



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

Collaborative Research Training Scheme 2009

Student-Led Initiative (£2,000)

Introduction

1. The Collaborative Research Training (CRT) scheme was developed as part of the AHRC's research training framework. It provides pump-priming funds to support institutions in establishing new, or enhancing existing, specialist research training provision for doctoral students in the arts and humanities, in collaboration with at least one other institution.
2. **The aim of the Student-Led Initiative category is to support the establishment of innovative collaborative research training programmes, originated by and run for postgraduate doctoral students that have a subject – or discipline – specific focus. Training is welcome which has as broad or as narrow a subject focus as is appropriate for the particular field.**
3. Awards are available for up to **£2,000** for funding initiatives run by research students for research students, with a rolling deadline for applications.
4. CRT funding offers an opportunity to add value to your existing subject – or – discipline - specific training provision. It is a flexible scheme through which collaboration can provide an effective way to support a wide range of training and development activities that benefit postgraduate students.
5. The AHRC believes that the experience of organising, developing and administering these initiatives is an excellent opportunity for students to enhance the development of both specialised, research-related skills and broader organisational and networking skills. Proposals should explain the benefits the students will gain through attending or interacting with the initiatives. Research students are invited to submit their proposals through their HEI, which should support and endorse each proposal.
6. To ensure that the scheme is of benefit to as wide a range of postgraduate students as possible the Initiative category is open to any postgraduate students in the arts and humanities. Exclusive priority will not be given to AHRC award holders, although where possible, AHRC award holders should be involved in the organisation of the programme, and included in the audience for the training. Funding will be provided on a competitive basis to applications that succeed in meeting the criteria of the CRT scheme, and that demonstrate a clear training and development focus that will benefit postgraduate researchers.

Aims of the scheme

7. The scheme aims:

- The overarching purpose of the CRT scheme is to support higher education institutions throughout the UK to establish new or enhance existing specialist research training on a collaborative basis, where such training offers a cost effective or higher quality provision than would otherwise be possible, thereby enhancing the quality of training and student experience which can be provided.

The Student-Led initiative's particular focus is:

- to enable doctoral students to gain experience of organising academic activities, developing the broad range of generic skills involved in doing so
- to give doctoral students the opportunity to develop and broaden their knowledge in their area of research
- to provide doctoral students with the opportunity to put into practice a range of transferable skills (e.g. communication skills, project management, networking, facilitation etc) that have been or will be developed during postgraduate study
- to provide students with the opportunity to raise awareness of their research and promote themselves to their academic peers
- to develop public engagement skills that enable postgraduates to convey their research to non-specialist audiences
- to foster and promote dialogue, interactions and exchanges of knowledge between postgraduates and wider community whether that is across disciplines, with beneficiaries of their research such as policy makers or business, with potential employers or with professional bodies or practitioners
- to create a sense of community among the population of research graduates.

Potential initiatives

8. Examples of possible initiatives are as follows: (please note that these are only examples and we welcome other proposals as long as they meet the aims and criteria of the scheme):

- Networks or Research Forums
- Journals or on-line web resources: these could include students both submitting, reviewing and editing papers as well as students organising and administering the journal, or provide on-line video resources
- Conferences (as long as these are student-led and student organised)
- Career Development Initiatives
- Roundtable events with academics and practitioners in the relevant field to discuss career pathways and career development issues
- Public Engagement activities: these could be showcase/demonstration events, where students can present their research to community organisations, media, primary and secondary educational pupils, the general public etc.
- Activities involving the exchanges of knowledge involving interaction between students and non-academic organisations. These could be professional interactions such as events engaging with professional bodies, policy makers, government bodies or relevant businesses such as local or national employers

The AHRC is keen to see proposals outlining innovative practices that will benefit a wide range of postgraduate researchers, either by their involvement in the organisation of the programme, or by participating in the scheme.

Events are welcome which address a clearly identified gap in provision within or across subjects, for example additional language skills, fieldwork techniques, practical skills required for specific careers, engagement with professionals or practitioners

Useful information

9. Vitae (formerly UK GRAD and UK HERD) is a national organisation championing the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff in higher education institutions and research institutes.

