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GW4
BioMed2
Doctoral Training Partnership

GW4 BioMed2 MRC Doctoral Training Partnership

Project Call 2025-26

[Project Application Call](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)



**Medical
Research
Council**



FAQs for supervisors

The GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP aims to attract and select the best students for training in high quality projects and environments. This document contains guidance for supervisors considering submitting a project for a GW4 BioMed2 MRC funded studentship, commencing in the academic year 2025/26. Advice on the whole process including project submission criteria, how students are selected, and critical dates can be found under the following headings:

1. How many studentships are available?
2. How do I submit a project proposal?
3. What are the key dates for the recruitment process?
4. Can I apply in more than one year?
5. Can I resubmit the same project proposal?
6. Does the project have to fit in with one of the three themes?
7. Can non-biomedical supervisors apply?
8. How many supervisors can be on the proposal?
9. How will the DTP correspond with the supervisory team?
10. Is it advantageous to have supervisors from more than one GW4 Partner?
11. Can other partners be involved?
12. Is the DTP looking to convert projects to CASE?
13. What is covered by the studentship?
14. What funding is available for project costs?
15. When students undertake research at different GW4 institutions, how will their research be funded?
16. What training will the DTP provide?
17. The 'Prep' period
18. Broadening Horizons Placement
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31. Further questions.
32. Application Form Template

1. HOW MANY STUDENTSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE?

Up to 20 studentships are available with the GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP for October 2025. This comprises of 16 (notional) MRC studentships, and the four universities are contributing additional funds to uplift this number, depending on the distribution of successful candidates.

2. HOW DO I SUBMIT A PROJECT PROPOSAL?

Project proposals must be submitted using [the online form](#) from Wednesday, 12th June 2024. The deadline for applications is **5pm on Friday, 19th July 2024**.

Please ensure that you read this FAQ before completing your proposal.

A copy of the survey questions has been attached to the FAQs to help with writing your project proposal. As there is no function within the online system to share partially completed forms, please use this document to prepare your project application and share the answers with your supervisory team before copying and pasting your final answers into the online survey.

You will be able to save and revise your proposal online. However, once it has been submitted, no amendments can be made. Once the deadline for applications has passed, the online form will close and you will not be able to submit your project proposal.

A check will be made once all applications have been received to ensure that the home institution is content for the project(s) to go forward to the shortlisting stage.

3. WHAT ARE THE KEY DATES FOR THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS?

GW4 BIOMED2 MRC DTP RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE		
KEY DATES (2025-26 Intake)		
Date	Time	Deadline
Wednesday 12th June 24	By 9am	Supervisor project proposal submission form opens
Friday 19th July 24	By 5pm	Supervisor project proposal submission deadline
Wednesday 24th July – Friday 16th August 24	By midday	Project panel scores projects and submits scores to DTP
Thursday 22nd August 24	10.30am – midday	Project selection panel
Friday 23rd August 24	By 5pm	Supervisors notified of project shortlisting outcome
Wednesday 4th September – Monday 4th November 24		Projects advertised for student applications
Monday 4th November 24	By 5pm	Student application deadline
Friday 8th November – Friday 22nd November 24	By 5pm	Panel scores and shortlists applicants – 1 st triage
Friday 29th November – Friday 13th December 24	By midday	Panel scores and shortlists applicants – 2 nd triage
Thursday 19th December 24	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Student shortlisting panel
Friday 20th December 24	midday	DTP notifies candidates and supervisors of successful applications
Friday 17th January 25	midday	Supervisor interviews all candidates by this date
Friday 17th January 24	midday	Candidates sends references and transcripts to the DTP
Thursday 23rd January – Friday 24th January 25		DTP interviews
Wednesday 29th January 25	1.00pm – 2.30pm	Student shortlisting panel
Thursday 30th February – mid March 25		Clearing period
w/c Monday 15 th September 25		Local induction events
1 st October 25		Official funding start date

4. CAN I APPLY IN MORE THAN ONE YEAR?

Supervisors are only permitted to submit **one proposal per year as lead supervisor** and, if successful, **with no more than two in any three-year rolling period for BioMed2 applications**. BioMed1 studentships will not count towards this.

Supervisors can be co-supervisors on an unlimited number of projects in all years.

5. CAN I RESUBMIT THE SAME PROJECT PROPOSAL?

Yes, if you were unsuccessful during previous recruitment rounds, you will be able to submit the same project proposal again.

