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## 2025-26 MRC LID Studentship Project Bid: Information for Prospective Supervisory Teams

The MRC London Intercollegiate Doctoral Training Partnership (MRC LID) is a partnership between London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and St George's, University of London, part of City St George's, University of London (St George's). Our programme provides postgraduate studentship funding and integrated skills training to develop a cohort of biomedical and public health scientists with world-class expertise in areas of strategic importance to UK and global medical research.

MRC LID will be advertising in early to mid-November 2024 for the fourth round of studentships under our Doctoral Training Partnership Grant 2 (DTP2) funding. We have funding to support up to 9 new doctoral studentship awards (for students to register for study in September 2025).

Staff who would like to be considered as a supervisor for an MRC DTP student to start in September 2025 are invited to complete the [2025-26 MRC LID Project Bid Form](#) online and submit it by the deadline of **23:59 (BST) on Wednesday 9 October 2024**.

If you have any questions about the project bids, required training, and the studentship scheme please contact the MRC LID Manager by email: [mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk).

### Essential bid information & guidance for potential supervisors

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## 1. MRC LID themes and skills

Prospective students will apply to carry out their doctoral research on a particular project, which they will select from a list of projects put forward by potential supervisors and selected by [MRC LID Board](#).

Projects must address at least one of the four overarching themes of MRC LID DTP2:

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

Supervisory teams should read [MRC LID specific theme pages](#) so that they are aware of the latest theme information and ensure that any proposed project fits within the DTP remit. Project bids that do not fall within the DTP remit will be rejected by the MRC LID Board.

Projects should provide training in at least one of three MRC LID strategic skills areas:

- quantitative skills
- interdisciplinary skills
- whole organism physiology.

## 2. MRC LID Studentships

### 2(a). Studentship duration

MRC LID offers funding through two studentship routes:

- 1+4 (Masters for 1 year FTE + MPhil/PhD for 4 years FTE)
- +4 (MPhil/PhD for 4 years FTE)

The majority of awards offered by MRC LID 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
- undertake a required 3-month FTE professional internship outside the partnership.

1+4 awards will be made to candidates showing exceptional potential, to allow them to undertake a full Master's course prior to starting their PhD research.

Routes are shown as FTE, but can be offered part-time if this can be accommodated by your project.

### 2(b). Studentship funding

Each studentship will provide

- a tax-free stipend (at the [UKRI standard studentship rate](#) with London weighting), paid directly to the student;
- tuition fees at the [UKRI standard studentship rate](#), paid directly to the student's primary institution;
- annual research and travel/conference allowances.

### Tuition Fees

UKRI DTPs were designed to fund UK nationals and residents. Both partner institutions have committed to cover any tuition fee top-up to their UK ('Home') tuition fee rate for MRC LID students, where applicable.

### International recruitment: nationality/residency restrictions & additional institutional support

Current UKRI rules state that 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 [MRC studentship eligibility guidance](#) would be considered to have overseas fee status.)

This means that MRC LID can only offer **up to 2 studentships** in any round to applicants with overseas fee status (maximum 30% of the MRC LID grant). To give you an idea of scale, here are our DTP numbers for the past 4 recruitment rounds.

| AY      | APPLICATIONS RECEIVED |     |     | AWARDS ACCEPTED |     |     | SUCCESS RATE |       |
|---------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----------------|-----|-----|--------------|-------|
|         | UK                    | INT | ALL | UK              | INT | ALL | UK           | INT   |
| 2021-22 | 48                    | 123 | 171 | 8               | 1   | 9   | 16.67%       | 0.81% |
| 2022-23 | 59                    | 207 | 266 | 7               | 2   | 9   | 11.86%       | 0.97% |
| 2023-24 | 33                    | 105 | 138 | 6               | 3   | 9   | 18.18%       | 2.86% |
| 2024-25 | 21                    | 92  | 113 | 9               | 0   | 9   | 42.86%       | 0.00% |

UK = Home fee status

INT = Overseas fee status

Successful applicants who are [LMIC](#) nationals and residents 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. upwards of GBP 20,000.00 per year) from alternative funding sources. Alternative funding sources cannot be from

- (a) personal or family funds or loans (for EDI reasons), or
- (b) MRC LID Studentship allowances, such as stipend or RTSG (as this is against UKRI regulations).

