

SWW DTP2 Recruitment Process FAQs

The first section of this document applies to all applicants, whether via the 'Student-Led' route or the 'CDA route'. The second section answers questions specific to the 'CDA route'. It is a long document, but we have tried to address as many of the FAQs as we can, and we hope that it proves useful to you.

SECTION A

Do SWW DTP2 studentships cover fees or stipends or both?

- SWW DTP2 studentships entitle UK doctoral students to a tuition fee award of £4,407 per annum at 2020/1 rates (or part-time equivalent). Applicants ordinarily resident in the UK who are awarded a studentship will receive from the AHRC a maintenance award of £15,285 per annum at 2020/1 rates (or part-time equivalent). UKRI will announce rates for 2021/2 in the new year (they are likely to be slightly higher than the figures quoted above).

What if I'm an overseas student rather than a UK student? Can I apply? What level of support do I get?

- Applicants who are not UK nationals are eligible to apply for all the SWW DTP2 awards (student-led and CDA). Overseas / international students will receive awards covering both fees and stipend *at the same level as UK students* (see above).
- Overseas student fees for PhDs are significantly higher than those payable by UK students. Discussion is still ongoing with SWW DTP2 partners about how each university wishes to handle the 'gap' or 'shortfall' between the UK fee and the overseas fee. One option is to waive that difference (i.e. not charge anything over the UK home fee, which is covered by the award). But another is to require the successful applicant to pay that difference or seek another source of funding to help cover it. We will update this document and our webpages as soon as we have clarity.

What if I'm from the EU?

- Because of Brexit, EU nationals are now regarded as overseas students and liable for the higher PhD fee. In other words, everything above about international / overseas students applies to EU students as well. This situation has changed since last year, and EU students (because they are overseas students) are now eligible for a stipend as well as the fee.

What other financial support is available to holders of SWW DTP2 studentships?

- Once they have taken up their award, and in addition to the fees and stipends noted above, studentship holders benefit from additional DTP funding opportunities to support their training, professional development, and research costs. Application processes for such funds are covered in the annual induction processes for studentship holders in October of each year.

How long does an SWW DTP2 studentship last?

- An SWW DTP2 studentship lasts three years eight months (or part-time equivalent).

Can an SWW DTP2 studentship be extended beyond three years eight months (or part-time equivalent)?

- Yes, but only in very specific circumstances. Once the studentship has begun, a studentship holder may apply to extend their studentship for up to four months (making a total studentship of up to four years), *either*
 - (a) to take up an ad hoc placement opportunity that is not planned or expected but that becomes available during the studentship, that cannot not be completed without an extension, and that would be beneficial to the student's development, *or*

- (b) to facilitate a project that from the outset requires a research timeline of longer than three years and eight months due to the exceptional academic requirements of the research.

Can I take up full-time employment while holding an SWW DTP studentship?

- No, students in full-time employment during their PhD are not eligible for a studentship.
- Anyone awarded a studentship who wishes to take up a temporary full-time job before completion of the PhD will need to make an application to SWW DTP2 to suspend the studentship.

Can I take up part-time employment while holding an SWW DTP studentship?

- Yes, you can, as a part-time student; part-time work on your PhD should not be less than 50% of full-time.

I have caring responsibilities, could I still apply?

- Absolutely! We have many students who have caring commitments. Supervisors and the SWW DTP2 administration try to offer as much flexibility as possible. Doctoral work is often intrinsically more flexible than taught courses.

Do I need a Master's degree to apply for an SWW DTP2 studentship?

- To be eligible to apply for an SWW DTP2 studentship you will normally have, or be studying for, a Master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification. If you do not have experience of formal postgraduate study, you are eligible only if you can demonstrate evidence of sustained experience beyond your undergraduate degree that is specifically relevant to your proposed research topic – this can be considered equivalent to Master's study.

Do I need to make an application to my intended home institution as well as for an SWW DTP2 studentship?

- Yes. By making an application to SWW DTP2 you are applying for a studentship only. You will still need to make a separate application to your intended lead home institution for a place on your PhD programme of choice.

Do I need to meet the course requirements of my intended home institution?

- Yes, you should also have met all the course requirements of your home institution before the start date of your SWW DTP2 studentship. The offer of a studentship does not bypass the home institution's requirements.

Do I need to wait for the outcome of my SWW DTP2 application before applying to my intended home institution?

- No, you can and should apply before then. Note that if awarded a studentship, you must ensure that you have a confirmed place at your choice of home institution by the start of the award.

