



ESRC TEACHING AND LEARNING PROGRAMME RESEARCH TRAINING FELLOWSHIPS

Key Features of the Scheme

Introduction / Executive Summary

The ESRC's Teaching and Learning Programme is inviting applications for Research Training Fellowship Awards attached to research projects / networks currently being funded under Phases I and II of the Programme. **The closing date for applications is 27 June 2001.** This fellowship scheme is being funded by the Department for Education and Employment as a part of its contribution to the Teaching and Learning Programme and has been developed in collaboration with the British Educational Research Association.

The fellowships are targeted at serving educational practitioners (e.g. school teachers/ heads, FE principals / lecturers / managers, LEA or other policy advisors / managers, professional trainers etc) who wish to study for a research doctorate whilst continuing in their current post / profession. The fellowships will provide funding for their part-time release to support their research training and completion of a research doctorate plus part-time tuition fees and some associated research and other costs.

The Teaching and Learning Programme's mission is to support high quality research and related activities which will lead to significant improvements in the achievement of learners at all ages and stages in all sectors and contexts of education and training, including formal settings and beyond, throughout the UK. The Programme is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly and Department for Education and Employment and managed by the ESRC. It currently has a budget in excess of £23 million. Currently four major research networks are being supported under Phase I of the Programme and nine major research projects under Phase II (further information on the Programme can be found on its website at <http://www.ex.ac.uk/ESRC-TLRP>).

Fellowship applications must be submitted in conjunction with one of the current Phase I or II project / network teams under the Programme and one member of the team must be prepared to act as the fellow's mentor / supervisor. The fellows will be expected to conduct research projects which will contribute to the achievement of the Programme's mission and supplement / complement the research being conducted under the project / network to which they would be attached. Fellows will be expected to be a full participant in the Programme and the project / network team.

This scheme has been designed to contribute towards the Programme's capacity building objectives and to complement broader activities to support the development of capacity for

educational research (e.g other initiatives being undertaken by the DfEE and BERA). Upon completion of their PhDs the fellows might, for example, become research co-ordinators / leaders within their school / college / LEA / organisation and/or continue to work on research projects on a part-time basis or perhaps embark on full-time research careers.

The fellowships will also further strengthen the Programme's work in partnership with users and practitioners; the fellows will be expected to contribute towards the user engagement, communication and impact activities of their associated project and of the Programme as a whole

Funding has been provided to support a first wave of approximately 5 fellows to start in the autumn of 2001; in addition, the Programme Steering Committee has indicated that, if sufficient high quality applications are received, additional resources may be made available from other Programme funds to support a small number of extra awards under this first wave. [Further funding may also be sought for a second wave of similar size to start in 2003 (possibly linked to Phase III awards) building on lessons learnt under the first wave].

Types of Awards Available.

Applicants can apply for one of two categories of TLRP research training fellowship award:

Category 1: Applicants who already possess a recognised research training masters qualification, or who can otherwise demonstrate that they have received equivalent training that meets the requirements of ESRC's new Postgraduate Training Guidelines (2001) for their relevant discipline, may apply for awards of up to 4 years in duration and for buy-out of the full-time equivalent of 1 year 8 months (20 months in total) of their time during the course of the award. Such awards may be based in Departments with ESRC mode A or Mode B (full or part-time) recognition.

Category 2: Applicants who do not possess a recognised research training masters qualification may apply for awards of up to 5 years in duration and for buy-out of the full-time equivalent of 2 years 4 months (28 months in total) of their time during the course of the award. Such applicants will be expected to complete an ESRC-recognised training programme leading to a research training masters qualification which will meet the requirements of ESRC's new Post-graduate Training Guidelines 2001. Continued funding for fellowship after the first two years will be subject to confirmation of the award of a research training masters qualification. These awards may only be based in Departments that currently hold ESRC Mode A (full or part-time) recognition.

Eligibility of Applicants .

The fellowships are intended to support the research training leading to a research doctorate for individuals who hold a current post as an educational professional / practitioner (e.g. teacher, lecturer, head-teacher, principal, trainer, LEA Advisor, educational policy-maker or education/training manager) and who wish to enhance their research skills and conduct a PhD whilst continuing in their current profession / occupation.

Applicants should have a ***minimum*** of three years post-graduate experience as an educational professional and be in a full-time permanent post or hold a fixed term /rolling

appointment of more than 3 years duration in a relevant occupation. [Exceptionally applications from individuals in split or part-time posts or on secondment will also be considered. Such cases will be considered on their individual merits. In the case of individuals who work less than normal full-time working hours, the normal expectation will be that the amount of full-time equivalent buyout requested will be reduced pro-rata].

Applicants must be registered on a recognised course in an ESRC approved Department and Must have the support of an eligible mentor / supervisor as detailed below.

