

SCOTTISH
GRADUATE
SCHOOL FOR
ARTS &
HUMANITIES

Sgoil Ceumnachaidh na h-Alba airson
Ealain agus Daonnachdan

**SGSAH Doctoral Training Partnership &
Funded Open Studentship Competition**

2025

GUIDANCE



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

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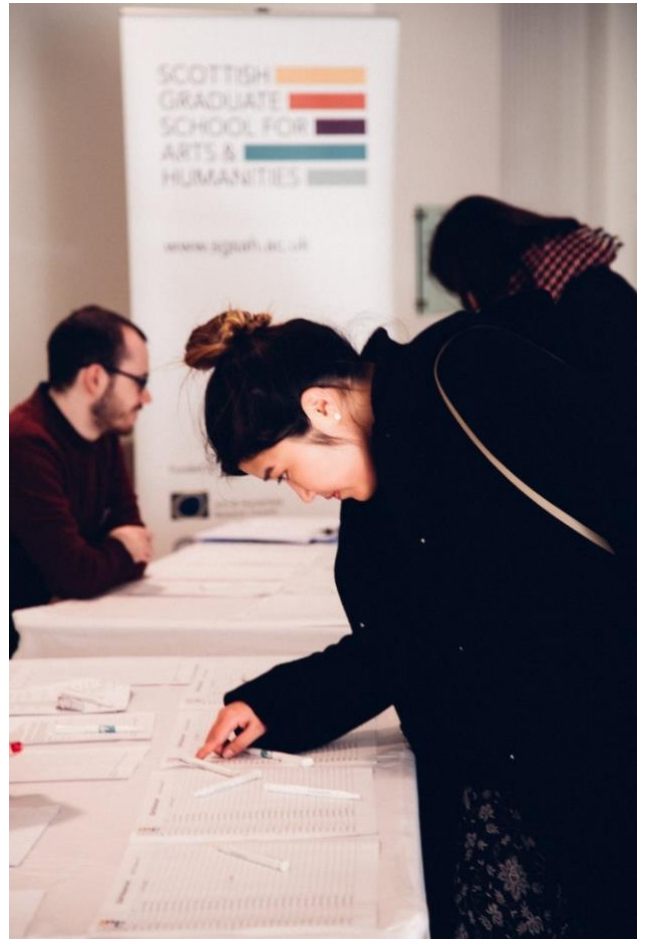
Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities Doctoral Training Partnership (SGSAH DTP) open competition for 2025. This document summarises the SGSAH DTP programme and provides guidance for applicants and nominating Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

We encourage potential applicants and supervisors to read the guidance carefully in advance of preparing applications for the studentship competition. It is crucial that the SGSAH DTP – its training programme, provision, Higher Education Institution members and external partners – provides an excellent fit for the applicant and their research project.

Alongside our competition for open studentships, we are also running a Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDA) scheme. This scheme funds projects that are developed in collaboration with external organisations across creative, heritage, third and business sectors. Guidance for the CDA scheme is available in a separate document.

If you require any further information or clarification, then please contact us at enquiries@sgsah.ac.uk.



1. SGSAH Doctoral Training Partnership

The SGSAH DTP is the programme in Scotland that delivers the Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) Doctoral Training Partnership. There are 10 AHRC DTPs across the UK. DTPs support postgraduate studentships across the breadth of the AHRC's subject remit and provide innovative training environments for doctoral-level research. They include opportunities for PhD students to undertake broader training or development, such as language learning, overseas research visits, or placements with non-academic partners.

The SGSAH DTP supports all disciplines in the arts and humanities. If you are awarded a SGSAH DTP studentship, you will be joining a cohort of approximately 60 other doctoral researchers. The 10 HEI members in the SGSAH DTP are:

[Glasgow School of Art](#)
[Royal Conservatoire of Scotland](#)
[University of Aberdeen](#)
[University of Dundee](#)
[University of Edinburgh](#)

[University of Glasgow](#)
[University of St Andrews](#)
[University of Stirling](#)
[University of Strathclyde](#)
[University of the Highlands & Islands](#)



1.1 Why SGSAH DTP?

Our aim is to work together to nurture and inspire a future generation of enlightened leaders committed to generating and mobilising new insights across scholarly, professional and public communities. Our doctoral graduates will be capable, caring, ethical & reflective professionals. They will be alert to their influence and impact as knowledge makers, co-creators and connectors and are guided in their actions by what we stand for: Respect, Inclusivity, Creativity, and Partnership. They will be

champions for arts and humanities research, demonstrating through their work the value of arts and humanities to society, industry and other disciplines.

Our DTP2-funded PhD projects will be markers of excellence and originality, enabled by environments where excellent research is supported and conducted.

Our prestigious 3½ year studentships offer:

- Fully funded PhD studentships with a stipend of around £19,800 per annum plus fees
- The best research environment and supervisory team, which may be cross disciplinary and/or cross-HEI
- A core training programme with fundamental training activities which will support you to develop your skills as a future research leader
- Access to advanced inter/disciplinary training through our innovative Discipline+ Catalysts
- Connection and collaboration with organisations across the creative, cultural and heritage sectors through our Knowledge Exchange Hubs
- Extra funds to extend your studies to gain additional skills through training and internships
- Opportunities to travel abroad to carry out research and fieldwork
- Opportunities to be a Visiting Doctoral Researcher at an international Higher Education Institute.
- Access to the richness of Scotland's research expertise and collections
- The chance to join an engaged and committed cohort of doctoral researchers working across the full range of arts & humanities disciplines
- Opportunities to lead the development of networks and funded training events across Scotland
- Membership of SGSAH – a partnership of 17 HEIs in Scotland supporting 1,750 doctoral researchers in the Arts & Humanities

I've been given opportunities to run events, learn languages, think about my future career and meet a great support network of friends. It makes you feel part of a larger community. (Doctoral Researcher, DTP)

2. Equalities Statement and Ring-fenced Studentships

SGSAH intends to ensure equity of experience and opportunity to access funded studentships, in alignment with our existing Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy. Specifically, SGSAH's EDI within the assessment process of funded studentship schemes includes:

- Applications are assessed anonymously, with Institutional Statements using 'they' pronouns throughout to avoid unconscious bias in terms of gender and ethnicity
- Qualifications are reviewed by the SGSAH team rather than panel reviewers, to avoid institutional bias
- A section of the applicant form for 'Relevant Professional Experience' is available to provide a level playing field for applicants with unrelated, dated or no Masters qualifications but who have demonstrably relevant professional experience
- Ring-fenced studentships for UK-domiciled BME applicants, care experienced and refugee applicants (see below)
- Optional flagging by applicants to indicate areas of under-representation, which alters the weighting of the scoring criteria
- All panel reviewers receive EDI and unconscious bias training

2.1 Ring-fenced Studentships

In accordance with UKRI and AHRC policy, permissible positive action is being applied to the 2025 SGSAH DTP Open Studentships, following a review of SGSAH Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) application and award data from previous years.

For the 2025 competition, SGSAH is making available *at least* three ring-fenced studentships for applicants from UK-domiciled Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. These 3 ring-fenced studentships represent a *minimum* recruitment, with no maximum.

This year we have ring-fenced an additional two scholarships, one each for care-experienced and refugee applicants.

In terms of process, applicants will be asked to indicate in their internal application process only that they wish to be considered for a ringfenced award or for reweighting but will not provide any further details of which category (or categories) they are in. The online application to SGSAH will request more detail which will not

be seen by Panel Reviewers, who will score and rank applicants using the existing assessment criteria but will be made available to the final ranking meeting of Executive members.

3.Strategic Themes and Priority Areas

SGSAH funds PhDs across the full range of disciplinary areas supported by the AHRC. SGSAH has designated the following strategic themes and priority areas:

- Modern Languages
- Celtic Languages and Studies
- Creative Industries/Economies
- Cultural and Heritage Studies
- Environmental Humanities
- Equalities, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice within arts and humanities contexts

There is no ringfenced funding for these strategic themes and priority areas, and applicants can apply in any subject area. However, we strongly encourage applications within our strategic themes and priority areas, and for applicants to indicate if their applications fall within one or more of them.

Please note that if your project does *not* fall into one of the Strategic Themes or Priority Areas, it will still be evaluated in relation to the assessment criteria. We continue to encourage applications from all eligible areas.

4. SGSAH DTP Doctoral Training and Development Framework

Our SGSAH DTP Training & Development Framework offers an inclusive and flexible blend of core and bespoke opportunities which connect disciplinary, methodological, academic and external contexts. This design recognises and responds to the increased diversification of doctoral approaches in the arts and humanities as well as acknowledging the multiple and diverse skills required to be a successful researcher.

We have four pillars which run throughout our doctoral training programme. These are: Foundation, Core, Specialist and Partnership.

