

## SWWDTP2 Recruitment Process 2024-25 Guidance for Applicants

The [South, West and Wales Doctoral Training Partnership](#) (SWWDTP) welcomes applications from members of all communities, and actively promotes equality, diversity, inclusion and widening participation. We want to increase applications from people from all minority backgrounds. In particular, in light of historic application data, we want to increase applications from those with non-childcare related caring responsibilities and those who received free school meals during their education. We also aim to award at least 5 studentships to applicants from communities currently under-represented within the SWWDTP student body. You can find more information on this and how we will support you in Section 2 of this guidance document, and also in our FAQs. During the applications period, we will provide additional online support and information for all applicants, and specifically for those from underrepresented communities and those who face specific barriers to inclusion. We will announce these opportunities on our social media.

### 1. SWWDTP2

The SWWDTP is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and a consortium of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). The SWWDTP2 Consortium comprises nine member institutions: Aberystwyth University, Bath Spa University, University of Bristol, Cardiff University, Cranfield University, University of Exeter, University of Reading, University of Southampton, and UWE Bristol.

The SWWDTP offers unparalleled opportunities to Arts and Humanities PhD students for cross-institutional supervision in both disciplinary and cross-disciplinary projects. Together with our multiple arts, heritage, cultural, and creative economy partners, SWWDTP2 aims to develop researchers who will be equipped for a wide range of careers through the acquisition of research-based, employability, entrepreneurial, and interpersonal skills vital to the 21<sup>st</sup>-century knowledge economy. SWWDTP2 provides bespoke support and training tailored to each student's project and career aspirations, enriched by the world-class expertise and state-of-the-art resources offered through the SWWDTP2 Consortium.

We welcome applicants from the UK and overseas with evidence of exceptional promise for PhD study. You will have a compelling research project that will benefit from the expertise we can offer in and across a range of subjects, and from our rich academic resources and network of partners. As an SWWDTP student, you will be provided with access across institutional boundaries to the most relevant and cutting-edge expertise through collaborative supervisory teams, which normally involves supervisors at two different Consortium institutions. This ensures an exceptional breadth and depth of support for your research project.

SWWDTP2 students also benefit from a unique enhanced training programme designed to develop the disciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and interpersonal skills required by researchers and professionals in the Arts and Humanities. You will have access to bespoke individual training along with collective cohort development that provide opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary discussion with your peers, academics and other experts from across the Consortium and beyond.

## 2. Eligibility for studentships

### (i) *Full- and part-time*

SWWDTP2 studentships are open to full-time and part-time applicants from the UK or abroad (applicants from the EU are included as international students). Students in full-time employment during their PhD are not eligible for a studentship. A student in part-time employment during their PhD may be eligible for a part-time award; part-time study should not be less than 50% of full-time.

### (ii) *Previous education/training*

A completed first degree is a requirement for a studentship. If you do not have a result yet for your first degree, you cannot apply to SWWDTP2 in this round. To be eligible to apply for an SWWDTP2 studentship you should normally have, or be studying for, a Master's degree or similar postgraduate qualification. You should also have met all the course requirements of your home institution before the start date of the SWWDTP2 studentship.

If you do not have experience of formal postgraduate study, you would be eligible to apply for a studentship only if you can demonstrate evidence of sustained relevant professional, voluntary, or employment experience beyond your undergraduate degree that is specifically relevant to your proposed research topic and/or methodology that could be considered equivalent to Master's study.

### (iii) *Minimum period of funding*

If you have already commenced doctoral study, you may apply for funding for the remainder of your study, *providing that*, at the start of the SWWDTP2 award on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025, you would have at least 1 year 10 months, or part time equivalent (50% of the standard funding period) remaining of your study period. Should you be applying to move to a different institution to complete your doctoral work, the 50% rule outlined applies from the start of your PhD studies at the original institution.

### (iv) *Underrepresented Communities*

SWWDTP2 is actively seeking to increase the diversity of students to whom awards are offered and we want applicants from every and any background to apply. We aim to award at least 5 studentships to applicants from communities currently under-represented within the SWWDTP student body. This is a target intended to encourage applications. It is not a quota: only applications that meet our stringent quality expectations will be offered awards. We operate in line with all relevant legislation governing positive action and do not make positive discrimination.

You will find detailed information regarding the support we offer to those from

underrepresented groups in our FAQ document.

### 3. Value of studentships and residence requirements

SWWDTP2 studentships entitle both UK and international doctoral students to a tuition fee award and maintenance award. Rates are updated annually by UKRI in January of the calendar year of entry. For the purposes of residence requirements, 'UK' in this document includes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

For 2024-25, the Home tuition fee rate has been £4,786 per annum (or part-time equivalent), and the maintenance award rate was £19,237 per annum (or part-time equivalent). All students receive these award rates. Rates for 2025-26 are expected to be announced by UKRI/AHRC in January 2025.

All Consortium HEIs charge a higher PhD tuition fee for international students. Please note that for international students, UKRI/AHRC - and therefore SWWDTP - will only fund fees to the equivalent of the Home UK fee. Each consortium member determines how it manages the difference between its home and international student tuition fees. Please check the relevant funding pages of your chosen home institution for its policy on how it manages this difference.