6. DOES THE PROJECT HAVE TO FIT IN WITH ONE OF THE THREE THEMES?

The studentships will be awarded against the three key research themes that characterize the GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP:

- Infection, Immunity, Antimicrobial Resistance and Repair
 - Neuroscience and Mental Health
 - Population Health Sciences.
-

7. CAN NON-BIOMEDICAL SUPERVISORS APPLY?

Yes. The DTP and MRC are particularly keen to promote interdisciplinarity with particular reference to mathematics, physical sciences, engineering and also social sciences. We also aim to attract excellent students from these disciplines.

The lead supervisor should, regardless of discipline, be the most appropriate person to lead the project.

8. HOW MANY SUPERVISORS CAN BE ON THE PROPOSAL?

The application form allows space for 1 lead supervisor and 3 co-supervisors, so please use those spaces to identify the main supervisory staff and include the remainder as a project team in the later sections.

Those listed as co-supervisors will be required to have a greater level of involvement in the student's progression monitoring than in conventional supervisory teams. Less experienced supervisory teams may include an experienced supervisor to act in a 'mentoring' role.

Further details can be found in the Supervisor Expectations document on our website.

9. HOW WILL THE DTP CORRESPOND WITH THE SUPERVISORY TEAM?

Most communication will be directed via the lead supervisor who will be expected to cascade the information onto the rest of their team. Funds relating to the project will also be paid to the institution of the Lead Supervisor.

10. IS IT ADVANTAGEOUS TO HAVE SUPERVISORS FROM MORE THAN ONE GW4 PARTNER?

Yes. The GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP aims to show what can be achieved by harnessing the combined power of four research intensive universities. Supervisors are strongly encouraged to seek out partners for training or experience in other GW4 HEIs and include them as co-supervisors. The DTP has given an undertaking that at least 90% of projects will be across two or more GW4 partners.

Please note that collaboration can mean access to laboratories and specific training, rather than just co-supervision.

11. CAN OTHER PARTNERS BE INVOLVED?

Any partners (academic and non-academic) can be involved in the project - not just those within the GW4 partnership. Supervisors should be aware, however, that the DTP seeks to have at least 90% collaborative projects across at least two of the GW4 institutions, so should consider opportunities for 'internal' collaboration as a priority.

12. IS THE DTP LOOKING TO CONVERT PROJECTS TO iCASE?

The GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP has no iCASE conversion target. However, this does not preclude industrial involvement which can take several forms (including placement, co-supervision and financial contribution to project costs).

We have arranged partnerships with the following organisations,

- Certus Technology
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory
- Mary Lyons Centre, MRC Harwell Institute
- NIHR Bristol Biomedical Research Centre
- National Centre for Mental Health
- AstraZeneca
- Takeda UK
- Merck
- Alan Turing Institute
- Cambridge Cognition
- Office for National Statistics

Applications for project who already have an industrial partnership in place are welcomed.

13. WHAT IS COVERED BY THE STUDENTSHIP?

The elements of the studentship are: fees (UK rate); UKRI national minimum stipend; RTSG (Research Training Support Grant); and a conference/travel allowance.

Studentships will be funded for a 4-year duration. As such, awards have been calculated on this basis.

Part-time studentships will also be considered and are usually arranged on the basis of working between 50% and 80% of a full-time studentship, over a period of 6 years but can be up to 7 years' duration.

Please note that **the funding is linked to the successful student**. If the student withdraws at any stage before 1st October 2025, the funding will be re-allocated by the Management Board to the next successful student and their preferred project. As such, supervisors will not be able to re-advertise their project for a new student.

14. WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR PROJECT COSTS?

Each studentship will include a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) as a contribution towards basic consumables. The MRC makes a distinction between wet-lab and dry-lab projects and expects wet lab projects to receive a higher amount than dry projects. This could be up to £5,000 per year, depending on the project.

On a project-dependent basis, a further one-off grant of up to £10,000 can be applied for from the flexible funding supplement where there are high-cost elements of the project to cover the costs associated with this skill/need, which may include training. High-cost elements may include in vivo biology, human brain scans, high performance computing or large data set storage. (NB this is for the lifetime of the project and cannot be applied for again).

It is advisable to list these high-cost requirements in your project application as this funding may not be available at a later date.

IMPORTANT: Please note that our MRC studentship funding is expected to cover all **training costs** but **NOT** consumable and equipment costs for the project; support is expected to be provided from the project and programme grants held by the supervisory team for these project costs.

