SSIA PhD Studentship: Guidance & Application Form Questions

**PhD Studentship opportunity**

Royal Holloway will fund 5 PhD studentships (one per year) to complement our ESRC IAA grant. These will support the aims and objectives of the IAA, with PhD students working in an integrated way with the IAA-funded Social Science Impact Accelerator.

The core aim of our IAA is to establish Royal Holloway as a proactive Civic University, catalysing and developing our local and regional place-based strategies to serve the diverse communities in our dynamic and complex region.

The purpose of the IAA studentships is (a) to build lasting regional partnerships to serve our social science impact agenda; and (b) to develop and deepen our approach to knowledge exchange and impact in the social sciences.

**Topics and approach**

We are inviting proposals from potential supervisors in RHUL social science research strengths that tackle challenges faced by the public sector, business or non-profits (or a combination of those) in our region. Challenge areas can include one or more of:

* Health and wellbeing
* Education
* Criminal justice
* Communities, participation and inclusion
* Innovation, business and economic growth
* Sustainability and climate change

The PhD project design must have knowledge exchange, external partnership, and impact considerations at its heart. We are looking for projects that fit the following **criteria**:

* Focus on questions of relevance to organisations in our region in the areas above. These organisations can be local government, non-profits, businesses, community or business networks, or other organisations relevant to the challenge areas above.
* Have clear objectives and plans for impact on specific organisations, sectors or our region as a whole, both during and after the project, with a collaborative and knowledge exchange-focused approach to research.
* Include an articulation of how the project will engage with the IAA programme and support its aims, including development of partnerships that last beyond the duration of the PhD, and an explanation of how the supervisor, and the student will contribute to the IAA.
* Include plans for a placement in a partner organisation of 3 months (this can be taken as a block or split across the PhD).

We do not offer a specific definition of “region” although proximity to RHUL is likely to be an important factor in the development of robust and lasting partnerships. Thus, we would encourage applicants to focus on London and the South East.

**The supervisor’s sectoral leadership role**

A condition of funding is that the supervisor(s) play a role in delivering the agenda of our ESRC IAA in relation to our regional and local partnership agenda.

We expect the supervisor to play a leadership role in relation to knowledge exchange and impact network development in the sector / topic area of focus of the PhD, including:

* Develop or strengthen RHUL’s relationship with 3+  key organisations working in the focus sector
* Convene two events with external organisations (attended by 4+ relevant external organisations) for RHUL staff members focused on knowledge exchange, innovation and networking, with these events supported by IAA funding.
* Convene (a) an internal staff development and training focused meeting to help interested staff members learn about the sector and challenge area, and to develop ideas for impact and knowledge exchange work in that area in year 1 of the PhD; and (b) another internal meeting at the end of the PhD project to share outcomes, impact, learning and ideas for future work, with both of these events supported by IAA funding.
* Support the PhD student in delivering their part of the IAA contribution.

**The student**

Students will be funded for 3.5 years (home fees and UKRI-rate stipend), which includes the integral 3 month placement.

We ask that the supervisor(s) propose a student that they would like to work with, and provide basic information about them in the application form, including their qualifications, degree class, and any research or work experience.

We expect the student to be engaged in the IAA programme. Some ways in which they can do this are:

* Developing networks and partnerships between the student, external organisations, and broader Royal Holloway community, through e.g. organising IAA funded events, roundtables, and joint activities at the ESRC Festival of Social Science
* Research and fieldwork that supports Royal Holloway’s broader impact objectives in the chosen sector/challenge area
* Testing new knowledge exchange methodologies as part of their thesis work
* Engaging with the knowledge exchange and impact projects funded by the IAA to learn from their experience
* Contributing to the IAA analysis and evaluation activities, for example through desk research on sectors of relevance to Royal Holloway’s social science research, contributing to our approach to tracking our activities and/or evaluating the IAA programme outcomes and impact in areas relevant to their PhD project.

We will be advertising this opportunity annually and you will be able to resubmit unsuccessful proposals, or submit new ones in future years.

**Funding and Timeline**

Please submit this [online form](https://forms.office.com/e/DA5VisRRd4) by 12pm on Wednesday 13 March. All questions are mandatory. We will review applications and let colleagues know within two weeks of the deadline date.

One project will be selected to for the PhD to start in **September 2024.**

If you have any questions, please contact socialscienceimpact@rhul.ac.uk

**Application Form Questions**

1. Name
2. Email address
3. Department
4. Career Stage

[ ]  *Postgraduate*

[ ]  *ECR (open for self-definition)*

[ ]  *Professor*

[ ]  *Non-academic staff*

1. Contract Type

*This opportunity is for researchers on Teaching and Research contracts only.*

[ ]  *Teaching and Research*

[ ]  *Professional Practice*

[ ]  *Teaching Focus*

1. Please write the name(s), role(s) and contract type(s) (if applicable) of your Partner Lead, Second Supervisor (if any) and Advisor (if any).

**The Project**

1. What is the proposed PhD project title?
2. Which of the following challenge areas will the proposed PhD project address? Please tick all that apply.

[ ] Health and wellbeing

[ ] Education

[ ] Criminal justice

[ ] Communities, participation and inclusion

[ ] Innovation, business and economic growth

[ ] Sustainability and climate change

1. What research questions will the project seek to address? What specific areas/topics will it focus on? What methodologies will it employ? (up to 500 words)
2. What are your short and long-term objectives in terms of research impact? Consider specific groups, organisations, sectors and geographic areas that will benefit. (up to 300 words)
3. How will this project use collaborative, challenge-led and knowledge exchange-focused approaches to maximise its relevance and impact outside academia? (up to 300 words)

**The partner**

1. Which regional organisation(s) will you partner with? Please provide a link to their website.
2. Please describe the approach to collaborating with this partner on the project, including any funding or resource contributions they could make. (up to 300 words)
3. What would the 3-month PhD student placement in the partner organisation involve and how would this help maximise the impact of this project? (up to 150 words)

**Benefits & Support**

1. How will you meet the sectoral leadership expectations for the supervisor set out in our brief? (up to 300 words)
2. What skills and experience do you have to enable you to best supervise this PhD student to conduct this research? How will the partner support the student's work on the project? (up to 150 words)
3. How will the student work within the Social Science Impact Accelerator team to contribute to its objectives? (up to 300 words)
4. How will this project enable Royal Holloway to continue to accelerate the impact of social science research over the next 5-10 years? Consider future funding bids and long-term partnerships. (up to 150 words)

**Information about the proposed PhD student**

1. Student’s name
2. Student’s address
3. Student’s email address
4. Please confirm the student qualifies for home fees.
5. What are the student’s educational qualifications?
6. What relevant research and/or work experience does the student have? (up to 150 words)
7. Please upload the student’s CV