

**1. Background**

The purpose of this funding call is to promote high quality PhD studentships in areas of applied research strength which align with the Creating Knowledge Platforms – Future Economies; Healthier, Independent Lives; and Thriving, Inclusive Communities – and the underpinning Foundation areas – Creative, Cultural and Professional Practice. It is open to all prospective SHU Directors of Study who are able to secure a financial contribution from an appropriate external organisation towards the cost of a 3-year FT (or 5-year PT) PhD scholarship.

The external organisation may be industry, charity, government department or other research organisation, but not another HEI. The scheme cannot be used towards any match-funding arrangements for UKRI/EU or overseas government scholarships funding.

The expectation is that the student will be registered for a degree at Sheffield Hallam University; co-registration with a second HEI is not permitted.

In all cases, student recruitment must operate through an open and competitive process.

As set out below, the expectation is that the Vice Chancellor's Scholarships Scheme will cover up to 50% of the fee, stipend and basic project expenses of each scholarship. The remaining 50%, plus any additional project costs/bench fees, will need to be met by the external organisation and/or any additional funding source.

In exceptional circumstances, proposals may be considered in which the external partners is unable to provide 50% of the direct costs. However, the collaboration would need to bring substantial in-kind contributions and open up significant new strategic opportunities. It is expected that such cases would only arise in disciplines where funding from external collaborators is particularly difficult to obtain. Note that the VC's Scholarships Scheme will also continue to fully fund high quality PhD studentships in disciplines for which external funding is difficult to obtain.

There are three submission deadlines per year:

<b>Proposal cut-off</b>	<b>Student start date</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> April	October
1 <sup>st</sup> September	February
1 <sup>st</sup> December	May

For start dates within each academic year, applications will be accepted up to the December deadline or until the funding for that year is allocated, whichever is the sooner.

Please note the level and focus of scholarships funding is reviewed annually and may change.

## 2. Funding principles

These scholarships are intended to support collaborative research aligned with the Creating Knowledge Platforms and Foundation areas. Projects should be in research areas in which SHU is, or has the potential to be, world-class. Projects should be consistent with our ambition to be the world's leading applied university, and should address key external challenges - economic, social, policy, health, environmental or cultural.

The Platforms are intended to promote cross-disciplinary research across the University. For this call, cross-disciplinary projects and supervisory teams are encouraged where appropriate but it is recognised that a well-structured PhD project and a supervisory team with the necessary skills and experience are of paramount importance. Inclusion of an early-career researcher on the team is highly encouraged.

## 3. Scholarship details

Scholarships provide:

- Tuition fees at home/EU levels
- A maintenance stipend at RCUK national minimum doctoral stipend rates
- £500 per year project expenses

for 3 years of full-time study or 5 years of part-time study.

To be eligible for one of these scholarships, prospective Directors of Study should normally secure at least 50% of the above costs from an external partner.

Indicative costs based on 2019/20 rates are:

	2019/20	Estimated cost for 3-year (FT) studentship	External contribution required
Tuition fee	£4,327	£13,242	
Stipend	£15,009	£45,934	
Project expenses	£500	£1500	
Bench fees*	Variable	Variable	Variable
Total	£19,836	£60,676	£30,338 + bench fees

\*Any additional non-staff resources required for the project, including research costs and project consumables, will not be covered by the VC's scholarships fund and Directors of Study will need to secure additional funding. The normal expectation is for this to be provided by the external partner, but alternative funding sources may also be used – this should be specified in the application.

## 4. Project eligibility

Projects must align with one of SHU's 3 research platforms (Healthy, Independent Lives; Thriving, Inclusive Communities; and Future Economies) and/or the application of creative, cultural and professional practice.

The prospective supervisory team must comply with standard SHU requirements, and supervisors will be expected to be able to demonstrate engagement with supervisor CPD over the past two years. Supervisory teams which include early career researchers or academics new to supervision are particularly welcomed.

Applications must include a letter from the external partner organisation confirming that, should the project be selected for University funding, the partner will provide the necessary funding. The letter should be on headed paper and contain the following information:

- company/organisation name, address and telephone number
- advisor name and email address
- a commitment to pay 50% of the fees (at RCUK Home/EU rates), stipend (at RCUK rates) and project support funding (£500 per year total) for the three years of the scholarship (or pro rata for part-time).

Applications must also set out how any additional project costs will be covered.

