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Exeter – Université Paris-Saclay

Visiting Research Student Fellowship Programme

Programme Guidelines

The University of Exeter and Université Paris-Saclay partner for a range of collaborative activities, built upon a foundation of research and education links plus shared strategic priorities. We have established research cooperation in Climate Science, Sports Science, and Computer Sciences; along with emerging cooperation in areas including Antimicrobial Resistance from a One Health perspective and broader Global Health research in areas such as public health, healthy ageing and health inequalities. We have established a five-year 'Cotutelle agreement', enabling delivery of a series of double PhD degree projects with match-funding and co-supervision from both institutions in which successful students will obtain PhD awards from both Exeter and Université Paris-Saclay. We have established a student exchange, offering clinical electives for outbound and inbound medical students each year, allowing our students to explore different medical specialties and healthcare environments by observing clinical practice.

Programme Objectives

The Visiting Research Student Fellowship programme will provide PhD Students with an opportunity to work with a supervisor on a research project. The key aim of the programme is to foster collaboration, develop research skills, and provide students with meaningful experience with projects aligned with the academic and strategic priorities of both institutions.

The specific objectives of the programme are to:

- Support pre-defined, high-quality research activities to increase research productivity
- Provide PhD students with practical research experience in an international and interdisciplinary academic environment.
- Foster cross-institutional collaborations and academic development

Student Eligibility

- The Visiting Research Student Fellowship programme is open to MPhil/PhD/Professional Doctorate students (University of Exeter homed students) and PhD (Université Paris-Saclay students) currently enrolled at either the University of Exeter or Université Paris-Saclay.
- Applicants must demonstrate academic excellence and a keen interest in research.
- Students must meet any additional eligibility requirements specific to the research project.
- Students must be eligible to hold the fellowship by the award start date for the duration of the fellowship.

Fellowship details

Award Term: applicants may request a minimum of 2 weeks of support and up to 8 weeks.

Award Amount: up to **€3,750 / GBP £3,300** per fellowship

Award number: four (4) fellowships (two by institution) per year



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Cost Eligibility

Applicants should develop a budget that is accurate as successful applicants will be required to abide by official reporting, insurance and registration requirements of their home institution as outlined in:

Exeter policies:

https://www.exeter.ac.uk/v8media/universityofexeter/governanceandcompliance/University_Travel_Policy.pdf

Université Paris-Saclay:

Please reach out to strategic.partnerships@universite-paris-saclay.fr should you have any questions.

Eligible costs include:

- Travel and subsistence costs (meals and accommodation) for the student
- Train travel, which must be claimed at the most economical rate available
- Travel cancellation insurance and seat reservation charges
- Accommodations
- Travel health insurance for the student if they do not receive any such benefits from their institution and/or other source
- Safety-related expenses for field work, such as protective gear, immunizations, etc.
- Entry visa fees when required for the purpose of the exchange
- Public transportation fees for travel made to the workplace

The following items are not eligible for funding under this scheme:

- Student fees / tuition
- Salaries and benefits
- third-party travel costs
- publication costs
- meeting, venue and catering costs at host institution
- indirect costs, estates/capital costs and overheads associated with internal research facilities
- passport and immigration fees

Resources

The successful student will be considered a visiting research student at the host institution per the guidelines.

- For University of Exeter,
(https://www.exeter.ac.uk/v8media/specifcites/tqa/pgr/PGR_Handbook_Chapter_16.pdf)
- For Université Paris-Saclay: Please reach out to strategic.partnerships@universite-paris-saclay.fr should you have any questions.

Students may be granted access to resources at the host institution such as research facilities, libraries, and other resources including wellbeing and accommodation support.



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Application process

1. **Proposal submission:** Each year, MPhil/PhD/Professional Doctorate students (University of Exeter homed students) and PhD (Université Paris-Saclay) students wishing to undertake collaborative work with the host institution must submit a full proposal by the deadline. A complete application includes the following components:
 - a. Application form:
Assessment criteria (see criteria definitions and formatting requirements on next page)
 1. Research proposal (max 1000 words) and appendix (if needed, max 1 page)
 2. Quality of the student (max 500 words)
 3. Quality of the environment (max 500 words)
 - ii. Budget form
 - iii. Home supervisor approval
 - iv. Host supervisor approval

The duration of each fellowship will be determined based on project requirements but will typically range from 2 to 8 weeks. Applicants will need to obtain approval from the supervisor of their home institution, the host supervisor as well as the authorized signatories from their Department/Unit at the time of submission.

It is critical to check with the existing supervisor at the home institution and the potential host supervisor as early as possible to ensure the proposal is developed with their support and approvals are in place at the time of application. Supervisor names and signature approvals are to be included on the application form. If physical/e-signatures are problematic, email endorsements must be submitted as attachments with applications.

For your application to be considered complete, both the home and host supervisor must submit their approvals.

2. **Review and Selection:** Applications will be reviewed by a panel of senior administrator and key academic leads for the partnership from both institutions. The review process will include evaluating each proposal against the assessment criteria and selecting the projects that will be recommended for funding.
3. **Notification of results:** All applicants will be notified about the results within the specified timeframe (see Important Dates). Once notified, students will be required to complete their Fellowship by 31st July 2026 and submit a final report summarizing their research outcomes within a month after the fellowship.