If you are interested in applying to the scheme but would like information on existing student-led activities and programmes, then VITAE's Database of Practice may be a helpful resource for you. This is an on-line resource where institutions can post information on good practice in training programmes they wish to share with the community. The Database can be found at:

<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/1392/Resources.html>

10. If you would like further information on the AHRC's research training framework and the skills training it expects its award holders to receive please see our website at:

http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/university_staff/postgrad/research_training_framework.asp

This page also provides a link to the Research Councils' Joint Statement of Skills, which provides a useful guide to the generic and subject-specific skills postgraduate researchers should expect to develop during their studies.

11. We would encourage you to be aware of the revised **Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers** which was published in 2008. This sets out the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers, employers and funders.

The Concordat consists of a set of key principles for the future support and management of research careers, and under each principle, an explanation of how it may be embedded into institutional practice:

<http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/>

Applying to the scheme

12. Applications can be made in this scheme by postgraduate students attending a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the UK, directly funded by HEFCE, DEL, HEFCW or SHEFC. It is not necessary for applicants to collaborate with students at other HEIs in the organisation of the proposed initiative, although this may be appropriate for some programmes, but doctoral students from a range of institutions must be invited to participate. Applications must be supported by the student's HEI, i.e. endorsed by the lead student's Head of Department and supervisor.

13. Applications should be submitted by a lead student. It is expected that the organisation of the initiative should be led by research students, and the application will be expected to demonstrate that this is the case and to involve the input of a named lead student.
14. Where collaboration in the organisation of the initiative is proposed, one lead student and one lead institution must be identified to coordinate the proposal and to act as the contact for correspondence. If the application is successful, the award will be made to the lead institution which will be responsible for transferring any funds to partner institutions. We welcome applications that involve collaboration with non-HEI organisations such as museums, archives, libraries, professional bodies or any other organisation that has an interest in research training. Such organisations cannot lead a bid in this scheme.
15. Potential applicants to the scheme should discuss their proposed application with their supervisor and with any other relevant institution staff, and should consider if their studies can support the time commitment required in organising the proposed initiative. Applicants should ensure they have the full support of their institution and have sought the appropriate advice needed to plan their programme successfully, including any specialist or technical guidance needed
16. Only one application should be submitted for each proposed initiative. We will not accept applications covering different aspects of a single initiative or separate applications from the different partners involved in any collaborative bids.

If you already hold a Collaborative Research Training Award

17. If you have previously been awarded funding as the lead student of a CRT conference or a previous Student-led Initiative, you may submit a further application to this scheme but not for the same activity.

Who is this scheme aimed at and who should benefit?

18. Initiatives funded through this scheme should be open to all relevant arts and humanities doctoral students where appropriate. The proposed initiative must be of direct benefit to research students primarily. Whilst we would not discourage Master's level students or students from other disciplines from benefiting from an initiative, priority must be weighted to doctoral students in the arts and humanities.
19. As part of the application process we request information on the number of arts and humanities doctoral students and AHRC award holders who are likely to benefit from the initiative. We will take this information into account alongside the nature and quality of the proposal and the costs sought when assessing the proposal.
20. Where students or parties other than arts and humanities doctoral students participate in AHRC-funded initiatives, the costs arising from their participation cannot be covered. Funding should only be used by and for arts and humanities research students.
21. Support from the AHRC for the proposed initiative should be acknowledged at any event or in conjunction with any material developed.

Application and Assessment Processes

22. Applications to the Student-Led Initiative are welcomed on a rolling basis throughout the year.
23. We require the original application form (i.e. with original signatures) and three photocopies.
24. Applicants are required to select a lead student who will be responsible for reporting on the activity and who will act as the main point of contact for proposals. While it is understood that an organising team may be responsible for organising, conducting and running the initiative, we will still expect a lead student to be nominated (although details of the organising team should be included elsewhere in the proposal). Applications must be sanctioned by the head of department and the supervisor of the lead student.
22. The AHRC undertakes to inform applicants of outcomes within four months of receiving the application form. *The application must be submitted in advance of the proposed start date of the initiative, which must fall after the date when the awards are announced.* As a general guide, we state that activities associated with the initiatives should normally commence approximately six months after the submission of the application, and must begin within one year of the offer of funding. The four month lead time will also allow sufficient time to assess resubmitted proposals prior to the initiatives' proposed start dates.