<b>5. Project assessment</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Max. score</b>	<b>Min. threshold for funding</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Alignment with SHU research platforms	10	8	Applications should clearly describe how the project aligns with one of SHU's 3 research platforms (Healthy, Independent Lives; Thriving, Inclusive Communities; Future Economies) and/or the application of creative, cultural and professional practice.
Academic quality and novelty	20	16	<p>Applications are expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• academic novelty</li> <li>• a track record of high quality publications (judged to be 3* or 4*)</li> <li>• a well-structured and achievable PhD project</li> <li>• potential to contribute to REF outputs</li> <li>• potential social, economic or cultural impact</li> <li>• availability of required equipment and resources and confirmation of funding for any additional project costs</li> </ul> <p>Interdisciplinary projects are particularly encouraged.</p> <p>Applications and, particularly, costings should be signed by the Head of Research Centre (or equivalent).</p> <p>After submission, the relevant REF UoA Coordinator will be asked to review and comment on this area.</p>
External collaborator	10	8	<p>Applications should evidence a clear commitment from the external partner, which should be more than simply financial.</p> <p>Assessment will include the nature and viability of the external partner, their contribution to the project (financial and non-financial), and the role of the named advisor.</p>
Supervisory team and the student experience	10	8	<p>Applications should describe the expertise, experience and capacity of the supervisory team. The team will be expected to be able to demonstrate engagement with supervisor CPD and a commitment to good supervisory practice.</p> <p>Teams which include early career researchers or academics new to supervision are encouraged.</p>

Supervisors may contribute multiple applications to the scheme but will only be awarded ONE scholarship as Director of Studies per academic year. In the event the scheme is oversubscribed, previously-awarded

PhD funding from the University may be taken in to account in the assessment of applications, with a view to achieving balance across the Platforms and Foundation areas.

## 6. Funding application process

Student recruitment will be expected to align with one of our three PhD intake points - October, February or May. Since contractual and IP arrangements will need to be achieved after the funding has been agreed, the following submission deadlines will apply:

Proposal cut-off	Student start date
1 <sup>st</sup> April	October
1 <sup>st</sup> September	February
1 <sup>st</sup> December	May

For start dates within each academic year, applications will be accepted up to the December deadline or until the funding for that year is allocated, whichever is the sooner.

Please note that if funding is awarded you should generally expect a minimum of 5-6 months to complete contract negotiations with the external funder, advertise and recruit a student.

Completed proposal forms should be emailed to [doctoralschool@shu.ac.uk](mailto:doctoralschool@shu.ac.uk), stating that you are applying for a collaborative VC's scholarship.

Forms should include comments from the relevant REF UoA Coordinator and approval from your Head of Research Centre.

Proposals will be assessed by at least four academic staff with expertise in doctoral supervision and/or the discipline area. The panel will always comprise the Director of the Doctoral School (or Deputy) and the relevant Research Institute PGR Lead (or nominee).

Proposals will be scored against the criteria listed above, and applicants will normally be informed of the outcome within 3 working weeks. Outcomes will be one of:

- Project approved - the project has scored a minimum of 80% across all areas and is approved for funding.
- Not approved, resubmission invited - the project is not approved as it has failed to score 80% in one or two areas. The panel feel the project is of the requisite quality and invite resubmission after the comments have been addressed.
- Not approved – an unsuccessful resubmission or a project which has not reached the threshold score in the majority of areas and the panel would not recommend a resubmission of the project as currently structured.

## 7. Successful proposals

If the proposal is awarded funding the normal expectation is that a student will be recruited for the relevant intake point. If the project fails to attract a suitable candidate, the **University funding may be reallocated to another project.**

It will be necessary for a contract with the external partner to be put in place prior to an offer of a PhD place being made to an applicant - see 8. below.

Advertising and recruitment is the responsibility of the appropriate Research Centre and/or Institute and should be carried out in accordance with local processes.

#### **8. Notes on external collaborations**

To ensure that expectations are managed effectively, it is important at the outset that the external partner is aware, at least in principle, of the terms and conditions of a PhD studentship agreement. Further support and advice on this is available from PGRTs and PGR leads.

Please contact the Contract Services team ([! RIO Contract Service](#) ) for legal/ contractual matters.

In accordance with the University's Terms and Conditions for students, the University recognises that each student is the owner of the intellectual property he/she creates in the course of his/her studies, subject to the exceptions listed in Section 8.1 of the student Terms and Conditions.

An agreement between all parties to clarify ownership of IP arising from each project will need to be signed before the project commences. Please contact the Contract Services team in RIO for advice.