Foundation: Professional Researcher consists of courses foundational to the development of the professional researcher. Normally delivered via the lead HEI, completion is mandatory. Likely content includes Planning and managing research;

Research ethics, integrity, values, and behaviour; Intellectual property and copyright; Data management; and Communications.



It's been a fantastic opportunity to get to know the other members of the cohort, to share ideas, fears and build relations. (Doctoral Researcher)

Core: Leadership Programme This is a developmental course that equips our DTP doctoral researchers to become ethical leaders and influencers in whatever career path they choose. Topics covered include Equality & Diversity, Wellbeing,

Communication, Fellowships, Grant Writing, Career Pathways and Publishing. Running through the Leadership Programme is our Annual Summer School, which offers more than 40 workshops delivered by our members over the course of a week. As the core offer of our doctoral partnership and the mechanism through which we facilitate a peer community, participation is a requirement.

Specialist: Discipline+ Catalysts support the pursuit of knowledge and advancement of disciplines through regular methodological and thematic training at the leading edges of arts and humanities. Our Catalysts also drive cross- and interdisciplinary collaborations which support student-led events funded through Cohort Development Funding. Doctoral researchers must participate in at least one Catalyst event annually.

Partnership: Knowledge Exchange (KE) Hubs SGSAH has three KE Hubs: Citizenship, Culture and Ethics Hub; Creative Economies Hub; and Heritage Hub. Supported by key partners including the BBC, the V&A, the British Council and the Scottish Parliament, the Hubs deliver industry-focused events, and work-related training within a UK and international context. Doctoral researchers must participate in one Hub event annually.

In addition to the four key training pillars summarised above, we offer opportunities for individual and collective training.

Individual: You can request funding to support individual training and development needs. For example, in some instances your stipend may be extended to allow you to gain vital skills or to complete an internship with an industry partner. We have a number of funding schemes to which you can apply, including:

- **Doctoral Internship/Artist in Residence** including international placements (up to three months' additional stipend for fully funded students, additional costs as required);
- **Visiting Doctoral Researcher** – normally international (travel, accommodation and bench fee for up to six months);
- **Specialist training** (course costs/fees, travel and accommodation and additional stipend where the training exceeds one month);
- **Language learning** (additional stipend and course costs). This may also be undertaken in combination with an international internship or a Visiting Doctoral Researcher position, utilising existing international links of our partnership;
- **Knowledge Exchange & Impact:** available to support collaborative research approaches and dissemination of findings;
- **Conference attendance:** to present research at national and international conferences.

It's a great opportunity to explore career options outside of academia and experience something different from PhD research. (Doctoral researcher)

Collective: Cohort Development Funding is available for doctoral researchers to collaborate on designing and managing the delivery of inter/disciplinary, generic, and careers-focused events. With funding of up to £2500 available, recent workshops and events supported via CDF include: Postcolonial Faultlines, Folklore in the Landscape; People and Land: Indigenous Research in Scotland; How to run a successful virtual event; Transgender: International/ Intersectional; Writing for an Interdisciplinary Audience; Spheres of Singing,

5. Open Studentship Competition 2025 Application Form Information

5.1 Eligibility

From 2021 onwards, the AHRC via SGSAH is offering awards to PhD researchers from the world (UK, the EU and International). All funded PhD students, whether UK or International will be eligible for a full award – both a stipend to support living costs, and fees at the HEIs' UK rate.

To be classed as a Home student, candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Be a UK National (meeting residency requirements), or
- Have settled status, or
- Have pre-settled status (meeting residency requirements), or
- Have indefinite leave to remain or enter

If a candidate does not meet the criteria above, they would be classed as an International student

SGSAH can award up to a maximum of 30 percent of awards in total each year to International students (including those from EU nations). SGSAH cannot cover International fees set by HEIs and so applicants should seek information from their lead HEI as to whether they will be required to fund the difference between Home and International fee status, or if the HEI is able to waive the difference.

5.2 Acceptance onto a PhD Programme

To be eligible you must have been accepted onto the PhD programme of your chosen lead HEI who will nominate you to the competition.

5.3 Application process

Read this guidance thoroughly before applying – and ensure you are reading the most recent version. You should then contact your chosen HEI(s) as soon as possible to find out how they are selecting proposals for nomination, and their internal deadlines for applications. **Note that internal deadlines are likely to be much earlier than SGSAH's deadline.**

SGSAH operates an electronic application system which will be open **3-14 February 2025** via our [website](#). This guidance includes a template for the information you will be required to complete online. The template is also available as a separate Word document.

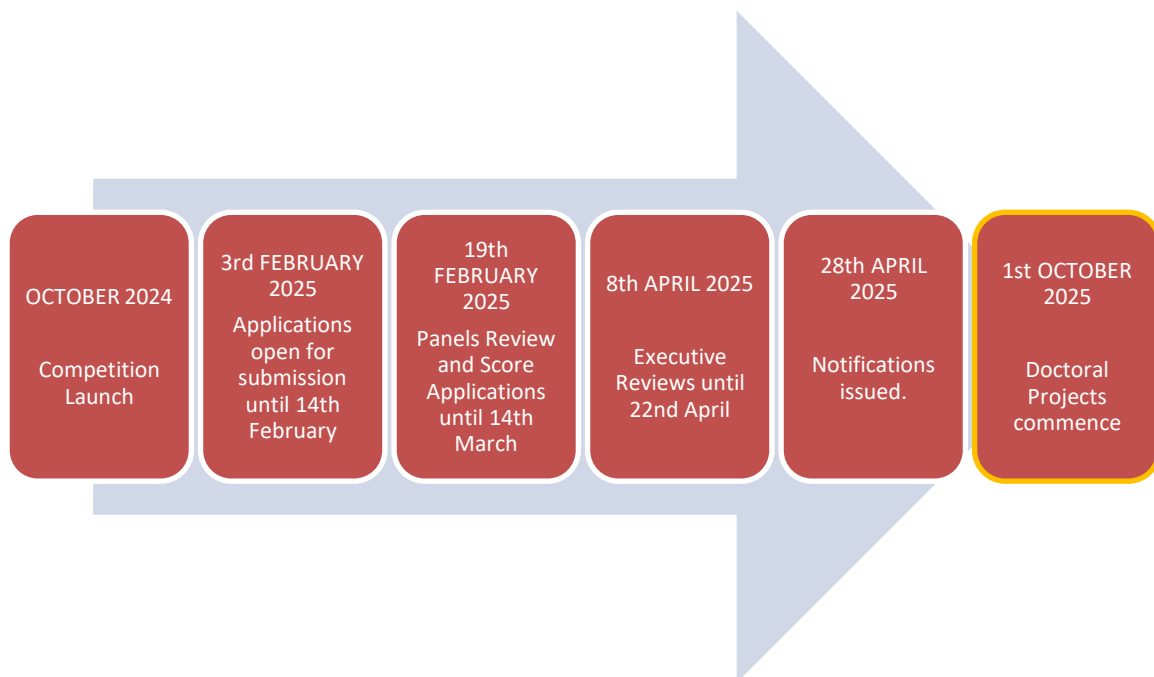
The online process involves:

- Inputting information to our electronic form. See the guidance below for details.
- Uploading one single PDF of your academic transcripts.
- Uploading the PDF Institutional Statement provided by your nominating HEI (please note you must anonymise the file name, ie it should not include your name).
- Uploading confirmation of your offer of a place from your lead HEI.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they have all the necessary documents ready to upload to the portal.

5.4 Application deadline

The online application portal will close at **12 noon GMT on 14 February 2025**. Late applications will only be considered where there is evidenced breakdown in SGSAH's operational systems and where such systemic failures have made submission by the deadline impossible. Please note that we will **not** accept late applications where there has been failure at the applicant's end (e.g. failure of internet connection). For this reason, **we strongly advise applicants to complete the application process at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline.**



6. Guidance on completing the 2025 application form

General notes on the application

You should read this guidance thoroughly before you begin your application. Your chosen HEI(s) will also have guidance on how to write a good research proposal, and your supervisory team will be able to give you advice.

Advice from current students for applicants is provided on page 20.

General note on the online form

Be aware that the online application form will automatically cut off entries over the stated word limits.

All applications submitted will be anonymised. Reviewers will not have access to transcripts, offer of place, or any identifying factors such as name or HEI(s) from which you have graduated. SGSAH also aims to mitigate any gender or ethnic bias in the assessment of excellence, and we ask that your nominator does not use pronouns, names or other words which would identify your gender or ethnicity. **We also ask that you remove any reference to your name on filenames to be uploaded as part of your application.**

6.1 Personal details

This section asks you to provide contact information. We will normally contact you by email so please ensure you use an address you check regularly, and which will be available to you at least until September 2025. Applications are reviewed anonymously. Personal details will not be shared with reviewers.