HIC applicants should be applying for other scholarships and bursaries at the same time as this to cover the additional costs (unless these will be funded via supervisory team grants).

Supervisors should bear all of this information in mind in discussions with prospective applicants, but also note this clear 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.'*

On this basis, we ask that all supervisory teams provide equitable time, support and guidance to all prospective applicants, regardless of their location or likely fee status, at the pre-application stage.

Supervisors and prospective students should contact MRC LID with any questions around these rules.

### Stipend

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 minimum non-clinical UKRI Studentship rate. Projects that require the applicant to be clinically qualified are not suitable.

### Other allowances

The annual allowances are a DTP contribution towards a student's training, conferences and travel, and research project costs. UKRI provides

- RTSG allowance of *up to* GBP 5,000.00 pa FTE
- travel & conference allowance of *up to* GBP 300.00 pa FTE.

The RTSG contribution must be used to support student-specific training and costs (e.g. training that would not be provided as standard for the PhD; a contribution to fieldwork or to lab consumables; top-up to travel and conference fee costs).

Training should cover MRC LID expectations – i.e. that through the scheme the student is offered, and undertakes, additional training compared to what would be offered to and undertaken by a non-funded PhD student at the institution. MRC LID will not pay for training or other expenditure that would be provided free to a non-funded PhD student.

Some flexible funding may also be available from the DTP on a competitive basis for student use. Approval from the MRC LID board is required. Examples of costs that may be supported are

- additional or high-cost training (where this cannot be supported through the RTSG);
- overseas institutional visits and skills training;
- placements\* (usually covered through RTSG but may be required from this pot for students on expensive wet lab projects)
- cohort training and events.

This is not an exhaustive list, and further information about flexible funding will be shared with studentship holders as part of their induction. The flexible funding cannot be used for project costs.

There is no other MRC LID funding available to cover the cost of research.

(\*Placements: All MRC LID awardees are required to undertake a 3-month (FTE) placement **in a different research discipline** and quite different from their research project, so that they learn new skills and knowledge, broaden their perspectives, and develop their networks. This is something we encourage the students to organise, with help from their supervisors. Final approval from the MRC LID Board is required. The information provided to students about the required placement can be found in the MRC LID Studentship Handbook and via the relevant Induction recording (both available on the [MRC LID Current Students page](#)).

MRC LID mandatory placements do not prevent students from undertaking other research placements connected to their project, where these benefit the programme of research and have a clearly measurable potential outcome, but would normally expected to be of short duration. Where a student undertakes a research placement they are expected to still fully engage with the MRC LID programme during this period.)

### **Project bid budget**

As part of the project bid form, supervisory teams must provide a budget that has fully costed

- (a) the doctoral research project being proposed, and
- (b) the anticipated training required for any successful student.

The purpose of the project bid budget is to show the actual costs of the project and the source/s of funding that are expected to cover these.

This budget should not include other studentship costs that are covered by MRC LID (tuition fees to the Home fee rate and stipend) as these are accounted for elsewhere in the DTP.

## **3. 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).

## 4. General/other information

- Projects that facilitate research collaboration between LSHTM and St George's will be viewed particularly favourably.
- The number of potential projects advertised will exceed the number of studentships available.
- Applicants will select their preferred project ahead of submitting an application.
- The assessment process is over a number of stages. In brief:
  - Assessment 1: Supervisory teams will review all applications received for their project, and provide the MRC LID Board with scores (based on MRC LID rubric), feedback and ranking.
  - Assessment 2: MRC LID Board and Associate Board members will also review each application received, and score these.
  - Shortlisting & award: MRC LID Board will consider all scores and feedback received and decide on a shortlist for interview. The final studentship awards (determined by the MRC LID Board) will be based on selecting the student applicants with most potential.