Unsuccessful Applications and Resubmissions

23. The Council normally defines a resubmission as the submission of an unsuccessful application to a later round of the scheme. For the purposes of this scheme, resubmissions may be submitted at any point following the notification of the outcome of the application. The purpose of the resubmission policy is to allow projects which are inherently worthy of funding a second chance of success. There is, however, no guarantee that a resubmitted application will be successful second time round, as it will be in open competition with an entirely new group of applications.
24. If your application is unsuccessful you will normally be permitted to make **one** resubmission to the same scheme unless otherwise indicated. You are strongly advised to take note of any feedback you received when preparing to submit your application for a second time.
25. When resubmitting an application for a Student-Led Initiative award, the programme will remain essentially the same, and should bear the same title. The resubmission allows you to give due consideration to any comments or feedback provided by the Council's assessors and/or to make any improvements which you consider would enhance your application, and/or to update the application in light of any significant changes that may have happened since the original application was submitted. If your original application had an outcome announced prior to **16 February 2009** then the revised application must adhere to the current guidance and forms and it will be assessed under the current criteria.
26. If you are resubmitting an application you **must** complete a new application form and state clearly that it is a resubmission.

Assessment Criteria

27. Applications submitted in the Student-Led Initiative will be assessed by the AHRC Executive.

28. Applications will be judged by the following criteria:

- Whether the proposal meets the aims of the scheme outlined above
- The quality of the proposed initiative, e.g. whether the proposed initiative demonstrates intellectual coherence and is of appropriate scope
- That the programme will be truly collaborative, involving a variety of researchers from different institutions in the organisation of the initiative and/or as the audience for the programme
- The extent to which the initiative is explicitly being organised by and for research students
- Evidence of the extent and quality of the training and skills development to be gained by the organisers and the doctoral students who will benefit from the initiative
- Evidence of the support that will be provided by the host department or institution and that specialist advice has been sought where needed (e.g. technical advice for an on-line resource)
- Evidence that procedures are in place for evaluating and ensuring the high quality of the initiative developed and delivered
- Evidence that realistic plans are in place for the programme in terms of its costs and timescales
- Evidence that the long term sustainability of the initiative has been considered
- Evidence that effective plans for disseminating the outcome of the programme have been considered and will be pursued after the AHRC award has ended
- Priority will be given to proposals that support clearly identified gaps within or across subjects or outline innovative practices that will benefit a wide range of postgraduate researchers
- The scheme is primarily intended to provide support for new initiatives by new applicants though we will consider proposals for new initiatives from previous award holders. We will also consider proposals to support initiatives in their second year or for the continuation of relatively new ones where a strong case for an enhancement to the existing provision is made.

Guidance notes on completing the application form

The lead applicant should complete the form. It should be word-processed in at least 10 pt font.

All sections of the form should be completed; we are unable to accept applications that are incomplete. Please ensure that you preserve the format of the application form and that the text boxes do not run onto subsequent pages. Small boxes may be completed by hand if you are unable to complete them electronically.

Please do not include additional pages.

Please staple the completed application form.

Section 1: Title of provision

Please include a title for the initiative. The title will be used for publicity-purposes if the award is successful so should be meaningful to a non-specialist audience.

Section 2: Details of the Lead Applicant and Institution

You should be a doctoral student studying in the arts and humanities, at a UK Institution. Please give details of the area and year of your study. **You do not have to be an AHRC award holder.** Applications should be sanctioned by your Head of Department and supervisor of the lead student.

Where the proposal involves collaboration between a number of ROs, we ask that you identify one individual to lead the application. Any collaborating organisations will need to decide which institution is best placed to lead the bid, but should bear in mind the following:

- All AHRC correspondence will be sent to the lead student
- If the bid is successful then the award payments will be made to the finance office of the RO at which the lead student is based
- The lead institution must be eligible to receive funding from the AHRC, i.e. be a UK RO funded by one of the four UK Higher Education Funding Councils.
- The AHRC will monitor successful awards so the lead student must be in a position to update the council on progress with the project.