6.2 Eligibility

This section asks you to confirm whether you are eligible to apply.

To be eligible for a SGSAH AHRC DTP studentship you must:

- be nominated by one of the SGSAH AHRC DTP consortium HEIs; and
- hold a conditional or unconditional offer of a place in a relevant discipline on a PhD programme at that HEI.

Both new and continuing PhD researchers may apply for an award. To be eligible, continuing students must have at least 50% of their 3½ years full-time or 7 years part-time PhD programme remaining as of 30 September 2024. Funding will only be available for this remaining period.

If you have any queries about your eligibility, please contact the relevant postgraduate office in your nominating HEI for advice and guidance at an early stage in the process.

6.3 Ring-fencing

Please indicate here whether you are eligible to be considered for any of the ring-fenced awards advertised. To be eligible, you must be a Home student from a BAME background, have refugee status or be care-experienced. (see section 4.a on Ring-fencing on page 4).

6.4 Optional Flags to Reweight Scoring Criteria

SGSAH is aware that some people face unfair structural barriers, which may be reflected in an applicant's previous academic record, even though they are fully capable of producing interesting, important and original doctoral level research. To address this, SGSAH have identified a list of Widening Participation "flags". If you qualify on any of these criteria, you can choose to have your previous qualification/relevant professional experience and preparedness for research under-weighted and your project proposal be overweighted as follows:

Category	Current Weighting	Proposed Weighting
Qualifications/Experience	12%	6%
Proposal	28%	44%
Preparedness	20%	10%
Supervisory	20%	20%
Training needs	20%	20%

Please note that Supervisory and Training needs scored will be unchanged.

If you wish to be considered for this reweighting, please tick any of the flags apply to you. The reweighting will be the same, irrespective of the number of flags. Please note that this information will not be disclosed to reviewers. If, after the reweighting process, the total score is lower, your original score will be used.

- Trans applicants
- First generation at University
- Recipient of a means tested scholarship, or free school meals
- Disability/Chronic Illness
- Care experienced, or an applicant with care responsibilities
- Refugee Status

6.5 Stuart Hall Foundation Fellowships

Scotland's two national graduate schools (Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities: SGSAH and the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science: SGSSS) are working in partnership with the [Stuart Hall Foundation](#) to offer up to six Stuart Hall Fellowships starting in October 2025.

Both SGSAH and SGSSS are committed to the public function of education and to addressing the barriers which exist to accessing higher education. The Fellowships, inspired by the life and work of Professor Stuart Hall and his research legacy in the areas of race, ethnicity, cultural and structural inequalities, will be used to provide opportunities for students from non-traditional and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Applications for these Fellowships are sought from candidates from non-traditional or disadvantaged backgrounds who are under-represented at graduate level in the Arts and Humanities and the Social Sciences in Scotland, and with a preference for those whose planned research aligns broadly with one of Stuart Hall's many areas of interest: cultural studies, race, ethnicity and inequalities. Applicants can apply through SGSAH and SGSSS's DTP Open Studentship Competitions, with selected successful candidates invited to apply for a Stuart Hall Foundation (SHF) Fellowship.

Each Graduate School will award up to three Stuart Hall Foundation Fellowships, which will be attached to funded studentships (covering fees, stipend and a research training grant). The Fellowship can be held within disciplines across the social sciences, arts and humanities at selected Scottish HEIs (Higher Education Institutes) which form part of the relevant Graduate School.

Recipients of these Fellowships will benefit from access to the [Stuart Hall Foundation Scholars and Fellows network programme](#), which includes regular events and opportunities to develop their career and research profile.

Applicants who fall into the descriptor for the Fellowships are invited to indicate their interest in the Fellowships on the application form via Survey Monkey Apply. If applicants are then successful in receiving a studentship offer, they will then be invited to make a further application for a Stuart Hall Fellowship.

6.6 Reasonable distance

AHRC studentships are awarded on the condition that the doctoral researcher lives within a 'reasonable distance' from their lead-HEI. SGSAH's definition of reasonable distance is that a student ought to be able to travel to their lead HEI every day to work core hours (10am to 4pm).

6.7 Panel(s) of the PhD Project

SGSAH DTP studentship applications are assessed by 11 panels. They cover the disciplines set out below. Please indicate which panel covers your proposal. Please

note that you should select two panels only if your supervisory team has an equal supervisory weighting across two panels e.g. 50% Music and 50% Film & TV (submit to Panels C and G). Where there is a differentiated supervisory weighting, you should submit your application to the panel with the greater weighting e.g. 75% French and 25% Film & TV should be submitted to Panel H only. If you are unsure which panel covers your proposal, or if the subject area is not listed, please seek the advice of your proposed supervisors who will confirm this within the Institutional Statement.

Panels	Disciplines
A	Archaeology & Classics
B	Cultural & Museum Studies, Art History
C	Creative and Performing Arts and Design
D	History
E	Law and Legal Studies, International Development, Diplomacy, and International Relations
F	Linguistics
G	Media, Communications, Cultural Policy, Film and TV, Library and Information Studies
H	Modern Languages
I	Philosophy
J	Scottish and English Literatures
K	Theology, Divinity, and Religions

6.8 Subject Area(s)

We ask you to indicate the primary discipline of your proposed PhD (e.g. Classics). Disciplines and subject areas covered within the above panels are listed in the table below. The AHRC's subject guidance can be found via the website link [here](#).

Panels	Disciplines
A	<p>Archaeology (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prehistoric Archaeology • Archaeology of Literate Societies • Archaeology of Human Origins • Archaeological Theory • Maritime Archaeology • Landscape and Environmental Archaeology • Industrial Archaeology <p>Classics (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classical Literature • Classical Reception • Philosophy, Thought and Religion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epigraphy and Papyrology • Languages and Linguistics
B	<p>Cultural & Museum Studies (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum and Gallery Studies • Museum Policy & Management • Cultural Geography • Heritage Studies and Management • Conservation of Art and Textiles <p>Art History Art History</p>
C	<p>Creative and Performing Arts and Design (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Creative Writing • Dance (incl. Choreography) • Design • Drama, Theatre Studies & Performance • Music (incl. composition, popular, classical and musicology) • Visual Arts (incl. Photography, Installation, Community, Digital and Applied Arts, Curating)
D	<p>History (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural History • Political History • Imperial/Colonial History • History of Science/Medicine/Technology • War Studies • Religious History • Economic and Social History • American Studies • Post-Colonial Studies • Scottish Studies
E	<p>Law & Legal Studies (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law • Human Rights • Criminal Law and Criminology • International Law • EU Law • Public Law • Comparative Law • Common Law, including Commercial Law • Law Regulated by Statute • Law Relating to Property • Legal History

	International Development, Diplomacy and International Relations
F	<p>Linguistics (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual Editing and Bibliography • Syntax • Semantics and Pragmatics • Phonetics • Language Variation and Change • Lexicon • Linguistic Theory • Morphology and Phonology • Applied Linguistics • Linguistics (General) • History of English Language
G	<p>Media (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media and Communication Studies • Journalism • Publishing • Television History, Theory and Criticism • New Media/Web-Based Studies • Film History, Theory and Criticism <p>Cultural Policy & Arts Management (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, Arts Management and Creative Industries <p>Cultural Studies and Pop Culture (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and Sexuality <p>Library and Information Studies (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archives • Records Management • Information Science and Retrieval • Library Studies • Information and Knowledge Management • Computational Studies <p>Information and Communications Technology (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and Knowledge Management
H	<p>Modern Languages (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreting and Translation • Scandinavian Studies • Asiatic and Oriental Studies • Middle Eastern and African • Italian Studies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin Studies • English Language • Comparative Literature • French Studies • Celtic Studies • Australasian Studies • German, including Dutch and Yiddish • Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages and Literature
I	<p>Philosophy (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Philosophy • Philosophy of Mind • Aesthetics • Metaphysics • History of Ideas • Language and Philosophical Logic • Epistemology • Ethics • History of Philosophy • Philosophy of Science and Mathematics and Mathematical Logic • Philosophy of Religion
J	<p>Literatures (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh Literature • Literature from the Anglophone world • Colonial and Post-Colonial Studies • Life writing • Children's Literature • Science and Fantasy Writing • Poetry • Literary and Cultural Theory • Ethnography and Anthropology • Gender and Sexuality
K	<p>Theology, Divinity & Religions (including)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Testament • Modern Theology • Judaism • Islam • Liturgy • Systematic Theology • Church History and History of Theology • New Testament

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Asian Religions • Buddhism • Hinduism • Jainism • Sikhism • Alternative Spiritualities/New Religious Movements • Atheism/Secularism • Inter-faith Relations • Contemporary Religion
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6.9 Interdisciplinary projects beyond the Arts & Humanities

We support PhD research projects that cross disciplines. We will fund proposals where at least 50% of the project falls within the AHRC's remit.

