**TECHNE2 Collaborative Doctoral Awards**

**for Students commencing Sept 2019**

*As approved by TECHNE2 Management Group 13 June 2018*

1. **Introduction**

TECHNE2 has made a strategic decision to offer 20% of its studentships as Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) as a commitment to praxis and interdisciplinarity and building relations with external Partners. CDAs are doctoral studentship projects which are developed as a collaboration between a university and an organisation outside higher education. The scheme is an equivalent to the AHRC’s previous Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme which the AHRC now wishes to be supported through Doctoral Training Partnerships such as TECHNE2.

This TECHNE scheme complies with the AHRC ‘Collaborative and Doctoral Award Guidance for DTP/CDTs’ published in February 2017. The criteria for projects, organisations and student involvement are set out in this AHRC guidance, which is reproduced in Annex A.

**Summary Timetable**

**May 2018 – Aug 2018** Organisations and TECHNE2 Universities discuss and develop projects

**31st Aug 2018** Deadline for Expressions of Interest on form attached – up to 4 per TECHNE2 member; up to 2 per TECHNE2 Partner

**18th Sept 2018** TECHNE2 Management Group selects 17 projects (1.5 times the number of CDA studentships available)

**Sept 2018 to Dec 2018** Universities recruit students to projects

**Jan 2019** Students complete a TECHNE2 application form

**Feb 2019 to April 2019** Applications are considered by a CDA Panel and the TECHNE2 Management Group

**Sept 2019** Students register and commence doctoral study

1. **Number of CDAs**

TECHNE2 will offer up to 20% of its studentships as CDAs i.e. around 11 studentships.

1. **Eligibility**

Each TECHNE2 member university may submit up to **four** Expressions of Interest (EoI) describing a project to be supervised jointly by them and another organisation. The other organisation may be a TECHNE2 Partner but does not have to be.

TECHNE2 Partners may submit up to two EOIs in collaboration with a TECHNE2 university. This is in addition to those submitted by TECHNE2 Universities on which they are named.

Non-TECHNE Partner organisations cannot submit EoIs (though can be named as collaborators in a University-led EoI).

For a list of TECHNE2 Partners please contact [techne@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:techne@rhul.ac.uk) .

Please refer to the AHRC guidance at Annex A relating to organisations who hold Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) awards.

1. **Process Stage 1 - Expressions of Interest – May to August 2018**

An Expression of Interest form is at Annex B.

**4a. Submission of Expressions of Interest**

On request, TECHNE administration will relay emails from Partner organisations seeking project collaborators to its member universities, or from universities to Partner organisations. Emails from Partners will be sent to all members of the TECHNE2 Management Group for forwarding within their organisations.

As stated in the AHRC guidance, prospective students may be engaged in the development of a project and can be named on the application at this stage.

The AHRC expects, but does not require, Partners to contribute £550 per annum as an addition to the student stipend. TECHNE will consider applications where Partners are unable to contribute the £550. Partners should note that the AHRC requires that students spend between 3 and 18 months working on Partner premises (see para. 3 of the AHRC Guidance at Annex A).

EoIs must have the approval at a senior level of both the University and the Organisation and have at least one named supervisor at each. The University and Organisation will be expected to sign a partnership agreement if the student is approved.

The deadline for expressions of interest is the **10th Sept 2018**.

**4b. Assessment of EoIs**

EoIs will be assessed by the TECHNE2 Management Group on the 18th September 2018. In addition to the Chair of the External Partners Forum who sits on the Management Group, another two Partners (preferably from organisations not involved in projects) will be invited to participate in the assessment.

Assessment criteria will include:

* The quality and feasibility of the proposed research project (see Grade Descriptors at Annex C)
* The experience and expertise of the supervisors
* The project’s relevance to Partner priorities and objectives
* The skills which will be developed by the student and the enhancement to their employability
* The commitment of the Partner organisation to provide access to training, facilities and expertise
* Where there is a named student, the potential of the student for PhD study, based on their CV

Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful EoIs. Students named on an application who are unsuccessful at this stage may submit an application in the open competition.

1. **Process Stage 2 - Student Recruitment – September to December 2018**

The successful projects will be invited to recruit a student. Universities (rather than Organisations) should administer the recruitment phase and communicate with all students involved as necessary. Unless a prospective student was involved in the development of the EoI, all projects should be advertised widely beyond the institutions concerned. Student eligibility, terms and conditions will be those attached to all AHRC DTP studentships. Both universities and organisations should be involved in the selection of the best student for the project, and the successful student must have been interviewed.

The recruitment phase will be completed by the end of December 2018. Selected students should be reminded that their receipt of an award is contingent upon approval from the CDA Panel and TECHNE Management Group and is not yet assured.