If you have any questions please contact MRC LID by email: [mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk)

## 5. Supervisory team requirements

### 5(a). Supervisory training requirements

#### Institutional supervisory training

MRC LID expects all supervisory team members to be up-to-date with their institution's supervisory training (initial, followed by a refresher every 3 years).

#### MRC LID mandatory EDI training

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 staff connected with the scheme (including every person on a supervisory team) - regardless of whether they are based at LSHTM, St George's, or are external to either partner institution - to undertake specific mandatory.

MRC LID specified training must be completed by every person on the supervisory team before the project bid decisions are finalised by the MRC LID Board at the end of October 2024 (i.e. before projects are advertised in October/November for registration the following September and any contact with prospective applicants begins).

Training must also be completed by the mentor of the primary supervisor if/where a mentor is required for the MRC LID scheme.

| <b>MRC LID EDI TRAINING REQUIREMENTS</b> |                                 |                |   |  |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------|---|--|
|  | <b>Course/Workshop</b>          | <b>Mode</b>    | <b>Who should attend</b>                                    | <b>How to book</b>   |
| All supervisors                          | MRC LID DTP2 Overview Recording | Self-certified | To be watched by all members of the prospective supervisory | Direct link available on <a href="#">MRC LID Prospective</a> |

|   |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
|   |  |  | team annually, once the up-to-date recording is available and before the bid deadline   | <a href="#">Supervisors page</a>  |
| Either INITIAL or REFRESHER training, as applicable | <p>INITIAL/NEW EDI TRAINING:</p> <p>(a) 'An Interactive Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at LSHTM' <b>or</b> 'Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at LSHTM workshop'</p> <p>And</p> <p>(b) 'Challenging microaggressions and being an active bystander'</p> | <p>Zoom online workshop</p><br><p>Zoom online course</p> | Both to be attended by anyone who hasn't completed these previously   | <p>Both courses facilitated through LSHTM for all prospective supervisors.</p> <p>Book via LSHTM Staff Development.</p> <p>See details below table.</p> |
|   | <p>REFRESHER EDI TRAINING:</p> <p>'Inclusive behaviours for RD supervisors Workshop' (previous equivalent workshop offered was 'EDI Reflective Practice for RD Supervisors workshop')</p>  | Zoom online workshop                                     | To be attended by anyone who has completed both EDI courses (a) & (b) in the table <b>before Jan 2023</b> and who <b>did not</b> attend an 'EDI Reflective Practice for RD Supervisors' workshop last year. | Book directly via Eventbrite links on <a href="#">MRC LID Prospective Supervisors page</a>  |

The mandated initial EDI training is facilitated through LSHTM. To apply (or to be added to a waiting list, so that we can arrange additional training where possible):

- LSHTM staff - Please use the intranet TED booking system and links on the [Prospective Supervisors page](#) to book your place or email TED to join the waiting lists.
- St George's staff – Please email LSHTM Talent & Education Development to book your place or join the waiting lists (email: [Staffdevelopment@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:Staffdevelopment@lshtm.ac.uk)).
- Other staff (not LSHTM or St George's): Please email LSHTM Talent & Education Development to book your place or join the waiting lists for available courses (email: [Staffdevelopment@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:Staffdevelopment@lshtm.ac.uk)).

Places on each course are limited. Please book for the earliest available opportunity that you can make.

If the training you require is not available, or all available options are full, please contact MRC LID (by email: <mailto:mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk>) as soon as possible to indicate your interest and join a waiting list. This will help us to gauge demand and try to meet it within the studentship

recruitment timeline. (The DTP will only know the level of demand, and number of people needing training to meet MRC LID deadlines, if and when people tell us. We don't have LOIs or any other initial mechanisms that would provide an indication of who might submit a project bid. We do not know in advance who will apply and whether they might have undertaken training previously and/or might require training now. Which makes calculations on to arrange ahead of time at best a guess, with a starting request for a few of each. Only once people book available spaces, or request to be added to waiting lists, can we measure demand and contact LSHTM Staff Development (TED) and EDI colleagues and/or other external facilitators to arrange additional training. If LSHTM already has courses on offer and these are not filled there is, understandably, an unwillingness to commit more time and money to adding more of these courses ahead of a call without any guarantee that there will be appropriate staff take-up.)