Where a compelling case for additional training to support an interdisciplinary project is made, normally involving a Science, Technology, Engineering or Medicine discipline, additional funded time of up to six months can be awarded. If your PhD project is interdisciplinary in these terms and you wish to request additional funding, please complete the section (up to 200 words).

6.10 Qualifications

The AHRC expects applicants to have completed or to be studying towards a relevant Masters qualification. This section requires you to complete the year, and if appropriate, grade, of your qualifications. Please provide **full** transcripts – copies of degree certificates alone do not provide sufficient evidence. Transcripts should be in English, and where necessary a certified translation should be provided.

We recognise that some applicants will have completed degrees which are non-standard or unclassified (i.e. Pass/Fail only). Where this is the case, applicants should still complete the Qualifications section with further information to be provided by the lead-HEI in its Institutional Statement. Information provided will not be shared with reviewers.

6.11 Relevant Professional Experience (300 words maximum)

This section is intended to provide a level playing field for applicants with unrelated, dated or no Masters qualifications but who have demonstrably relevant professional experience. The Relevant Professional Experience section should therefore **only** be completed by candidates who:

- do not have and are not studying towards a Masters degree or equivalent
- or are returning to Masters study after a considerable break in higher education
- or gained a Masters degree more than five years previously

- or their Masters degree is not in a relevant subject
- AND they have significant professional experience, which is relevant to their research proposal.

Whilst we do not wish to discriminate against applicants who might not previously have had the opportunity to study at postgraduate level, you should be aware that a doctoral degree is a rigorous training at the highest academic level. If you are completing this section of the application, you should provide evidence that the training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a Masters course and therefore prepares you to continue to doctoral study.

6.13 Research Summary (100 words maximum)

Please provide a summary of your proposed research project that will be comprehensible to non-specialists.

6.14 Research Proposal (1000 words maximum)

This section must describe your proposal and should include title, research question(s)/problem, research context, methods and sources, originality/innovation and contribution to knowledge and knowledge exchange (KE), public engagement (PE) & impact (including academic impact).

We are seeking original, innovative, cogent, and coherent proposals which are well-written in their entirety. Completion of the project should be feasible within 3½ years or part-time equivalent. The methodology should be demonstrably appropriate and the whole proposal well-grounded in current research literature and/or practice. The academic impact should be clearly stated: demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to academic advances, across and within disciplines, including significant advances in understanding, methodology, theory, and application.

In addition, we hope that our doctoral graduates are committed to generating and mobilising knowledge across a range of professional and public communities. The SGSAH DTP aims to support you in developing KE, PE, and impact skills. You will be able to apply for funding to support activities which realise impact.

We use the UKRI definition of impact, which also includes public engagement. When we ask you to describe the impact your research might have, we are not asking you to answer your research question(s) or to anticipate the results of your research. Instead, we are asking you to consider more broadly who may be interested in and/or benefit by your research and its findings; and to describe what methods you might use to engage with these people or groups during and after your research.

You might find these questions helpful in thinking about impact:

- What is happening now – or not happening – that you think your research findings could help to change?
- Who might be interested or involved in delivering or experiencing the change that may happen as a result of your findings?
- Why would these communities be interested? How might they benefit?
- How will you engage/communicate/network with these communities? How can working with these communities help your research? Would your project benefit from planned knowledge exchange activities?
- How would you demonstrate/evidence any changes and the link back to your research findings, bearing in mind that you will be able to apply for funding to develop impact?

6.15 Preparedness for proposed doctoral project (300 words maximum)

Please demonstrate how your previous study (Undergraduate/Masters) and/or professional experience have prepared you for this doctoral project. This might include reference to your UG and Masters programme of study and your dissertation topics, specific and appropriate methodological training and/ or expertise (e.g. proficiency in a relevant language, particular IT skills etc.), work-based learning or employment in a relevant occupation, etc. Please do not reference by name your previous places of study in this section.

6.16 Training needs and SGSAH DTP (300 words maximum)

We ask you to provide this information to show awareness of training required to allow for successful and timely completion of your PhD. However well-prepared applicants may be to undertake the research they propose, it is expected that new skills will be required to ensure completion of the PhD. What skills will you need to develop to successfully complete your research project?

We also want to support your future career aspirations. What skills will you seek to develop for professional development purposes?

In this section, we are also looking for evidence on how the SGSAH DTP fits with your training needs and career aspirations and how you plan to take best advantage of the opportunities we offer, beyond the core training requirements (outlined on p.5-6). SGSAH requires all AHRC funded students to:

- complete foundation training as required by the lead HEI
- complete our DTP core Leadership Programme consisting of an induction, one residential event for each full-time year of study, a symposium in year two and our annual Summer Schools
- be a member of and participate in at least one Discipline+ Catalyst event and one KE Hub event per annum.

This section invites you to consider other opportunities, for example an internship or a Visiting Doctoral Research position. For further information on the activities of the Discipline+ Catalysts and KE Hubs, please see further information [here](#).

6.17 Ethics and Research Integrity (300 words)

Any project funded by SGSAH DTP must be ethical. In this section you should identify any ethical or safety issues attached to this research project or to the associated impact plans and how these will be addressed. Please do consider this carefully as any project, including its impact plans, which is considered not to have addressed ethical issues will be deemed to be not fundable.

Please note that Ethics and Research Integrity is not scored within the competition process, but it is important that this section of the form is given due consideration in order to indicate the proposal's feasibility.

6.18 Environmental Impact Assessment

SGSAH's Green/Graduate Strategy & Operations Plan sets out our commitment to reducing the impact of doctoral research in the arts and humanities. In this section applicants are asked to confirm that they will undertake appropriate measures to reduce the impact of their research activities, including adhering to sustainable travel practices, conference attendance, and fieldwork activities. Successful applicants will be provided with supporting guidelines and training.

6.19 Plagiarism and Generative AI

Applicants are asked to tick a box confirming that their application constitutes their own original work and is not plagiarised. It is anticipated that applicants have worked with supervisors and other HEI staff to construct their statement but have not used AI. Applicants should also note and adhere to the UKRI statement on the 'Use of generative AI in application preparation and assessment' at <https://www.ukri.org/news/use-of-generative-ai-in-application-preparation-and-assessment/>.

Please note that an applicant reusing wording from their own existing work (i.e. from a masters' dissertation or published articles etc.) is not in the instance of the competition considered to be plagiarism.

6.20 SGSAH Requirements

As a SGSAH AHRC DTP-funded doctoral researcher, you are required to join and participate in at least one Discipline+ Catalyst and KE Hub event annually. You may elect to be a member of more than one Catalyst and Hub, though this is not a requirement. Please indicate which Catalyst(s) and Hub(s) you will join.

6.21 Nominating Member of Staff and Email

Please provide a name and contact for your nominating institution. This will be the person who signs the nominating form. You should check with your proposed

supervisor or the Graduate School Administrator at your lead-HEI who the nominator is. It might be your Dean of Graduate Studies, or Head of School, or even your lead supervisor.

7. Further queries

If you have any further queries, please refer to our FAQs or contact the SGSAH office via enquiries@sgsah.ac.uk We will provide some additional asynchronous materials to support applications and are hosting online Q&A sessions on Thursday 10 October 2024 at 11am, Tuesday 15 October 2024 at 10am, and Thursday 31 October at 2pm (all times are BST).

8. Frequently asked questions

Can I apply to more than one HEI?

You can apply to more than one HEI, but you can only submit one application to the SGSAH DTP studentship competition in each year. If more than one SGSAH DTP HEI seeks to nominate you, you must choose the one you wish to be registered with as a doctoral researcher. Please inform any other HEIs who have agreed to nominate you that you have decided not to accept their nomination. Before doing so, we recommend that you explore with them the possibility of a cross-HEI supervision arrangement.

We want to make sure you are supervised by the best team possible across our doctoral training partnership, with access to the best research environment and resources for your research project and professional development. The very best supervision for your project may come from a team across HEIs. To support this, we have in place a co-supervision agreement and funding available to support travel costs between HEIs where required. Where your supervisory team comes from across HEIs, one of the supervisors/HEIs will be designated the lead-HEI. This is the HEI at which you will be registered for study and from which you will graduate. The lead HEI will be your nominating HEI and this HEI will support your final application to the SGSAH DTP competition. HEIs must be members of the SGSAH DTP.

If I am unsuccessful this year, can I apply again in future years?

Yes. You can apply for funding from your second year onwards if you decide to continue without funding in your first year, or you can make a further application for entry in year one next year. You may also wish to consider applying for an advertised Collaborative Doctoral Award project.

How will my proposal be assessed?

Your application will be reviewed by a Panel of disciplinary reviewers drawn from across our HEIs, with final decisions made by the SGSAH DTP Executive Committee.