If a project fails to recruit a student by the end of December then in effect the scholarship will be returned to the open competition.

1. **Process Stage 3 – TECHNE2 Application – January 2019**

The selected students should complete, in conjunction with their supervisor and project Partner, a TECHNE2 application form by the late-January deadline. The project proposal can be refined at this stage to reflect the interests/experience of the student but should not depart in fundamental aspects from the original project as described in the EoI. Students applying through the CDA cannot also apply through the open competition, just as other students cannot apply through more than one TECHNE2 institution or Subject Group.

1. **Process Stage 4 - Quality Check and Moderation – March/April 2019**

The CDA applications will be checked, moderated and ranked by a Panel consisting of:

* the TECHNE Director OR Deputy Director
* the TECHNE academic leading on work with Partners
* the Chair of the External Partners Forum OR his/her nominee
* another Partner representative, preferably without an interest in a project

The Panel will check that:

* the project as described is consistent with the one proposed in the EoI
* the project remains feasible in terms of the timescale and resources required
* the quality of the student is equivalent to that of students selected through the open competition in previous years
* the student has the skills, experience and capacity to undertake the project proposed

The Panel will meet in March/April to rank the applications for the TECHNE2 Management Group. The assessment criteria will be based on:

* the quality of the student - see Grade Descriptors at Annex C
* the student’s fit to the project
* the student’s capacity to develop skills and enhance their employability

The Panel should identify any applications they think unsuitable for funding.

1. **Process Stage 5 – Final Management Group Approval – April 2019**

The final decision will rest with the Management Group, who will consider the recommendations of the Panel when it meets in April to make the final decisions on all awards. The Management Group will focus on moderating the quality of the student compared to those shortlisted through the open competition.

1. **Administration**

Following final approval by the Management Group, CDA students will become part of the main TECHNE2 cohort and be included in standard administrative processes. If a student does not accept the offer of a CDA, it is not transferable to another student. The studentship will be awarded to another student according to the Management Group criteria.

**Annex A**

**AHRC COLLABORATIVE DOCTORAL AWARD GUIDANCE FOR DTP/CDTs**

(Feb 2017)

AHRC recognises that there is a very broad spectrum of ways in which partner organisations can engage with DTPs/CDTs at an award level, cohort level or individual project/student level. Collaboration can also take many forms, from providing joint training at the cohort level, to brief or extended internships for individual students and jointly-conceived projects, to mention just a few. We welcome all forms of partnership and collaboration, and encourage DTPs/CDTs to continue the very positive work you have already done.

With reference specifically to Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs), this document is aimed at increasing the flexibility needed for DTP/CDTs to successfully support CDAs.

**Recruitment**

Working on the principle that the best students are supported whatever the type of studentship, we recognise that for CDAs, a separate recruitment route may be helpful, given that these are project-driven, originate in different ways, and that the assessment criteria for the ‘best’ students may be different. One option that may be useful for DTPs/CDTs to consider is to ring-fence a limited number of CDA studentships.

Currently, AHRC doesn’t allow for ring-fencing and funding must be based on quality rankings. However, we understand from conversations with DTP/CDT directors that supporting CDAs would be difficult without ring-fencing. Allowing ring-fencing specifically for CDAs would enable them to be considered in a separate project-driven competition with tailored assessment criteria, focusing on the quality of the project and the collaboration, with an option to include non-University partners on assessment panels. We anticipate that arrangements will be made to ensure consistency of quality thresholds across different routes, if run separately.

How DTPs/CDTs choose to organise this within or across DTPs/CDTs is up to you – our aim here is to give you as much flexibility as possible in devising mechanisms which support CDAs. Likewise, there is no requirement for ring-fencing. If you have already established a mechanism for supporting CDAs which works for your award, there is no need for this to change.

**Funding**

As CDAs are collaborative, we recognise that there may be additional costs incurred by students, for example, travel and accommodation requirements incurred when working with the partner organisation. It is for the DTPs/CDTs to negotiate contributions from partner organisations. With previous CDA competitions, the non-HEI partner was, as standard, required to provide supervisory time and desk space for the student as in-kind contributions. In addition to this, the non-HEI partner was also required to make a cash contribution (where possible) to the student over and above the maintenance grant provided by the AHRC. This cash contribution was used to cover the costs incurred by the student in undertaking the project. It is essential that CDA students are not financially disadvantaged by participating in this kind of studentship.