The grant from the MRC also includes a Flexible Funding Supplement, which is a small budget that aims to support high costs research and/or training needs, including essential extensions where there are enhanced training needs. To determine the allocation of this funding the Management Board set up a funding panel, comprising of the three Research Theme Leads. Calls for funding will be held twice a year (March and October) and your application acts as your first call. Supervisors should identify any high-cost training or training-related expenses (including travel) integral to the project in the application form.

15. WHEN STUDENTS UNDERTAKE RESEARCH AT DIFFERENT GW4 INSTITUTIONS, HOW WILL THEIR RESEARCH BE FUNDED?

Research at GW4 institutions other than the student's home institution will be supported through the RTSG and Flexible Funding Supplement, which will be made available to the student and the lead supervisor via the host institution.

Please note that it will be the responsibility of the supervisory team to manage the funds across institutions to ensure costs are within budget. Co-supervisory institutions will not receive a portion of tuition fees.

Costs against these budgets are claimed in retrospect and further information regarding the financial arrangements for the DTP will be sent to the lead supervisor and student should the project be successful.

16. WHAT TRAINING WILL THE DTP PROVIDE?

A core set of basic research skills consistent with those recommended by the MRC and a training needs analysis form (TNA) has been introduced by the DTP. All students are required to record their projected training plans and progress in completing these on their TNA, which will be shared with supervisors and the DTP Management. Supervisors will be required to undertake a Training Needs Analysis with their student on a regular basis and use entries by the student into their form to record this. Periodic review of the TNA record will be reviewed by supervisors and the DTP to ensure that arrangements and progression are satisfactory.

An Online Core Training Course has been developed with 30 elements over 3 modules which covers all aspects of the agreed DTP research skills. As specified in the Supervisor Expectations document on our website, it is a requirement of GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP that supervisors agree to contribute to student training, including facilitating the online training.

Basic core-skills training as defined by the DTP may be provided at institutional level (research ethics and integrity, statistical approaches, presentation skills, etc.), via the DTP Online Core Training Course modules or through a mixture of both, so long as all areas are covered. Students can request exemption from duplicated elements of the online core skills training programme if they can provide evidence of having completed them elsewhere.

In addition, students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the wide range of advanced training offered across the 4 HEIs of the DTP which they can access for free as a GW4 DTP student. The DTP will facilitate access to a range of advanced training across the partnership and will co-ordinate specialist focused training days around the research themes that are aligned to MRC priorities for training.

There will also be induction days, an annual congress, theme days and cohort building activities and supervisors are required to release students to attend these mandatory events.

Engagement with the DTP training programme is compulsory and continued sponsorship is contingent on that engagement. It is important that supervisors allow time for all of these commitments when planning a project.

17. THE 'PREP' PERIOD

New for GW4 BioMed2, we have introduced a 'Prep' period at the start of each studentship. The 'Prep' period is a student-led and focused 3-month period allowing each student to take ownership of their project, reflecting on, and revising their PhD project by experiencing other research and training across different themes and connecting with their peers and other researchers. With the support of the BioMed2 community and their supervisors, the students will refine their project plan and establish connections within and beyond their institution. Students will then start their PhD research work in January.

18. BROADENING HORIZONS PLACEMENT

During the third year of (full-time) study, all students are required to complete a Broadening Horizons placement of up to 3 months. This work experience specifically aims to prepare them for careers post PhD. Students will explore areas relevant to their future careers in a wide range of organisations including our Associate Partners (it may be in an academic or non-academic environment and may be associated with the PhD project but can also be standalone).

19. SHOULD PROPOSALS INCLUDE FULL COSTINGS?

We require an indicative budget for shortlisting projects. You are asked to indicate how the RTSG monies will be allocated and the additional anticipated project costs. Please also demonstrate how the extra costs of the project will be met by the supervisory team. Your own institution may require a more formal budget to ensure that the project will not be underfunded. In addition, the proposals need to outline anticipated high costs and potential funding sources. Please use [the online application form](#) to specify any additional high costs for which you anticipate applying to the Flexible Funding Scheme.

20. HOW WILL PROJECTS BE SELECTED?

Projects will undertake a light-touch screening at institutional level to ensure that the School and Department the project comes under has the operational capacity to support this project and that the supervisory team satisfies the local supervisory regulations. If any institution is unhappy for the project to be considered further, it can be withdrawn from the project selection process.