Our marking scheme and indicative criteria are contained in this guidance on page 46.

When will I find out if I have been successful?

We aim to make initial offers for awards starting in October 2025 in late-April 2025.

Can I delay the start of my study?

A key element of the success of the Doctoral Training Partnership is the development of a strong and connected cohort of doctoral researchers and so we

expect that all studentships will begin in October each year. Exceptionally we may permit deferment within the academic year once awards have been made.

If you have a query that isn't answered here or on the FAQ section of our website, please email enquiries@sgsah.ac.uk.

9. Advice from successful applicants

Start early

Begin your application as early as possible. Even if you are sitting on the draft for a few weeks or months before the deadline, having time to think over your proposal, and allowing time for many edits is beyond valuable, even necessary.

- *Daniel*

Coming up with a good idea, identifying potential supervisors and seeking support from an institution takes time. In my experience writing a good application is also a long process, as it requires research, patience and many redrafts. But don't get demoralized, I have always been supported throughout the whole process, and useful advice has always been only one email away.

- *Vlad*

Find the right supervisor for you

Start by finding a potential supervisor who's enthusiastic about your project and has experience guiding PhD applicants! It's really invaluable to have good practical support for your application.

- *Harry*

Find a supervisor that you work well with and find inspiring. Discuss and work through your application with them in order to frame your good ideas so that they become more relevant and compelling.

- *Pernille*

Share your draft widely...

I also found enlisting the support of multiple proof-readers (dedicated family and friends!) who are not necessarily specialists in your area really helpful, as they can help you simplify your language and make the content of your proposal more accessible and clear.

- *Clare*

Just having someone else give a second opinion on what works and what doesn't was so incredibly useful to me when I was completing my application. They can help make sure that you are getting your point across as clearly and precisely as

possible, which to me was absolutely critical.

- *Adam*

...and make use of feedback

Don't be afraid to ask your prospective supervisors to look over drafts of your application and to take their advice on board.

- *Fraser*

Keep it clear

Reading my proposal to friends and family who knew little about my subject forced me to better clarify my argument and resulted in a much stronger application.

- *Juliet*

Have a parent, friend, or sibling read it. If they don't understand something (especially if it's specific to your field) make sure you clarify so that anyone judging from different disciplines can understand. However, find a way to not clarify too much that it weakens the proposed idea's academic integrity.

- *Daniel*

Think about all elements of the application

Immersing yourself in SGSAH, their ethos and what they stand for will help you to get into the right mind set for writing an application, which is tailored to the SGSAH and the concept of developing a networking framework/community for researchers.

- *Grant*

Think boldly and creatively when it comes to impact and knowledge exchange and come up with a concrete proposal offering tangible output. It can feel daunting to make claims about how your work can benefit others, but by its very nature original research produces practical advances.

- *Murray*

For me, it was necessary to really think about the essence of my research, my main ideas and aims, in order to submit a really polished application.

- *Stefana*

Draft, redraft and then redraft again

A good application requires numerous drafts and lots of time – it's not a side project to be completed on weekends.

- *Mads*

Be prepared for how many times you have to redraft your proposal. The application process and word limits can feel frustrating and restrictive, but it's good practice for future proposals and will ensure that you are very clear about your objectives.

- Kirsty

Go easy on yourself. It can be easy to let the application dominate your headspace in the months leading to submission. There's a fine line between redrafting and unhealthy fixation.

- Andrew

And finally...

I want to encourage students who are discouraged by similar experiences or find the process/competition daunting that sometimes it does take some people a bit longer than others, and that if you are committed, have a really excellent project, and listen to the advice of your supervisors, you can be successful with the SGSAH.

- Katy

Thanks to the past and current SGSAH doctoral researchers who shared their experiences with us.

10. SGSAH AHRC DTP Nomination Application Form Template 2025/26

This template is available to download so you can prepare in advance of the online portal opening on 3 February 2025. If you are nominated by a SGSAH AHRC DTP HEI, you will need to complete the online application form. The online portal will close at 12 noon GMT on 14 February 2025. Late applications will not be accepted.

The application form should be read alongside the latest version of the SGSAH Doctoral Training Partnership & Funded Studentship Open Competition 2025 Guidance.

Personal Details

Applications are reviewed anonymously. Personal Details will not be shared with reviewers.

Name
Email <i>We will normally contact you by email so please ensure you use an address you check regularly, and which will be available to you at least until September 2025</i>
Permanent Address
Correspondence Address if different

<p>Eligibility Please indicate whether you are classified by your HEI as a home or international student.</p>

PhD Programme of Study

Institution at which you are or will be registered (the lead institution)	
Have you already commenced your PhD programme of study?	Yes/No

Cross-institutional supervision where applicable (up to two additional HEIs)

Institution	
Institution	

Subject panel(s) and subject areas of PhD Project

Strategic Themes and Priority Areas

Please indicate if your application falls within one or more of our strategic themes or priority areas as identified above

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern Languages • Celtic Languages and Studies • Creative Industries/Economies • Cultural and Heritage Studies • Environmental Humanities • Equalities, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice within arts and humanities contexts |
|---|

Qualifications

The AHRC expects applicants to have **completed or to be studying towards a Postgraduate Masters qualification in a relevant subject**. If you are **not** in this position, you **must use** the 'Relevant professional experience' section to provide evidence that the training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a Masters course in a relevant subject and, therefore, prepares you to continue to doctoral study. Details of place of study will not be shared with reviewers.

University or College	Dates of award	Degree/Diploma	Main subjects	Grade, Class, or GPA

Qualifications pending

University or College	Anticipated date of award	Degree/Diploma	Main subjects

Relevant professional experience (300 words maximum)

If you complete this section, it will be reviewed in place of qualifications.

You should only complete it if:

- You do not have and are not studying towards a Masters degree or equivalent
- or are returning to Masters study after a considerable break in higher education
- or gained a Masters degree more than five years previously
- or if your Masters degree is not in a relevant subject
- AND you have significant professional experience, which is relevant to your research proposal.

You should use this section to provide evidence that the training and development you have received is equivalent to that obtained through a relevant Masters course and, therefore, prepares you to continue to doctoral study.

Research proposal title

Research Summary (100 words)

Summary of the proposed research project that will be comprehensible to non-specialists and suitable for PR and communication channels.

Research Proposal (1000 words)

This section must describe your proposal. We are seeking original, innovative, cogent, and coherent proposals, which are well-written in their entirety. Completion of the project should be feasible within the funded period, normally 3½ years. The methodology should be demonstrably appropriate and the whole proposal well-grounded in current research literature and/or practice. Full bibliographic referencing is not required.

Research question(s)/problem:

Research context, methods and sources, originality/innovation, and contribution to knowledge (academic impact):

Knowledge Exchange, Public Engagement & Impact: *Who might be interested or involved in delivering or experiencing the change that may happen as a result of your findings? Why would these communities be interested? How might they benefit? How will you engage/communicate/network with these communities? Be realistic in your proposed plans and ensure that your plans are ethical.*

Preparedness for proposed doctoral project (300 words maximum)

Please demonstrate how your previous study (UG / MA) and / or professional experience have prepared you for this particular doctoral project. This might include reference to your UG and Masters programmes of study and your dissertation topics, specific and appropriate methodological training and/or expertise (e.g. proficiency in a relevant language, particular IT skills etc.), work-based learning or employment in a relevant occupation, etc.

Training needs and SGSAH DTP (300 words maximum)

However well-prepared applicants may be to undertake the research they propose, it is expected that they will need to develop new skills during their programme of study.

- *Please identify your training needs – what skills will you need to develop to ensure that you are able to complete your research project successfully? (Your project is likely to build on and extend existing skills and will be project specific.)*
- *What skills do you seek to develop for professional development purposes? For example, do you intend to undertake an Internship?*
- *How will you meet the needs and develop the skills noted above? What resources and/or opportunities will you access across the SGSAH DTP Programme beyond the core requirement, and from your HEIs and/or other HEIs or organisations?*

Ethics and Research Integrity (300 words)

Please identify any ethical or safety issues attached to this research project and/or its impact plans and how these will be addressed. Please add a link to your lead HEI's Ethics and/or Research Integrity policy.

Environmental Impact Assessment

As part of SGSAH's '[Green/Graduate Strategy & Operations Plan](#)' we have committed to reducing the environmental impact of doctoral research in the arts and humanities, including sustainable travel practices, conference attendance, and fieldwork activities. To ensure the sustainability of doctoral research projects applicants are asked to confirm that they will undertake appropriate measures to reduce the impact of their research activities. Successful applicants will be supported through guidance and training.

[tick box] I confirm that as part of my annual progress review (year 1 full-time; year 1 or 2 part-time) I will identify measures to ensure the sustainability of my doctoral research activities.

