



INDUSTRIAL CASE STUDENTSHIPS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) 2014

OVERVIEW

These FAQs are aimed at those who are new to Research Council Funding Processes, and those who are familiar but wish to clarify changes to the 2012 call as a result of the recent CASE Evaluation (related Press Release and documentation can be accessed on the Industrial CASE Studentships webpage).

These FAQs relate only to the Industrial CASE Studentships (iCASE), and **do not cover the Industrial CASE Partnerships (ICP), or CASE conversion of Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) awards.**

For any general queries regarding Training Grants or DTPs, please consult the related FAQs documents.

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND INDUSTRY

1.1 The student placement at the industrial partner is at a company outside of the UK; is the industrial partner eligible?

Probably. Provided that the industrial partner has a UK research and / or commercial production capability within the UK, a placement overseas is likely to be acceptable.

1.2 The industrial partner does not have a UK research and / or commercial production capability within the UK; are they eligible?

Possibly. In exceptional cases, organisations based overseas may be eligible, but only where they can provide the student with **an opportunity to gain skills currently not available within the UK**. This justification can be included as part of the application, within the Company Details attachment.

1.3 The industrial partner is partly owned by an academic institution; will this affect eligibility?

Possibly. Academic partner(s) may not own more than 50% of the industrial partner / company. Any equity owned by an academic institution(s) in the industrial partner must be declared within the Non-academic Partner/Company Details attachment. This is to ensure that all awards are for genuine collaborations between academia and industry and provide a research training experience to the student not available in an academic setting. It also ensures that conflicts of interest between academic founders and their companies are managed and that students receive independent supervision by both partners.

1.4 The industrial partner is a very new enterprise; will this affect eligibility?

Possibly. It will be the responsibility of the partners to establish any possible risk to the project and have contingencies in place should there be changes in the priorities of the industrial partner, that challenges their meeting project commitments. Details of this can be included as part of the application, within the Company Details attachment.

1.5 The industrial partner supervisor has limited experience managing doctoral research students; will this affect our application?

No. Provided that within the Management section of the application there are details explaining how this will be addressed to ensure the student receives the appropriate level of management and supervision, especially during their placement at the industrial partner.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE NON-ACADEMIC PARTNER

2.1 What are the financial requirements of the non-academic partner?

For the **Industrial CASE Studentships**, the associated mandatory costs are dependent upon the size of the enterprise. For medium and large companies who have more than 50 employees (including employees in parent companies or subsidiaries) contributions to the academic partner are required, as in previous competitions. Contributions to the student stipend are no longer required, however are encouraged.

For small companies, who have 50 employees or less, there is no requirement to contribute to either the academic partner, or the studentship stipend.

However, **the non-academic partner must always meet all the costs incurred by the student during their placement at the organisation**, including project-related consumables, as well as travel and accommodation.

The costs associated with both iCASE Studentships and ICP are summarized in the table below. Please note, ICP is a separate scheme to iCASE and is included for information purposes only.

Table 1. Mandatory financial contributions to CASE studentships.

	iCASE		Industrial CASE Partnership (ICP)
	Companies <50 Employees	Companies >51 Employees	
Placement Expenses	Yes	Yes	Yes
Academic Contribution	No	Yes	Yes
Studentship Stipend	No	No	Yes

2.2 Why has the BBSRC decided to change the requirement for non-academic partners to make financial contributions to Industrial CASE Studentships?

As a result of the recent Industrial CASE review, the independent Review Panel concluded that financial contributions from companies are still appropriate and remain welcome since they demonstrate the industry partner's commitment to the studentship. Therefore, companies with more than 50 employees must contribute to the academic research organisation.

However, it was recognised by the Panel that the enhanced stipend did not necessarily lead to recruitment of better quality students, and that the financial contributions (in the form of enhancements to studentship stipend or lab expenses) could be a barrier to smaller companies participating.

As BBSRC recently increased research training support grants (RTSG) to £5k p.a. for each individual studentship, the removal of the requirement for small companies (with 50 employees or fewer) to contribute, is in part, compensated for by this new financial arrangement.

2.3 The non-academic partner is a small company and unable to provide additional financial or 'in kind' funding; will this count against them during assessment?

No, an application will not be scored more poorly if the industrial partner is unable to contribute further to the project.

2.4 The non-academic partner is a public funded body, or charitable organisation, do they have to contribute financially?

This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, please contact the BBSRC for guidance at postgrad.studentships@bbsrc.ac.uk

2.5 The non-academic partner is an overseas company; who meets the cost of the placement?

If the non-academic partner is international, the costs of airfare must be provided for by the company. It is advisable to confirm with the non-academic partner if this is acceptable (particularly in the case of smaller companies) before submitting an application.

2.6 Are CASE studentships exempt from counting towards State Aid?

Since no funding is paid direct to the company, State Aid issues do not arise. Further information on State Aid can be found at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/europe/state-aid>.

THE PLACEMENT

3.1 Does the student have to spend time at the non-academic partner?

Yes. It is **essential** that all students spend a minimum of 3 months (previously 6 months) on a placement with the non-academic partner. This 3 month period can be at any point during the studentship and may consist of a number of shorter visits if appropriate. The BBSRC encourages placements of longer duration up to a maximum of 18 months.