Residence requirements for Research Council funding for postgraduate research are based on the [Education \(Fees and Awards\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#) and subsequent amendments. SWWDTP does not support distance learning: all students must be resident in the UK during their period of study. Please note that the award of Studentships to international applicants is conditional upon their obtaining any necessary visas or permits to study in the UK. SWWDTP2 does not handle visa inquiries, so *all* international applicants must discuss these with the relevant personnel (usually via the Graduate School or equivalent) in the institution to which they are applying for a place to study, and/or embassies and consulates in their country of residence. Consortium HEIs have professional advisors in place to help with such queries.

In addition to their award, studentship holders benefit from additional funding opportunities to support their training, professional development, and research costs.

### 4. Duration of studentships

An SWWDTP2 studentship lasts three years and eight months (or part-time equivalent). You will be expected to undertake and complete your PhD thesis, any known or expected placements, and/or any training essential to the completion of the thesis within that period. Once their studentship has begun, a studentship holder may apply to *extend* their studentship for up to four months (up to four years in total), *either* to take up an ad hoc placement opportunity that is not planned or expected but that becomes available during the studentship, or could not be completed without an extension and would be beneficial to the student's development, *or* 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.

The AHRC expects all students to submit their project within the funded period and no later than four years after the start of their award (or part-time equivalent), regardless of whether an extension to the studentship period is granted, *unless* a period of suspension has been granted by

their home institution for reasons such as maternity, adoption or shared parental leave, illness, or other exceptional personal circumstances.

## 5. Your SWWDTP2 application

By making an application to SWWDTP2 you are applying for a studentship only. *You will still need to make a separate application to your choice of **home institution** for your place on your preferred PhD programme.* You do not need to apply for a PhD place at your intended home institution **before** submitting this application for a studentship, but you must have a place on your PhD programme before funding commences on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025. We advise you make an application in good time for your place to be confirmed by that date.

Applications for an SWWDTP2 studentship must be completed via our [online application system](#). The online application system may also be accessed via the [SWWDTP website](#).

For 2024 entry, the application system will open on Monday 25 November 2024, at 00.01am, and will close at 11.59 pm on Monday, 20 January 2025.

Once an application form is submitted, *you will not be able to edit the contents.* 'Submission' means you are willing for SWWDTP2 to log the application as complete. Please, therefore, ensure all the documents required are uploaded to your application at the point of submission.

## 6. Types of studentships

There are [two different types](#) of SWWDTP2 studentship for which you can apply:

- A. *Student-Led Awards:* We invite high-quality applications from prospective students who wish to propose their own research project. The SWWDTP normally requires students to have two supervisors from two separate institutions within the consortium, unless the necessary expertise can only be found in a single institution; such circumstances are exceptional. *If SWWDTP reviewers believe that appropriate co-supervision is available elsewhere in the Consortium and that single-institution supervision is not sufficiently justified, **your application will be disqualified.*** Your preferred supervisors must have agreed to supervise your project and you will have to apply both to the SWWDTP2 and to the institution where your lead supervisor is based. You should work closely with your preferred supervisors when framing your application. Their advice will help optimise your submission. 25 Student-Led awards will be available for October 2025 entry.
- B. *Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs):* CDAs are doctoral studentship projects which are developed by consortium academics working in collaboration with an organisation outside of higher education. The supervisory team is pre-determined and consists of two consortium academics and a member of the partner organisation. CDAs embed the opportunity 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. Three CDA awards will be available for entry in October 2025.

The remainder of this document goes into more detail concerning the application process for the two types of studentship. *All the information in sections 1–5 above applies to **both** studentship types.* 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 wish to submit an application to both competitions, please ensure that you have completed two separate and distinct applications within the SWWDTP application system, one Student-Led Scholarship Application and one CDA Scholarship Application.

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.

### **A. Student-Led Awards**

#### *(i) Application timeline*

The timeline for applications for Student-Led Awards is as follows:

Application system opens	00.01am Monday, 25 November 2024
Application deadline	11.59pm Monday, 20 January 2025
Notification of awards	Friday, 4 April 2025

#### *(ii) Content of application form*

On the online application form you will be asked to provide the following information:

1. Personal Details (including EDI information), Eligibility, and Data Protection
2. Education and Professional History
3. Application Mode, Institutions, Supervision and SWWDTP Alignment
4. Subject area(s), Research Project and Placement Form (additional evidence required for practice-based applicants)
5. Research costs
6. Bibliography
7. Certificates of Educational Achievement

#### *(iii) Supervisors*

Please make sure you have the agreement of *both* your nominated supervisors before including their names in your application. SWWDTP2 recommends contacting *both* your intended supervisors as early as possible in the application process. If you have identified a prospective home institution supervisor but are uncertain about co-supervision, the home institution supervisor may be able to help you select the most suitable co-supervisor.

The norm for SWWDTP2 funding is cross-institutional supervision. In other words, supervision is almost always provided by two supervisors from different institutions. If appropriate supervision of this kind is available within the Consortium, we will not permit single-institution supervision.

However, in rare circumstances, expertise in certain disciplines is occasionally concentrated in one place and that – exceptionally – there is no academically viable alternative to single-institution supervision. If you believe your project to fall within this limited group, please indicate this in the corresponding section of the application form and supply the additional information requested.

If SWWDTP reviewers believe that appropriate co-supervision is available elsewhere in the consortium and that single-institution supervision is not justified, they are instructed to award the minimum score for the ‘supervision’ section of their report, and this will lead to the disqualification of your application. It is therefore extremely important to be sure that this is essential and to justify it carefully. It is not sufficient justification to say that you have already begun a PhD within a single HEI and wish to retain the team with which you have been working so far.