Plagiarism and generative AI

[Tick box] This application constitutes my own original work. I understand that if any plagiarism is detected in the review process, my application may be withdrawn from consideration. In drafting my application, I have worked with my potential supervisors, but have not used generative AI to write my proposal or other parts of the application.

SGSAH Requirements

All SGSAH DTP funded doctoral researchers are required to participate in core training elements provided by SGSAH. Key mechanisms for delivery of this training include Knowledge Exchange (KE) Hubs and Disciplinary+ Catalysts. Information about these can be found in the Guidance.

You must be a member of at least one KE Hub. Please indicate which KE Hub(s) you will join:

Citizenship, Culture and Ethics

Creative Economies

Heritage

You must be a member of at least one Disciplinary+ Catalyst. Please indicate which Catalyst(s) you will join:

Archaeology and Classics

Creative Arts and Design

Cultural and Museum Studies

History

Law

Linguistics

Media, Comms, Film & TV

Modern Languages

Celtic Studies

Philosophy

Literature

Theology, Divinity & Religion

<p>Nominating Member of Staff</p> <p><i>Please provide a name and contact for your nominating institution. This will be the person who signs the nominating form. This will depend on your chosen HEI's nomination process.</i></p>	
<p>Nominator Email</p>	

Ring-fencing, and Optional Flags for Reweighting Scoring

Please note that the online application form will ask for further detailed information in relation to the options below which will be confidential and not revealed to reviewers. The tick box below is for internal HEI review purposes only.

[] Please indicate whether you are eligible to be considered for ring-fenced awards.

[] Please indicate whether you wish to have your scoring reweighted under the optional flags listed in the guidance.

Data storage: Anonymised, limited special characteristic data (such as disability, ethnicity, and other health data) will be collected and retained by SGSAH in order to fulfil our contractual obligations to our funder, the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Applications from nominees not in receipt of funding will be destroyed by 1st October 2025. Applications from nominees in receipt of funding will be retained for the duration of the studentship. This application may be read by up to twenty reviewers.

11. Guidance for nominating institutions on completing the SGSAH DTP Institutional Statement for studentships beginning in October 2025

Students nominated by a SGSAH AHRC DTP HEI will need to complete the online application form and upload the Institutional Statement (IS). The online portal will open on **3 February 2025** and close **at 12 noon GMT on 14 February 2025**. **We will not accept late applications.** It is the lead HEI's responsibility to ensure that its nominated candidate is able to upload its Institutional Statement before the portal closes. We advise nominated doctoral researchers to submit their applications at least 48 hours before the portal closes to allow for any technical issues.

All applications will be anonymised. Reviewers will not have access to transcripts, offer of place, or any identifying factors such as name or qualifications. All parts of the applications should be free from pronouns or other words which would identify the applicant's gender or ethnicity. In order to comply with these guidelines, we ask that you use 'the applicant,' or refer to all applicants as 'their/they.' **In addition, all files being uploaded as part of the application should be anonymised.**

The Institutional Statement is designed to allow institutions to demonstrate that they offer an excellent fit for the nominated candidate and their specific PhD research project. To this end, we invite nominators to demonstrate:

- the relevance and fit of the proposal with the proposed supervisory team in its entirety;
- the relevance and fit of the research environment; and
- the nature of training and level of support to be provided to the student by the supervising institution(s).

Name of nominating member of staff

We do not specify who within a nominating institution should complete the Institutional Statement, but the candidate will be required to supply a name and email address on their application so please do make sure that your nominated applicant knows who the nominator is. We will crosscheck nominations supplied by HEIs against applications received.

Non-standard and/or unclassified qualifications

If your nominated candidate holds a non-standard and/or unclassified qualification, we would ask you to provide further information about their qualification which will allow us to evaluate it fairly against the scoring criteria. For example, where the applicant holds an Ordinary Degree rather than an Honours Degree, contextual

sectoral information may be provided. Where a degree is unclassified, we ask you to confirm the quality of the work by making reference to the examiner's report.

Confirmation of Interdisciplinarity

Applications which cross two of our Competition Review Panels will be reviewed by both panels. We seek confirmation that the proposed research crosses Panel disciplines. Please note that two panels should only be selected if the supervisory team has an equal weighting across two panels e.g. 50% Music and 50% Film & TV. (See p.12 for details of Panel Disciplines.)

Interdisciplinary Projects beyond the Arts & Humanities

SGSAH will fund interdisciplinary projects where at least 50% of the project falls within the AHRC's disciplinary domains. If relevant, please detail the interdisciplinary nature of the project beyond the arts & humanities. Where the applicant's project is interdisciplinary, with supervision drawn from Science, Technology, Engineering and/or Medicine, the Review Panel and Executive will exceptionally consider requests for up to 4 years of funding. If additional funding is requested (up to 4 years in total), please provide a clear rationale for this request (200 words max).

Supervisory Team

We seek evidence that the applicant and their project will be supported by the very best team of supervisors and research environment available across our doctoral training partnership.

Making best use of the excellence that exists across the SGSAH DTP consortium, in terms of world-leading academic expertise and unique resources, the very best supervisory team and research environment may be provided by working across our DTP HEIs. To support this, we have in place a cross-HEI co-supervision agreement.

Where the supervisory team comes from across HEIs, one of the HEIs will be designated the lead-HEI. This is the HEI at which the doctoral researcher will be registered for study and from which they will graduate. The lead-HEI will be the nominating HEI. The Lead Supervisor must be employed by the nominating HEI.

We recognise that the very best supervisory team and research environment may come from a single HEI.

In all cases, a compelling rationale for the supervisory arrangement will need to be provided in the 'Supervisory expertise and research training environment' section.

In this section, we ask you to provide details of the supervisory team and indicate the weighting given to each supervisor. Lead Supervisor allocation must be more than or equal to the allocation of other supervisor(s) in the team. **The only supervisory allocations available are:**

75%/25%
50%/50%
60%/20%/20%

The DTP will not formally recognise supervisory input of less than 20%.

Normally, doctoral supervisors supervise no more than 6 FTE doctoral researchers. Where a proposed supervisor will be supervising more than 6 FTE, a compelling mitigating rationale must be provided.

This section of the IS also invites all supervisors to list up to six relevant outputs. This is indicative and is not intended to discourage early career researchers from acting as Lead, co- or secondary supervisors. SGSAH welcomes and supports the development of ECRs through its DTP programme. 'Outputs' refers to publications, practice-based research including performances, exhibitions, compositions, etc.

Supervisory expertise and research training environment (800 words maximum)

We seek here demonstrable and persuasive evidence that the supervisory arrangements offer the PhD researcher the best training environment possible within the consortium partnership.

- Why is this the right supervisory team for this project and this applicant? What expertise does this particular team bring to the project?
- What role will supervisors play in ensuring the doctoral researcher and their project are supported?
- How will the supervisory arrangements be managed? (SGSAH actively supports the development of Early Career Researchers. Where an ECR is a member of the supervisory team, please provide details on how the ECR will be mentored/supported in their role.)
- How does the research environment support the doctoral researcher and the project? How are the collections/research culture, context, and resources of the HEIs to which the applicant has applied essential to the successful completion of the project?
- What will the doctoral researcher/project add to the research environment?

We recognise that there may be occasions where an applicant has extenuating circumstances that influence their choice of lead-HEI, which should be within commutable distance. Reviewers will still seek evidence that an *overall* excellent research environment is provided.

Training and Skills Development Plan (500 words maximum)

The applicant's section on required training must align with the more detailed training plan requested here, and the two sections should be constructed collectively. Students are normally funded for 3½ years and the AHRC expects its funded doctoral students to submit within the funded period. Stipends can be extended to

allow additional funded time for the completion of e.g. internships and essential language learning. Note that our AHRC-funded doctoral researchers are still required to submit within four years (or p/t equivalent) irrespective of additional funded time.

SGSAH requires all AHRC funded students to:

- complete foundational training as required by the lead-HEI
- complete the SGSAH DTP Leadership Programme consisting of an induction, one residential event for each full-time year of study, a symposium in year two and our annual Summer School
- be a member of and participate in at least one Discipline+ Catalyst event and one KE Hub event per annum.

Further opportunities for training and skills development are outlined on p. 5-6 of this Guidance. We would recommend that the doctoral researcher and supervisory team review these as part of their discussion of a bespoke PhD Programme training plan. This plan should support the successful and timely completion of an excellent PhD project as well as develop the student's professional skills. Training plans should be specific to the individual applicant. Broad or boilerplate statements about departments, resources, etc. are unlikely to make a strong enough case for the applicant.

We recognise that plans are likely to change over the course of the PhD project. We seek evidence that the needs of the student, their project, and their future ambitions have been considered carefully at the outset. (Currently, more than 50% of Arts & Humanities doctoral graduates pursue careers outside of the academy.)