Section 3: Details of the Student-Led Initiative

You may bid for up to £2000 for the costs of your project. Please give as much detail as possible about the subject matter and how it will be organised, and on the structure and aims of the project. You should not exceed the 2,000 word limit for section 3 of the form. Applications exceeding the word limit may be made ineligible.

Please use the following headings when completing the form:

3.1 Type of initiative

Please briefly indicate the type of project e.g. round table event, conference, web resource etc.

3.2 Dates/Duration of the Project

Please state dates/duration of the project and indicate if it is intended as a one-off event, a series, or a continuing programme of work.

3.3 Location

If the project takes the form of an event, please state where it will be held.

3.4 Number of students

Please give an estimation of the number of projected participants in the project.

3.5 Describe the aims and objectives of the project, including goals for both the organisers and participants and how these reflect the aims and objectives of the scheme.

Please describe the objectives of the project and outline what you hope to achieve in organising it and what benefits attendees/audiences will gain from it. These may be subject specific but should also include generic aims. Please also briefly describe the outcome intended for participants in the project.

We welcome single subject and inter-disciplinary topics. You should also state who might utilise or participate in the project, including non-student participation.

3.6 Describe the project and the training needs that will be met for both the organisers and participants.

Involvement in the project should meet the specialist, subject specific training needs of the participants, so please outline how they will be met. Please clearly describe the gap in training provision that your initiative is meeting and identify any innovative methods you wish to employ.

3.7 Detail milestones/timetable for the initiative

Please detail the key milestones in organising the initiative and include a timetable for the events that will take place under the initiative.

3.8 Describe the collaborative elements of the project.

We expect the organisation to be conducted by research students, but aside from the named student organising the work, please indicate who else might be involved and in what capacity; how will the programme be collaborative in nature and what different institutions and organisations will be involved in the initiative? If there are complimentary activities, such as workshops, poster sessions, responsive-mode feedback, or other events as part of the initiative please include them in the description. Additionally, please describe the support that will be provided by the host department or institution.

3.9 How will you publicise the project?

Please outline how it will be publicised to your target audience. If applicable, please indicate any plans to publish proceedings or outcomes once the project has ended.

4.0 How will the success of the project be evaluated and how will you disseminate any outcomes?

Please outline how you will evaluate the success of your initiative, and that the programme met the training needs of those involved. Please also outline dissemination plans for any proposed outcomes.

4.1 How will you sustain this activity after the AHRC funding has ended?

The aim of the CRT scheme is to support the arts and humanities community in establishing new research training provision. The AHRC is keen to see that successful programmes of training initiated through this scheme become embedded in the community and are of long-term benefit to postgraduate researchers. Please indicate how your programme might be sustained after the AHRC funding has ended.

Section 4: Costs

Please provide a **clear** breakdown of how costs will be allocated and what added value the AHRC funding will provide. Please give additional **detail** relating to these costs in the second column. If the project is likely to cost in excess of £2,000 please state what other funding has been appropriated or sought.

Costs that are **not eligible** are:

- Academic staff time
- Costs of hiring or refurbishing rooms within participating higher education institutions or internal space charges
- Costs for generic equipment which could reasonably be expected to be provided by the collaborating institutions.

Section 5: Subject area

Please indicate the subject area in which your application falls. Should your research training programme be interdisciplinary, please tick the relevant subject areas and indicate which is the **primary** subject area.

Section 6: Institution's Authorisation

Someone with appropriate authority within the institution should authorise the application by signing the form and stamping it with the institution's stamp.

In signing the form the institution agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the scheme and to inform the AHRC of any changes. Where the application has specified a transfer of funds to another institution, the lead institution agrees to transfer funds, as specified.

If you have a proposed initiative in mind and would like to discuss it further please do not hesitate to contact us for an informal discussion.

Please send the completed application form with original signatures, plus three copies, to the AHRC. We cannot accept applications sent by fax or email, nor can we accept incomplete or unauthorised applications.

The contacts for the scheme are:

Awards Officer

Oliver Donaldson e-mail: o.donaldson@ahrc.ac.uk Tel: 0117 987 6613

Senior Awards Officer

Louise Matter e-mail: l.matter@ahrc.ac.uk Tel: 0117 987 6605

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Please send all applications to:

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