*(iv) Disciplines and subjects*

SWWDTP2 welcomes and encourages both single-subject and interdisciplinary applications that are identifiably located within one or more of the subject areas (please see Appendix 1 at the end of this document)

SWWDTP2 also 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 subject areas above.

Please specify in your application *one or two* of the AHRC subject areas above into which your research falls. SWWDTP2 will ensure that your application is reviewed by at least one specialist in each of the fields that you specify. Please do *not* therefore specify two subject areas unless you are happy for your application to be reviewed by specialists in each of the fields that you specify.

Your selections from the AHRC’s list of disciplinary areas above will determine which reviewers are asked to assess your proposal. You may wish to consult the list of AHRC disciplines (see Appendix 1 below) before choosing. Some applications fall within a single discipline. Some applications are cross-disciplinary, in which case you may indicate two different disciplines on the application form in the relevant section.

The AHRC recognize that some areas of research do not fall neatly into one or another Funding Council’s remit and have provided detailed guidance on how to judge which body to apply to, broken down into a number of areas where Councils share interests:

<https://www.ukri.org/publications/research-overlapping-social-sciences-and-arts-and-humanities-joint-ahrc-and-esrc-statement/>

If your project requires co-supervision from a specialist who does not work in the fields supported by the AHRC, you may select a third, non-AHRC, discipline. Please note that if you select a third

discipline, this will trigger an additional review – if the additional reviewer does not consider that the project falls firmly within the third discipline, the scores from that reviewer are likely to be low and that will negatively affect your chances of funding, so please only select a third area if absolutely necessary.

*(vi) Research Project Proposal*

This section is one of the most important in your application and the score awarded by reviewers for this is weighted more heavily than the scores for other sections. It is essential to give a clear outline of your PhD project and its context, including:

- an account of its aims, significance, originality, and timeliness
- the principal research questions you will be posing
- the methodologies for your work and any relevant theoretical approaches to be deployed
- the primary materials you will be working with/on
- any outcomes you envisage beyond the PhD thesis itself (e.g. creative outputs, outreach, public engagement, impact)

You should already have a sense of how the PhD is likely to be structured, so please include a brief indication of what this structure currently looks like (this may be in the form of a chapter-by-chapter breakdown, or you may prefer to suggest instead the broad areas into which you expect your work will take you). For some projects (e.g. those involving field work or archival research) it may be useful to provide a rough timeline for such work indicating where it fits within the 3 years and 8 months of funding (or part-time equivalent) provided by SWWDTP2. There is a separate section of this form devoted to placements you may be planning as part of your PhD, so do not include this information in your Research Proposal.

Your research project proposal must be **no longer than 1,500 words**.

Although there is no one right way to write a research proposal, your research proposal should include the following:

- **A working project title**
- **The research problem(s)/question(s)/hypothesis(-es) that you plan to address**
  - Explain why it is/they are important and timely, and how this will be of broader benefit to society
- **The context to your proposed study**
  - Explain what has been said/done about this before
  - Your context may include a selective and critical review of the relevant scholarly literature, assessing its strengths and weaknesses, to show your understanding of the main debates and issues in your research area
  - Indicate how your proposed research will add to, or reconceptualise, what has been said/done to date
- **The research methods you will use**
  - Explain why these are the most appropriate
  - Confirm you have provisional permission to undertake the research on the material, if permission to do so is required
- **Outcomes arising from the research beyond the PhD itself**



- These may be creative outputs, outreach materials, public engagement activities, policy impact guidelines, etc.
- **Relevant experience that has prepared you to undertake this project at this level**
  - This should include past relevant subject-specific knowledge and training, and achievements (e.g. academic success, especially in research; academic publications).
  - If you know you will require specialist training to undertake your proposal project (e.g. languages; equipment or software use; analytical techniques training), or you have any placement plans that will support your development of these skills, explain this here. Awareness that you will need additional training to complete your proposed research is not a negative reflection on your preparedness to date to undertake your project.
- **A provisional timeline for the completion of your PhD research project**
  - Justify that what you propose to undertake can be completed within the duration of your registration period

For **Research Costs**, you will be asked to provide a brief indicative budget detailing any additional research costs that will be essential to your PhD research project.

Examples would include (but are not be limited to): extensive travel to archives; high-cost specialist training that is essential to your research; laboratory costs; fieldwork costs; working with living research participants, etc.

The **Bibliography** to your proposal should be submitted as a separate document, uploaded via your main task list on the application system. The Bibliography should simply contain bibliographical details of any works that you cite during the course of your research project proposal. It is **not** meant as an opportunity for you to list all the works in your field with which you are familiar.

### (iii) *Creative/practice-based applicants*

If you are applying to fund a creative or practice-led PhD, you must indicate both the nature of the creative and practical work you propose to submit for the PhD and an account of the academic analysis and contextualization that will accompany it. This is extremely important: in the past, excellent creative proposals have scored poorly because they lacked the academic analytical context needed to make these ideas into credible doctorates. Consult the programme regulations at your chosen home institution for an indication of what the programme expects in this regard.

If you are applying for a creative or a practice-based PhD, you will have a section on the application form to provide one or two links to additional material to demonstrate the practical / creative skills that you possess – e.g. a portfolio of visual or video material, a sample of creative writing, sound files, etc. Written material should be no longer than 2000 words; audio/video material not more than 30 minutes in duration; portfolios of static images not more than 25 examples. If your materials are longer than these limits, please include in the evidence box clear indications of sections / timings within the material that equate to the limits and on which reviewers should focus. Links should be to public websites or to your own data storage sites and must be such that anyone who legitimately views this application (reviewers and DTP staff) can access the material easily. If a password is needed, please put that in brackets after the link in the relevant box below. If the material is not easily accessible, it will not be considered.