Projects will be reviewed by one of the three research theme panels. Each selection panel will consist of the Theme Lead and will include membership from all four universities. Where conflicts of interest are declared, the panel member will abstain from scoring. Declarations are required where the panel member is part of the project supervisory team or has a close involvement in that research team.

The final scores and recommendations from the three research theme panels will be combined to provide overall rankings for consideration by the Management Board. The Director will chair and overview the process, including removal of scoring biases using a standardisation process.

Project selection will be made based on scientific and training excellence in addition to its alignment with the strategic priorities of the DTP. All projects will be scored against the following criteria. Supervisors are strongly advised to take note of these criteria and consider them in preparing project applications as the scoring will act as an indicative guide for discussions by the Management Board.

1. Evidence of high-quality doctoral training (weighting 0.5)

- Significance, originality, feasibility and degree of challenge presented by the proposed research.
- Added-value features, e.g. exposure to working across disciplinary boundaries, opportunities for collaboration with other academic centres or industries.
- Strategy for knowledge transfer and maximising the impact of the doctoral research.
- **Feasibility of project resourcing arrangements.**
- Consideration of students' active participation in tailoring the project brief during the 'Prep' period.

2. Evidence of an excellent research and training environment (weighting 0.25)

- Publication of research outputs in high quality journals and track record of the supervisors.
- **Quality of the research environment including PhD completions across the supervisory team in the last 10 years.**
- Consideration of preparation the student for future career readiness.

3. Evidence of alignment with strategic aims (weighting 0.25)

- Cross-cutting priority and training themes aligned to the MRC Foundations for Excellence and Priority Skills Needs and the training opportunities of our Associate Partners (data science cross cutting priority theme, in vivo biology; interdisciplinarity and translation/innovation cross-cutting training themes).
- The strategic aim to support collaboration across the partner institutions: as the norm, PhD projects are expected to involve collaboration in supervision and/or specialist training.
- **Evidence to support awareness of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion across the supervisory team including a significant contribution from early career researchers if relevant (e.g. lead supervisor).**
- In preparing for project proposals, supervisors may want to refer to the following:

[UKRI Statement of Expectations](#)

[MRC Review of Vulnerable Skills and Capabilities](#)

[MRC Strategic Plan](#)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Projects will be automatically rejected by the panel if they do not satisfy the criteria relating to the feasibility of project resourcing arrangements, equality, diversity, and inclusion awareness and quality of the research environment, including PhD completions across the supervisory team in the last 10 years.

21. WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT?

We appreciate there are differences in what the 'research environment' encompasses when considering wet and dry lab projects. For 'wet' lab projects the research environment might refer directly to a physical lab run by a particular academic and the funding and equipment available. Alternatively, a dry lab research environment could be about a wider network of academics and access to expertise from a range of disciplines.

As the proposals will be shortlisted by theme panels, the panel will assess and score the environment based on markers of excellence relevant to the type of research.

22. WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF AN EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER?

For the purposes of the GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP, an ECR is an individual who is either within eight years of the award of their PhD or equivalent professional training, or an individual who is within six years of their first academic appointment. These durations exclude any period of career break, e.g., for family care or health reasons.

The 'first academic appointment' is defined as the first paid contract of employment, either full-time or part-time, which lists research and/or teaching as the primary functions.

23. IS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE SUPERVISORS TO HAVE A RECORD OF MRC FUNDING?

Evidence of a high-quality research environment should include (but is not limited to) the research profiles of all members of the supervisory team which may encompass publications, funding, public engagement, other measures of research quality or impact. Supervisors should demonstrate relevance to MRC remit but there is no requirement for MRC funding. Grants and publications should not predate 2013, please select appropriate examples.

Please note that only information such as grants, and awards recorded on the form will be considered – please do not assume that reputation replaces the need to complete this section.

24. HOW MANY PROJECTS WILL BE SELECTED FOR ADVERTISEMENT?

To support our goal of recruiting the best students to the DTP, more projects than available places will be selected for advertisement to ensure that the final selection is based on the quality of the applicant. The selected projects will be advertised on the GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP website, on partners' own local websites and FindaPhD (which will be arranged by each partner institution). Supervisors are also strongly encouraged to use their own networks and spheres of influence to attract good candidates.

