

White Rose BBSRC Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP)

Professional Internships for PhD Students (PIPS)

Guidance for new potential PIPS hosts

Role of the host organisation

Thank you for considering providing our PhD students with an opportunity to undertake a Professional Internship for PhD Students (PIPS) within your organisation. Our PIPS placements are always a huge success and bring benefits to both yourself and the students. For information about our PIPS scheme and the role of the host organisation, please see the PIPS tab and sub-pages on our website:

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

The '[PIPS paperwork](#)' page contains links to download the Memorandum of Understanding and Health and Safety Checklist, which have to be completed in consultation with yourself and the student in advance of each placement. We also ask you to complete a short feedback form at the end of the placement.

How we advertise our PIPS opportunities

All PIPS opportunities are advertised on the DTP website then circulated in the DTP newsletter, which goes out to all students across the partnership – in the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York.

On the DTP website (<https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/>) you will notice that the latest PIPS opportunities are advertised on the right-hand side of each page. You may find it useful to have a look at these to get some ideas about the type of content and layout for a PIPS advert.

***A tip:** if you get the content of your advert(s) right, you should be able to pretty much copy and paste when you come to complete the Memorandum of Understanding for an individual student – saves you work in the long run.*

Content of a PIPS advert

It would be helpful if you cover the following information. Feel free to use these headings or group the information in a way that suits you.

1. Pips title

This is effectively the job title.

2. About us

Give a brief description of what your organisation does, your vision and mission, etc.

3. Website link

Include a link to your company website and to any other key information.

4. What you will do

Our students are highly capable and the work must be suitable for students at PhD level.

Give the background to the project that the student will be working on e.g. is it part of a wider project?

Describe what they will actually do whilst they are with you. A specific, time-bound project outline is ideal, with a clear remit and outputs and outcomes that can be achieved and evidenced within the 3 month period. If you get this section of the advert right in terms of outcomes and outputs for you as a company and for the student, you should be able to pretty much copy and paste into the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), subject to any modifications that have happened as a result of discussions with a specific candidate.

5. Benefits to the student

Describe the skills and experience that the student will have gained by the end of the placement, including skills specific to the PIPS project, industry-based skills and wider, work-related skills.

6. Benefits to the company

Describe what the company will gain as a result of this placement e.g. how will the student's work contribute to the future direction of the company's work?

7. Ideal candidate

Please bear in mind that PIPS must be unrelated to the student's PhD project. One of the main purpose of PIPS is to help the student develop their wider, work-related and transferable skills. This section is perhaps more about motivations and interests at this stage, rather than specific previous experience, as we encourage our students to try something completely different / out of their comfort zone for their PIPS. Having said this, you are operating in a specific field so feel free to specify a particular type of background if you need to.

8. When

A PIPS placement is for 3 months. This is usually undertaken in a solid block, although there is flexibility and this can be split in different ways. You can say, for example, that you would like the placement to start in Spring but that dates can be flexible and can be negotiated to suit both the

student and the company. Or, for example, you could simply say anytime during the year. Entirely up to you.

For your information - As a temporary measure, due to the COVID lockdown, there are some students who have limited time left to complete their PhDs and the UKRI has agreed to allow them to undertake a shorter PIPS of one or two months, if required. This does not apply to all students. Those affected will be able to let you know. If it is feasible for you, it may be worth mentioning in your advert that a placement shorter than 3 months can be arranged, if necessary, for those students who wish to do this under the UKRI COVID guidance.

9. Where

Provide the full address of where the student will undertake their internship. Please state if the placement can / will be conducted remotely due to the ongoing COVID lockdown. Add any other information you think will be helpful in terms of how and where the placement will take place.

10. Contact

Give contact details of the person students should contact with any initial questions or queries – name, email and telephone. This would normally be the person who will act as the placement supervisor but it may be someone different.

11. How to apply

This can be formal or informal to suit your internal processes. Some PIPS hosts have an on-line application form on their website for students to complete. Others have an application form for students to fill in and email. If you are using an application form, please provide a link (to the form on your website) or send the hard copy (PDF form or Word doc).

Other PIPS hosts ask the students to submit a CV and covering letter and some simply ask interested students to ring for an initial chat.

Most hosts would follow up this initial approach by inviting the student to interview, which again can be formal or informal to suit you.

12. Deadline

This will be influenced by whether you are offering placements at a specific time of year or anytime. Please give either a fixed deadline to receive applications or state if you are offering a rolling deadline. Either approach can work so it is up to you.

13. Logo

Please attach your company logo to the email with the advert. You can also send a flyer, if you have one, that I will include in the advert for students to download.

What happens next?

Once I receive your advert, I will put it on the DTP website and advertise it in our newsletter.

Before a placement is due to start, the student and a contact from your organisation should discuss and complete the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This needs to be signed off (by the student, your organisation contact and the university PIPS contact) at least one month before the placement is due to start. You will also need to complete a health and safety assessment in advance.

Following the placement, we ask host organisations to complete a feedback form for the benefit of the student. The student will complete a case study (which may be written up as a blog on the DTP website: <https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/pips/pips-case-studies/>) and is also required to submit a confidential report to our funder, the Biotechnology and Biosciences Research Council (BBSRC).

Document templates for the above can be downloaded from the PIPS paperwork page on the DTP website: <https://www.whiterose-mechanisticbiology-dtp.ac.uk/pips/pips-paperwork/>

Funding

DTP students continue to receive their stipend/salary during their PIPS. In addition, they have a PIPS allowance of up to £1,000. This is to cover the costs of travel and accommodation only; it cannot be used for anything else. This funding may not cover the full cost of the PIPS that a student wishes to undertake. We understand that some host companies will not be in a position to contribute to these costs but we would ask those that are able, to consider making an in-kind or direct contribution. Please see the [PIPS funding page](#) for more information.

If you have any other queries about providing a PIPS placement, please do not hesitate to contact me (email: c.m.liddle@leeds.ac.uk)

Yours

Catherine



Catherine Liddle

Co-ordinator

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