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MRC London Intercollegiate Doctoral Training Programme (MRC LID) – Information for Supervisors

Potential Supervisors' Project Bid Form Guidance: 2023-24 start

The LSHTM/SGUL MRC London Intercollegiate Doctoral Training Partnership (MRC LID) will be advertising in early to mid-November 2022 for the second round of studentships under our DTP2 funding (this is for students to start in September 2023). We have funding to support 8-9 new studentship awards.

Details about studentships available and the DTP project call

The majority of awards offered will be for 4 years (FTE) with the expectation that students will gain new skills to allow them to undertake multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary research and that they will undertake a required 3-month professional internship outside the partnership. 1+4 (FTE) awards will be made to candidates showing exceptional potential, to allow them to undertake a full MSc course prior to starting their PhD research.

Each studentship will provide a stipend, payment of tuition fees (at the Home fee rate), a research allowance and annual travel/conference allowance (amount as per MRC standard studentship rates). Some flexible funding may also be available for additional training needs. This cannot be used for project costs and approval from the MRC LID board is required.

Please note that although clinically qualified candidates are eligible to apply for these awards, they are designed for non-clinical research and the stipend payable will be fixed at the current non-clinical MRC rate. Projects that require the applicant to be clinically qualified are not suitable.

Up to 30% of the cohort may be awarded to applicants with overseas fee status (all students who are not UK nationals, and all students who do not meet residency requirements as set out in [UKRI eligibility guidance](#)). **MRC LID can only offer up to 2 studentships to overseas applicants** (maximum 30% of the MRC LID grant) in any round.

- Successful [LMIC](#) applicants will be offered an institutional bursary to top up the fee difference (between the UKRI fee rate paid and the institution's full overseas fee rate).
- Successful HIC applicants will be expected to cover the fee difference (approx. GBP 15,000.00 – GBP 20,000.00 per year) from alternative funding sources (but not from personal or family funds or loans, for EDI reasons).

Supervisors are expected to bear this in mind in discussions with prospective applicants. But also to note this UKRI guidance: 'Recruitment of international students should be based on ability and potential and not the candidates' opportunity to access funding. Financial considerations must not be part of the recruitment decision.'

Students will join a rolling cohort of MRC-funded research degree students and will be expected to engage fully in various cohort-related training activities.

Prospective students will apply to carry out their PhD research on a particular project, which they will select from a list of projects put forward by potential supervisors. Projects should address at least one of the four overarching themes of MRC LID DTP2:

- Global Health
- Infectious Disease
- Health Data Science
- Translational and Implementation Research

and provide training in at least one of the three MRC strategic skills areas:

- quantitative skills
- interdisciplinary skills
- whole organism physiology.

Projects that facilitate research collaboration between LSHTM and SGUL will be viewed particularly favourably.

As the number of potential projects will exceed the number of studentships available, the final decision (by the MRC LID Board) will be based on selecting the students with most potential.

Staff who would like to be considered as a supervisor for an MRC DTP student to start in September 2023 are invited to complete this project submission form and to submit it to mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk by **23:59 (BST) on Monday 10 October 2022**.

The MRC LID DTP2 adopts a proactive approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) with a firm commitment to widening participation, anti-racism, and decolonising global public health research. Reflecting this commitment, MRC LID requires all supervisory team members to attend the following training offered by LSHTM ahead of the project bid submission deadline:

1. MRC LID – DTP2 overview (updated for this bid)
2. EDI and unconscious bias
3. Microaggressions and being an active bystander

All prospective supervisors must watch the new/updated DTP overview video. Staff who have completed 2 and/or 3 within the last academic year are not required to repeat this training for this round. Project bids submitted will not be considered where staff have not attended this training prior to the project bid submission deadline.

Staff may only be listed as a supervisor for a limited number of projects in this round.

Supervisor 1 – staff may be named as primary supervisor for one project only.

Supervisor 2 – staff may be named as second supervisor for one project only.

Supervisor 3 – staff may be named up to twice as third supervisor, and only where this would provide experienced supervisory support for less experienced teams.

Staff with little or no supervisory experience are strongly encouraged to submit projects, but they should identify an experienced member of staff who would be willing to be their mentor in their role as PhD supervisor. Mentoring will not count towards the project supervisor limit for the purpose of this studentship. Because of this, the other members of the supervisory team must have sufficient experience to meet institutional requirements. If an inexperienced team is struggling to find a suitable experienced supervisor to meet institutional requirements please speak to your FRDD (at LSHTM) or the Head of the Graduate School (at SGUL).

It is a requirement of this scholarship scheme that each student has both a first supervisor and second supervisor. Please provide details of both on this form. No more than three supervisors should be named for any project.

Each project submitted must meet the necessary institution policy for the composition of research degree supervisory teams, comprising staff who have undertaken required institutional training. For any queries regarding this please speak to

- LSHTM: your Research Degree Manager (RDM), or
- SGUL: the Graduate Office.

Project proposals from ineligible supervisory teams – both teams with inadequate experience and teams with supervisors who are already at institutional capacity – will not be considered.

LSHTM: Supervisory Capacity Guidance ([RD Handbook Chapter 9](#))

SGUL: Please see relevant supervisory guidance or contact the Postgraduate Office

Those who are primary supervisors for an MRC LID student starting in 2022-23 may not put forward a project for the 2023-24 academic year.