*(vii) SWWDTP2 Alignment Statement*

Your SWWDTP2 Alignment Statement, which must be **no longer than 300 words**, should focus on how you will benefit from what SWWDTP2 provides – why you want to work within this distinctive community of researchers – and what makes you stand out in an extremely competitive field. This extends beyond funding and includes (but are not limited to):

- training offered
- activities and placements supported
- inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary research communities beyond home universities, such as opportunities for engagement with organisations beyond HEIs in the arts, creative economy, heritage, including (but not limited to) museums, libraries, and archives.

Give specific examples where possible. Make suggestions for additional research clusters, specific training, etc., if you think your project will benefit from these.

*(viii) Assessment criteria*

Your application will be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Quality of the research project proposal**
- **Experience and aptitude for PhD study**
- **Suitability of supervision**
- **SWWDTP2 alignment**

The expanded criteria are as follows:

**1. RESEARCH PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT**

SWWDTP is seeking to fund research projects that:

- clearly articulate a research question or questions of acknowledged significance to the appropriate discipline(s)
- identify research resources that merit further study and are accessible for research, including archival materials, special library collections, or appropriate online resources
- outline an appropriate methodology
- demonstrate an awareness of the research context surrounding such a question or questions, resources, and methodology
- can be completed within the funding period prescribed by the AHRC (currently 3 years and 8 months full-time or 7 years and 4 months part-time).

If the proposal is for a practice-led / creative PhD project, the research proposal must additionally:

- offer the prospect of original creative work or practice
- combine such work with intellectually rigorous analysis and contextualization

Grade	Descriptor
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5	A proposal of exceptional quality and promise. All aspects are clearly thought out, demonstrating exceptional critical analysis and the potential to make a discipline-leading and original contribution to the field. The project has been conceptualised with exceptional rigour and with acute regard to key theoretical and methodological contexts. The project has also been exceptionally well thought-out on a practical level, identifying a clear and appropriate body of primary material and presenting a realistic plan for completing the research project within the funded period. If the project includes a practice-led or creative element, it offers a highly original and cutting-edge critical engagement with relevant approaches to and bodies of creative practice, contextualising the contribution in an exceptionally rigorous analytical framework.
4.5	
4	A very good proposal, which includes elements of excellence as defined in the above descriptor, but where shortcomings or absences are apparent in one key area. Alternatively, a proposal in which all elements are tackled in a convincing manner, but where the overall case for the rigour, originality and/or significance of the research project is not presented at the highest level.
3.5	
3	A good proposal, where some elements of excellence as defined in the above descriptors are present, but where there are multiple shortcomings or absences in key areas. Alternatively, a proposal with clear potential for development but which is not suitable for funding at present, as the rigour, originality, and/or significance of the proposed research is not presented at a suitably high level.
2.5	
2	A proposal which shows some of the features of a satisfactory and practicable doctoral project but is not suitable for funding in its current form.
1.5	
1	A weak proposal which would not be a suitable basis for doctoral research without fundamental revisions.

## 2. PROMISE, POTENTIAL, AND APTITUDE FOR DOCTORAL STUDY

SWWDTP is seeking to fund students who show a clear aptitude for advanced academic research in the discipline(s) central to the proposed research project as well as promise and potential. This may be evidenced by some or all of the following criteria:

- outstanding undergraduate and/or taught postgraduate degree results
- professional qualifications
- significant work or voluntary experience in a relevant area
- elements of the research proposal itself that show how the applicant has already begun their preparation or how previous experience will be used academically
- published work
- For practice-led/creative applications, most students will have submitted samples of their past work (written, video, audio, multimedia, etc.): the quality and originality of those submissions should be considered when scoring this section.

Grade	Descriptor
5	The applicant is within the top 5% of prospective PhD students, taking into account: the grading criteria; my overall experience of supervising and assessing PhD projects; prior work and voluntary experience where applicable; the quality and originality of practice-led and creative contributions where applicable; and the variety and diversity of potential pathways into doctoral study (diverse applicant

	backgrounds, differing disciplinary expectations, appropriate interdisciplinary experience, etc.).
4.5	
4	The applicant is within the top 10% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptor.
3.5	
3	The applicant is within the top 25% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptors.
2.5	
2	The applicant is within the top 50% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptors
1.5	
1	The applicant is in the lower 50% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptors.

### 3. SUITABILITY OF SUPERVISION PLANS

SWWDTP is seeking to fund projects that are aligned as well as possible with the highest levels of talent and experience on the part of academic supervisors. Criteria for reaching a score here include:

- how far the research and publications of all supervisors mesh with the requirements of the research proposal
- evidence that the proposed supervisors are the most appropriate in the consortium for this work
- how far the combination of the supervisors' expertise is appropriate to the project
- how well the applicant articulates the justification for their supervisory choices
- in cases where a third supervisor is requested; to what extent the third supervisor's expertise is necessary for the project and does not duplicate what might be provided by lead and co-supervisor.
- in cases where single institution supervision is requested, Reviewers are asked to comment on the candidate's justification. If single-institution supervision is **not** felt to be justified, this section will be scored no higher than 1, and the application will then be disqualified.

