you plan to work with the Hub and the whole programme. For example, a management group can be set up which can include members of industry, students and people from other departments or institutions that meets to ensure that everyone's point of view and need of the CDT is being considered.

- *Evidence of the plans in place to match students to placements and monitor their progress, and proposed metrics to monitor and evaluate the research innovation arising from such placements.*

In respect of the placements, we would expect thought to be given by the applicant of where the student will be placed relating to their project and we would not expect the student to have to arrange their own placement. Also, the applicant should have in place pre-meetings with the placement so that the student has already established a relationship with them. The applicant should also remain in contact with the student whilst on placement so that if there are any issues these can be addressed swiftly, and they will need to monitor the benefits of the placement for the student, university and placement organisation.