

White Rose BBSRC i-CASE studentship applications

DTP3 2022 entry

## Guidance Notes

**Our mission statement:**

“To train excellent bioscientists who understand how living systems work  
and can innovate to address global challenges”

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## Timeline for i-CASE recruitment DTP3 2022 entry

Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Scheme opens – Call out to supervisors for project applications.
w/c Mon 26 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Q&A fora for supervisors to be held at each university.
August – Sept 2021	Academic and non-academic / industry partners negotiate detailed partnership arrangements.
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2021 5pm	<p><b><u>DEADLINE FOR PROJECT APPLICATIONS TO BE RECEIVED:</u></b></p> <p>Applicants need to submit two forms: Form A (Case for Support) and Form B (Non-Academic Partner Form), plus a letter of support from the industry partner, to Catherine Liddle, DTP Co-ordinator, via email: <a href="mailto:c.m.liddle@leeds.ac.uk">c.m.liddle@leeds.ac.uk</a></p> <p><i>Please also cc your own Grad School for information:</i></p> <p>Leeds – fbsgrad e: <a href="mailto:fbsgrad@leeds.ac.uk">fbsgrad@leeds.ac.uk</a> Sheffield – Linda Harris e: <a href="mailto:linda.harris@sheffield.ac.uk">linda.harris@sheffield.ac.uk</a> York – Monica Bandeira e: <a href="mailto:monica.bandeira@york.ac.uk">monica.bandeira@york.ac.uk</a></p>
w/c Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021	White Rose Assessment Committee (WRAC) for BBSRC DTP CASE meets, ranks the projects and agrees the successful projects to go forward for advertising.
w/c Mon 19 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021	Project teams (academic and industry / non-academic partners) notified of results of WRAC by Catherine Liddle, DTP Co-ordinator. (cc University PGR Administrators with the full list of successful/unsuccessful projects. Finance Managers are notified of the successful projects)
---“---	<p>Successful project teams advertise and recruit to the CASE studentships, following the normal procedures in each of the DTP partner universities: Leeds, Sheffield and York.</p> <p>Grad schools to advertise projects on FindaPhD.com, Black British in STEM (<a href="https://bbstem.co.uk/">https://bbstem.co.uk/</a>) and other websites, using a common DTP proforma. Grad schools to send FindaPhD project links to the DTP Co-ordinator (e: <a href="mailto:c.m.liddle@leeds.ac.uk">c.m.liddle@leeds.ac.uk</a>) to be added to the DTP website.</p>
Jan-Feb 2022	Individual CASE students recruited to deadlines set by project supervisors/CASE partners.
---“---	DTP Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) survey to be issued to each individual applicant. (The survey link will be sent by the DTP Co-ordinator to grad schools to forward to applicants).
October 2022	CASE students start (at the same time as the rest of the White Rose BBSRC DTP3 2022 cohort). NB The start date may be modified within individual universities depending on any COVID lockdown restrictions still in place at this time.

## Timeline flexibility

The White Rose BBSRC DTP Management Board is aware that the COVID crisis may make some of the discussions around the commitments of an industry partner to a CASE studentship more difficult at this time. The DTP will continue to review the situation and will respond flexibly e.g. the project application deadline outlined above may be extended if negotiations with industry partners have not been possible. For now, supervisors should assume that the competition will run on the above timescale and we will keep you informed of any changes.

## BBSRC funding

As part of the **DTP3 funding award**, the White Rose BBSRC DTP has been allocated **7 CASE studentships per year**, to be allocated over the academic years 2021-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

This is now the call for the third tranche of DTP3 CASE studentships, due to start in October 2022.

## What are CASE/i-CASE partnerships?

The terms 'CASE' and 'i-CASE' are used interchangeably. CASE studentships, are collaborative training grants (from the BBSRC) that provide students with a first-rate, challenging research training experience, allowing top quality bioscience graduates to undertake research, leading to a PhD, within the context of a mutually beneficial research collaboration between academic and partner organisations. In addition to experience of an industrial research environment, the student should receive business-related training, for example, in project-management, business strategy, and/or finance.

