



Scottish Graduate School
of Social Science

Sgoil Cheumnaichean Saidheans
Sòisealta na h-Alba

SGSSS-SFC Saltire Emerging Research (SER) Programme

FAQ during Q&A

TIMEFRAME AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

1. How many places are offered?

The SGSSS (Scottish Graduate School for Social Science) SER (Saltire Emerging Researcher) Programme offers up to 12 placements. 6 of these placements are currently available via our Open Call competition with a deadline of 3rd December 2021, through which you can apply with a placement project that must include a European hosting partner chosen by yourself. The remaining 6 placements will be promoted in early 2022 as targeted placements, meaning that SGSSS will provide the European partner and you can apply to the project(s) of your interest.

2. Are the placements for 2022 or 2023? Is there another round of applications for 2023 in case we not successful this year?

The current SGSSS SER programme is funded until August 2022. We do not know if extra funding will be available after August 2022.

3. If successful, will I have to suspend my PhD or is the placement going to be considered within my current PhD timeline?

Yes, PhD students are required to suspend their studies to undertake a SER placement. This should be agreed with your supervisory team and your home institution.

4. If my institution agrees to not suspend the PhD, would that work with this placement?

No, you will not be able to progress your studies and undertake the placement at the same time. This is because the programme allocates a stipend at the UKRI standard rate (regardless of your current funding status – i.e. whether you are an ESRC or self-funded student) with a specific purpose – to enable you to undertake this placement. If you were to progress your PhD at the same time of the placement, you would be receiving double salary which will not be possible.

5. Is the duration fixed at 6 months or up to 6 months?

The maximum duration is six months, but it can be less than this depending on your proposed programme of activities.

6. Should the proposed research be independent of the PhD thesis, or can it be a part of it?

Your proposed activities can be related to your PhD research however you need to make it clear in your application form how these activities are additional to what you are already doing as part of your PhD. In other words, what you are proposing for your placement would not have happened had this funding not been made available.

7. Is there likely to be an "in-bound" placement programme, and if so, when is the possible date for this? We are currently supporting only out-bound placements, and this will be the focus of our efforts for this year. If the funding were to be renewed by SFC (Scottish Funding Council) in the future years, we would consider supporting in-bound placements.

ELIGIBILITY

8. Am I eligible if I have recently completed my PhD at an eligible institution but am currently unemployed?

Unfortunately to apply for this programme you will have to be *currently* registered for a PhD or employed as an ECR (Early Career Researcher) at an SGSSS partner HEI (Higher Education Institute) in a Social Science discipline detailed by the ESRC (Economic and Social Research Centre). If your current status does not fall in any of these two categories, you are not eligible for this programme.

9. How do we quantify and determine that our PhD is 50% social science?

Please familiarise yourself with [this UKRI guidance](#) to assess whether your PhD falls within the ERCS remit. If in doubt, please discuss with your supervisor who will be able to advise further.

10. I have an ESRC postdoctoral fellowship until September 2022. Can I apply for this opportunity? And if yes, can I apply for a small-scale new project (my fellowship does not allow new research)?

In principle you could apply as an ECR if currently employed by one of the SGSSS partner HEIs in Social Science discipline as detailed by ESRC. Though, you would need approval from your HEI, and it is advisable to check with ESRC if they would consider this programme as new research or not.

11. Are students in their write up stage eligible to apply if they are beyond the 4th year of write up (extended)?

If you are currently registered as a PhD student at one of our HEI members, you are eligible to apply regardless of your current stage. Your application will need to be supported by your supervisor and you will need to explain how your placement will deliver a wider contribution to the research culture at your home institution upon your return (see part 3 of the Application Form - 'Case for Placement').

12. I am on a short-term or part/time contact in my current employment. Am I eligible to apply as I might go unemployed in spring 2022?

Applicants must be *currently* registered for a PhD or employed as an ECR at an SGSSS partner HEI in a Social Science discipline detailed by the ESRC. If your current status falls in one of the categories detailed above you can apply for this programme, even if you may be unemployed later in 2022. Please bear in mind that you will need to cover, in your application form, the expected benefits and impact of your placement including wider contribution to the PGR and ECR social science community.

13. I am an international student and my VISA status doesn't allow me to suspend my PhD. Can I still apply for the Saltire programme?

Yes, Tier 4 students must remain enrolled in their PhD and can to apply to this programme through the hybrid model option. You will be expected to undertake the Saltire placement on a part-time basis allocating a maximum of 20 hours a week to your placement whilst continuing your PhD.

PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPMENT

14. How do you go about identifying a host institution?

Please refer to the [Q&A slide deck](#) for tips on how to build a relationship with a potential host institution.

15. Should we start contacting the host academic now, or after the application outcome?

Yes. You will need a statement of support from the host organisation to complete your application; so, it is mandatory for you to discuss your ideas with your host partner before applying.

16. Where can we see the targeted opportunities?

Targeted opportunities will be available from the [SGSSS SER dedicated webpage](#) in early 2022. We will also promote them via our [newsletter and Weekly Digest](#).

17. Does it have to be an academic host, or it could be industry based?

The SER programme focuses on academic partnership developments rather than industry. You could design a placement that will include engagement with communities and industry, but the host of your partnership will need to be within an academic context.

LOGISTICS

18. Does the travel need to originate from Scotland? If someone is engaged in fieldwork in some other country and then wants to continue to this placement - can they plan that travel?

We are not limiting travel flows in the current guidance; so, we will accept applications where students are registered for a PhD at the Scottish HEI but may not

start their travel in Scotland – please provide a rationale for your request and respond to the value for money criterion.

19. How much consideration do you give to carbon footprint when considering travel options applied for, or do you purely consider financial cost?

We are offering hybrid and fully online options. We will consider carbon-offset costs as part of the budget.

FUNDING

20. Is there a set amount or do we submit a draft budget of any reasonable costing that can be approved (inc. flights, rent, materials/consumables etc.)?

Each applicant will have a maximum of £9500 available to their placement and will be able to design the use of that budget as needed to achieve the objectives of their placement. Value for money is one of the 3 assessment criteria, so the panel will evaluate applications accordingly to how this has been considered when designing the placement.

For any other questions, please get in touch: team@sgsss.co.uk