

Taken from the AHRC Training Funding Guide 2019-2020

VERSION 3.0

January 2020

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/AHRC-08102021-TrainingGrantFundingGuide-2020.pdf>

Pages 30-32

5.1.5 Collaborative Doctoral Awards

Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) are doctoral studentship projects which are developed by a university based academic working in collaboration with an organisation outside of higher education. They are intended as a way of facilitating collaboration with a diverse range of non-HEI partners including smaller, regional partners and spreading capacity for non-HEIs to work with HEIs in focused, mutually beneficial ways. CDAs provide important opportunities for doctoral students to gain first-hand experience of work outside the university environment and enhance the employment-related skills and training which a student may gain during the course of their award.

CDA projects also encourage and establish links that can have long-term benefits for both collaborating partners, providing access to resources and materials, knowledge and expertise that may not otherwise have been available and also provide social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society.

Whilst there are many ways in which a DTP might engage with non-HEI organisations, in order to be classified as a Collaborative Doctoral Award, a studentship must meet the specific CDA criteria outlined below.

5.1.6 CDA Criteria

1. The project needs to have been jointly developed by the academic and non-University partner. It's not sufficient for the student simply to be accessing resources/archives held by the non-University partner; both partners should be equally invested in the project, and the student will have a supervisor at both organisations. This doesn't preclude a prospective student being engaged in the development of the project, and s/he could be named on the application. It would be possible to badge a studentship as a CDA once it has commenced, if the non-University partner comes on board at a later date, is fully engaged and has agreed to jointly supervise the student.
2. The project proposal would need to meet the expectations of the RCUK Joint Vision for Collaborative Training, in other words:
 - The research is relevant to the organisation's priorities and objectives;
 - The project is based on a truly collaborative approach;
 - Evidence of a clear commitment from the non-University partner to provide access to training, facilities and expertise not available in an academic setting alone;
 - The opportunity provided by the project to enable the student to develop a range of valuable skills and significantly enhance their future employability.
3. There must be an opportunity for the student to spend time working at the non-University organisation's premises. During this time, the student must be engaged in activities which are an integral component of the research to be presented in the thesis, as well as wider

development activities and opportunities. For a full-time student, the minimum is 3 months and the maximum 18 months. When and how this time is spent will vary according to the nature of the project, and is subject to negotiation between the partners and the student.

4. The partner organisation can be from the private, public or voluntary sector (where a private company is defined as being at least 50% privately owned with a wealth creation base in the UK). The word 'organisation' is used as a generic term and should be interpreted as widely as possible. The AHRC wishes to encourage collaborations from any area within its subject remit and with a full range of organisations, bodies and businesses, including the creative, cultural and heritage industries, both large and small and to include sole traders and partnerships.
5. In most cases the non-HEI partner must have an operating base in the UK.
6. In exceptional cases, a collaboration with a company or organisation based outside of the UK can be considered. AHRC recognises that, given the distinctive nature of its subject domain, there may be potential for reciprocal research collaborations outside the UK. A DTP will need to be clear what additional benefits are to be gained from the collaboration, that demonstrable value from the project will be accrued to the UK, and that the collaboration will deliver long-term, lasting benefits. The overseas partner must specify a minimum contribution and would be expected to cover additional costs of travel to and from the UK. The logistics of running such a partnership should be carefully considered in order to demonstrate that the project is both viable and feasible.
7. University museums and galleries or organisations that are deemed to be a spin-off or are supported by an HEI are eligible as project partners, providing that the project is not a collaboration with the parent institution. We are keen to see a wide variety of partners engaged with collaborative studentships, including local partner organisations

Organisations belonging to Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs) can be partners for DTP Collaborative Doctoral Awards.

Whilst not a requirement, experience has demonstrated that the signing of written agreements as part of these projects can be extremely valuable. Agreements ensure that all parties, including the student, are aware of, and understand, the requirements and responsibilities underlying the partnership. DTPs or HEIs may wish to develop a template agreement for setting out the expectations and responsibilities of CDA partnerships.