Please note:

- Project bids submitted will not be considered where any supervisor named on the bid has not attended the MRC LID specified, required training by the deadline. This is because of commitments made to MRC as part of our DTP bid.
- Alternative EDI training, even if equivalent, cannot be accepted in lieu of the MRC LID requirements.
- Where a supervisor has taken a formal leave of absence from work (for example, maternity leave or a prolonged period of sickness leave) the MRC LID requirement to renew training every two years can take that into account - by excluding the period of absence from the training requirement period. Please contact MRC LID to discuss details further and advised of the aggregated time out.
- MRC LID asks all supervisors to undertake EDI training **every two years**. Firstly initial training (to establish baseline principles and vocabulary) and thereafter a refresher workshop (which is more focussed on how to practically embed EDI in the supervisory role).
  - INITIAL/NEW TRAINING
    - If you have not undertaken both required initial courses, you must book and complete these. The required courses are:
      - 'Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at LSHTM workshop' (or it's short time replacement 'An Interactive Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at LSHTM'), and
      - 'Challenging microaggressions & being an active bystander'.
    - Both courses must be completed to be eligible for the MRC LID scheme.
    - If you have previously booked and attended both of these courses (or their historic equivalent, as listed above) please do not repeat them. Instead, undertake refresher training.
  - REFRESHER TRAINING
    - If you have not yet completed the initial training requirements please book for the two required initial training courses instead. Do not book refresher training.
    - If you have completed the initial training requirements between January 2023 and now you do not yet need to undertake refresher training (which is required every two years).
    - If you previously completed both of the initial training requirements before January 2023, please book on one of the refresher workshop options available from the list on the [MRC LID Prospective Supervisors page](#). Unless you completed the MRC LID refresher course (EDI Reflective Practice for RD Supervisors workshop) in 2023; in which case you do not need to undertake this training in 2024 (because MRC LID EDI refresher training should be every two years).

### 5(b). Supervisory team composition

It is a requirement of this scholarship scheme that each student has both a first supervisor and second supervisor.

No more than three supervisors should be named for any project.

Staff may only be listed as a supervisor for up to two projects in total in this round. Details of restrictions are as follows.

- 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 (or named as second supervisor for two projects, where they are not submitting a project proposal as a primary supervisor).
- Supervisor 3 – staff may be named as third supervisor for up to two projects (this cannot exceed being named in 2 projects in total, so should be only where they are not also submitting a project proposal as a primary supervisor or named on another bid as a second supervisor), and only where this would provide experienced supervisory support for less experienced teams.

Those who are primary supervisors for an MRC LID student starting in 2024-25 may not put forward a project as Supervisor 1 for the 2025-26 academic year.

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

- LSHTM: please see Supervisory Capacity Guidance ([RD Handbook Chapter 9](#)) and/or speak to your Research Degree Manager (RDM).
- St George's: please see relevant supervisory guidance or contact the Graduate Office.

Staff with little or no supervisory experience may submit a project as long as they have the support of an experienced member of staff from their institution who will act as PhD Supervisor mentor to the PhD supervisor. Being named as a Mentor for Supervisor 1 will not count towards the supervisory limits noted above (unless they are also named as Supervisor 2 or 3).

Note for staff based at St George's: Whilst an inexperienced member of staff – who does not yet hold a St George's Licence to Supervise - can submit a project proposal, a more experienced supervisor will need to take the role of Lead Supervisor until the student transfers to PhD (and the Research Degree Committee determines whether the supervisory team roles can change at that time). The experienced staff member in the team cannot be

- (a) someone who is Lead Supervisor for a 2024-25 awardee or
- (b) someone who has submitted a separate bid as Lead Supervisor for this round.