The GW4 BioMed2 DTP will also promote the programme in targeted advertising. The title and project description wording you put on the application form will be used on our website to advertise your project. Therefore, please ensure that it is jargon-free and understandable to applicants who are not yet experts in your field.

25. CAN APPLICANTS APPLY FROM DISCIPLINES OTHER THAN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE?

Yes. The DTP is particularly interested in recruiting students from non-biomedical, but numerate subjects (e.g. from a computing, mathematics, statistics, chemistry, engineering or quantitative social sciences background).

26. WHAT ARE THE STUDENT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

Students will need to meet the standard academic eligibility criteria. Applicants for a studentship must have obtained, or be about to obtain, a UK degree, or the equivalent qualification gained outside the UK, in an appropriate area of medical sciences. However, the DTP also welcomes students from non-medical backgrounds, especially in the areas of computing, mathematics and the physical sciences.

Successful applicants will also need to meet the entry requirements of their home institution.

UKRI fully funded studentships through the GW4 BioMed2 MRC DTP are available to applicants who would be classed as an international student. There is a limit to the number of international students we can accept onto our programme (up to 30% cap across our partnership per annum). The GW4 partner institutions have an agreement that the fee difference between home and international students will be waived by the home institution.

Students will also need to meet the English Language requirements of their home institution. The Management Board will not be made aware of the applicant's English language skills during the shortlisting process.

27. HOW WILL CANDIDATES APPLY?

Applicants will apply via a centralised online application form **between Wednesday, 4th September and Monday, 4th November 2024 at 5pm.**

The DTP application process aims to select the best students and will make an offer of funding to the top ranked applicants. The host institution will be responsible for checking eligibility and making an offer to study once the DTP's offer of funding has been accepted.

The process for applying will be made clear in the advertisements. Documents provided by shortlisted students can be shared by the DTP to speed up the local application process.

28. HOW WILL STUDENTS BE SELECTED?

All studentships will be awarded competitively. Students can apply for up to two projects in order of preference. Theme-specific panels will consider and score all applications before drawing up an interview shortlist of around 60 applicants.

A reserved shortlisting quota of 20% for students from self-declared under-represented groups (including ethnicity, disability, and other protected characteristics) will be used to increase diversity and inclusion. Up to 30% of our awarded studentships can be allocated to international students, thus we will restrict the number of international students on the shortlist to no more than 30%.

Shortlisted applications will then be passed to the lead supervisor of the chosen project/s by **Friday, 20th December 2024**. Shortlisted students are required to meet (remotely or in person) for a discussion on the project and their suitability, with all their potential lead supervisors by **Friday 17th January 2025**. This discussion should not be arranged in an interview setting as this could confuse the applicant. The onus for arranging these meetings is placed on the students and expenses will not be available for candidates to attend these discussions.

Supervisors will be expected to complete a standardised online report following each interview by **midday on Friday, 17th January 2025**. The purpose of these reports is to assist the interview panel with their deliberations, and they are an important part of the recruitment process so that the DTP can ensure a suitable match between project and applicant.

Candidates that have been informed they have been shortlisted for interview will be required to provide their academic transcripts and two references to the DTP by **midday on Friday 17th January 2025**. Preferably, these documents will be sent directly to the DTP from the referee but, in some circumstances, can also be supplied by the student.

Supervisors are reminded that the final selection will be based on the qualities and performance of the student and will be competitive between all students according to a set criterion to be published at the time of advertisement.

Candidates will then be interviewed by a centralised DTP theme-based interview panel with representatives from all HEIs. Interviews will be 30 mins in length and will include discussion of a piece of data research that the student was involved with.

Interviews will take place on **23rd and 24th January 2025**.

The supervisor report, interviews, academic transcripts, references, and the application form will all contribute to the panel's considerations for allocating studentships. The Management Board will allocate studentships based primarily on candidate quality ranking but will also consider the scientific strategy of the DTP, ensuring balance across themes and strategic skills. Students for whom their first-choice project has already been taken will be offered their second-choice project.

Supervisors should not interact with prospective students between **Friday, 17th January 2025**, and the interview sessions (**23rd and 24th January 2024**). Students will have been provided with some of the interview questions and support is provided centrally, the interview panel will expect to hear the student's own thoughts.

29. HOW WILL THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE THEMES AND INSTITUTIONS BE ACHIEVED?

The overriding goal of the DTP is to recruit excellent students. There are no internal quotas and alignment with the research themes should not preclude an excellent project proposal, particularly one which will provide outstanding training in one or more of the vulnerable skills areas. That said, the DTP seeks to recruit students in approximately equal numbers to the three research themes.