As with previous CDA awards, for any studentships which you badge as CDA, the student will need to be awarded an additional payment, within their stipend, of £550 per annum. This will ensure that these students receive the same level of stipend as CDAs awarded through the CDPs. We would encourage this additional payment to be secured from the partner organisation, where possible. If necessary, you are permitted to use the flexibility within the SDF to contribute to any costs that are required, beyond those of the partner organisation.

**Criteria**

With specific reference to CDAs, the specific criteria needed in order to badge a studentship as a CDA are as follows:

1. The project needs to have been jointly developed by the academic and non-University partner. It’s not sufficient for the student simply to be accessing resources/archives held by the non-University partner; both partners should be equally invested in the project, and the student will have a supervisor at both organisations. This doesn’t preclude a prospective student being engaged in the development of the project, and s/he could be named on the application. It would be possible to badge a studentship as a CDA once it has commenced, if the non-University partner comes on board at a later date, is fully engaged and has agreed to jointly supervise the student.
2. The project proposal would need to meet the expectations of the [RCUK Joint Vision for Collaborative Training](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/skills/rcdvision-pdf/), in other words:
   * The research is relevant to the organisation’s priorities and objectives;
   * The project is based on a truly collaborative approach;
   * Evidence of a clear commitment from the non-University partner to provide access to training, facilities and expertise not available in an academic setting alone;
   * The opportunity provided by the project to enable the student to develop a range of valuable skills and significantly enhance their future employability.
3. There must be an opportunity for the student to spend time working at the non-University organisation’s premises. During this time, the student must be engaged in activities which are an integral component of the research to be presented in the thesis, as well as wider development activities and opportunities. For a full-time student, the minimum is 3 months and the maximum 18 months. When and how this time is spent will vary according to the nature of the project, and is subject to negotiation between the partners and the student.
4. Partner organisation eligibility is as defined for the previous CDAs. The partner organisation can be from the private, public or voluntary sector (where a private company is defined as being at least 50% privately owned with a wealth creation base in the UK). The word ‘organisation’ is used as a generic term and should be interpreted as widely as possible. The AHRC wishes to encourage collaborations from any area within its subject remit and with a full range of organisations, bodies and businesses, including the creative, cultural and heritage industries, both large and small and to include sole traders and partnerships.
5. In most cases the non-HEI partner must have an operating base in the UK.
6. In exceptional cases, a collaboration with a company or organisation based outside of the UK can be considered. AHRC recognises that, given the distinctive nature of its subject domain, there may be potential for reciprocal research collaborations outside the UK. DTPs/CDTs will need to be clear what additional benefits are to be gained from the collaboration, that demonstrable value from the project will be accrued to the UK, and that the collaboration will deliver long-term, lasting benefits. The overseas partner must specify a minimum contribution and would be expected to cover additional costs of travel to and from the UK. The logistics of running such a partnership should be carefully considered in order to demonstrate that the project is both viable and feasible.
7. University museums and galleries or organisations that are deemed to be a spin-off or are supported by an HEI are eligible as project partners, providing that the project is not a collaboration with the parent institution. We are keen to see a wide variety of partners engaged with collaborative studentships, including local partner organisations.

**As discussed with the DTP/CDT Directors’ Group in November 2016, Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) award holders can be partners for CDAs within the DTPs/CDTs.** However, as these CDAs are an opportunity to engage with a diverse range of partners, we would strongly encourage DTPs and CDTs to think broadly about the partner with which they might work. In particular, we would ask you to consider the options for involving SMEs, local museums and galleries, charities, and local and regional government in collaborative projects.

If CDP organisation is a partner, we would expect CDP organisations to make the same level of financial commitment to these awards as they do to the CDP CDAs.

Whilst not a requirement, experience has demonstrated that the creation of written agreements as part of these projects can be extremely valuable. Agreements ensure that all parties, including the student, are aware of, and understand, the requirements and responsibilities underlying the partnership. DTP/CDTs or HEIs may wish to develop a template agreement for setting out the expectations and responsibilities of CDA partnerships.

**Annex B**

**Collaborative Doctoral Award Expression of Interest**

**September 2019 Entry**

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This form should be no more than 3 sides of A4 in length, with a minimum of 11 point font and sent to [techne@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:techne@rhul.ac.uk) by Monday 10th September 2018.

