CHASE studentship competition for October 2020 entry

Guidance for applicants

1. General notes

CHASE membership

The CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership member institutions are as follows:

- 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

Awards starting in 2020 are made under the DTP2 grant. The Open University is an associate member institution in DTP2 and does not award CHASE studentships.

Eligibility for a CHASE award

UK Research and Innovation Training Grant Terms and Conditions set out the following requirements for eligibility:

To normally be eligible for a full award a Student must have no restrictions on how long they can stay in the UK and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least 3 years prior to the start of the Studentship (with some further constraint regarding residence for education). To be eligible for a fees only award, a Student must be ordinarily resident in a member state of the EU, in the same way as UK Students must be ordinarily resident in the UK.

Further guidance on residential eligibility is provided in Annex B of the UKRI Training Grant Guidance.

Applicants will hold an undergraduate degree, and will normally have a Master’s degree, or be studying for one. However, CHASE also welcomes applications from candidates with sustained experience beyond their undergraduate degree level that is specifically relevant to their proposed research topic.
**Award length**

Awards are offered for 3 years (36 months) full time, with the opportunity to extend up to 4 years (48 months) to include necessary skills training, or to incorporate placement projects.

- Languages skills training usually takes place at the start of the project, so you should include any necessary training in your application (see page 8).
- Successful award holders may apply for an extension to cover skills training identified in the first year of the project.
- Successful award holders may apply at any time during the studentship for an extension and costs to cover a collaborative placement project of up to 6 months with an external organisation.

Part time awards are offered at 0.5 FTE for 6 years part time, with the opportunity to extend up to 8 years (96 months) or the maximum institutional registration period.

**Application process**

**Institutional Selection**

You must apply for a place to study at your institution by Monday 13 January 2020.

Access to the CHASE Studentship Application form will be provided by your institution. You must consult with your proposed supervisor before completing the form.

Deadlines for completing the CHASE Studentship Application form vary by CHASE institution. It is essential that you check the deadlines of your CHASE institution, as late applications will not be accepted.

**CHASE Selection panels**

Applications shortlisted by the institution will be put forward to the relevant CHASE selection panel. The scope of each selection panel is as follows:

**A: History, Thought and Systems of Belief**

Applications to: History; Law and Legal Studies; Philosophy; Theology, Divinity and Religion; Archaeology; Classics; Political Science and International Studies

**B: Art History and Visual Cultures**

Applications to: Art History; Conservation; Visual Art History and Theory; Digital Arts & Photography History, Theory and Practice; Visual Arts (covering Art Theory & Aesthetics; Community Art including Art and Health); Museum Studies; Ethnography and Anthropology; History and Theory of Architecture; Cultural Geography

**C: Media and Creative Practice**

Applications to: Design; Creative Writing; Music (Practice-based, composition, musicology); Visual art practice; Installation and Sound Art History, Theory and Practice; Film-Based and Time-Based History,
Theory and Practice; Media: New Media/Web-Based Studies; Media: Film History, Theory and Criticism; Media: Television History, Theory and Criticism; Drama and Theatre Studies Practice; Information and Communications Technologies; Media and communication studies; Journalism and Publishing;

**D: Literature, Language and Culture**

Applications to: Drama and Theatre Studies Theory; Languages and Literature (including American Studies, Life writing, History and Development of English Language, Literary and Cultural Theory, Post-Colonial Studies, Comparative Literature, Medieval Literature, Comparative Studies, Gender and Sexuality); English Language and Literature; Popular Culture; Cultural Studies (Policy, Arts Management and Creative Industries); Interpreting and Translation; Linguistics; French Studies; German Studies (including Dutch and Yiddish); Italian Studies; Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin American Studies; Asiatic & Oriental Studies; Middle Eastern and African Studies; Russian, Slavonic and Eastern European Studies; Cultural Studies and Popular Culture

**CHASE Management Board**

Selection panel scores will be moderated and combined into a single ranked list by the CHASE Management Board. Awards will be made to the highest ranked applications.