The final allocation decisions will focus on the quality of the applicants but also consider:

- balance between themes
- balance between cross-cutting priority and training themes
- balance between institutions
- involvement of diverse groups as supervisors
- inclusion of high-ranking students from non-biological disciplines
- cross-institutional supervision
- protected characteristics such as gender, disability, and ethnicity.

At the project selection stage, some consideration will be given to ensure that the portfolio is not too heavily skewed away from a reasonable representation of theme or institutional balance. Note that balance will be sought over the duration of the DTP, so that imbalances in one year may be redressed later.

We are also monitoring for equality and diversity and will act as necessary to redress any imbalance over the lifetime of the DTP.

30. WHO WILL STUDENTS BE REGISTERED WITH?

Students will register for a PhD with the HEI of the lead supervisor. They will be registered with one HEI only but will be registered as visiting students across the other HEIs to provide them with access to all resources and facilities across the DTP.

The monitoring of progression, appraisal and pastoral support will be provided in the first instance by the relevant PGR office of the home HEI. The GW4 BioMed2 Management Board, however, will oversee the progress of all students as well, receiving termly reports from the whole supervisory team as well as the students themselves. Where problems arise, the Management Board will seek to provide additional support over and above, but in collaboration with that provided by the local PGR/Doctoral office.

31. FURTHER QUESTIONS

In the first instance please contact the DTP Hub at GW4BioMed@Cardiff.ac.uk.

Considering more specific institutional or theme-specific queries, please contact the relevant institutional or theme lead at the email addresses below.

Professor Emma Kidd	Director	kiddej@cardiff.ac.uk
Dr Tom Freeman	Joint Bath Academic Leads	tpf24@bath.ac.uk
Dr Vicky Hunt		bs1vh@bath.ac.uk
Professor Matthew Avison	Joint Bristol Academic Leads	Matthewb.avison@bristol.ac.uk
Professor David Sheppard		D.N.Sheppard@bristol.ac.uk
Dr David Petrik	Joint Cardiff Academic Leads	petrikd@cardiff.ac.uk
Dr Neil Rodrigues		rodriguesn@cardiff.ac.uk
Professor Wendy Noble	Joint Exeter Academic Lead	Wendy.noble2@exeter.ac.uk
Dr Emma Dempster		e.l.dempster@exeter.ac.uk
Dr Soma Meran	Infection, Immunity, Antibiotic Resistance and Repair Theme Lead	MeranS@cardiff.ac.uk
Dr Martin Eichmann	Deputy Infection, Immunity, Antibiotic Resistance and Repair Theme Lead	M.Eichmann@exeter.ac.uk
Dr Esther Walton	Neuroscience and Mental Health Theme Lead	Ew685@bath.ac.uk

Dr Emma Dempster	Deputy Neuroscience and Mental Health Theme Lead	e.l.dempster@exeter.c.uk
Dr Jon Heron	Joint Population Health Sciences Theme Leads	Jon.heron@bristol.ac.uk
Professor Rhian Daniel		DanielR8@cardiff.ac.uk
Dr Giovanni Biglino	Research Culture and Wellbeing Lead	g.biglino@bristol.ac.uk

32.APPLICATION FORM TEMPLATE

GW4 BioMed2 MRC Doctoral Training Partnership: Supervisor Project Proposals 2025/26

[GW4 BioMed2 Project Application - October 25/26 - Cohort 2.4](#)

Please refer to the FAQ document when completing your project proposal. This form should be submitted by 17:00 on Friday, 19th July 2024.

Please note that this form can be saved and completed in stages BUT cannot be shared with other people. If you wish to collaborate and share your answers before submission, then you will have to do this via a Word document then cut and paste your answers into this form at a later stage.

Once you have submitted the form it cannot be revised or amended. If you realise you have made a mistake after submission (clicking on the 'Finish' button) you will need to re-do the whole form and let us know so that we can delete the previous version.

Please download your submission receipt and save a copy of your answers at the end of the form.

Project Details

Project Title (no word limit): *

The title is important for attracting applicants. Please take care to make your title understandable to those who are not yet experts in the area.