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| 1. **Project title** |
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| 1. **Organisation or University submitting this application** |
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| 1. **Student Name if the project has been developed with a student – please attach student’s CV** |
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| 1. **Contact for all communication at submitting Organisation or University** *(name, email address, phone number)* |
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| 1. **Collaborating Organisation or University and Department/School** |
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| 1. **Supervisors at University** *Please list all academic staff in the supervisory team along with their department. You should say how many students the supervisors currently supervise, and how many students they have supervised to completion.* |
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| 1. **Supervisors at Organisation** *Please list all staff involved with this project, specifying whether this is as a supervisor or in another capacity. You should describe the supervisory experience of staff where appropriate.* |
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| 1. **Collaborative arrangements** *If there is a past history of working together describe it briefly. Please say how much time the student will spend working in the Partner organisation (minimum 3 months). You might describe arrangements for travel for meetings, how time will be divided between the two institutions and/or how the workload will be divided between the supervisors, how the joint supervision will work in practice and what joint supervision offers the student.* |
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| 1. **Project description and methodology** |
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| 1. **Relevance of the project to the Organisation’s priorities and objectives** |
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| 1. **Resources to be provided by the Organisation** *Please describe the access to training, facilities and expertise that will be provided say whether the Organisation will be contributing £550 per annum to the student stipend* |
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| 1. **Prior qualifications, skills and experience required by the student and the skills that will be developed in the project, including those which will enhance employability** |
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| **Annex C** |  |  |  |  |  |

***Grade Descriptors used for the assessment of student applications***

|  | **Quality of student**  **33%** | **Quality of Proposal**  **33%** | **Feasibility of Proposal**  **33%** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Assessment criteria:   * Past academic achievement * Contribution of academic and professional experience to preparedness for doctoral study * How doctoral study will contribute to long term career aims | Assessment criteria:   * Ideas underpinning the proposal * Concept and design of research * Fit of the project with the TECHNE philosophy | Assessment criteria :   * Coherence and quality of research plan * Feasibility of research being completed in 3 years * Advancement of work in the current field * Potential impact * Expertise of potential supervisors * Feasibility of necessary training, fieldwork or study trips |
| **Score** |  |  |  |
| **6** | A student of outstanding quality, who is outstandingly well prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study. | An outstanding proposal in all of the following: scholarship, originality, quality, significance and openness to diverse approaches. It provides full and consistent evidence and justification for the proposal in terms of concept and design. The proposal merits the very highest priority for funding. | The research plan is coherent, clear and convincing and the project has strong potential for impact. The project will significantly advance work in the current field and is undoubtedly capable of completion within 3 years. There is an excellent fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is unproblematic. |
| **5** | A student of excellent quality, who is exceptionally well prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study. | An excellent proposal in all of the following: scholarship, originality, quality, significance and openness to diverse approaches. It provides full and consistent evidence and justification for the proposal. The proposal should be funded as a matter of priority, but does not merit the very highest priority rating. | The research plan is coherent, clear and convincing and the project has strong potential for impact. The project will advance work in the current field and is capable of completion within 3 years. There is a good fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. . Resourcing of training or fieldwork is unproblematic |
| **4** | A student of good quality, who is well prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study. | A very good proposal in all of the following: scholarship, originality, quality, significance and openness to diverse approaches. It provides very good evidence and justification for the proposal. It is worthy of consideration for funding. | The research plan is coherent, clear and convincing and the project has some potential for impact. The project will advance work in the current field and is capable of completion within 3 years. There is an adequate fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is unproblematic. |
| **3** | A student of satisfactory quality, who is prepared to undertake the proposed postgraduate study. | A satisfactory proposal in terms of the overall standard of scholarship and quality but which is more limited in terms of originality, significance, its contribution to the research field or openness to diverse approaches. In a competitive context the proposal is not considered of a sufficient quality to recommend for funding. | The research plan is adequate. The project may advance work in the current field and it may be possible to complete it within 3 years. There is an adequate fit between the project and the expertise of the supervisors. Resourcing of training or fieldwork may present some problems. |
| **2** | The quality of the student is inconsistent. The student may be of insufficient quality or may not be well prepared to undertake and complete the proposed postgraduate study. | A proposal of inconsistent quality which has some strengths, innovative ideas and/or good components or dimensions but also has significant weaknesses or flaws in one or more of the following: conceptualisation, design, methodology. As a result of the flaws or weaknesses identified, the proposal is not considered to be of fundable quality. | There are significant weaknesses or flaws in the management of the project and it would be unlikely to be completed in 3 years or to advance work in the field. The fit between the project and supervisors is inadequate. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is likely to be problematic. |
| **1** | A student of an unsatisfactory quality who is not well prepared to undertake and complete the proposed postgraduate study. | A proposal of an unsatisfactory quality which:   * Has unsatisfactory levels of originality, quality and/or significance * Contains insufficient evidence and justification for the proposal * Displays limited potential to advance the research field   It is not suitable for funding. | The project is unconvincing in terms of its management or capacity to deliver the proposed outcomes or its contribution to the field. The fit between the project and supervisors is inadequate. Resourcing of training or fieldwork is likely to be problematic. |