



Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Industrial Cooperative Awards in Science and Technology (ICASE) Studentships

GUIDE FOR STAFF

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EPSRC ICASE Post-award Guidance

Overview

Industrial Cooperative Awards in Science & Technology (ICASE) provide funding for PhD studentships where businesses take the lead in arranging projects with an academic partner of their choice. The aim of these awards is to provide PhD students with a challenging, first-rate research training experience, within the context of a mutually beneficial research collaboration between academic and partner organisations, for example industry and policy making bodies.

Each partnering business will receive an ICASE [allocation](#) from the EPSRC. Associated with this, a competitive selection process is normally conducted within each business in order to select the academic partners and aligned research projects. Following selection, the business partner organisation will be required to complete an ICASE sign-up form for submission to the EPSRC; completion of this form will require input from the academic partner.

Following successful award and allocation to Strathclyde academics as part of each ICASE round, the University receives one annual ICASE grant from the EPSRC; this includes all of the successful ICASE grants awarded to Strathclyde. The academic supervisors will also receive an email confirmation of the award from the EPSRC; this e-mail should be forwarded to the [PGR Funding Team](#).

It should be noted that the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) also receive an ICASE allocation from the EPSRC, which are also awarded to University collaborators on a competitive basis. Based on our strategic partnership with the NPL, an internal Strathclyde application process has been established and is aligned with the overarching NPL competitive ICASE allocation process. Please contact the [PGR Funding Team](#) for further information if required.

It is expected that students funded against 2020 ICASE awards will start their PhD on the 1st of October 2020, however the latest date by which they must start is the 1st October 2021.

Contracts & Agreements

As ICASE awards are collaborative, an agreement should be drawn up between the University and the partner organisation involved. The EPSRC strongly encourage that this is done prior to commencement of the PhD to avoid any issues or misunderstandings at a later stage.

To initiate the contract, the academic supervisor should contact the [RKES Reception](#) to be assigned a Grants and Contract Manager/Officer with information on the type of award and the name of the collaborating company. Aligned with this, it is often beneficial for the academic to make initial connections with the business partner to formulate the agreed route for initiating and managing the contract process; this could include the use of previously constructed ICASE-aligned contracts as a basis for the new contract.

The EPSRC requires a mandatory monetary contribution from the partner organisation for each ICASE studentship of at least one third of the funding provided by EPSRC (i.e. a minimum of £29,232 for 2020/21). This contribution should be paid via the University and can be used for **a) the income of the student as a top up to the EPSRC minimum stipend** (not specified by EPSRC but usually between £1,500 and £3,000 per annum), and **b) the other costs of the project** (student's travel, consumables, etc.) Contributions from the project partner cannot be used towards tuition fees or towards the URKI minimum stipend as these are covered by the core EPSRC ICASE award. Any travel required to and from the business partner's facilities, as part of the research, should be covered by the business partner, over and above the minimum third of the studentship contribution.

The academic supervisor must complete a grant costing to detail the split of the company contribution. Funding splits should be agreed between the academic supervisor and the contact within the business partner organisation.

Once agreements are in place, and an account has been set up for the industrial partner's financial contribution, supervisors should inform the PGR Funding Team of the account number.

Identifying & Recruiting a Candidate

When considering and selecting a potential candidate for the ICASE studentship, careful consideration must be paid the UKRI eligibility criteria:

- UKRI fees and stipend can only be awarded to UK and EU students and not to EEA or International students;
- EU students are only eligible for UKRI stipend if they have been resident in the UK for 3 years, including for study purposes, immediately prior to starting their PhD;
- If an EU student cannot fulfil this condition, then they are eligible for a **fees only** studentship;
- International students cannot be funded from UKRI funds unless they are 'settled' in the UK. 'Settled' means being ordinarily resident in the UK without any immigration restrictions on the length of stay in the UK. To be 'settled' a student must either have the [Right to Abode](#) or [Indefinite leave to remain](#) in the UK or have the right of permanent residence in the UK under EC law. If the student's passport describes them as a British citizen, they have the Right of Abode.
- Students with full [Refugee](#) status are eligible for fees and full stipend.
- It is important to note that residential eligibility is based on a physical presence in the UK. British citizenship in itself does not satisfy the residential eligibility requirement.

If you are unsure of the eligibility of a candidate for UKRI funding, or would like to discuss the eligibility of a candidate under the EPSRC '[10% Rule](#)' please contact the [PGR Funding Team](#) as early as possible.

Once a potential candidate has been identified, the lead academic or Departmental/School administrator must inform the PGR Funding Team. The Team will then review the candidate's Pegasus application, and perform the final eligibility checks. Once eligibility has been established, a studentship letter will be sent to the candidate, with the supervisor and Departmental/School PGR Administrator copied in for their records. It is essential that candidates are not told that they have received the studentship prior to receiving the official studentship letter.

UKRI Joint Electronic System (Je-S)

As a condition of UKRI studentship funding, all UKRI-funded students' details must be entered into the UKRI's Joint Electronic System (Je-S) by no later than one month after the student commences their studies. Academic supervisors will be contacted by the PGR Funding Team requesting the necessary information in a dedicated form. This information will then be used to create an individual Je-S record for the student. Each funding council has a dedicated form, which can be found on [PGR Funding Team SharePoint](#) page.

If an EPSRC ICASE student is looking to take voluntary suspension for any reason, the PGR Funding Team must be notified of the dates of, and reason for, the voluntary suspension, as their Je-S record must be updated to reflect any changes, and the studentship funding may be affected.

Medical Leave

The EPSRC ICASE studentship will cover stipend payments for absences covered by a medical certificate for up to thirteen weeks (3 months) within any 12-month period. Voluntary suspension

must be taken for the period to allow fee payments to be suspended and the studentship duration to be extended accordingly.

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, and Parental Leave

EPSRC ICASE funded students are entitled to up to 52 weeks (12 months) of maternity or shared parental leave. The first 26 weeks (6 months) is paid at full stipend rate. The following 13 weeks (3 months) are paid at a level commensurate with employee entitlements to statutory maternity pay. The final 13 weeks are not paid. Partners are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend. Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave; this may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on the individual circumstances. Voluntary suspension should be taken for the period to allow fee payments to be suspended and the studentship duration to be extended.

Extensions to duration of study, other than those for voluntary suspension, are not recognised by EPSRC, and students who are granted extensions by the University will be recorded as late submissions in the annual EPSRC PhD Submission Survey.

Useful Links

- [Introduction to Industrial CASE](#)
- [ICASE 2020 Information](#)
- [ICASE Additional Conditions](#)
- [PGR Studentship System](#)
- [General and Course Regulations for Graduate and Postgraduate Awards](#)
- [Policy and Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Study](#)
- [Pegasus student application](#)