3.2 Does the Industrial CASE studentship placement have to be directly related to the student's research project?

Yes. BBSRC requires that the student spends time at the non-academic partner on a placement directly related to the student's research project. The recent evaluation recognised that the most effective studentships are shaped through collaboration of academic and non-academic partners, with input from the student.

The purpose of the placement is to provide a training experience unavailable at the academic institution. Training in project management, business strategy and finance, for example, should also be an integral component of the training package delivered during the placement at an industrial partner.

3.3 What is the difference between CASE and PIPS placements?

The Professional Internship for PhD students (PIPS) is an innovative and integral element of the DTP programme, built in to enhance the employability and broaden the training experience of the DTP students. The purpose of the PIPS is to provide students with the opportunity to experience work in an area that is **not directly related** to their PhD project, where destinations for these internships include policymaking, media, teaching and industry. Further details are available on the BBSRC website at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidelines/dtp-call.pdf>.

This contrasts CASE studentships, where the placement **should be directly related to** the research project and, as such, should be developed in collaboration between academic and non-academic partners with input from the student.

3.4 Is a CASE student required to complete a PIPS placement?

CASE students funded via an Industrial CASE Studentship are **not required** to carry out an additional placement through the PIPS scheme, although this is still encouraged.

If a student wishes to partake in a PIPS placement, there will be no additional funding to extend the CASE Studentship, except in the case of a competitively obtained BBSRC Policy Placements (PoPs). PoPs provide the opportunity for BBSRC-funded PhD students to work for three months in one of a range of organisations involved in science policy. Successful applicants have the opportunity to work on a policy topic of interest to both the applicant and the organisation, by producing a briefing paper, participating in a policy inquiry or organising a policy event. Full details of this annual competition can be found on the BBSRC website at <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/people-information/policy-placements.aspx>.

OTHER

4.1 The academic partner does not currently have a DTP award; will this affect our application?

No. Each application will be assessed individually on its own merits against the assessment criteria provide to the assessment panel.

4.2 The project is interdisciplinary; how can I check whether it fits the BBSRC's remit?

The primary aim of Industrial CASE is to provide an opportunity for high quality collaborative research training in areas of science relevant to BBSRC's strategic priorities (www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/priorities/priorities-index.aspx). If you have specific queries concerning remit, email remit@bbsrc.ac.uk.

4.3 What is the difference between Industrial CASE Studentship and Industrial CASE Partnerships?

Applications to the annual responsive Industrial CASE Studentship competition applications are led by an academic partner, whereas Industrial CASE Partnership 2/3-year block awards are made to strategic "partnership" companies. Historically, BBSRC has invited companies to become 'Partners' based on their track record with iCASE studentships. The companies then

choose the Research Organisation and academic group where the Training Grant is to be held (i.e. where the student will be registered), effectively allowing greater flexibility and managing their allocation in closer partnership with BBSRC.

The current allocations to ICPs cover studentships starting in October 2014 and October 2015, these were awarded from the 2013 funding competition.

4.4 The student is an overseas applicant; are they eligible for CASE?

Residency eligibility criteria, rather than nationality will determine whether a student is eligible. The residence eligibility criteria are satisfied in full if all three of the following conditions are met:

- i. The candidate is settled in the UK i.e. is ordinarily resident in the UK without being subject under the immigration laws to any restriction on the period for which they may stay in the UK (see paragraph 10);
- ii. The candidate has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for three years immediately prior to the date of start of their course;
- iii. No part of the period of residence in (b) was wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full-time education.

Please refer to the Student Eligibility forms for further guidance, or contact the relevant research office at your organisation for further clarification.

4.5 Are CASE students required to take part in the Biotechnology Young Entrepreneurs Scheme (YES)?

Biotechnology YES (www.biotechnologyYES.co.uk) is a free innovative competition held annually and aimed at raising awareness of the commercialisation of bioscience research. Although there is no absolute requirement for CASE students to take part, the recent evaluation recommended that since YES provides CASE students with an excellent opportunity to network, further develop their entrepreneurial skills, and better understand the benefits of collaborative research, they should be actively encouraged to participate.

4.6 We are approached by companies who wish to initiate CASE studentships throughout the year; are there opportunities to obtain Industrial CASE funding outside the annual funding call?

If you are in receipt of DTP funding, conversion to CASE can occur at any time. Whilst no longer mandatory, BBSRC still encourages such conversions to take place where appropriate. Please see <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/studentships/doctoral-training-partnerships.aspx> for further information.

4.7 Does BBSRC plan to continue harmonisation with other Research Councils?

A number of Research Councils meet regularly to discuss opportunities for further harmonisation of CASE schemes wherever possible. As a result, all the Research Councils now share common CASE Vision; furthermore, BBSRC, MRC, NERC and STFC now share similar dates for the CASE call and application deadline, to facilitate exchange of applications that may be out of remit for one Council. Research Councils will continue to explore areas where further harmonisation is possible.