Grade	Descriptor
5	Exceptional, an ideal or virtually ideal supervisory proposal, with experienced and appropriate supervisors whose work very closely matches the student's needs
4.5	
4	Excellent, a supervisory proposal that is extremely well attuned to the research project, with experienced and appropriate supervisors whose work closely matches the student's needs
3.5	
3	Good, a supervisory proposal that is well attuned to the research project, with experienced and appropriate supervisors whose work matches the student's needs
2.5	
2	Acceptable, a supervisory proposal that will support the research project but where the supervisors' experience is not central to it, or there is a lack of supervisory expertise for a significant aspect of the proposed research
1.5	
1	Weak, inappropriate or poorly justified supervisory proposal OR a single-institution proposal that need not be confined to one consortium partner

#### 4. SWWDTP ALIGNMENT

**This section will be scored and considered by the Awarding Board only.**

SWWDTP seeks to support students who will benefit from the culture and ethos of this consortium specifically and who articulate how they propose to engage with the opportunities offered by SWWDTP. For the purposes of this score, the SWWDTP Director and the Awarding Board will consider the following criteria:

- how far the applicant engages with opportunities for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research
- whether the applicant proposes to adopt a creative approach within and across disciplines, that displays the potential to respond to rapidly changing research and industry environments
- whether the applicant has identified ways to conduct research that will speak to audiences beyond a single academic discipline, and beyond academia
- how far the applicant engages with the personal and professional development opportunities of SWWDTP’s training provision
- how far a case has been made showing that the project will benefit from the opportunities for training and development offered by SWWDTP’s planned thematic offering on diversity, equality, and inclusion in Arts and Humanities research.
- the extent to which they show an awareness of, and willingness to engage with, the broader research environment(s) in partner HEIs, especially their home institution and their co-supervisory institution (e.g., research centres, local research clusters)
- how far the applicant engages with SWWDTP’s thematic research environment and enabling opportunities (e.g., consortium research clusters, ideas for extending these, student-led research events, publication opportunities)
- whether plans for placements within SWWDTP’s schemes are appropriate, imaginative, feasible, etc.

Grade	Descriptor
5	The statement clearly and explicitly demonstrates exceptional alignment with SWWDTP, showing how the applicant and their research project will benefit in multiple ways from SWWDTP’s planned thematic training and development opportunities in diversity, equality, and inclusion in Arts and Humanities research; from the more general training and development opportunities on offer; from opportunities for interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research; from opportunities to respond to academic and industry environments; from opportunities for impact and public engagement; from engagement with broader research environments within and across member universities; from engagement with SWWDTPs research clusters and wider research collaborations and partnerships; and/or opportunities for placements that advance career development and training and contribute to impact and public engagement.
4.5	
4	The statement clearly demonstrates excellent alignment with SWWDTP according to one of the criteria in the above descriptor, and generally good engagement with some of the other criteria. Alternatively, the statement shows

	a high degree of alignment with SWWDTP across two or more of the criteria in the above descriptor.
<b>3.5</b>	
<b>3</b>	The statement demonstrates very good alignment with one of the criteria in the above descriptors, or good alignment with SWWDTP across two or more of those criteria.
<b>2.5</b>	
<b>2</b>	The statement demonstrates an under-developed degree of alignment with SWWDTP.
<b>1.5</b>	
<b>1</b>	The statement demonstrates little or no specific alignment with SWWDTP.

### **B. Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs)**

#### *(i) Application timeline*

The timeline for applications for CDAs is as follows:

Application system opens	00.01am Monday, 25 November 2024
Application deadline	11.59pm Monday, 20 January 2025
Applicant interviews	Between 27 January and 27 February 2025
Deadline for supervisors to select first choice candidate	Thursday 6 March 2025
Awarding Board	Monday 31 March 2025
Notification of awards	Friday, 4 April 2025
Deadline for awardee acceptance	Friday, 2 May 2025

The three CDA projects available for 2023-24 entry will be advertised no later than Monday, 14 October 2024. Interested applicants should email the named contacts, to discuss the project before developing an application to be considered by the supervisory team. You may apply for only *one* CDA project. Your application must be submitted by 11.59pm on Monday, 20 January 2025.

#### *(ii) Content of application form*

On the online application form you will be asked to provide the following information:

1. Personal Details (including EDI information), Eligibility, and Data Protection
2. Education and Professional History
3. Application Mode, Institutions, Supervision and SWWDTP Alignment
4. Research Project and Placement Form (additional evidence required for practice-based applicants)
5. Bibliography
6. Certificates of Educational Achievement

### *(iii) Disciplines and subjects*

SWWDTP2 welcomes and encourages both single-subject and interdisciplinary applications that are identifiably located within one or more of the subject areas listed under A(iv) – the Student-Led awards – above. There are no differences between the eligible subject areas for the two routes.

### *(iv) CDA Research Project Proposal*

This section gives you the opportunity to explain how you will shape the CDA project to fit with your own interests and prior achievements. It is essential to give a clear outline of your PhD project and its context, including:

- an account of its aims, significance, originality, and timeliness
- the principal research questions you will be posing
- the methodologies for your work and any relevant theoretical approaches to be deployed
- the primary materials you will be working with/on
- any outcomes you envisage beyond the PhD thesis itself (e.g. creative outputs, outreach, public engagement, impact)

The proposal should also address why you are the most appropriate candidate to undertake this particular CDA project, what you will bring to the project, and the enhanced skills that you will develop by undertaking a CDA project.