## What is CASE for?

**CASE funding MUST be used to support industrial, collaborative studentships.** The collaborations should be with as wide a range of companies and organisations as possible. In particular, partnerships should be sought with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and companies within the local area or which have specialist technical expertise.

The BBSRC has a list of employers within their Industrial Case Partnership (ICP) scheme: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/training/industrial-case-partnerships>

For CASE studentships, the BBSRC encourages the use of **companies outside** their own ICP scheme.

## Difference between a standard DTP and a CASE studentship

CASE students are part of the DTP; they are not separate to it. As a DTP, we intend to introduce some CASE-specific training elements into the programme, including a biotech mini-symposium. CASE students must also take part in DTP-wide training when required.

A key difference is that a standard DTP studentship must contain a three-month Professional Internship for PhD Students (PIPS), whereas a CASE studentship will undertake a placement (of at least three months) with their industry partner.

Refer to the BBSRC website for further useful information about CASE studentships, including Frequently Asked Questions:

<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/investing-doctoral-training/case-studentships/>

## Project assessment and advertising

The proposals will be judged and awarded by a panel drawn from the White Rose BBSRC DTP, consisting of two senior academics from each university and the DTP Director as chair. There are no quotas per university and the 7 highest-ranking projects will be awarded funding.

The top 7 projects will be put forward by each university for advertising on FindaPhD when the portal opens (from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 onwards) and will also be advertised on other web sites e.g. Black British in STEM (<https://bbstem.co.uk/>). We also encourage separate advertisements aimed at under-represented groups.

Projects will also be advertised on the DTP website:

<https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/about-dtp/how-to-apply/>

This page will be updated to reflect the 2022 entry recruitment process.

An EDI statement will shortly be added to the following new Equality page on the DTP website: <https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/edi/>

## Shortlisting, interviewing and student selection

The shortlisting, interviewing and appointment of candidates will be managed by the Primary Investigator (PI) for the project and the CASE industry partner, with the support of the host university.

Successful candidates who accept offers will be appointed by the host university.

## Hints and tips

### **Strength of industrial partnership**

Assessment panel feedback from previous years has been that some proposals described projects where the link between the project and the industrial partner appeared to be very weak, and where the commitment of the industrial partner was not sufficiently demonstrated. The strongest proposals always have a detailed description of the added benefit of the CASE partner to the project, and a clear statement of the benefit, to both the student and the company, of the studentship.

### **Financial contribution**

Although there are minimum financial amounts that industrial partners must commit to the scheme (See Form B), these are only minimum amounts. One way the industrial partner can demonstrate their commitment is by the level of funding they provide to the student and to the project, proportionate to the size of the company. The financial commitment needs to be overtly discussed and agreed with your industry partner and identified in their letter of support.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

We suggest that academics use inclusive language in the PhD project description in the application form. The links below provide good advice on this topic:

1. <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>
2. <https://www.totaljobs.com/insidejob/gender-bias-decoder/>

The DTP explicitly encourages applications from underrepresented groups and we ask that project leads make this clear in the application forms.

## White Rose BBSRC DTP useful links

Website: <https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/>

You may wish to follow us on our social media channels:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BBSRCWhiteRose>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8567834/>

## Guidance notes for Form A: Case for Support

- *In addition to these guidance notes, please ensure you read the guidance notes contained within the application form itself.*
- *All sections must be completed. Note that incomplete forms will be returned. This may leave you with insufficient time to complete them before the deadline.*

### Section 1: Application contact details

Provide details of all supervisors, both academic and non-academic, connected to the project. There must be a minimum of two supervisors: an academic lead supervisor and an industry / non-academic partner supervisor. In addition, you may wish to work with up to two academic co-supervisors.