I am already studying (e.g. for a Master's) at an SWW DTP2 institution. Can I stay at the same institution for my SWW DTP2 studentship?

- Yes. We have no intrinsic objection to your continuing in the same Department, University, etc. as before in your university career. However, as with any applicant, we would advise you to look across the whole SWW DTP2 consortium for the best supervisory team to support your project. Remember that SWW DTP2 students are almost always supervised by two academics from different institutions within the Consortium.

I've already begun my doctorate. Am I eligible for an SWW DTP2 studentship?

- Yes, you are, providing that, at the start of the studentship, you will have at least 50% of your period of study remaining (excluding any 'writing up' year or part-time equivalent).

I already have a PhD. Can I apply for an SWW DTP2 studentship for a new PhD project?

- Yes. Almost all our applicants do not have a PhD, but if you do and have a good reason for studying for a new one and a strong project, you are eligible to apply for an SWW DTP2 studentship.

How can I find supervisors for my SWW DTP2 research project?

- You can search for prospective supervisors [on our website](#) and on the websites of SWW DTP2's member institutions. SWW DTP2 recommends contacting *both* your intended supervisors as early as possible in the application process. Their input into your application will be extremely important. You may contact a lead supervisor and ask them for advice on who might be suitable as a co-supervisor.

Can my two nominated supervisors come from the same SWW DTP2 institution?

- Your two nominated supervisors must come from *different* SWW DTP2 institutions unless appropriate academic expertise really is available within only one institution.
- SWW DTP2 only rarely approves supervision from a single institution but if your project is such that you think that the only sensible supervisory team is within a single institution, make the case as clearly as you can in your application. You will need to show that there is no-one appropriate in another partner institution.

Can I apply to be supervised by three supervisors?

- Yes, but you must justify the need for the additional supervisor in your application. The third supervisor must bring experience, knowledge, and/or expertise to the project *not* provided by the others.
- The third supervisor may be from the same institution as one of the other two.
- CDAs are supervised by three supervisors (two from Consortium HEIs, one from a non-HEI partner).

Does my project have to be interdisciplinary to secure SWW DTP2 funding?

- No, we support single-discipline and interdisciplinary research. Both are important and we do not have an intrinsic preference for one over the other.

Can my project be interdisciplinary with a subject outside the Arts and Humanities?

- Yes, SWW DTP2 welcomes and encourages interdisciplinary applications that go beyond the boundaries of the Arts and Humanities and involve research in other fields of study, providing that the approach and methodologies used are primarily situated within the Arts and Humanities and the home supervisor and programme of PhD study are based in one or more of the Arts and Humanities subject areas that we cover.

What about creative/practice-based applications?

- Creative output can be produced, or practice undertaken, as an integral part of a research process. The AHRC expects this to be accompanied by some form of documentation of the research process, as well as some form of textual analysis or explanation to support its position and to demonstrate critical reflection. Creativity and/or practice that do not involve such processes are therefore not eligible for a studentship. For research to be considered practice-led, your own practice must be an integral part of the proposed project, and the creative and/or performative aspects of the research should be made explicit. The research carried out should bring about enhancements in knowledge and understanding in the discipline, or in related disciplinary areas.
- You should explore your lead institution's websites for creative/practice-based PhDs – they have a wealth of information that will help shape such a programme.

What should I include in my SWW DTP2 Alignment Statement?

- Your SWW DTP2 Alignment Statement should focus on how you will benefit from what SWW DTP2 provides and what makes you stand out in an extremely competitive field:

- you must justify your choice of supervisors and show how making use of cross-institutional supervisory relationships will benefit your project;
- you should show how engaging with organisations in the arts, creative economy, heritage and museums, archives, and libraries will benefit your work (these may include formal [SWW DTP2 partners](#), though this is not required);
- you should outline how the training and activities provided by SWW DTP2 will enhance your studies and lead to the best possible PhD.

What criteria will be used to assess my application?

- Your application will be assessed using the following criteria:
 - Preparedness or promise for doctoral research;
 - Quality of the research project proposal;
 - SWW DTP2 alignment (an awareness of, and engagement with, the benefits and opportunities of the SWW DTP2 programme).

What should I put in the 'Bibliography' part of my application?

- The bibliography that you are asked to provide should contain *only* references to works cited in abbreviated format in your research project proposal. It is not meant to be a means of judging whether you have read everything in your field.

Do both my referees need to be academics?