**Notification and acceptance of awards**

CHASE will inform shortlisted candidates of the outcome of their application by 7 April 2020. The outcome may be either the offer of an award, the offer of a place on a waiting list, or notification of an unsuccessful application. Acceptance of an award constitutes an agreement between you and your CHASE institution as set out in the offer letter.
Selection criteria for applications

Selection panels will grade applications according to the following criteria:

| 1. Research proposal | • 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.
| | • 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.

| 2. Preparedness for research | • 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.

| 3. Suitability of research environment | • 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.

A full set of grade descriptors is included as an annex to these notes (page 11).
2. Notes on completing the Studentship Application form

How to access the application system

1. Click on ‘Apply Here’ from the CHASE website https://www.chase.ac.uk/apply
   This will take you to the CHASE studentship application home screen.

2. The first time you use SM Apply, you will need to click ‘Register’ and provide your name, email address, and a password.

3. Once your account is created, you will receive an email asking you to verify your email address. Click on the link in the email to verify your address.

4. You will arrive at a Programs page. Click on the ‘More’ button under CHASE Studentship to return to the home screen.

5. Click on ‘Check eligibility’. You will be presented with an Eligibility Quiz with three parts.
   • Enter the access code that your institution has provided. If you don’t have an access code, please contact your institution.
   • Confirm your residential eligibility. Please refer to Annex B: Residential Eligibility Guidelines for UKRI Funded Studentships in the UKRI Training Grant Guidance.
   • Confirm that you consent to your data being used by CHASE. Click ‘save my profile’ to continue. A pop up will confirm that you are eligible to complete the application form.

6. Back at the application home screen, click ‘Apply’. You will be asked to name your application. Please enter the title of your project proposal (or, if your title is too long, part of the title). You can change this later if you wish.

7. You will see the overview of your application, with six tasks to be completed. Clicking on a task will open the task for editing.
**Task 1: Contact details**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Please provide your contact details to cover the period of your application, until September 2020.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Please identify one CHASE institution and provide details of the department or school of study to which you have applied. CHASE discourages applications to multiple member institutions if the research proposal is similar, as there will be one institution that provides the best fit for the project. CHASE encourages cross-institutional co-supervision where appropriate to provide the best combination of supervisory expertise; please discuss this with your main supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Please select your preferred mode of study. CHASE supports both full and part-time study. Part-time study is offered at 0.5 FTE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Please indicate if you are also applying to another AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership. Please note that only one AHRC studentship offer can be accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Please let us know how you found out about CHASE studentship opportunities.</td>
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**Task 2: Research Proposal**

You are advised to discuss your research proposal with your main supervisor. You should treat the proposal as an opportunity to show that you have begun to explore an important area of study, and that your research has the potential to challenge and develop that area. It is also important to demonstrate that you can express your ideas in clear and precise English, accessible to a non-specialist.

The panellists who read your proposal know that it is a provisional statement and that your ideas, questions and approaches will change during the course of your research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Please provide a title for your proposal. Be as concise and explicit as you can. The title of your project may change during the research process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Please provide a brief abstract (c.200 words, and not more than 1,000 characters). This should be a complete but concise description of the project that will allow a non-specialist reader to quickly ascertain the purpose of your project. Most CHASE panellists will not be expert in your precise disciplinary area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 3

Please provide a description of your research proposal of no more than 10,000 characters, under the following headings:

**Introduction**
Use this section to introduce the questions and issues central to your research. Identify the field of study in broad terms and indicate how you expect your research to intervene in the field.

**Research background and question**
Use this section to expand your Introduction. What are the key sources, texts and approaches in the field? How does your proposal differ from existing lines of argument? What does your project contribute to existing work in the field? How does it extend our understanding of particular questions or topics? You need to set out your research questions as clearly as possible. Identify the problems that you want to explore and explain why it is important to do so. Please use this section to indicate how your previous studies, professional and/or other experience contribute to your understanding of the field and your preparedness for research. In other words, think about how to situate your project in the context of the university and its disciplines. You can also discuss the impact of your research for non-academic institutions and audiences.

