

Collaborative Doctoral Awards Summary

for students, HEIs and non-HEI partners



What is the LAHP Collaborative Doctoral Award?

Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) encourage and develop collaboration and build partnerships with a wide range of organisations in the public, private and third sectors, including grass-roots and activist organisations. CDAs are not only a route into academia, but, crucially, provide students with hands-on industry experience outside of the university environment. CDA projects benefit partner organisations, by enabling relevant and impactful research to be undertaken, which would otherwise be difficult for the organisation to accomplish.

LAHP's CDA studentships are funded for 3.5 years (full-time) or 7 years (part-time), enabling students to undertake and enhance research projects with input from a non-HEI partner.



The Supervision Team

CDAs are supported by a supervision team, typically involving two supervisors from the Higher Education Institution (HEI) and a supervisor from the non-HEI partner. Formal supervision meetings with all parties take place, at least, every three months. Work plans should be jointly agreed upon between the student, the academic and non-HEI supervisors and collectively revisited and revised at relevant points throughout the course of the research project. Relevant meeting notes from joint supervisions, including any changes to the work plan, should be circulated between parties after each joint meeting.

Alongside the non-HEI supervisor, there may be a lead contact at the non-HEI partner organisation with overall responsibility for managing CDAs and related PhD programmes. Identifying who this is and how to contact them will be established in the induction process.

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Induction

LAHP recommends that the first joint supervision team meeting occurs in the very early stages of the PhD journey, providing clear orientation for the student, and enabling the joint development of the PhD work plan. The first meeting should ensure that the student is clear on initial expectations around engagement with both supervisory partners. Navigating a new institution can be a challenging process for anyone, but particularly for a CDA student.

The induction process should include:

- Establishing the cultural-historical context and structure of the organisations, where the student's research fits within this, and where cultural and structural challenges might arise for the student,
- Deciding who the key initial contacts are that the student will need to establish themselves and their research work; and how to facilitate those introductions,
- Outlining the level of access the student has to the institution's facilities and internal networks, including the access protocols and relevant policies and procedures, and
- Where applicable, explaining the processes and expectations of institutional email accounts and other forms of communication. This includes clarifying the types of emails, calendar invites and notifications they may receive, events or meetings where attendance are essential or optional, and exploring how to manage their account, including how to opt-in or out of communications.

Critical and Open Approach to Supervision

For CDAs undertaken from critical perspectives, it will be important to have early joint conversations around institutional openness to be challenged, and how the student will be supported in taking a critical stance.

CENTERING STUDENT CARE, WELL-BEING, AND SUCCESS

It is important to be aware that from the start of their studies, students are negotiating relationships in both their HEI and non-HEI organisations. In order to promote student care, well-being and success, the students' supervision team will:

- introduce and signpost the student to resources and key people to help them settle into and thrive in their academic and professional environments,
- help the student navigate their insider/outsider positionality in academic and professional spaces,
- explore new and unexpected development opportunities that arise, without putting undue pressure to undertake them,
- actively work to create physical and psychological safe and inclusive environments for the student, ensuring that they are always treated with dignity and respect,
- acknowledge and address systemic oppression and challenges that the student might experience, and
- enable the student's autonomy to make their own decisions on how they and their research is used and communicated.

COMMITMENT FROM NON-HEI SUPERVISORS

CDA students will spend significant time within their non-HEI organisations, agreed within the work plan. Non-HEI supervisors support students by:

- Providing the student with an appropriate workspace*,
- Providing the student with a thorough organisational induction,
- Attending and contributing to supervision meetings,
- Being available to the student for regular guidance and support,
- Establishing and introducing the student to key contacts, according to the work plan,
- Enabling access to collections and/or other resources necessary for the project,
- Be an advocate, ally, and sponsor of the student and their work,
- Communicate with colleagues the terms of the CDA partnership agreement,
- Advising and consulting with the HEI in cases of serious accident or incidents involving the student, and
- Cooperating with the HEI in the event of the student raising a complaint or concern about the organisation.

*unless under exceptional circumstances, agreed by LAHP

Development Opportunities

CDAs enable students to build valuable employment-related transferrable skills. The studentships can also encourage and establish longer-term links between the HEI and non-HEI partners that can have benefits for both. CDAs also bring broader social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society.

Development opportunities will typically fall in the 2nd or 3rd year of a full-time (or part-time equivalent) PhD programme to enable time for the student to establish their research. However, it is up to the student and the supervisory team to decide how to structure the time to enable the student to take advantage of these opportunities. For example, it may be appropriate and necessary to break up the development opportunities into a series of small-scale work packages.

Research extensions and placement funds

Students may extend their funding by up to a further six months to enable them to complete wider substantive specialist skills training; undertake longer-term fieldwork, or spend a sustained period with an external partner (beyond the non-HEI partner). Placement with an additional external partner may be weaved in as an integral part of their doctoral project to gain research or career-enhancing skills and/or as an opportunity to generate further impact from their research. LAHP works closely with a wide range of cultural partners to facilitate placement opportunities and also organises an annual event to promote the placement scheme. There may be additional funding for 6 months (full-time) or 12 months (part-time) for a CDA compared to an open studentship that enables students to take up development opportunities as part of their PhD programme.

See the LAHP website for further information and case studies at www.lahp.ac.uk.