If an inexperienced team is struggling to find a suitable experienced supervisor to meet MRC LID mentorship and/or institutional supervision requirements please speak to your FRDD (at LSHTM) or the Head of the Graduate School (at St George's).

Note for LSHTM staff on visiting and honorary academic contracts: Please discuss a potential bid with your Faculty RDM before applying as it is likely that this will only be acceptable where you are second or third supervisor for the project.

**Project proposals from ineligible supervisory teams – including teams with inadequate experience and/or teams with supervisors who are considered to be already at institutional capacity – will not be considered.**

Supervisors are expected to submit an MRC LID bid for a research project where the applicant will be based at the primary/lead supervisor's institution, and supervised by Supervisor 1.

Primary/Lead supervisors should only submit a research project bid if they intend to be available and still employed at their primary institution in 18-24 months' time. Please do not submit a bid if you have handed in your resignation, or planned for a sabbatical, or for any other known reason which means you will not be present for a new studentship awardee starting in



Sep 2025. (This is not ideal for a new student or the STP. Studentships are awarded on the basis of a programme of study agreed by our funder and based within the DTP partner institutions. It is an expectation of the MRC that students are primarily based at the respective DTP partner institution for the duration of their research degree studies. Given our awards, it is unlikely that MRC LID would agree the transfer of a studentship away from our partnership institutions in the event that a supervisor moves away.)

#### 5(b)i. Role of MRC LID Mentor

The role of the mentor is to support the primary supervisor only. A mentor is not included in the supervisory team composition checks, unless they are named as either Supervisor 2 or 3. Because of this, the other members of the supervisory team (those listed as Supervisors 1, 2 and 3) must have sufficient experience between them to meet institutional requirements.

The mentor will support Supervisor 1 by providing guidance and support in navigating the supervisory role (eg around meeting with applicants, assessing applications, and preparing applicants for interview), and – in the event that a studentship is awarded to the project team – providing guidance and support on how to become a good supervisor. Therefore, the mentor must be based at the same institution as Supervisor 1.

The mentor role does not include mentoring or supervising the student themselves.

#### 5(c). Recording

MRC LID expects every supervisory team whose bid is successful to provide a recording for their project advert. Recordings have been used for two recruitment rounds, and have been received very well by applicants, most of whom looked at a range of recordings before selecting their projects.

MRC LID sees the recording as a useful tool,

- To give applicants a flavour of the project and team, and hopefully encourage them to contact you for further conversations about their application.
- To broaden participation, by ensuring that every prospective applicant receives the same key initial information (which would need to be shared with every applicant who contacts the supervisory team).
- To support more effective use of a supervisory team's time/resources, especially where they receive lots of interest in the project.

These are not intended to be a shiny PR 'advert' embedded into our web pages to tempt applicants in. Instead, it is for sharing information. The recording will be included with the rest of your project information as a link, in the same way DOIs are.

Recordings should provide information to applicants on the project, the research environment, and the proposed supervisory team, and may also cover other useful details that you may wish to convey to applicants (e.g., a brief outline of attributes or skills that the project team is looking for).

Teams can choose to share the required information in whatever way they wish (a slideshow with just a voice, or a video of the whole team having a discussion, or a discussion between the proposed supervisory team with a section including any current MRC LID student/s you supervise; or anything else that best suits the team and message).

Teams can use whatever software and platform they wish to as long as it's available publicly and accessible for the duration of the recruitment round (PowerPoint presentation recording; Zoom\* or Teams recorded presentation or discussion; video uploaded to Panopto; YouTube etc).

The recording will remain the property of the supervisory team as MRC LID will only use a link through to it provided by you. Therefore, the administration, monitoring, and security of the recording, and any collection of data for review, is controlled by the supervisory team, not MRC LID. Please remember (or diarise) to archive or delete your recording once the current MRC LID recruitment round is completed.

Ideally, we'd like teams to have captioning enabled for inclusivity, where possible.