Research Theme: Please indicate the research theme that is most appropriate for this project: *

- Infection, Immunity, Antimicrobial Resistance & Repair
- Neuroscience & Mental Health
- Population Health Sciences

Please provide a summary of your project which will attract students to apply, if your project is shortlisted and advertised. This should be written for a general science audience to ensure broad reach of your project description (maximum 100 words). *

We use this section on our website to advertise your project. Try to avoid descriptions which are jargon laden and impenetrable to those who are not yet experts in the field.

The Supervisory Team: Lead Supervisor

Please ensure and confirm that you meet the requirements for supervisor eligibility by your lead HEI.

Lead Supervisor Title: *

- Professor
- Dr
-

Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Lead Supervisor First Name: *

Lead Supervisor Surname: *

Lead Supervisor University Affiliation: *

- Bath
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Exeter

College / Faculty: *

Department / School: *

Lead Supervisor Email: *

Lead Supervisor Telephone Number

Please indicate if there are any existing associations between the supervisory team members outside of a work capacity.

Does one or more members of the supervisory team identify with the following? Please tick all that apply. *

- Early career researcher
- Minority ethnic or gender identifying group
- Other area of diversity
- None

The Supervisory Team: Co-Supervisor 1

Co-Supervisor 1 Title: *

- Professor
- Dr
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Co-supervisor 1 First Name: *

Co-supervisor 1 Surname: *

Co-supervisor 1 University Affiliation: *

- Bath
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Exeter
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify: Please check your University regulations regarding co-supervisor eligibility.

College / Faculty: *

Department / School: *

Co-supervisor 1 Email: *

Add another supervisor: *

- Yes
- No

The Supervisory Team: Co-Supervisor 2 Co-supervisor 2 Title:

- Professor
- Dr
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Co-supervisor 2 First Name:

Co-supervisor 2 Surname:

Co-supervisor 2 Affiliation:

- Bath
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Exeter
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify: Please check your University regulations regarding co-supervisor eligibility.

College / Faculty:

Department / School:

Co-supervisor 2 Email:

Add another supervisor: *

Yes

No

The Supervisory Team: Co-Supervisor 3 Co-supervisor 3 Title:

Professor

Dr

Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Co-supervisor 3 First Name:

Co-supervisor 3 Surname:

Co-supervisor 3 Affiliation:

- Bath
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Exeter
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify: Please check your University regulations regarding cosupervisor eligibility.

College / Faculty:

Department / School:

Co-supervisor 3 Email:

The Proposed Project

Please refer to selection criteria and the FAQ's and consider how your project offers high quality doctoral training and research.

Describe the proposed project. Please include a brief background, the key research question that the project aims to address and a breakdown of the specific objectives that the student will work towards over the course of the studentship. Please also indicate areas where the student will be able to take ownership and steer the project. (maximum 800 words). *

Descriptions will be considered by the Theme Panel, which may include non-specialist members, and will be advertised on HEI websites to potential applicants, so must be written in a style/language understandable to both audiences.

Without reference to the characteristics of the supervisory team, please provide details as to whether equality, diversity and inclusion are considered within the design or scope of the project, or the intended training of the student (no word limit). *

Has this project received ethical approval? *

- Yes
- No
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Project Costs

This section asks you to describe how the project costs will be met year by year. Please note that you do not need current or previous MRC funding to be eligible for these studentships.

Would you consider the project to be wet-lab or dry-lab based? If you have selected Other, please provide further details. *

- Wet lab
- Dry lab
- Other

If you selected Other, please specify (no word limit):

We provide a Research Support Training Grant (RTSG) of £2,000 per year for dry lab projects and £5,000 per year for wet lab projects. Please describe how these funds will be used. Please note these costs are for training only, additional consumable costs are not covered (no word limit). *

What are the anticipated additional project costs per year (e.g. for consumables)? Please provide an indication of the nature of the costs. (no word limit). *

Please indicate how you as a project team, plan to fund these additional costs. Please note that funds can come from any member of the supervisory team if it is relevant to their participation, but this should be indicated (no word limit). *

Describe how you propose to support the student to tailor the project and take ownership of it, during the initial 3 month 'Prep' period (maximum 500 words). *

Can this project be completed on a part-time basis (minimum 50%)? *

Yes

No

Excellence of the Research and Training Environment

Please refer to selection criteria and FAQ document and consider publication record; PhD submission rates; and critical mass; both in terms of the named supervisors and their wider research group(s)/network(s), of relevance. Please limit to 4 supervisors TOTAL.

LEAD SUPERVISOR: How many students are currently being supervised as 1st supervisor?