- No – one of them must be an academic, the other can be an academic, or a different type of referee, but both must be familiar with you, your work and the qualities you bring to doctoral research. Familiarity is much more important than using a 'big name' to support the application if this person does not know you well.

Can I submit my application and then ask my referees to submit their references?

- No, your two nominated referees must upload their references before you can submit.

How do I submit my SWW DTP2 application?

- Applications for an SWW DTP2 studentship must be completed online, via the link that will be made available on the SWW DTP website when the competition opens: <https://www.sww-ahdtp.ac.uk/> (n.b. the website is currently undergoing reorganization but it will always be clear where to find the application link).

When does the application process open and close?

- The application process opens on Monday 30 November 2020 and closes on Monday 25 January 2021. There should be sufficient time to prepare an application between these dates and to secure references, so extensions will not be permitted. Do not leave the online submission process to the last minute!

When will I hear the result of my application?

- Results of successful applications will be communicated on Thursday 1 April 2021.
- The Awarding Board also compiles a ranked 'reserve list' of applications that are of sufficient quality as potentially to deserve funding, but which were not ranked as highly as the first cohort. Successful applicants sometimes decline their awards for a variety of good reasons. If 'vacancies' arise, SWW DTP2 will contact those on the 'reserve list' in rank order with an offer of a studentship. The final list of autumn starters in 2021 is likely to include a number from the 'reserve list'. Some 'reserve list' offers may be made as late as August 2021.

SECTION B: Questions specific to CDA applicants (but see also Section A)

What are Collaborative Doctoral Awards?

- Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) are doctoral studentship projects developed by SWW DTP2 academics working in collaboration with an organisation outside of higher education. The supervisory team is pre-determined by the SWW DTP and consists of two Consortium academics and a member of the non-HEI organisation, and applications are advertised to work with that particular team. There is plenty of flexibility for students to shape their own projects within this supervisory framework and within the broad topic advertised. CDAs provide students with an opportunity to gain first-hand experience of work outside the university environment, and thus to enhance the employment-related skills and training which a student will gain during the course of their award.

Can I apply for both the Student-led and Collaborative Doctoral Award competitions?

- Yes, you may submit an application in both the Student-Led and the CDA competition, but the projects must be distinct from one another. If you submit an application in both competitions and are subsequently selected to undertake a CDA project, you will need to choose which application to proceed with – it is not permissible to have an application in both competitions once the CDA applicant selection stage has been completed.

Do I have to study full time?

- No, you can apply as a full-time or part-time student for a CDA.

Do I need to have work experience in a relevant field?

- Not necessarily. To be eligible to apply for any SWW DTP2 studentship, including CDAs, you should normally have, or be studying for, a Master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification, and if you do not have experience in a field relevant to the CDA project, this will not count against you.
- However: if you do not already have experience of formal postgraduate study, and you are eligible only if you can demonstrate evidence of sustained experience specifically relevant to your proposed research topic, then work in the relevant CDA field will be an advantage.

Will there be an interview?

- Yes, there will be a round of interviews with the host organisation and academic supervisors. These will be conversations to ascertain whether the project is a good fit for all. They will offer the opportunity to ask questions and decide on whether it is right for you. We do not interview students for the student-led competition.

How do I apply?

- In just the same way as for the Student-Led route. Follow the link on the SWW DTP website "apply" page (<https://www.sww-ahdtp.ac.uk/prospective-students/apply/>). Before 30 November 2020 you will find information there, and from that date until 25 January there will be a live link for you to begin the online application process.

Are CDA awards fully funded?

- Yes. They cover the fee at the UK home rate of £4,407 (for all students, home or international) and a stipend (£15,285 in 2020-21). All the fee information in Section A applies to both CDA and Student-Led applications.

Is the PhD project rigidly pre-determined for a CDA or is there flexibility for me to shape it myself?

- There is plenty of opportunity to shape your own project, both during the application process and after an award is made. The outline project is determined by the supervisors working with the non-HEI

partner, but those who are invited for interview have the chance then to suggest ways in which it might be adjusted to suit their particular interests and expertise. They propose their own thesis title, defining its focus themselves. Projects are all designed to allow flexibility of this type. All PhDs change shape during the research and writing, some quite radically, and CDAs are no exception.

I am a mature student. Would a CDA be right for me?

- Students of any age are invited to apply for all our awards, including CDAs. This includes mature students or those who have taken a break from academic study since their Master's degree. We also consider applications from mature students with relevant professional experience or knowledge even if they do not hold an MA (see above).