You should already have a sense of how the PhD is likely to be structured, so please include a brief indication of what this structure currently looks like (this may be in the form of a chapter-by-chapter breakdown, or you may prefer to suggest instead the broad areas into which you expect your work will take you). For some projects (e.g. those involving field work or archival research) it may be useful to provide a rough timeline for such work indicating where it fits within the 3 years and 8 months of funding (or part-time equivalent) provided by SWWDTP2. There is a separate section of this form devoted to placements you may be planning as part of your PhD, so do not include this information in your Research Proposal.

Your research project proposal must be **no longer than 1,500 words**.

Although there is no one right way to write a research proposal, your research proposal should include the following:

- **The research problem(s)/question(s)/hypothesis(-es) that you plan to address within the broader CDA project as outlined by the supervisors**
  - Explain why it is/they are important and timely, and how this will be of broader benefit to society
- **The context to your proposed study within the broader CDA project as outlined by the supervisors**
  - Explain what has been said/done about this before

- Your context may include a selective and critical review of the relevant scholarly literature, assessing its strengths and weaknesses, to show your understanding of the main debates and issues in your research area
- Indicate how your proposed research will add to, or reconceptualise, what has been said/done to date
- **The research methods you will use**
  - Explain why these are the most appropriate
  - Confirm you have provisional permission to undertake the research on the material, if permission to do so is required
- **Outcomes arising from the research beyond the PhD itself**
  - These may be creative outputs, outreach materials, public engagement activities, policy impact guidelines, etc.
- **Relevant experience that has prepared you to undertake this project at this level**
  - This should include past relevant subject-specific knowledge and training, and achievements (e.g. academic success, especially in research; academic publications).
  - Explain why you are an appropriate applicant to undertake this particular CDA project and how your experience and skills have shaped the originally advertised project proposal
  - Set out the enhanced skills that you will develop by undertaking this particular CDA project and how completing the project will contribute to your specific career goals
  - If you know you will require specialist training to undertake your proposal project (e.g. languages; equipment or software use; analytical techniques training), or you have any placement plans that will support your development of these skills, explain this here. Awareness that you will need additional training to complete your proposed research is not a negative reflection on your preparedness to date to undertake your project.
- **A provisional timeline for the completion of your PhD research project**
  - Justify that what you propose to undertake can be completed within the duration of your registration period

The **Bibliography** to your proposal should be submitted as a separate document, uploaded via your main task list on the application system. The Bibliography should simply contain bibliographical details of any works that you cite during the course of your research project proposal. It is **not** meant as an opportunity for you to list all the works in your field with which you are familiar.

#### *(v) SWWDTP2 Alignment Statement*

Your SWWDTP2 Alignment Statement, which must be **no longer than 300 words**, should focus on how you will benefit from what SWWDTP2 provides – why you want to work within this distinctive community of researchers – and what makes you stand out in an extremely competitive field. This extends beyond funding and includes (but are not limited to) how you will make use of:

- training offered
- activities and placements supported
- inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary research communities beyond home universities, such as opportunities for engagement with organisations beyond HEIs in the arts, creative economy, heritage, including (but not limited to) museums, libraries, and archives.



Give specific examples where possible. Make suggestions for additional research clusters, specific training, etc., if you think your project will benefit from these.

(vi) *Assessment criteria*

Your application will be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Research Proposal Assessment**
- **Promise, Potential and Aptitude for Doctoral Study**

Categories 1-2 below are used to score written applications in order to shortlist applicants for interview. The third category is used to score interview performance of the shortlisted applicants only. The fourth category is used at Awarding Board to confirm the suitability of the selected candidate.

**1. Research Proposal Assessment:**

SWWDTP is seeking to fund research projects that:

- clearly articulate a research question or questions of acknowledged significance to the appropriate discipline(s)
- identify research resources that merit further study and are accessible for research, including archival materials, special library collections, or appropriate online resources
- outline an appropriate methodology
- demonstrate an awareness of the research context surrounding such a question or questions, resources, and methodology
- can be completed within the funding period prescribed by the AHRC (currently 3 years and 8 months full-time or 7 years and 4 months part-time).

If the proposal is for a practice-led / creative PhD project, the research proposal must additionally:

- offer the prospect of original creative work or practice
- combine such work with intellectually rigorous analysis and contextualization

Grade	Descriptor
5	A proposal of exceptional quality and promise. All aspects are clearly thought out, demonstrating exceptional critical analysis and the potential to make a discipline-leading and original contribution to the field. The project has been conceptualised with exceptional rigour and with acute regard to key theoretical and methodological contexts. The project has also been exceptionally well thought-out on a practical level, identifying a clear and appropriate body of primary material and presenting a realistic plan for completing the research project within the funded period. If the project includes a practice-led or creative element, it offers a highly original and cutting-edge critical engagement with relevant approaches to and bodies of creative practice, contextualising the contribution in an exceptionally rigorous analytical framework.
4.5	

<b>4</b>	A very good proposal, which includes elements of excellence as defined in the above descriptor, but where shortcomings or absences are apparent in one key area. Alternatively, a proposal in which all elements are tackled in a convincing manner, but where the overall case for the rigour, originality and/or significance of the research project is not presented at the highest level.
<b>3.5</b>	
<b>3</b>	A good proposal, where some elements of excellence as defined in the above descriptors are present, but where there are multiple shortcomings or absences in key areas. Alternatively, a proposal with clear potential for development but which is not suitable for funding at present, as the rigour, originality, and/or significance of the proposed research is not presented at a suitably high level.
<b>2.5</b>	
<b>2</b>	A proposal which shows some of the features of a satisfactory and practicable doctoral project but is not suitable for funding in its current form.
<b>1.5</b>	
<b>1</b>	A weak proposal which would not be a suitable basis for doctoral research without fundamental revisions.