The student and their project may benefit from collaboration with a non-academic organisation. Such collaboration(s) and their likely benefits should be referenced in this section.

- What training and skills development does this applicant require in order to successfully complete this PhD project and how will specific institutional resources and SGSAH's shared resources enable this applicant to complete this thesis? Please avoid generic statements of provision.
- Is there an opportunity to collaborate with a non-university partner to the benefit of this applicant and their project?
- How will specific institutional resources and SGSAH's shared resources support this applicant in preparing for their future career aspirations?

Ethics & Research Integrity

Any project funded by SGSAH DTP must be ethical. Please indicate that you have discussed with the applicant any ethical or safety issues attached to this research project and/or its impact plans and how these will be addressed. The applicant should provide a full outline of ethical consideration in their application.

Confirmation of supervisory requirements

SGSAH DTP is committed to the continuing professional development of our PhD supervisors, which we see as essential to the provision of an excellent training environment for our students. Measures agreed by our HEI members are:

- ✓ One member of the proposed supervisory team must have previously supervised at least one doctoral candidate to successful completion at the point of the nomination being submitted. This need not be the Lead Supervisor.
- ✓ All supervisors must have completed supervisory training for new supervisors at the point of the nomination being submitted. All non-ECR supervisors must have completed an Updating Workshop offered by their HEI in the past four years.
- ✓ Supervisors of SGSAH DTP funded doctoral researchers must attend or have already attended a SGSAH Supervisors' Induction Workshop. Where supervisors have not yet attended this, they are asked to reserve a place prior to the nomination being submitted and to hold this in their diaries. Where an application is unsuccessful, supervisors should cancel their reserved place and release the hold from their diaries. We anticipate multiple workshops being held in September 2025. Booking will be available on our website from 8 January 2025.

As supervisory training is a requirement, staff who are already supervising SGSAH AHRC DTP2 funded doctoral researchers (that is, doctoral candidates whose funding commenced in 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 2024/25) but who did not attend the mandatory training are not eligible to be a nominated supervisor in the 2025 studentship competition and should contact their SGSAH Executive member.

a. Signing off

Institutional Statements must be signed by the designated nominator in the lead-HEI.

12. SGSAH AHRC DTP Institutional Statement for Nominated Applicants 2025/26

Title of research proposal:

Name of Nominating Member of Staff:

Institution:

Email Address:

(This must be an “.ac.uk” email address. Nominators will receive an automatic email reply confirming the application has been submitted by the student.)

Non-standard and/or unclassified qualifications

If your nominated candidate holds a non-standard and/or unclassified qualification, please provide further information about their qualification. For example, where the applicant holds an Ordinary Degree rather than an Honours Degree, contextual sectoral information may be provided. Where a degree is unclassified, confirm the quality of the work by making reference to the examiner’s report (e.g. excellent and publishable; strong and of near-publishable standard).

Confirmation of interdisciplinarity

Where supervisors are weighted 50%/50% and cover more than one review panel, they may be submitted for review to more than one panel. Please indicate if this is the case.

Yes

No

Interdisciplinary projects beyond the Arts and Humanities

We will fund interdisciplinary projects where at least 50% of the project falls within the AHRC’s disciplinary domains.

Where the applicant's project is interdisciplinary, with supervision drawn from Science, Technology, Engineering and/or Medicine, the Review Panel and Executive will exceptionally consider requests for up to 4 years of funding. If additional funding is requested (up to 4 years in total), please provide a clear rationale for this request (200 words max).

*We seek evidence that the applicant and their project will be supported **by the very best team of supervisors and research environment available across our doctoral training partnership**. Each environment and team will be specific to each applicant and their project. First and second/co-supervisors may be located in different HEIs. Supervisory teams should be clear about the supervision allocation across the team. Lead Supervisor allocation must be more than or equal to the allocation of other supervisor(s) in the team. The DTP will not formally recognise supervisory input of less than 20%.*

The requirement that all members of the supervisory team list up to 6 relevant outputs is indicative and not intended to discourage early career researchers from acting as Lead, co- or secondary supervisors. SGSAH welcomes and supports the development of ECRs through its DTP programme. 'Outputs' refers to publications, practice-based research including performances, exhibitions, compositions, etc.

Lead Supervisor (must come from nominating, lead HEI)

Name:

Institution:

Email:

Discipline:

ECR (within six years of their first academic appointment): Yes/No

Supervision allocation (please indicate)

75%

60%

50%

Total number of doctoral researchers supervising currently (as FTE):

Total number of doctoral researchers supervising at 1st October 2025 (as FTE):

Up to six most relevant research outputs:

Supervisor 2

Name:

Institution:

Email:

Discipline:

ECR (within six years of their first academic appointment): Yes/No

Supervision role (i.e. co-supervisor or second supervisor):

Supervision allocation (please indicate)

25%

20%

50%

Total Number of students supervising currently (as FTE):

Total number of doctoral researchers supervising at 1st October 2025 (as FTE):

Up to six most relevant research outputs:

Supervisor 3 (where applicable)

Name:

Institution:

Email:

Discipline:

ECR (within six years of their first academic appointment): Yes/No

Supervision role (i.e. co-supervisor or third supervisor):

Supervision allocation (please indicate)

20%

Total Number of students supervising currently (as FTE):

Total number of doctoral researchers supervising at 1st October 2025 (as FTE):

Up to six most relevant research outputs:

Supervisory expertise and research training environment (800 words)

- *Why is this the right supervisory team for this project and this applicant? What expertise does this particular team bring to the project?*
- *What role will each supervisor play in ensuring the doctoral researcher and their project are supported?*
- *How will the supervisory arrangements be managed? (SGSAH actively supports the development of Early Career Researchers. Where an ECR is a member of the supervisory team, please provide details on how the ECR will be mentored/supported in their role.)*
- *Why is this the right research environment for the project? How are the collections/research culture, context, and resources of the SGSAH DTP consortium essential to the successful completion of the project and how will these be accessed?*
- *What will the student/project add to the research environment?*

Training and Skills Development Plan (500 words max)

Please avoid generic statements of provision.

- ***What training and skills development does this applicant require in order to successfully complete this PhD project?***
- ***What resources are required to enable this applicant to complete this thesis and how will these be accessed? The specific resources required may be drawn from across the SGSAH DTP consortium, beyond the supervisory HEI(s).***
- ***Is there an opportunity to collaborate with a non-university partner to the benefit of this applicant and their project?***
- ***How will SGSAH's shared resources support this applicant in preparing for their future career aspirations?***

*The plan should refer to training essential to the successful completion of their project as well as other optional training opportunities provided by SGSAH, the co-supervising HEIs and/or other HEIs within and beyond the SGSAH DTP consortium, that will be of benefit to this doctoral researcher and their career aspirations (e.g. Internship; Visiting Doctoral Researcher; methodological training, second language learning). For further information on core training provided by SGSAH please refer to the Guidance document. **Training plans should be specific.***

Ethics & Research Integrity

Please indicate below that you have discussed with the applicant any ethical or safety issues attached to this research project and/or its impact plans and how these will be addressed. The applicant should provide a full outline of ethical considerations in their application.

I confirm that discussion of ethics and research integrity has taken place with applicant in developing their application

Confirmation of supervisory requirements

One member of the proposed supervisory team has previously supervised at least one doctoral candidate to successful completion.

All supervisors have completed supervisory training for new supervisors.

All non-ECR supervisors have completed an Updating Workshop in the past four years.

SGSAH AHRC DTP Supervisors' Induction

All supervisors of SGSAH AHRC DTP-funded doctoral researchers must attend a SGSAH Supervisors' Induction. These must be reserved at www.sgsah.ac.uk in advance of the application being submitted.

If you are already supervising an SGSAH AHRC DTP2 doctoral student, you should have already attended the SGSAH Supervisors' Induction Workshop.

I have already attended the SGSAH Supervisors' Induction Workshop.

If you have not previously attended a SGSAH Supervisors' Workshop you are required to do so before you begin to supervise an AHRC-funded doctoral candidate. Please indicate which Induction workshops have been reserved:

Lead Supervisor:

Supervisor 2:

Supervisor 3:

If you are already supervising an SGSAH AHRC DTP2 doctoral student but have not attended the SGSAH Supervisors' Induction Workshop **you are not eligible to be a nominated supervisor in this year's competition.**

Data storage: Anonymised, limited special characteristic data (such as disability, ethnicity, and other health data) will be collected and retained by SGSAH in order to fulfil our contractual obligations to our funder, the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Applications from nominees not in receipt of funding will be destroyed by 1st October 2025. Applications from nominees in receipt of funding will be retained for the duration of the studentship.