In addition to the above post-graduate experience applicants should normally have a qualification of the standard of a good honours degree at first or upper second class level from a UK academic institution (or equivalent overseas qualification). However candidates without such a qualification may also apply if they have a masters degree or professional qualification (e.g. teaching qualification) or have significant other post-graduate research experience.

Funding is not available to individuals who have previously received ESRC research studentship funding to conduct a PhD or who are seeking funding for the final year of a current PhD.

Individuals who are uncertain about their eligibility are advised to contact the ESRC Office for advice at the earliest opportunity.

Eligibility of Mentors / Supervisors

Applications must have the support of a named mentor / supervisor. The mentor / supervisor must be a named applicant on a Phase I or Phase II award currently being supported under the Teaching and Learning Programme or should be another senior member of such a project team named in the original application to the ESRC (e.g. manager of a sub-project within a network / project). The application must have the support of the principal award holder for the Project /Network.

Exceptionally proposals involving jointly supervised awards / awards with more than one mentor may be considered provided that one of the mentors / supervisors meets the above requirements.

The mentor / supervisor should be based in an eligible Department as detailed below and the award should be administered by the mentor's institution (where there is more than one mentor at least one of the mentors must be based in an eligible Department and ensure that the fellow follows the approved training course in that Department).

There is no limit on the number of different fellowship applications linked to any one project/network or mentor that may be submitted and there will be no restriction on the number of fellowship awards which can be attached to any one project / network or mentor.

Eligibility of Departments and Institutions

Awards must be administered by UK institutions recognised as eligible for the receipt of ESRC research funding.

The mentor's Department must offer a masters / PhD programme which is recognised by the ESRC and the fellow must be registered on this recognised programme (where jointly supervised awards are proposed one of the mentors' Departments must offer a recognised programme on which the fellow would be registered). For Category 1 awards the Department must currently hold ESRC Mode A or Mode B recognition for either full or part-time study. For Category 2 awards the Department must hold ESRC Mode A recognition (full or part-time).

Awards may be based in Departments with Mode A (or, for category 1 awards, Mode B recognition) in subjects other than education (e.g. psychology or sociology) where this is more appropriate for the research being undertaken by the fellow.

Eligibility / Remit of Research Proposals

Proposals must be for research that is additional to the research currently being conducted by the Phase I or II network / project and should not be for activities included in the project / network proposal approved for funding by ESRC. However, the research should complement / be relevant to the project's / network's research. It could, for example, follow-up new issues or angles emerge from the current research being undertaken or extend the research into new learning settings, subject areas or domains. Alternatively a fellow's research proposal could focus on more general / cross-cutting issues arising from the Programme's research and objectives (e.g. the role of practitioners in research / interactive research processes, building capacity, causality, conceptions of attainment / evaluating learning outcomes, achieving impact etc) or a relevant issue emerging from the three core themes for Phase III [How can motivation and learner engagement in learning processes be increased? How can advances in research on professional practice, human cognition, classroom processes and telematics be transformed to promote learners' achievement? How can the continuous improvement of learning communities be attained most effectively?] However, the fellow's research proposal should be sufficiently distinct from the project's / network's research to allow separate reporting and the fellow's distinctive contribution to be identified.

Projects with a strong quantitative dimension or involving the integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches are especially encouraged although applications involving other approaches will also be considered.

Contribution to Project Teams and the Teaching and Learning Programme

Fellows will be expected to be full members of the project / network team to which they are attached and to be involved in project activities (e.g. networking, communication and impact activities) as appropriate. Fellows will also be full members of the Programme and to have access to, and be expected to contribute to, Programme level activities. Fellows will be expected to make a particular contribution to the development of project / network and Programme user engagement, communication and impact strategies and activities beyond the scope of their own specific project. Funding for participation in Programme activities will be met through the Programme Director's award.

Participation in Programme Capacity Building Activities.

In addition to the training provided by the recognised Department and mentor / supervisor, the Programme Director and Programme's Research Capacity Building Network will have

responsibility for co-ordinating and overseeing the training provided to all the fellows and will provide supplementary support for fellows' training and development as appropriate. The fellow will be expected to collaborate with such activities and to participate in relevant training activities organised by the Programme; funding for attendance at such events will be provided through the Director's or Research Capability Building Network's awards.

Collaboration with the British Educational Research Association (BERA)

This fellowship scheme has been developed in collaboration with the British Educational Research Association (BERA). It is expected that the fellows will join BERA, attend and contribute to the BERA annual research student conference and generally contribute to the development of the national community of educational researchers and development of capacity for educational research. (Funding for attendance at annual BERA Conferences may be requested as a part of the award.) As a part of this fellows will be expected to collaborate with the Training Officer due to be appointed by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and may be invited to participate in training activities organised by BERA as a part of this initiative.