## 2. Promise, Potential, and Aptitude for Doctoral Study:

SWWDTP is seeking to fund students who show a clear aptitude for advanced academic research in the discipline(s) central to the proposed research project as well as promise and potential. This may be evidenced by some or all of the following criteria:

- outstanding undergraduate and/or taught postgraduate degree results
- professional qualifications
- significant work or voluntary experience in a relevant area
- elements of the research proposal itself that show how the applicant has already begun their preparation or how previous experience will be used academically
- published work
- For practice-led / creative applications, most students will have submitted samples of their past work (written, video, audio, multimedia, etc.): the quality and originality of those submissions should be taken into account when scoring this section.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
5	The applicant is within the top 5% of prospective PhD students, taking into account: the grading criteria; my overall experience of supervising and assessing PhD projects; prior work and voluntary experience where applicable; the quality and originality of practice-led and creative contributions where applicable; and the variety and diversity of potential pathways into doctoral study (diverse applicant backgrounds, differing disciplinary expectations, appropriate interdisciplinary experience, etc.).
4.5	
4	The applicant is within the top 10% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptor.
3.5	

3	The applicant is within the top 25% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptors.
2.5	
2	The applicant is within the top 50% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptors
1.5	
1	The applicant is in the lower 50% of prospective PhD students in my discipline, as measured in the above descriptors.

### 3. Interview

**Process note:** Having assessed the applications by the above criteria and created a shortlist, the supervisory teams (both HEI and non-HEI supervisors) will interview all shortlisted applicants. You will be contacted to let you know whether you have been shortlisted, and, if you have, to arrange an interview time. Interviews may take place remotely. The purpose of the interview is to allow the supervisory team to select the most suitable candidate according to the SWWDTP2 Applicant Assessment Criteria.

*This score should focus exclusively on the quality of the applicant's responses to questions during the interview.*

Grade	Descriptor
5	<b>An outstanding interview, exceptionally responsive, alert, detailed, and well-informed</b>
4.5	
4	<b>An excellent interview, highly responsive etc. but leaving room for improvement</b>
3.5	
3	<b>A very good interview, clearly responsive, etc. but not always convincing</b>
2.5	
2	<b>A good interview, able to respond but sometimes without detail or unpersuasively</b>
1.5	
1	<b>A weak interview, inadequate responses.</b>

### 4. SWWDTP ALIGNMENT

**This section will be scored and considered by the Awarding Board only.**

SWWDTP seeks to support students who will benefit from the culture and ethos of this consortium specifically and who articulate how they propose to engage with the opportunities offered by SWWDTP. For the purposes of this score, the SWWDTP Director and the Awarding Board will consider the following criteria:

- how far the applicant engages with opportunities for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research
- whether the applicant proposes to adopt a creative approach within and across disciplines, that displays the potential to respond to rapidly changing research and industry environments
- whether the applicant has identified ways to conduct research that will speak to audiences beyond a single academic discipline, and beyond academia
- how far the applicant engages with the personal and professional development opportunities of SWWDTP's training provision
- how far a case has been made showing that the project will benefit from the opportunities for training and development offered by SWWDTP's planned thematic offering on diversity, equality, and inclusion in Arts and Humanities research.
- the extent to which they show an awareness of, and willingness to engage with, the broader research environment(s) in partner HEIs, especially their home institution and their co-supervisory institution (e.g., research centres, local research clusters)
- how far the applicant engages with SWWDTP's thematic research environment and enabling opportunities (e.g., consortium research clusters, ideas for extending these, student-led research events, publication opportunities)
- whether plans for placements within SWWDTP's schemes are appropriate, imaginative, feasible, etc.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>5</b>	The statement clearly and explicitly demonstrates exceptional alignment with SWWDTP, showing how the applicant and their research project will benefit in multiple ways from SWWDTP's planned thematic training and development opportunities in diversity, equality, and inclusion in Arts and Humanities research; from the more general training and development opportunities on offer; from opportunities for interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research; from opportunities to respond to academic and industry environments; from opportunities for impact and public engagement; from engagement with broader research environments within and across member universities; from engagement with SWWDTPs research clusters and wider research collaborations and partnerships; and/or opportunities for placements that advance career development and training and contribute to impact and public engagement.
<b>4.5</b>	
<b>4</b>	The statement clearly demonstrates excellent alignment with SWWDTP according to one of the criteria in the above descriptor, and generally good engagement with some of the other criteria. Alternatively, the statement shows a high degree of alignment with SWWDTP across two or more of the criteria in the above descriptor.
<b>3.5</b>	
<b>3</b>	The statement demonstrates very good alignment with one of the criteria in the above descriptors, or good alignment with SWWDTP across two or more of those criteria.
<b>2.5</b>	
<b>2</b>	The statement demonstrates an under-developed degree of alignment with SWWDTP.
<b>1.5</b>	
<b>1</b>	The statement demonstrates little or no specific alignment with SWWDTP.