LEAD SUPERVISOR: How many students have been supervised to completion (starting 2014/15 onwards).

LEAD SUPERVISOR: Of those, how many completed within 4 years?

CO-SUPERVISOR 1: How many students are currently being supervised as 1st supervisor?

CO-SUPERVISOR 1: How many students have been supervised to completion (starting 2013/14 onwards).

CO-SUPERVISOR 1: Of those, how many completed within 4 years?

CO-SUPERVISOR 2: How many students are currently being supervised as 1st supervisor?

CO-SUPERVISOR 2: How many students have been supervised to completion (starting 2014/15 onwards).

CO-SUPERVISOR 2: Of those, how many completed within 4 years?

CO-SUPERVISOR 3: How many students are currently being supervised as 1st supervisor?

CO-SUPERVISOR 3: How many students have been supervised to completion (starting 2014/15 onwards).

CO-SUPERVISOR 3: Of those, how many completed within 4 years?

Comments on above (optional but explanation encouraged - no word limit).

Please provide evidence of the quality of the research and training environment, including how the training experience will contribute to the students' future career development. This includes illustration of the research profiles of all members of the supervisory team which could include publications, funding, public engagement, other measures of research quality or impact (maximum 1,000 words): *

As outlined in the 'Supervisor Expectations' document, the DTP requires Lead Supervisors and Co-Supervisors to contribute to the training environment of the DTP during the course of the studentship. Please tick the box/es to indicate that you agree with the following, *

- The Supervisory team have read the 'Supervisor Expectations' document
- We will complete a termly online student progression survey
- We will attend at least one Supervisor training session each year
- Supervisors and co-supervisors agree to have their engagement with the DTP monitored

Supervisors are required to take part in at least one additional role during their allocated studentship. Please indicate the roles that you may be interested in (select all that apply). *

- Participation in project shortlisting
- Participation in student shortlisting
- Delivering training at one of our events
- Standing as a Deputy for theme or institutional lead
- Participating as an online CORE training tutor

Please suggest the title of a training seminar that you or a member of your Supervisory team could deliver to our students, if applicable.

Alignment of the Project with Relevant Strategic Priorities

Please refer to selection criteria in the FAQ document (point 20), and describe how the project will address, as applicable: one or more of the DTP's strategic skills priority areas - data science skills, interdisciplinary skills, in vivo skills, translation and innovation collaboration across GW4 partner institutions the strategic aim to increase diversity in our supervisory teams (including early career researchers, gender, ethnicity and other areas of diversity)

Please indicate by tick-box(es) which of the strategic skills areas will be developed through the project. *

- Data Science skills
- Interdisciplinary skills
- In vivo skills
- Translation and Innovation

Please indicate if there is an element of collaboration across the GW4 institutions. *

- Yes
- No

If yes, please indicate which GW4 institutions will be involved. Please tick all that apply.

- Bath
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Exeter

Please describe how the project will address the strategic skills as listed above, including collaboration within the GW4 (maximum 600 words). *

Identification of Project-Specific Training Needs

Please identify high-level/high-cost training needs that will need to be supported by the DTP for this project to be feasible (e.g. in vivo biology, human brain scans, high performance computing or large data set storage, international collaboration). NOTE: High-level/high-cost training needs not identified at this stage cannot be financially supported later in the studentship. Please also state use of existing courses/resources across GW4 that can be accessed to provide specialist training (maximum 120 words). *

Approvals

I confirm that I have institutional approval, eg from Head of School/Faculty/Dept, to submit this project proposal.

Yes

No

A GW4 BioMed Studentship includes a UKRI level stipend, fees, RTSG of up to £5k per annum (depending on nature of project) and a travel grant of £300 per annum.

Studentships are funded for 4 years with the submission deadline at 4 years. Additional awards can be made to cover the cost of high cost or exceptional training needs via a bi-annual competitive bidding process. There are NO additional DTP funds for enhanced project costs. Note the RTSG is for research training and support and in line with UKRI and MRC policy, must be made available to the students for costs of, for example, training workshops, conference attendance and travel associated with attending development activities and placements. It must not be used solely for the purchase of consumables and MUST NOT be used at all for the purchase of items which would reasonably be expected to be provided by the institution including laptops. Project costs must therefore be covered by laboratory or programme grants.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS THE LAST QUESTION. CLICKING 'FINISH' WILL SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL AND IT CANNOT BE UNDONE.