### Section 2: Project information

**2.1 Project Title** – The proposed Project Title goes in the blue box.

Note that the projects will be assessed for their fit to the BBSRC remit partly using this title. Please ensure that your title does not give the impression that the project would fall outside the BBSRC remit.

Link to BBSRC website for reference: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/science-remit/>

#### 2.2 BBSRC Priorities

The priorities listed in the application form are the new BBSRC priorities. These are the new priorities / themes taken from the BBSRC's strategic document, 'Forward look for UK Bioscience', available on the BBSRC website: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/news/planning/forwardlook/>

#### 2.3 Relevance to BBSRC DTP Remit and Impact (300 words max)

Link to BBSRC website for reference: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/research/science-remit/>

## 2.4 Project Outline (500 words max)

Use the headings given in the application form.

Highlight any plans that are particularly original or unique. Explain how techniques or particularly difficult or risky studies will be tackled and, if necessary, provide further details regarding contingency plans.

## 2.5 Training – Academic (500 words max)

The key assessment criteria will be the overall quality of training offered by the academic institution and the non-academic / Industry Partner.

For the **academic partner**, give details of how you will address the project-specific and generic training needs of the student, highlighting how this addresses strategic skills gaps (where relevant) and how the project will be managed so that the work at the academic Research Organisation (RO) can derive greatest benefit from the placement. You may wish to include:

- a. Appropriate practical and technical research training
- b. Specific training courses and seminars
- c. Arrangements to support interdisciplinary research training
- d. Computing
- e. Statistical techniques
- f. Health and safety
- g. Business and finance related training

## 2.6 Training – Non-academic / Industry Partner (500 words max)

The key assessment criteria will be the overall quality of training offered by the academic institution and the non-academic / industry partner.

Give details of how the **non-academic / industry partner** will address the project-specific and generic training needs of the student, highlighting how this addresses strategic skills gaps (where relevant) and how the project will be managed so that the work while at the non-academic partner will be carried out with greatest benefit to the student. You may wish to include:

- a. Appropriate practical and technical research training
- b. Specific training courses and seminars
- c. Arrangements to support interdisciplinary research training
- d. Internal arrangements for planning, managing and monitoring its provision of postgraduate research training



- e. Computing
- f. Statistical techniques
- g. Health and safety
- h. Presentation and communication skills
- i. Team working
- j. Time management
- k. Project management
- l. Business-related training
- m. Finance-related training
- n. Intellectual property-related training

## **2.7 Research Environment – academic (300 words max)**

Give details of the **academic research environment** and explain how the student and the project will benefit. You may wish to include:

- a. Integration with the existing cohort of students
- b. Interactions with other researchers
- c. Opportunities to participate in interdisciplinary teamwork
- d. Current infrastructure, expertise, facilities and technologies available in the department / group.

## **2.8 Research Environment – non-academic / industry partner (300 words max)**

Describe in detail the research opportunities which will be provided by the **non-academic / Industry Partner**. You may wish to include:

- a. Integration with existing students, if applicable
- b. Interactions with other researchers and staff, such as technicians, health and safety, lab scientists, senior scientists, IP and legal reps, sales, managers, directors, CEO, CSO
- c. Opportunities to participate in interdisciplinary teamwork
- d. Current infrastructure, expertise, facilities and technologies available in the organisation

## **2.9 Location**

Will the student industrial placement take place at the same site as the main PhD e.g. a university spin-out company or innovation centre? Answer Yes or No.

## **2.10 If 'Yes' (200 words max)**

It is very important that all students experience a sufficiently differentiated research experience whilst at the non-academic / industry partner premises.

If the student placement is to be at the same (or in very close proximity) location as the

academic partner, the applicant must justify how the location will be a suitably differentiated environment for the student, highlight the added value that the non-academic partner will bring to the project and the measures that will be taken to ensure the student receives a training experience that is not available to them at the academic Research Organisation (RO).

