

## Internship: Guide for Students

The ESRC SCDTP Internship programme enables SCDTP students to undertake an internship for up to 3 months (full-time or part-time equivalent) during the course of their PhD. The ESRC-SCDTP has allocated funding to provide internships each year.

### Why do an internship?

There are many positive reasons for doctoral students to undertake an internship. Whether you plan to stay in academia or are aiming for a non-academic role, employers are increasingly looking for postgraduates with well-rounded skill sets. An internship can provide evidence to use on CVs and in interviews to demonstrate a broad range of skills and experiences which go beyond the area of PhD of research. An internship can be an opportunity for postgraduates to understand their research in a wider context and consider new career ideas. They can also be a chance to travel, experience different regions and cultures and trial living in new areas of the country/world.

A key component of a SCDTP funded internship is to engage in knowledge exchange. Placements are within a professional environment where doctoral students can build bridges between academia and external organisations to influence policy and practice. Ultimately an ESRC funded internship will embody a two-way flow of information, ideas, experience and expertise that provides benefit to both parties.

### Finding an internship

The SCDTP is inviting Non-Academic Partners interested in supporting an intern to register they organisation and potential project with us. This will support the process of match-making between organisations and students. This does not prevent you from identifying organisations with whom you may wish to arrange an internship. Should you wish to arrange your own internship you should discuss this Prof Melanie Nind (SCDTP Deputy Director, Training & Impact) at the earliest opportunity ([M.A.Nind@soton.ac.uk](mailto:M.A.Nind@soton.ac.uk)). Other students are advertised for competitive application.

### ESRC-SCDTP Guidelines

Students are able to undertake an internship at any time during their PhD studies, but the internship must commence at least three months prior to the official PhD funding end date. Students on the 1+3 funding scheme may be considered to undertake an internship no earlier than the summer before their PhD starts.

Internships can last from 1 to 3 months; they can be done on a full or part-time basis, and with more than one placement provider.

The internship programme is intended to support knowledge exchange between academic and non-academic partners, therefore students cannot undertake a placement within a university or research institute. However, approval may be given for internships that aim to increase the impact of the research, for example through communication and policy-related activities. It is important that

students source placements that are relevant to their PhD subject or methodological area, so that a demonstrable level of knowledge exchange can take place.

### **Internship funding**

For full-time internships, during which the student's PhD programme is suspended, the student will receive an extension to their studentship for the same duration as their internship. Part-time internships may run alongside full or part-time study as long as the student is not over-committed.

Students who hold a Tier 4 visa should discuss possible internship arrangements with the SC DTP manager ([scdtp@soton.ac.uk](mailto:scdtp@soton.ac.uk)).

Travel and accommodation expenses can be claimed during a full-time internship, up to a maximum of £1,000 per month. All claims for expenses must be supported by appropriate documentation. Students can request an advance payment of predicted expenses if necessary. This should be discussed with the SC DTP Manager ([scdtp@soton.ac.uk](mailto:scdtp@soton.ac.uk)).

### **Application to carry out an Internship**

Applications will be accepted throughout the year and considered by the SC DTP directors. We recommend applying 2-3 months before the internship would be due to start. You will need to work with your internship placement provider to create an Internship Plan which you will outline on the application form signed by you, your supervisor and the provider.

During this process it is vitally important that you speak with your academic supervisors about suitable times to undertake an internship, they may even have ideas or contacts you can use. Your application will also require confirmation of support from your supervisors. It is helpful if they can highlight the benefits that will arise from you spending up to 3 months as an intern during the specified period.

If you have already secured a placement independently, you should email your supervisor's Letter of Support and Internship Plan to the SC DTP Manager ([scdtp@soton.ac.uk](mailto:scdtp@soton.ac.uk)) so that the placement can be considered for funding/approval.

### **After the internship**

A condition of receiving ESRC funding is that, within 3 months of the end of the internship, you write about the experience for the SC DTP Blog. Students also will be required to give detailed feedback on their placement and demonstrate from a knowledge exchange perspective the skills they gained and shared through the experience. Considerable value is placed on the feedback about internships in the annual student survey as it helps to develop and improve the internship programme.

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