

## ESRC PhD Internships

### Introduction

ESRC is the single largest funder of doctoral training in the social sciences in the UK. Through our Doctoral Training Network we support circa 3000 students at any one time and drive best practice and standards.

Our funding seeks to develop **globally competitive** social science researchers who are able to operate in **interdisciplinary**, **collaborative**, and **challenge-led** environments across a **range of sectors**.

As part of their training, we strongly encourage our students to undertake Internships with non-academic organisations. Placements provide an invaluable opportunity for them to develop their broader transferrable skills; leadership, communication, collaboration and project management, which are essential for researchers of the future in and outside academia. In return they provide organisations with access to the talent of early career social science researchers to deliver a specific piece of work or contribute to an ongoing activity.

### What can ESRC PhD students bring to your organisation?

Our students have secured a highly competitive ESRC scholarship and are at the top of the social sciences' doctoral cohort. They have broad interests covering a variety of topics within the social sciences but what they have in common is an interest in solving socio-economic problems. They have excellent research skills, high-level critical thinking and are able to analyse complex issues. Our students are up and coming experts in their fields, often at the cutting edge, using innovative techniques and with fresh ideas. They can:

- Complete research, project work, policy/programme evaluations or produce reports
- Bring a fresh perspective to your organisation and help link practice with the latest academic knowledge.
- Help you to build and access a network of researchers
- Provide your staff with experience of supervising and working with researchers
- Help you recruit doctoral graduates

### What does an Internship look like?

Internships should comprise a clear programme of activity/project which will draw on the student's research skills and knowledge and support them to develop their wider transferrable skills. The specific activities may include:

- Working on a challenge together with industry stakeholders
- Informing policy makers on a particular topic
- Contributing to the development of a program or service
- Disseminating research findings and testing research ideas
- Analysing rich real-world datasets, and provide feedback to the organisation on findings

### How do they work?

- Flexible timing – up to 3 months (FTE) and any time of the year (higher uptake during summer)
- Internships can be full or part time and be physical, virtual or a combination.

- ESRC funds the students time (c. £5200 for three months). Host organisation are expected to make a contribution to the additional costs associated with the placement, for example the students travel and subsistence costs.
- The focus of the Internship is determined by your organisation
- You can specify the student skills/profile required and select the student/s from applications
- Host are expected to provide:
  - Access to adequate working space (recognising that some Internships may include home working) and equipment to undertake the Internship
  - Experienced staff members on hand to help develop skills / act as a mentor
  - Ensure students are embedded within a team and included in all meetings, events and training opportunities that are available.

### **Getting started**

Potential hosts will be asked to complete a pro-forma providing information on the programme of activity/ project they want the student to undertake, the skills and experience they require, where the Internship will be located and how the student will be supported. The host should indicate when they want the Internship to take place.

This will then be reviewed by the ESRC following which we will advertise the placement to our students.

The students will then apply directly to the host organisation, with the host processing the applications.

For some examples of completed Pro forma's please see below:

[Welsh Government Internship Opportunities – Application Deadline 14 March 2022 | ESRC Wales Doctoral Training Partnership \(walesdtp.ac.uk\)](#)