

Guidance for International RiP Applications

Please note that this guidance is based on ESRC guidance issued in March 2026 and is subject to change. Please contact the RiP team before submitting your application for an international placement.

Does the international placement meet your DNA?

Explain how and why the international placement is central to your development as a social scientist. Include specific information, such as key skills that the placement will provide which are not available to you in the UK. Examples include access to data/methods that are world-leading which would develop your employability and research skills; help you develop research and impact networks that are important for your future career in that country or internationally; lead to outputs (authorship on report/paper/blog) with the international host partners.

Explain how and why the international placement complements your current experience. For example, you may already have UK-based work experience; hence, an international placement will add value to your CV.

Any additional information?

Please explain any other considerations in applying for an international placement. These can include justifying why this is a unique ambassadorial opportunity for you, your university, the SCDTP and the UK. For example, the host may be an important faculty/university partner in research projects and impact case studies; the project deliverables will lead to reputational benefits for your faculty, university and UK researchers.

Is this a paid placement?

Some international organisations advertise paid placements. Please clarify if your placement is paid. For paid placements (in the UK or internationally), your stipend will be discontinued for the duration of the placement.

Will the host contribute to your international placement costs?

Carefully consider the costs of your international placement and discuss this with your potential host. The expectation is that the host will contribute to the **direct costs** of the project. However, there are **additional costs** to consider for **in-person placements**, such as visa fees, accommodation and travel, which are likely to exceed the maximum

funding available from SCDTP for the RiP placement. The RiP team is happy to help negotiate this with the host.

Funding for an international placement

If the host organisation is unable to provide financial support for additional costs, you can apply for **up to £1,000** to cover reasonable travel and accommodation expenses from the SCDTP.

Other funding sources

No additional financial support is available from the SCDTP, in particular ESRC is clear that the Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) is intended to support the costs of the PhD research itself and **cannot** be used to fund RiP placement expenses such as travel and accommodation.

Consider whether the placement could coincide with other agreed activities such as Overseas Fieldwork (OFW) or Overseas Institutional Visit (OIV) to reduce travel costs.

The cost of accommodation during an in-person placement (as with other training) can be reduced by staying with family or friends as long as this is in line with your university's risk assessment and insurance policies. Please check and include confirmation with your application where relevant. Without this, any approval will be conditional pending appropriate evidence that no policies are breached.

You can use your stipend to contribute towards travel and accommodation costs for in-person placements if you wish, however, remember to take into account how much you will need to cover your day-to-day living expenses whilst on placement (which could be more expensive than at home) and existing commitments (such as rent and bills) to maintain your primary accommodation at home.

Note that expenditure using SCDTP RiP funding must be in accordance with your university's financial regulations – further guidance on this can be found in the **SCDTP Finance Guide**. Please bear this in mind if you were planning to **split costs** for the same thing (e.g. paying for part of your accommodation with SCDTP RiP funding and part from your stipend).

As a SCDTP student, you will not be expected to pay for any part of the placement yourself.

If the host is not contributing to the costs and your required budget – after taking all of the above into account - exceeds the £1,000 RiP funding available from SCDTP, your application for an in-person placement is unlikely to be successful in which case you will be asked to consider a virtual placement with the international host or a UK placement instead.

The RiP team is there to support and guide your application for an international RiP. Please contact them by emailing (scdtp@soton.ac.uk) to discuss your application before submitting your application.