## Appendix 1

AHRC Level 1 Discipline	AHRC Level 2 Discipline
Archaeology	Archaeological Theory
	Archaeology of Human Origins
	Archaeology of Literate Societies
	Gender and Sexuality Studies
	Industrial Archaeology
	Landscape and Environmental Archaeology
	Maritime Archaeology
	Prehistoric Archaeology
Classics	Classical Literature
	Classical Reception
	Epigraphy and Papyrology
	Gender and Sexuality Studies
	Languages and Linguistics
	Philosophy, Thought and Religion
Cultural and Museum Studies	Conservation of Art and Textiles
	Cultural Geography
	Cultural Studies and Pop Culture
	Gender and Sexuality Studies
	Heritage Management
	Museum and Gallery Studies
Dance	Policy, Arts Management and Creative Industries
	Choreography
	Dance Notation
	Dance Performance
	Gender and Sexuality Studies
	History of Dance
Design	Social Dance
	Architecture History, Theory and Practice
	Design History, Theory and Practice
	Digital Art and Design
	Gender and Sexuality Studies
Drama and Theatre Studies	Product Design
	Drama and Theatre - Other
	Dramaturgy
	Gender and Sexuality Studies
	Performance and Live Art
	Scenography
	Theatre and History
Theatre and Society	

	<b>Theories of Theatre</b>
<b>History</b>	<b>American Studies</b>
	<b>Cultural History</b>
	<b>Economic and Social History</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>History of Science/Medicine/Technology</b>
	<b>Imperial/Colonial History</b>
	<b>Political History</b>
	<b>Post-Colonial Studies</b>
	<b>Religious History</b>
<b>War Studies</b>	
<b>Languages and Literature</b>	<b>American Studies</b>
	<b>Asiatic and Oriental Studies</b>
	<b>Australasian Studies</b>
	<b>Celtic Studies</b>
	<b>Comparative Literature</b>
	<b>Comparative Studies</b>
	<b>Creative Writing</b>
	<b>English Language and Literature</b>
	<b>Ethnography and Anthropology</b>
	<b>French Studies</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>German, including Dutch and Yiddish</b>
	<b>Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin Studies</b>
	<b>History and Development of the English Language</b>
	<b>Interpreting and Translation</b>
	<b>Italian Studies</b>
	<b>Lifewriting</b>
	<b>Literary and Cultural Theory</b>
	<b>Medieval Literature</b>
	<b>Middle Eastern and African</b>
<b>Post-Colonial Studies</b>	
<b>Russian, Slavonic and East European Languages and Literature</b>	
<b>Law and Legal Studies</b>	<b>Common Law, including Commercial Law</b>
	<b>Comparative Law</b>
	<b>Criminal Law and Criminology</b>
	<b>EU Law</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>Human Rights</b>
	<b>International Law</b>
	<b>Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law</b>
	<b>Law Regulated by Statute</b>
	<b>Law Relating to Property</b>
	<b>Legal History</b>
<b>Public Law</b>	

<b>Linguistics</b>	<b>Applied Linguistics</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>Language Variation and Change</b>
	<b>Lexicon</b>
	<b>Linguistic Theory</b>
	<b>Linguistics (General)</b>
	<b>Morphology and Phonology</b>
	<b>Phonetics</b>
	<b>Semantics and Pragmatics</b>
	<b>Syntax</b>
	<b>Textual Editing and Bibliography</b>
<b>Media</b>	<b>Film History, Theory and Criticism</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>Journalism</b>
	<b>Media and Communication Studies</b>
	<b>New Media/Web-Based Studies</b>
	<b>Publishing</b>
	<b>Television History, Theory and Criticism</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>Classical Music</b>
	<b>Composition</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>History of Music</b>
	<b>Music and Society</b>
	<b>Musical Performance</b>
	<b>Musicology</b>
	<b>Popular Music</b>
<b>Traditional Music</b>	
<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>Aesthetics</b>
	<b>Epistemology</b>
	<b>Ethics</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>History of Ideas</b>
	<b>History of Philosophy</b>
	<b>Language and Philosophical Logic</b>
	<b>Metaphysics</b>
	<b>Philosophy of Mind</b>
	<b>Philosophy of Religion</b>
	<b>Philosophy of Science and Mathematics and Mathematical Logic</b>
	<b>Political Philosophy</b>
<b>Political Science and International Studies</b>	<b>Diplomacy and International Relations</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
<b>Theology, Divinity and Religion</b>	<b>Alternative Spiritualities/New Religious Movements</b>
	<b>Atheism/Secularism</b>
	<b>Buddhism</b>
	<b>Church History and History of Theology</b>



	<b>Contemporary Religion</b>
	<b>East Asian Religions</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>Hinduism</b>
	<b>Inter-faith Relations</b>
	<b>Islam</b>
	<b>Jainism</b>
	<b>Judaism</b>
	<b>Liturgy</b>
	<b>Modern Theology</b>
	<b>New Testament</b>
	<b>Old Testament</b>
	<b>Sikhism</b>
	<b>Systematic Theology</b>
<b>Visual Arts</b>	<b>Applied Arts History, Theory and Practice</b>
	<b>Art History</b>
	<b>Art Theory and Aesthetics</b>
	<b>Community Art including Art and Health</b>
	<b>Design History, Theory and Practice</b>
	<b>Digital Arts History, Theory and Practice</b>
	<b>Film-based media (History, Theory and Practice)</b>
	<b>Fine Art History, Theory and Practice</b>
	<b>Gender and Sexuality Studies</b>
	<b>Installation and Sound Art History, Theory and Practice</b>
	<b>Photography History, Theory and Practice</b>
	<b>Time-based media History, Theory and Practice</b>