**Research methods**
Give a brief statement detailing how you will achieve the aims set out in the previous sections. Your focus here will depend very much on your discipline(s) and research topic. You can consider the following questions (no one project will require you to answer them all):

- Does your project involve archival sources, particular databases or specialist libraries?
- Will you need access to facilities at another institution? Is your study interdisciplinary?
- How does your creative practice contribute to your research?
- What theoretical resources do you intend to use and why?
- Are there any organisations working in your area who might offer the opportunity for collaborative research?
- Is your research based on the work of a single author, artist or theorist, or a group of individuals or texts?
- What forms of textual, historical, visual or material analysis are relevant to your topic?
- Is there a ‘gap’ in established approaches to your field of study that you want to explore?
- Are there ethical issues that you need to address in undertaking your research?
- Will you be involved in fieldwork?

**Schedule of work**
Use this section to show that you have a realistic plan for completion of the project within the period of the award. You may want to think here about dividing the proposal into sections (not necessarily chapters at this stage) with a timetable for researching and writing up each section.
**Research environment**

Use this section to detail how your proposal will be supported by the research environment at your institution. This might include: the proposed supervision, the home department(s) or equivalent, the institutional support (including available archives, sources, research centres), and any external organisations involved. You should demonstrate that you have given clear thought to the fit between your project and the proposed research environment.

| Question 4 | You must provide a bibliography of up to 20 items, in a standard format such as Harvard, listing any books and articles to which you refer in the proposal. This is indicative, not exhaustive. |

**Task 3: Preparedness for research**

Those applying for a doctoral studentship should normally have, or be studying for, a Master’s degree or similar postgraduate qualification. You should have met all the course requirements prior to the start date of your AHRC doctoral studentship. If you do not have experience of formal postgraduate study, you may be eligible for a studentship only if you can demonstrate evidence of sustained experience beyond your undergraduate degree level that is specifically relevant to your proposed research topic, and could be considered equivalent to Master’s study. Please provide evidence as to how the training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a Master’s course and, therefore, prepares you to continue to doctoral study.

| Question 1 | Please provide information about any professional experience (research and/or practice-based) that is relevant to your proposed programme of study. You will be asked how many entries you wish to provide. This could include professional experience that is relevant to the planning and completion of a research project, as well as the topic of the research. You can also use your research proposal to elaborate on how this experience supports your project. |

| Question 2 | Please indicate whether you have already started your PhD, i.e. if you are applying for funding as a current student. Students who have already commenced doctoral study are eligible to apply for AHRC funding, provided that, at the start of the AHRC award, you will have at least 50% of your period of study remaining (excluding the ‘writing up’ period). Please provide full details of all your higher education qualifications. You will be asked how many you wish to submit. |

| Question 3 | In DTP2, a CHASE award may include up to an additional 12 months of funding to allow for skills development. We expect that most language skills development would require up to 6 months, but that some projects may require acquisition of an entirely new language, for which up to 12 months is offered. Please indicate the length of additional time your project requires, as well as a proposal for how you plan to use this time to develop your language skills to the necessary level. This may include training offered by your department (please check with your proposed department for the local resources available) or by an external provider (e.g. language school or immersive training). Your supervisor should write in support of any additional funded period in their statement. |
Task 4: Equality Diversity and Inclusion monitoring form

You are asked to provide information on your protected characteristics (gender, ethnicity, disability and age) to assist with DTP and AHRC monitoring. This information will be stored securely and will not be shared with anyone involved in the assessment process.

Task 5: Referees

Your CHASE application requires references from two referees. You should choose your referees carefully: together they should have a good knowledge of your academic record to date, your research plans and your preparedness for doctoral study. One or both referees may be your supervisors.