By submitting a project bid, supervisory teams are

- agreeing to undertake this task and provide MRC LID with a URL of the recording (not an MP4 file, please) ahead of the projects being advertised, and
- accepting that the recording will be public and shared on the MRC LID web pages for any prospective applicant to use.

Teams will be asked to provide their link within 1 week of the outcome of their bid being confirmed. Bid teams may wish to complete their recording in advance of this, so that it is ready; or plan a meeting between all supervisory team members during that week so that they have set aside suitable time to record it together.

Projects will not be advertised without a project recording.

(\*One small thing to note: Zoom recordings delete after 7 days. Anyone who chooses to record using Zoom will need to upload their recording to an open OneDrive or Dropbox folder, or to Panopto, or equivalent to avoid having to update the shared URL (and MRC LID project page) every week.)

#### **5(d). 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; post-award interactions with students 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.

- Pre-advert
  - Primary supervisors should only submit a bid for (and offer) a project they have the skills and expertise to supervise, and which would be based primarily at their home institution (LSHTM or St George's).
  - DTP-funded students are expected to reside in the UK, within commuting distance of their primary institution, for the duration of their studentship. Supervisory teams are expected to plan their project with this in mind.
  - The MRC LID Board has historically identified some issues with the feasibility of some bids. Supervisory teams must consider what's practical and do-able as a PhD (4 years FTE), and submit a project bid accordingly. (We will accept bids in good faith, assuming that this has been considered (and where this is uncertain, options have discussed with Faculty/Institute RD staff).)
  - Following submission of your project you may be asked follow-up questions from the MRC LID Board ahead of the final decisions. Please respond promptly, as these will likely have a quick turnaround.
  - You will be asked to provide a recording for your project, if it is selected. (You may wish to prepare this in advance. Last year's projects may provide some examples; the list is still available via the [Projects page](#).)
- Projects advertised

- Where a project is advertised, please support applicants who contact you to decide whether your project is a suitable match; answer questions; and offer at least one read through of their draft project proposal.
- It is the role of the supervisory team to demystify the Higher Education application process and vocabulary for applicants, and to support their application in a way that is equitable.
- MRC LID does not expect supervisory teams to provide each applicant with the same allocation of time. Instead, please consider each applicant's background and experiences, and provide them with commensurate support (for example, it is likely that a team would need to provide less time and support to a someone employed in their lab, who has some knowledge of the project and institution, than someone who is trying to navigate the UK postgraduate system for the first time).
- Application review & feedback
  - After the application deadline, applications received from prospective applicants will be checked for information provided, and followed up for missing documents. Applications will then be sent out electronically to supervisory teams for scoring (using the MRC LID rubric provided) and feedback on each applicant. Your scores and feedback will be passed to the MRC LID Board. Each application will separately be scored independently by two MRC LID associate board and/or board members. All scores will be collated and the board will meet to decide on the interview shortlist.
  - If project supervisors are not going to be available, or do not have internet access to review and assess applications over the period set out in the timetable, they should nominate a colleague to cover this, and should advise the MRC LID— via [mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:mrclid@lshtm.ac.uk) - of this in advance, particularly as the turnaround times are tight.
- Supporting applicants prepare for interview
  - MRC LID will provide shortlisted candidates a link to our Interview information, including a 'Hints & Tips' document at the time they are invite for interview. Supervisory teams are asked to provide interview support and guidance (including a mock interview, if possible) to those who are shortlisted under their project. As selection at this stage is solely based on the applicant (there is no limit/ratio-based selection linked to the project, theme, or DTP partner institution) it is possible that some teams will have multiple candidates selected at this stage.
- Post-award
  - Supervisory teams will meet with their MRC LID student as soon as possible following registration. Discussions should include
    - Planning training opportunities (and any sign up for Term 1 modules);
    - Student-Supervisor expectations
    - Budget of MRC LID allowances and other costs.
  - 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 (i.e., not claimed from the scheme).
  - Over the duration of an award, any changes to (a) project, or (b) supervisory team composition must be approved by the MRC DTP management board - via contact with MRC LID admin in the first instance.
  - Each member of a supervisory team whose project recruits a student to the scheme will automatically become a member of the MRC LID Associate Board for the duration of the studentship funding award. The rationale for this is that MRC LID supervisors have an understanding of the general DTP scheme and of the MRC LID specifically, including our specific aims, themes, and skills training. Associate Board members will be called on from time to time to assist the board, for example to help with recruitment scoring, or to provide subject-