### **2.11 Collaboration (500 words max)**

Collaboration, partnerships and knowledge exchange is a key theme of the BBSRC. (Ref: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/forward-look-for-uk-bioscience-pdf/>). For CASE partnerships, there must be a strong collaboration between the academic partner and the non-academic / industry partner. Applications will be assessed on how well this collaboration will work.

Please respond to the following points:

1. Provide the Unique Selling Points of the collaboration. How will the collaboration benefit the proposed project? Can the project be done without the collaboration?
2. Give details of any previous collaboration between the academic and industry partners.
3. Provide details of the success of any previous Industrial CASE awards that the collaboration has received. What did the student(s) do after completing their PhD? How did the awarding of a studentship benefit the academic and industry partners?
4. Explain how the project will be managed in order to maximise the benefit to all parties in terms of student training and scientific output.
5. Give comprehensive and technical details of the anticipated work the student will complete while at the non-academic / Industry Partner's premises. Show timelines if appropriate.
6. Include details of student supervision, monitoring and support during the CASE placement and explain how the non-academic / Industry Partner supervisor will be involved throughout the 4-year project.

### **2.12 Grants**

See guidance notes on the application form.

### **2.13 Do you envisage that there will be work in whole, living, protected animals within your proposed project? Answer Yes or No.**

Note: If you have answered 'Yes' and you are awarded a studentship, your student will be required to attend a mandatory, half-day Advanced Ethics workshop in Leeds.

## 2.14 Ethics

See guidance notes on the application form.

## Section 3: Supervisors

For each individual supervisor (academic and non-academic / Industry Partner supervisors) listed in Section 1, complete all details requested. There is a separate page for each supervisor role.

## Section 4: Masterclasses: supporting the DTP training programme

This section is new for DTP3 i.e. from October 2020 entry.

### Aim

The White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) benefits from an impressive pool of supervisors with wide ranging expertise relevant to training our students in mechanistic biology. These supervisors are spread across different areas of our BBSRC science remit and across all three universities. The aim of the *Masterclasses* is to provide a series of forums (focussed on specific research areas) so that PhD students and PIs from the three universities can get together and share knowledge, technical expertise and form stronger inter-university groupings. From a student perspective, seeing what researchers in their area are doing across the White Rose network will hopefully broaden their horizon and provide valuable links to help them be successful in their own projects. From the perspective of the PIs, we hope that the opportunity of getting together with colleagues in similar research areas once a year will also be of interest, to share recent advances and to build up potential research collaborations.

### What do PIs have to do?

We envisage one-day, interactive classes organised by staff across the three Universities that fits one of our strategic priorities (see figure below) and which attracts students from all cohorts doing research in that particular theme. We are not going to be prescriptive in the form that these events take. Rather, we are looking for PIs across the three universities who work in similar areas to come together to suggest collaborative activities. These could be as simple as a standard one-day symposium where students/PIs present their research for discussion, or they could focus on particular techniques relevant to specific research areas (advanced microscopy, omics, etc), or approaches (computational modelling), or grand challenges in the specific research area (multi-drug resistance, sustainable food, etc).

All we expect is that the PhD students have the opportunity to engage with students and PIs from other universities around the network.

### **Where will these be held?**

Ideally these will be distributed around the three universities and some will occur in rotation around the universities over the lifetime of the DTP. We have large and powerful groupings in some areas (e.g., structural biology, microbiology, plant science, biotechnology), so these might occur regularly, whereas others might represent more specialised areas and be held as one-offs. There is no expectation for these to be large, formal events - in fact, relatively small, informal events where students have the chance to talk science and just meet up with researchers from other institutions are often the most beneficial (and fun).

### **When?**

Again, we are not prescriptive on this but we see early summer as potentially a good time to hold the Masterclasses. The actual timing will be agreed to ensure it does not clash with other DTP training events or key university events.

During summer 2021, a series of masterclass launch events will be held to introduce the concept and to garner ideas for masterclass topics from the students and supervisors/co-supervisors, with the intention of delivering live masterclasses during summer 2022 onwards.