The details you provide on the project bid form will be used to check the suitability of your proposed project, your supervisory experience, and your capacity to effectively supervise a student over the next 4 years FTE. After your bid has been submitted it will be passed to the Head of the Graduate School (where the Primary Supervisor is based at SGUL) or the Research Degree Manager and a Faculty Research Degree Director from your Faculty (where the Primary Supervisor is based at LSHTM) for institutional support and approval before the MRC LID team will view it. (LSHTM staff on visiting and honorary academic contracts should discuss a potential bid with their Faculty RDM before applying as it is likely that this will only be acceptable where you are second or third supervisor for the project.)

2023-24 MRC LID Recruitment Timetable

ACTION	PROVISIONAL DATE
Supervisor project call sent out	Early September 2022
Supervisor project bids submitted	23:59 BST on Monday 10 October 2022
MRC LID team to liaise with LSHTM Faculty offices & SGUL PG Office to get forms signed off	Week commencing Monday 10 October 2022
Discussion of projects & final project selection	Week commencing Monday 24 October 2022
Feedback to supervisory teams and request for videos & further advert information	Week commencing Monday 24 October 2022
Studentship advert goes live	Week commencing Monday 31 October 2022 at the latest
Closing date for studentship applications from prospective students	23:59 GMT on Sunday 15 January 2023
MRC LID admin to pass prospective students' applications on to supervisors	By Wednesday 25 January 2023 at the latest
Supervisors to return review rankings & feedback for their project/s	23:59 GMT on Tuesday 7 February 2023
Shortlisting review (applications allocated across MRC LID shortlisting panel for initial review), followed by shortlisting meeting (MRC LID Board)	From Monday 13 February 2023
Students invited for interview & all applicants advised of outcome	Week commencing Monday 6 March 2023 at the latest

In January applications from prospective students will be sent out electronically to supervisors for consideration, ranking and feedback to the MRC LID board. If project supervisors are not going to be available, or do not have internet access to review and assess applications, they should nominate a colleague to cover this, and should advise the LSHTM/SGUL Scholarships team – via mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk - of this, particularly as the turnaround times are tight.

CASE Studentship Awards

Further information about potential CASE awards can be found on the [MRC LID Project Call](#) webpage and [UKRI website](#) (below DTP allocations).

Supervisor responsibilities

The MRC LID expects all supervisors engaged with the scheme to participate actively in our EDI strategy (through training; respectful engagement with applicants; consideration made in application reviews, etc).

Supervisors are required to meet their institution's regulations and policies regarding student supervision. These responsibilities are taken very seriously by the institutions and failure to meet them could result in supervisors being ineligible for any further studentship funding from this or any other DTP within their institution.

Supervisors must be able to support all costs of the PhD project over and above a minimal contribution to training and the student's research, which may be claimed via the MRC standard annual RTSG allowance. MRC LID would expect that all costs covered for a non-DTP student would also be covered for a DTP student (ie not claimed from the scheme).

Any changes to project or supervisor must be approved by the MRC DTP management board, via contact with MRC LID admin in the first instance.

In addition, supervisors of MRC LID students must support their students in engaging with MRC as an important element of the transferable and scientific skills training. This will include

- (a) maintaining contact with, and sharing outcomes, success stories, and news items with MRC LID management board via the MRC LID admin team;
- (b) providing updates on project and status whenever necessary;
- (c) attending additional training, as set out in the MRC LID Studentship Handbook and events set up by MRC LID;
- (d) updating Je-S whenever prompted (and reviewing it at least once a year);
- (e) providing outcomes information via researchfish and annual reports;
- (f) providing information for any ad hoc requests from the DTP admin team and/or MRC (previous examples include MRC survey).

MRC LID students are expected to make the most of the opportunities and activities the additional funding provides, and their supervisors are required to support these elements of the award (for example, by encouraging students to attend MRC training days and retreats; supporting the student's annual training plan review, together with their MRC LID board mentor; supporting additional skills training, with the MRC core skills and the student's future career prospects in mind).

By submitting a project bid, all supervisors are agreeing to these conditions.

Project assessment

Questions the DTP Management Board will consider when assessing this project bid:

- Has every member of the supervisory team undertaken mandatory training for this programme (MRC LID overview; EDI and unconscious bias; Microaggressions and being an active bystander; institutional supervisory training or refresher training)?
- Do the supervisor and associate/co-supervisor meet the eligibility requirements to supervise PhD students?
 - [LSHTM Policy](#)
 - SGUL supervisors should check the SGUL policy with the Postgraduate Office
- Do both supervisors currently supervise fewer students than the expected maximum?

- Is there sufficient funding in place (external to the Studentship allowances) to support a student's research project?
- Does the project fall within the scientific remit of the DTP (Global Health; Health Data Science; Translational & Implementation Research; Infectious Disease)?
- Does the project offer training in the relevant key skills (Quantitative Skills, Interdisciplinary Skills, Whole Organism Physiology)?
- Does the project look feasible and productive within the time constraints of a PhD (based on the scientific description provided)?
- Does the project offer the potential for high quality PhD training?

The decision of the DTP Management Board is final and non-negotiable.