- specific/specialist knowledge, or to provide an additional opinion in a specific case or discipline.
- 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
    - maintaining contact with, and sharing outcomes, success stories, and news items with MRC LID management board via the MRC LID admin team;
    - providing updates on project and status whenever necessary;
    - allowing and encouraging attendance of training and events set up by MRC LID;
    - updating Je-S whenever prompted (and reviewing it at least once a year);
    - providing outcomes information for UKRI and MRC annual reports;
    - providing information for any ad hoc requests from the DTP admin team and/or MRC (previous examples include MRC survey).

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 throughout the year.

All 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 members of the supervisory team are agreeing to abide by these terms and conditions, and to:

- follow the programme requirements as described in the MRC LID Studentship Handbook and on our web pages
- abide by the terms and conditions and guidance of [UKRI training grants](#) and [MRC additional terms and conditions](#)
- review and assess project bids and applications received from across the partnership (as requested from time to time; requests made will be reasonable)
- allow and encourage your student to attend DTP cohort activities and ensure that research and other training/fieldwork activities do not interfere
- keep in regular contact with your student throughout their studies, as per institutional guidance
- ensure any MRC LID student you supervise submits their thesis within 4 years
- ensure that the PhD project remains within the MRC LID remit
- contact the MRC LID if the following may occur:
  - significant change in project direction
  - intended change in main supervisory team
  - change in mode of study of your student
  - introduction/loss of a CASE partner (ahead of time, so that formal agreements and processes can be followed)
  - progression issues
- support your MRC LID student with their mandatory MRC LID placement, from planning through to maintaining contact with them throughout their placement (we recommend monthly), to reporting.

It is the responsibility of the primary/first/lead supervisor to share this document and other relevant MRC LID communications with the rest of the supervisory team.

## 6. MRC LID EDI FAQs

DTP1 followed traditional HEI advertisements and recruitment, and the data shows that we are missing out on a wide range of potential students. Central to our DTP2 bid was an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy, with plans to focus on “widening participation” over the course of the grant. As part of this change, mandatory training for all supervisory team members must be completed before projects are considered for inclusion. Please see details outlined under [5\(a\). Supervisory training requirements](#)

We are regularly asked the same questions about the mandatory EDI and supervisory training requirements. It is likely that our EDI FAQs will cover your question. If it does not, please contact the MRC LID Manager.

### Mandatory training

#### Why does MRC LID require EDI training?

MRC LID's DTP1 data showed that historically recruitment of students from marginalised groups and non-traditional backgrounds was extremely low. Therefore, as part of our DTP grant bid, MRC LID committed to every member of a prospective supervisory team undertaking specified EDI training before any contact with potential applicants. This is only one commitment made: more details of our strategy can be found on the [MRC LID EDI page](#).

#### How frequently must I take the EDI and supervisory training?

MRC LID intends for all supervisors to attend/refresh their EDI training every TWO years.

If you were on absence leave (e.g., maternity or sick leave), you can discount the period of leave from the accumulation of years - for instance, a person who took maternity leave for 52-weeks in the past TWO years will have only accumulated one year (i.e. the year that they were at work) and will still have one year to go until they have accumulated two years and need to do the refresher course. Please contact MRC LID to discuss details further and advise of the aggregated time out.

Supervisors must update their institutional supervisory training every THREE years (see institutional guidance).

#### What EDI training must I do?

MRC LID specified training must be completed by every person on the supervisory team before any contact with prospective applicants (i.e. before projects are advertised in October/November for registration the following September). This requirement is the same regardless of whether the proposed supervisor is based at LSHTM or St George's or elsewhere (external to either partner institution).