### **Which topics would be suitable for a Masterclass?**

DTP supervisors and co-supervisors have been grouped into the following broad areas of scientific research / clusters:

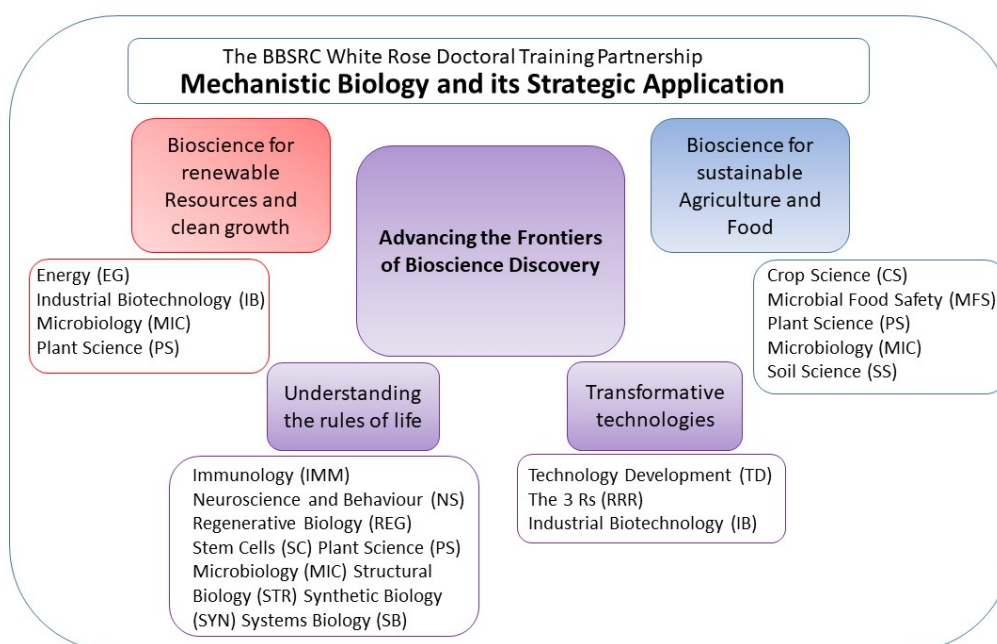
- Development, Disease and Neurobiology
- Microbiology
- Molecular and cell biology
- Plant Science
- Structural Biology, Biophysics and Chemistry

On the application form, you are asked to choose which cluster your research falls into. If your research falls into more than one cluster, please choose the one most pertinent.

Details of the cluster leads and the launch events during summer 2021 can be found on the Upcoming Training and Events section of the DTP website: <https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/training-and-events/upcoming/masterclasses-new-for-summer-2021/>

Below is a schematic overview of the DTP with some areas of research strength highlighted. This is not an exhaustive list (!) but the topic area for a *Masterclass* should encompass

present areas of DTP research across all three universities so that there is a reasonable expectation of a suitable number of DTP attendees.



### Can non-DTP students attend?

In principle, yes. However, we expect the clear majority of PhD attendees at any meeting to be White Rose DTP students from all 3 universities (Leeds, Sheffield and York) and that WR DTP students will have the opportunity to actively participate.

### Can people from outside the White Rose consortium attend?

In principle, yes, but again we expect a clear majority of PhD attendees at any meeting to be WR DTP students from all 3 universities and that WR DTP students have the opportunity to actively participate. If, for example, you can invite a specialist speaker from an external university to attend- great! At the end of the day we want to provide our DTP students with a great experience, so anything that helps achieve that is welcome. Just note - we are not a source of funding other than for refreshments(!).