To complete the Referees task, you will need to enter the name and email address of each referee in the form. This will send an automatic email inviting each referee to log into the system and complete a reference form. To help your referees, please only request references after the other tasks are complete.

Please note that it is your responsibility to monitor the progress of the application and check that all parts are completed on time. You will be notified by email when each referee has accepted the invitation, and when they have completed their reference. Once both references have been received, you will need to mark the task as complete. You will not be able to submit your application until both references have been received.

Task 6: Supervisor details

Please provide your main supervisor's name and email address. Similarly to the Referees task, this will send an automatic email inviting your supervisor to log into the system and complete a supervisor statement form. If your supervisor is also one of your referees, they will receive two separate requests.

While references should focus on the quality of candidates, the supervisor’s statement should focus on the quality of the proposal, including the research environment (at both the ‘home’ institution and within CHASE), and its ‘fit’ with the supervisor’s expertise and interests. 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.

If you are requesting additional time for language acquisition, the supervisor statement should include support for your plan.

If your project is creative practice-based, the supervisor statement should include information on the relevant PhD programme regulations.

You will be notified by email when your supervisor has accepted the invitation, and when they have completed their statement. Once this has been received, you will need to mark the task as complete. You will not be able to submit your application until the supervisor statement has been received.
Submitting your application

Once all six tasks are complete, you will be able to review and submit your application. You must submit your application by the deadline set by your institution.
# Annex: grade descriptors for use by CHASE panels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Selection criteria</th>
<th>Preparedness for research</th>
<th>Suitability of research environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>The proposal excels in originality, sophistication and ambition. The literature review is of highest quality and the project is well designed. This is highest priority for funding.</td>
<td>The applicant demonstrates outstanding potential and preparedness in relation to skills (such as languages, or transferrable skills from work experience), training and previous research or fieldwork experience. All skills gaps have been identified, and there is a plausible plan to address them.</td>
<td>The application demonstrates that the proposed research environment has been considered carefully. There is an excellent, mutually beneficial fit between the project and the proposed research environment in all respects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>The proposal is original and rigorous to a high degree, with a strong literature review. It is feasible within the time-frame. It is a high priority for funding.</td>
<td>The applicant demonstrates strong potential and preparedness in relation to skills, training and previous research or fieldwork experience. Any crucial skills gaps have been identified and there is a plausible plan to address them.</td>
<td>The application shows that the proposed research environment has been considered and is a strong fit for the project in all important respects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>The proposal has originality and rigour but could be better designed or elaborated. Despite good potential, there are one or more areas for obvious improvement. This is a medium priority for funding.</td>
<td>The applicant shows satisfactory potential and preparedness in relation to skills, training and previous research or fieldwork experience. Most of the small and large skills gaps have been identified and there is a plausible plan to address them.</td>
<td>There is a good fit between the project and the proposed research environment in most respects, such that the project is on balance likely to be successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>The proposal has merit but falls short in relation to originality, methodology or literature review. This is not a priority for funding.</td>
<td>The applicant shows some potential and preparedness in relation to skills, training and previous research or fieldwork experience. Some skills gaps have not been identified or the plans for addressing such gaps may not be plausible within the timeframe.</td>
<td>The research environment is unsuitable in some respect (e.g. potential lack of access to an essential resource)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>The proposal does not display originality and there are flaws in the methodology or literature review. This should not be funded.</td>
<td>The applicant has not identified the skills or preparation necessary to the project, and there are significant gaps that mean the project is unlikely to reach a successful conclusion.</td>
<td>There are reasons for concern that the research environment is unsuitable in several respects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>The proposal has significant and serious flaws such that it should not be funded.</td>
<td>The applicant does not meet the criteria (e.g. requirement for M-level study or equivalent has not been met).</td>
<td>The application does not meet the criteria for supervision or access to essential resources.</td>
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