Training must also be completed by the mentor of the primary supervisor if/where a mentor is required for the MRC LID scheme.

Each potential supervisory team member must initially undertake:

1. 'An Interactive Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at LSHTM' or 'Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at LSHTM workshop', and
2. 'Challenging Micro-Aggressions and Becoming an Active Bystander'

Both courses must be completed.

Those who have not completed this training previously should undertake it now.

After you have undertaken each course once, and it is showing on your record, there is no requirement to redo it.

Potential supervisors who have previously attended the initial required training must attend refresher training (required every TWO years). Refresher training offered is:

3. 'Inclusive behaviours for PhD supervisors workshop' (previous equivalent course was 'EDI Reflective Practice for RD Supervisors Workshop').

### **What would happen if I had taken equivalent training from other institutions? Can I use those?**

Unfortunately, we don't have the facility or time to assess equivalent training for what would be a large number of potential supervisors. To ensure that everyone has a common basis for discussing EDI and other RD training issues, we require all potential supervisors to do our in-house training.

### **Why can't I do the training later?**

Most EDI issues arise at the moment potential supervisors start talking with prospective students and contributing to students' applications, which is why the training has to be done before the project can be advertised.

### **What if I can't book on the training courses?**

Places on each course are limited. We strongly recommend that colleagues plan to undertake required EDI training through the year, at the earliest available opportunity, and as far in advance of the call deadline as possible.

If courses are full please contact MRC LID as soon as possible to join a waiting list. This will help us to gauge demand and try to meet it within the studentship recruitment timeline.

The training offered nearest the deadline is always oversubscribed, and there are always people who miss out. Unfortunately, there is no leeway for those who wait until the final opportunity to book and then are unable to attend (for example, due to illness or last-minute teaching commitments).

Every year there are complaints and confrontations about our mandatory training. However, the DTP is unable to compromise on commitments made to UKRI.

### **Why does my reflection on decolonizing global health issues apply if my project is primarily based in the UK or other high-income country (HIC) settings?**

We recognize that all projects are different, and the concept of coloniality may not seem applicable to a proposed project. However, potential supervisors should spend time as a team reflecting on factors that may perpetuate inequities, such as

- (i) underrepresentation of minoritized groups in research,
- (ii) power dynamics between research participants and researchers as well as between supervisor and supervisee,
- (iii) sources of knowledge, who is considered an "expert" in a given topic and why, and/or
- (iv) engagement of study participants and the potential beneficiaries of the research in all steps of it.

These issues may apply to research conducted in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) as well as high income countries (HICs).

Some other potential sources of information could be found at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/aac/publication/increasing-diversity-in-research-participation/>  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-023-01579-9>

## 7. Post-bid information

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 Graduate School Manager and Head of the Graduate School (where the Primary Supervisor is based at St George's) 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 MRC LID will review it.

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; MRC LID mandated EDI training; institutional supervisory training or refresher training)?
- Do the supervisor and associate/co-supervisor/s meet the eligibility requirements to supervise PhD students?
  - [LSHTM Policy](#)
  - St George's supervisors should check the St George's policy with the Postgraduate Office
- Do all 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.

## 8. MRC LID Recruitment Timetable

Please see our comprehensive [2025-26 MRC LID Recruitment timetable](#) (PDF).

## 9. 2025-26 MRC LID Studentships Project Bid Form

Documents providing an overview of the online 2025-26 MRC LID Project Bid Form:

- [MRC LID Project Bid Form initial user view](#) (PDF)
- [MRC LID Project Bid Form showing all response options \(buttons; drop-down menus etc\) and branching](#) (PDF)

Please note: MRC LID is using REDCap survey for project bids. LSHTM has notified us that the system will be unavailable on the Wed 4 and Thurs 5 Sep 2024 (maintenance/upgrading). You should have access to the form – via the link above - from Fri 6 Sep 2024 onwards. If not, please contact MRC LID by email.