### How do I get involved?

When you apply for a DTP studentship you will be asked to confirm that you are prepared to contribute to a Masterclass if you are awarded a studentship (either as PI or co-I). We will send out an invitation to present DTP supervisors and co-Is in January 2021 to suggest *Masterclass* activities for the following June. All PIs and co-Is will be expected to contribute in some fashion and at some timepoint during the DTP studentship in their group. People who do not volunteer will be volunteered! Even if you are not successful in getting a DTP studentship, you will be more than welcome to attend and contribute to these *Masterclasses* since we hope they will bring value to BBSRC-related science beyond the immediate limits of the DTP.

### Section 5: Signature

The academic lead should sign and date the form. An electronic signature is acceptable. By submitting an application for a White Rose BBSRC DTP CASE project, you are committing to supporting the overall work of the DTP and to supporting my PhD student in their professional development, including attending DTP-wide and CASE-specific training opportunities.

----- End of Form A guidance -----

## Guidance Notes for Form B: Non-academic / industry partner

- *In addition to these guidance notes, please ensure you read the guidance notes contained within the application form itself.*
- *All sections must be completed. Note that incomplete forms will be returned. This may leave you with insufficient time to complete them before the deadline.*

### Notes for the non-academic / Industry Partner:

- *By submitting an application to the DTP CASE competition as a non-academic / industry partner, you are committing to supporting the training and development of a BBSRC-funded PhD student for four years.*
- *During this time, the student must complete a minimum three-month placement (maximum eighteen months) at the non-academic partner/company, for which all expenses incurred, including travel and accommodation, must be met by the non-academic partner.*

## Section 1: Project information

Ensure the details are identical to those on Form A, in particular the Project Title.

## Section 2: Non-academic / Industry Partner Details

See the guidance notes on the application form.

## Section 3: Student Placements outside the UK

Note: The BBSRC will make the final decision on any applications for placements outside the UK. The BBSRC regulations state that placements outside the UK may be permitted – but are not guaranteed to be accepted – under the following circumstances:

- The non-academic partner has a UK research and / or commercial production capability within the UK
- Where the non-academic partner does not have a UK research and / or commercial production capability within the UK, they may possibly be eligible, in exceptional cases, and only where they can provide the student with an opportunity to gain skills currently not available within the UK.

Complete this section only if the student placement will take place outside the UK and meets the above criteria.

#### Section 4: Non-academic / industry partner further information

Answer all the questions in this section, ensuring that you do not exceed the word count (200 words max) for each question.

#### Section 5: Financial contribution

**Table A** in the application form shows the minimum financial contributions required from the non-academic / Industrial Partner. It is important that Industry Partners are aware that their contributions are required over the **full, 4-year PhD**.

For more details of the financial commitment levels required of Industrial Partners, see the Information Pack and Frequently Asked Questions on the BBSRC website:

<https://bbsrc.ukri.org/skills/investing-doctoral-training/case-studentships/>

Note also that, even where contributions from the Industry Partner are not required, they are strongly encouraged. Financial contributions are a key element that help to demonstrate the commitment of the industry partner.

**Table B** in the application form is to record the financial contribution the Industry Partner is making to the project. Detailed guidance about completing this table is given on the application form. Please read it carefully.

All financial contributions for successful CASE applications will be documented in a partnership agreement.



## Section 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

This section of the form is new for 2022 entry.

The White Rose BBSRC DTP is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in all its policies and procedures. This year, for the first time, we are asking industry partners to state their commitment to improving EDI. We are not asking for their full policy but for a summary statement that demonstrates the principles they are committed to as an organisation.

As part of our EDI agenda, we would ask project descriptions to be written in an accessible manner to appeal to a wide range of applicants and to explicitly state that applications are especially welcome from under-represented groups.

## Section 7: Letters of support

### 6.1 Financial support letter

A letter of financial support, detailing the financial commitment from the non-academic / Industry Partner (as shown in Table B), must be attached to the application. This should be on company headed paper and be signed by someone with financial control. This applies to all applicants.

### 6.2 Business financial statements

This information is required only for Industry Partners that:

- are less than 5 years old, and/or
- those that are new to the BBSRC CASE scheme (irrespective of how long the company has been operating).

----- End of Form B guidance -----