Signed by Nominator:

Name:

Position:

Date:

13. Assessment criteria for 2025

Nominations submitted to the SGSAH DTP competition are of a very high standard. The majority are of fundable quality and the competition is fierce. We have developed a set of criteria to help us to make difficult decisions in a transparent way.

In essence, the questions we ask are:

- Why this applicant?
- Why this research project?
- Why this supervisory team and HEI(s)?
- Why this DTP?

Marks are organised into broad bands A-D. Reviewers are asked to allocate precise marks within each band (SGSAH staff will assess qualifications). Total marks available for award are 50.

Qualifications OR Relevant Professional Experience

Band	Mark	Qualifications description*	Relevant Professional Experience description
A	6	<p>A first-class degree with evidence of high marks maintained across the programme or exit velocity as demonstrated by increasing marks in undergraduate transcripts <i>and</i> dissertation or equivalent awarded a first-class mark.</p> <p>OR a Masters level distinction with a dissertation mark of 70% first class/A grade or equivalent</p> <p>OR clear evidence in the Institutional Statement of excellence in the dissertation/independent research element of an unclassified postgraduate research degree (e.g. MPhil), e.g. comment from external examiner or dissertation of publishable quality</p>	<p>A compelling case that relevant professional experience is at least equal to the completion of a Masters degree with distinction, including strong evidence of independent research thinking and excellent quality output</p>
B	5	<p>A first-class degree</p> <p>OR a Masters level distinction</p>	<p>A strong case is made including evidence of independent research</p>

		OR clear evidence in the Institutional Statement of a high standard of achievement in the dissertation/independent research element of an unclassified postgraduate research degree (e.g. MPhil), e.g. dissertation of near-publishable quality.	thinking and high-quality output
C	4	Masters with merit	A good case is made that relevant professional experience is at least equal to the completion of a Masters degree but is not compelling. For instance: evidence is available of research thinking but the level of independence is unclear; evidence is available for output, but the quality is not excellent.
D	1	Masters at pass (overall mark 50-59% or equivalent) OR Undergraduate degree at 2:1	A case is made that relevant professional experience is at least equal to the completion of a Masters degree but is not strong. This might include a lack of evidence of independent research thinking and poor-quality output, for example.
* Where the qualification is non-standard or unclassified, your Institutional Statement will provide further information for review purposes.			

Quality of Research Proposal, Knowledge Exchange, Public Engagement, and Impact (including Academic Impact)

Band	Mark	Description
A	14 13 12	An exceptional proposal in all of its components. Research questions are clear/cogent, and the proposal demonstrates a comprehensive awareness of the research context and the contribution that the project will make to the field. A clear gap in existing knowledge has been identified and a compelling case made for the significance of addressing this gap. The proposal is original and innovative, the methods are appropriate, and the project is feasible within the timescale of 3 ½ years. An entirely

		persuasive case has been made for the potential for knowledge exchange, public engagement and/or impact (including academic impact) with demonstrably feasible plans for delivery within the timescales. Any ethical/safety issues have been identified and appropriately addressed. The proposal is compelling.
B	11 10 9	A strong proposal with clear and cogent research questions and a sense of the contribution that the research will make, combined with appropriate methods. The research is likely to be feasible within the timescale of 3 ½ years. There is a good case for the potential for knowledge exchange, public engagement and/or impact (including academic impact) together with a realistic delivery plan. Any ethical/safety issues have been identified and appropriately addressed. A good case is made for the proposal.
C	8 7 6	A solid proposal with researchable questions, appropriately identified sources and an appropriate methodology. There is some awareness of its intellectual importance. The research may be feasible within the period of supervised study. There will be indications of awareness of the potential for knowledge exchange, public engagement and/ or impact activity (including academic impact) but the proposal may lack realistic plans for implementation. Any ethical/safety issues have been identified and appropriately addressed.
D	5 4 3	A proposal with serious shortcomings in one or more of its aspects.

Preparedness for research

Band	Mark	Description
A	10 9	Evidence that the applicant is exceptionally well-prepared for their proposed research and for PhD level of study through either: Previous highly relevant study (e.g.: the relevance of undergraduate and Masters' programme and dissertation topics; specific advanced methodological or skills training; proficiency in required language or technical skills; relevant employment-related or work-based learning experience etc.); or Previous highly relevant professional experience (e.g. significant employment in a highly relevant field with equivalence to Masters' study; specific methodological training and/or experience etc.); and The training requirements identified demonstrate convincingly that the candidate has an excellent sense of what is required to enable them to complete the project successfully and has identified training available, making excellent use of their membership of the SGSAH AHRC DTP.

B	8	Evidence that the applicant is well-prepared for their proposed research and for PhD level of study through either: Previous related study (e.g.: the relevance of a UG programme and Masters' dissertation topic; specific methodological or skills training); or Relevant professional experience (e.g. employment in a relevant field with equivalence to Masters' study; specific methodological training and/or experience); and The training requirements identified indicate that the candidate has a reasonable idea of what is required to enable them to complete the project successfully and has identified some training available, making good use of their membership of the SGSAH AHRC DTP.
	7	
	6	
C	5	Evidence that the applicant is prepared for their proposed research and for PhD level of study through either: Previous related study but somewhat limited in scope (e.g.: the relevance of an undergraduate or Masters dissertation; some competency in appropriate methodological or skills training and/or experience). or Some relevant professional experience but limited in scope or duration (e.g. employment in a relevant field with equivalence to Masters' study.) and The training requirements identified indicate that the candidate has partially considered the training required to enable them to complete the project successfully and has given some indication of familiarisation with the resources and opportunities provided by being a member of the SGSAH AHRC DTP.
	4	
	3	
D	2	No evidence that the applicant is prepared for their proposed research and for PhD level of study (e.g. there is no relevance of UG/Masters programmes to the proposed project) or No relevant professional experience and Little indication of familiarisation with the resources and opportunities provided by being a member of the SGSAH AHRC DTP.
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a. Supervisory Expertise and Research Environment

Band	Mark	Description
A	10	Supervision arrangements represent an optimal fit with the nominated student and their proposed research. The supervisory team, in its totality, provides this student with the best possible support available, and is internationally excellent. The
	9	

		<p>supervisory team is likely to offer complementary areas of expertise, at the level of knowledge/discipline, methodologies, and other appropriate skills (e.g. impact and KE experience), demonstrating the ability to develop the doctoral researchers' skills and professional competence. All members of the supervisory team are active researchers, demonstrating significant and ongoing expertise in the required field(s), as appropriate to their career stage.</p> <p>The research environment offered to the applicant is demonstrably excellent in all of its components.</p> <p>Resources available across the HEI(s) are essential to the successful completion of the PhD and will add value to the overall doctoral experience – e.g. specialist libraries, collections, spaces or equipment – and the nominated applicant will be able to access the resources.</p> <p>The research fits well with the expertise and/or priorities and/or research clusters of the supervising HEI(s). There is demonstrable 'added value' for the student being co-supervised by this supervisory team and particular HEI(s) and vice versa.</p>
B	8 7 6	<p>Supervision arrangements represent a strong fit with the proposed research. There is a strong research environment, with the supervisory team able to offer good support, and the environment providing access to necessary research resources. There is evidence of existing or emerging capacity in the proposed research area.</p>
C	5 4 3	<p>Supervision arrangements are adequate, with supervisors having some experience in the subject area but there are some questions about the fit between the full supervisory team and proposed research. There is adequate fit between the resource needs of the project and the research environment.</p>
D	2 1	<p>There are some strengths but there are also clear weaknesses in terms of supervisory fit and research environment. The supervisory team does not fulfil the supervisory training requirements in all of its components.</p>

b. Students Training Needs and Institution's proposed Plans and Provision

Band	Mark	Description
A	10 9	<p>Compelling evidence that the specific needs of the nominated applicant have been considered carefully that the training needs identified are appropriate and relevant and that the student will be exceptionally well supported.</p> <p>It is highly likely that the project will be successfully completed within the funded period. There is clear evidence that the future career aspirations of the applicant have been considered that appropriate opportunities/resources have been identified, making</p>

		<p>excellent use of the resources available across the supervisory HEI(s) and the wider SGSAH.</p> <p>The overall plan is clear and realistic and offers an outstanding PhD Programme for the applicant.</p>
B	8 7 6	<p>There is strong evidence that the specific needs of the nominated applicant have been considered and that the training needs identified are appropriate and relevant.</p> <p>It is likely that the project will be successfully completed within the funded period. There is good evidence that the future career aspirations of the applicant have been considered, and that appropriate opportunities/ resources have been identified, making good use of the resources available across the supervisory HEIs and the wider SGSAH.</p>
C	5 4 3	<p>There is some sense that the specific needs of the nominated applicant have been considered though the development opportunities are limited.</p>
D	2 1	<p>The training plan is entirely generic. Insufficient attention has been paid to specific training and skills development needs and how these will be met.</p>