Awards

Awards will be issued to an administering institution which will be responsible for the administration of the award in accordance with *ESRC Research Funding* regulations. Institutions are required to sign the application to confirm their willingness to administer the award on this basis. Awards will be indexed for future inflation and cash-limited. The institution will be able to deduct its part-time tuition fees from the award. The institution will be responsible for reimbursing the fellow's employer for their release to work on the award within the award cash limit. Indirect costs will **not** be payable on these fellowships.

Monitoring and Reporting.

Fellows will be required to submit an annual progress report to the ESRC. Fellows should complete the report in consultation with their mentor / supervisor. The report should be submitted by the mentor / supervisor who will also be asked to comment and confirm that satisfactory progress is being made. ESRC reserves the right to terminate an award, subject to three months notice, in the event that it judges that unsatisfactory progress is being made.

Fellows will be required to produce a full final report on their work within three months of the end date of the award. ***This report should include a summary of the findings targeted at non-academic users of the research.*** The ESRC will withhold payment of the final claim on the award pending receipt of a satisfactory final report in accordance with paragraph 14.4 of the current edition of *ESRC Research Funding*. In accordance with normal ESRC rules for part-time studentships, the fellow will then have up to two years to finalise the submission of their thesis (though normally it would be expected that this will be completed within one-year).

In the case of Category 2 awards continued funding after two years will normally be subject to the mentor confirming in the second annual report that the fellow has satisfactorily completed the approved research training course and that a research training masters qualification has been awarded or is expected to be awarded. Confirmation of the award of a recognised Research Training Masters qualification should then be forwarded to ESRC by the end of the following December at the latest.

Funding Available

Applicants may apply for the following:

- ***Fellow's Salary Costs.*** The costs of buying out the fellow's time for the full-time equivalent of up to 20 months (category 1) or 28 months (category 2 awards) of their time based upon their current salary levels (plus standard incremental progression) and employers' cost of national insurance and super-annuation (if applicable) (& other allowances currently received by the fellow e.g. London allowance). This funding may be used to support extended periods of part-time buy-out (e.g. 50% buy-out) or concentrated periods of full-time buy-out (or a combination of full and part-time buy-out). Applicants are required to state in their proposals how they propose to use the funding to buy-out their time. The fellow's employer will be responsible for ensuring that the fellow is released from their duties for the specified period and the administering institution should confirm that the applicant has been released from their duties prior to reimbursing the employer for the fellow's salary costs.
- The institution's standard part-time ***tuition fees*** for the course on which the fellow will be registered (under the exceptional items heading).
- ***Travel and subsistence costs up to a maximum of £5,000 (Category 1 awards) or £6,000 (category 2 awards) over the lifetime of the award.*** These costs should include the estimated costs of attending the annual BERA research student conference, any external (outside the administering institution) training courses required to supplement that provided within the recognised training course, and travel for research or dissemination / communication purposes.
- ***Additional research costs.*** Exceptionally the ESRC will consider requests to meet specified additional costs necessary for the conduct of the research ***up to a maximum of £10,000*** over the lifetime of the award (e.g. fieldwork or survey costs, additional travel costs, supply teaching costs for participants other than the fellow, communication or dissemination activities etc.).

Assessment Criteria

Key criteria in considering applications for funding under this competition will include:

- Contribution / fit of the proposal to the aims of the Teaching and Learning Programme (for example in relation to capacity development, working with practitioners, transforming the knowledge base into effective and efficient teaching and training practices and enhancing the achievement of learners).
- Extent to which the proposal will complement / add value to the existing work of the associated Programme Phase I or II project and to the overall Programme.
- Quality and feasibility of the research proposal (conceptual / theoretical framework, appropriateness of the proposed research methods, likely contribution to knowledge etc).
- Likely contribution to the career development of the applicant and quality of the training / support environment described.

- Skills and experience of the candidate and the mentor / supervisor.
- Value for money.

Assessment of Applications & Notification of Decisions.

A small selection panel/ sub-group will be set up to make funding recommendations under the competition to the Programme Steering Committee in July; this will comprise academic and non-academic Steering Committee members, the Programme Director, plus possibly one or two external members, including a representative from BERA. This Group may continue to meet in later years to review / advise on the progress of the fellows and on the future development of the scheme.

It is hoped to be able to inform applicants of the outcomes of their applications by the end of July 2001.

Further Information / Application Forms

To download an application form **click here.**

For further information and notes for guidance on completing an application form **click here.**

If you have any queries regarding the fellowships please contact Alex Monckton (Tel: (01793) 413021, e.mail: Alex.Monckton@esrc.ac.uk) or Gary Grubb (Tel: (01793) 413086, e.mail: Gary.Grubb@esrc.ac.uk) at the ESRC.