Assessment Criteria

Students will be asked to provide details in their application about how their proposed fellowship will address the following assessment criteria.

Assessment Criteria	Description
Quality of the proposed research or creative activities (max 1000 words + 1 page for ancillary material as needed)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Completeness of the background and literature review.2. Quality and originality of the questions and strategic importance of the proposal to address knowledge gaps in a key thematic focus area.3. Clarity of the goals, research design, and methods.4. Feasibility of the project and appropriateness of the project timeline, including timeliness of the visit.5. Identification of potential risks that may arise during the project and possible mitigation strategies.6. Appropriateness of the results and process to generate new knowledge and make an impact.
Quality of the Student (max 500 words)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Qualifications and previous training and experience of the applicant to undertake the activities described in the proposal.2. Evidence of leadership through contributions to the research field, in addition to curricular and/or professional contributions.3. Evidence of generating knowledge that is creative/original and of high quality.
Quality of the environment (max 500 words)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Alignment of the proposed activities with existing research activities performed by the host supervisor2. Availability of resources (personnel, facilities, and equipment) to achieve the research goals and ensure the success of the work.3. Evidence of mentorship and adequacy of the mentorship plan to support the student towards developing a personalised and world-class international student experience.



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Important Dates

Date	Activity
30 September, 2025	Calls for applications issued
10 November, 2025	Full application deadline
mid-December, 2025	Anticipated notice of funding decision
January 2026	Anticipated Start of funding
31 st July, 2026	Latest Project end date (complete fellowship and expenditure)
1 month after exchange	Final report submission deadline

Grant acquittal and reporting

Awardees must agree to adhere to all requirements related to the receipt of funding including deadlines and procedures for acquittal of funds and reporting on outcomes.

Awardees will have to utilize the funds for the project by the end of July 2026.

Within 1 month upon completion of the exchange, awardees will be required to submit a brief report outlining the successes and outcomes of the project. Report forms will be provided.

This report will be utilized for the follow up of potential opportunities, reporting on outcomes and to highlight successes of the initiative between Paris-Saclay & Exeter.

Awardees who embark on international travel are required to abide by official reporting, insurance and registration requirements of their home institution as outlined in:

Exeter policies:

[https://www.exeter.ac.uk/v8media/universityofexeter/governanceandcompliance/University Travel Policy.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/v8media/universityofexeter/governanceandcompliance/University_Travel_Policy.pdf)

- Funding is only provided for the activities detailed in the application, unless by prior agreement.
- Expenditure must not exceed the value of the award.
- Details of the award will be listed on the University of Exeter Global Partnerships, or the Paris-Saclay website as appropriate.
- The home institution may, from time to time, contact award holders to monitor progress and expenditure.
- A final project report and financial acquittal will need to be completed and submitted within **one month** of the visit.
- English Language requirements for visiting students state that they must meet the UKVI minimum requirements which is equivalent to IELTS 5.5 overall and 5.5 in each subsection, however we do accept a number of English Language test listed on our website <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/study/englishlanguage requirements/>, details for visiting students is at the bottom of the webpage.
- Visitor visa: If you are coming to the university to study or conduct research for a period of less than 6 months (for example as an exchange student) you can do this using a [Visitor Visa](#).



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Credit-mobility students entering the UK on a Visitor visa will be exempt from the English Language requirements above if the Partner Institution completes the Exeter English Language Proficiency form confirming their student has the minimum proficiency in English language equivalent to B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Contact with the Host Institution

If you are interested in making an application for a Visiting Research Student Fellowship, but you require support in making contact with potential supervisors at the Host Institution, Exeter Students should please contact GP-Funding@exeter.ac.uk and Paris-Saclay students should please contact strategic.partnerships@universite-paris-saclay.fr

Support with setting up

You can seek advice from the Host Partner on matters of accommodation, but please note that the Host Institutions cannot secure your accommodation for you and may not have visiting student housing available on campus. You may consider short-let apartments or hotels, and the Host Institution can advise on locations and travel time to and from campus.

In drafting your budget, please provide examples of actual costs whether for accommodation, local transport and international travel. There is no fixed duration for the Visiting Research Student Fellowship, and the budget should be adapted to the duration of your fellowship.

Please contact the Host Institution if you have any questions on IT resources that might be available to you, access to physical office space and staff support while you are on your fellowship. Please note that the expectation would be that you are physically engaged at the Host Institution campus for the duration of your fellowship and working with your supervisor at the Host Institution.

In your application, you'll be asked to confirm that you have the support of your Scientific Lead for Paris-Saclay Students; and the support of the Department Director of Postgraduate Research for University of Exeter Students to undertake this fellowship.

Upon completing your fellowship, you will be asked to complete a brief Narrative and Expenditure Report outlining your activities and costs incurred throughout your fellowship. You may also be asked to be available during future cycles of the Paris-Saclay -Exeter Visiting Research Student Fellowship programme to share your experiences and advice with prospective applicants.



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Contact Information

Please consult your home institution contacts if you would like any additional information.

Exeter: Stuart Westhead (Global Partnerships Regional Head – North America & Europe)

S.westhead@exeter.ac.uk; **Global Partnerships** GP-Funding@exeter.ac.uk

Université Paris-Saclay: strategic.partnerships@universite-paris-saclay.fr