FoA PhD Studentship ring-fenced for applicants from BAME backgrounds: guidance notes

# Guidance notes

## Information about the studentship

The Faculty of Arts is committed to undertaking initiatives which support under-represented groups to study with us. Currently, a lower proportion of our postgraduate research students are from racialised ethnic minority backgrounds, and so we are taking steps to address structural inequalities which may contribute to this. One such step is this Faculty-funded studentship, open to candidates who

* identify as being from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background
* have a Home tuition fee status
* currently hold an offer of a PhD place in the School of English and the departments in the School of Humanities and the School of Cultures Languages and Area Studies
* hold an offer to begin studying for a PhD in the 2025/26 academic year in a school or department within the Faculty of Arts in the 2025/26 academic year

The studentship covers the Home tuition fee for three years full-time or six years pro-rata part-time and pays a stipend which is tax-free, does not need to be paid back and will match the UKRI stipend (as an indication, the UKRI stipend for 2024/25 is £19,237 per year for full-time study, pro-rata part-time).

## How we assess your application

In evaluating your application, we consider both your project and you as a person, assigning these two aspects equal weighting. We evaluate your application anonymously, and thus ask that you do not include information which makes you identifiable, including universities you have previously attended.

Below, we describe what we are looking for in more detail.

#### Your project

Successful applicants will have an extremely well thought-through proposal which, above all else, shows what the project going to address, why it is important that this should be addressed, and how it will address this.

The project must be clearly focused, feasible (in terms of being completed within three years, and in terms of practical aspects such as methodology), innovative, and timely. We expect research questions to be set out, and for it to be clear how the methodological plans will allow applicants to answer these questions. The proposal needs to be accessible to non-specialists, and to demonstrate the importance of the project and what it brings to the discipline.

Additional guidance on writing the proposal is provided on the application form.

#### You as a person

The most important quality that we are looking for is preparedness: successful applicants will be able to show us how their professional and/or academic experience to date has prepared them for this specific research project (e.g. in terms of subjects studied, previous research conducted, projects managed). We want to know that they are the best person to undertake this research. However, in order to ensure a fair and inclusive evaluation process, we review these applications anonymously. Therefore, we ask candidates **not** to provide details of universities where they have studied previously or reveal their name or other identifying information in their application.

They will also be able to demonstrate that they are ready for postgraduate research: that they can identify the personal and professional skills they possess which will enable them to be successful as a PhD student, that they are highly motivated, and that they have a realistic idea of what their PhD journey will look like. The strongest applications will show self-awareness and insight into the potential challenges of undertaking a PhD and insight into how the candidate’s personal and professional skills will help them to overcome these challenges. Candidates are advised to read through [this resource from Prospects](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/phd-study), which includes articles outlining the typical process across three years and common challenges faced by PhD students, in considering their own preparedness for postgraduate research.

As part of our evaluation of the project, we consider why applicants feel that the relevant School or Department at Nottingham is a particularly suitable place for them to conduct their research. This means that applicants should reflect on why they have chosen these particular supervisors, and that they should have a clear sense of what they will gain by being a researcher here, specifically.

## General advice

You are **strongly** advised to share a draft of your proposal and application form with your intended supervisor(s) in plenty of time for them to offer feedback prior to the deadline. We also suggest that you work on your application over a period of time before submitting your application, allowing you to reflect on your responses. You should, of course, proofread your responses carefully and make use of spelling and grammar checkers. Be careful **not to exceed the wordcounts** given for each section. A Word version of the application form is provided (link below) so that you can take your time to prepare and share your application over a period of time.

## How to apply

**Deadline for application: 14:00 (GMT) on 7 March 2025**. To apply for the Studentship,

1. Read the guidance notes above.
2. Develop your application using the [Draft application form (MS Word document)](https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/Arts/Documents/PhD-studentship-BAME/Faculty-of-Arts-BAME-PhD-Studentship-2025-Draft-application-form.docx). You may choose to share this document with intended supervisor(s).
3. Use spelling and grammar checkers and check you are not exceeding word limits.
4. When you are ready to apply, go to the [online application form](https://forms.office.com/e/3ij1fEatDc). You may choose to copy and paste text from your Draft document into the online application form.
5. Make sure you press submit at the end of the online form. When you submit, a confirmation message will appear on your screen.
6. If you are unable to apply online, please email [AR-Arts-admin@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:AR-Arts-admin@nottingham.ac.uk).