

Global Challenges Doctoral Centre PhD Scholarships

Call for staff-led project applications 2020

The Global Challenges Doctoral Centre (GCDC) is delighted to invite academic staff members from across all Kent schools¹ to suggest projects suitable for a PhD student to conduct. The University of Kent has established the Global Challenges Doctoral Centre (GCDC) to develop doctoral research addressing the challenges of economic development and well-being faced by developing countries on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) list](#). The GCDC funds eight doctoral scholarships per year (four staff-led and four student-led²), and all GCDC projects are required to meet a specific list of criteria to adhere to Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) stipulations.

GCDC PhD scholars receive the following:

- Annual stipend at UKRI rates for 3.5 years (TBC but this was £15,009 for 2019/20);
- Annual tuition fees at UKRI Home/EU rates for 3.5 years (£4,327 for 2019/20);
- A Research Training Support Grant of £1,500 per year for 3 years with the opportunity to apply to a top-up fund; and
- Specialised interdisciplinary GCDC cohort training activities.

The application deadline for academic staff members to suggest projects is **5pm on Monday 23 September**, and a panel including the GCDC director and deputy director and the Dean of the Graduate School will select a total of four staff-led projects to be advertised on the GCDC website and opened up for student applications. The outcome of the staff competition will be announced by the beginning of October 2019, and schools will be asked to provide project descriptions and interview dates by 15 October 2019 for advertising purposes.

Criteria

To be eligible, the envisaged project has to be **ODA compliant**. This means that the research project must directly and primarily benefit the economic and social problems faced by developing countries on the OECD's [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) list](#).

¹ Please note that GCDC scholarships are only available to scholars who will be based at the Canterbury or Medway campuses.

² Information about the four GCDC student-led scholarships will be available in mid-October 2019. Please contact kentgcdc@kent.ac.uk with any queries.

In addition, the project has to fit within the [wider aims and specified challenges of the Global Challenges Research Fund \(GCRF\)](#), a £1.5 billion fund announced by the UK Government in late 2015 to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries. The GCRF aims are, inter alia, to promote challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and to strengthen capacity for research, innovation and knowledge exchange in the UK and developing countries. The GCRF has also identified three principal challenges that research projects should address:

- 1) Equitable access to sustainable development;
- 2) Sustainable economies and societies; and
- 3) Human rights, good governance and social justice.

Academic staff members are also asked to demonstrate which UN sustainable development goal(s) the project meets and how, as well as which specific DAC-list country/countries will benefit from the project and how.

How to apply

Interested academics should complete and submit the application form (available via the [GCDC website](#)) **by 5pm on Monday 23 September 2019** to kentgcdc@kent.ac.uk. Supervisors are asked to detail what top up funding (in addition to the RTSG of £1,500 per year for three years) will be required per year (if any) and to indicate whether it will be possible for their school to make up the difference in fees for an international applicant. This is for information only and will not be used as criteria in judging applications.

Student application and selection process

The four successful GCDC projects will be advertised on the GCDC website and Find a Scholarship page from mid-October 2019, and the deadline for students to apply for GCDC scholarships will be Sunday, 19 January 2020 at midnight. Prospective students will apply for the PhD in the usual way via Kent Vision and note on their personal statement/research proposal the project for which they are applying. The school will have responsibility for identifying applicants to GCDC projects when reviewing all PhD applications. Schools are asked to ensure that applications put forward for review and interview are eligible and compliant. Although the Scholarships team will confirm applicants' residency status, schools are asked to pre-screen all applicants to ensure their eligibility.

Following the application deadline, schools will shortlist and interview candidates (to be conducted in person or via Skype) in January/February 2020 (please see timetable below). The school-level interview panel will be required to have an understanding of the GCDC and the requirements of GCDC students; namely, that GCDC students engage with the Centre's training and activities throughout the duration of their PhD.³ Schools will then put successful candidates forward to the GCDC panel who will review and approve the final four scholars. The panel will inform the school of the outcome and then the school will inform applicants by the end of February 2020.

³ The GCDC director or deputy director will be happy to sit on the school-level interview panel. Please email kentgcdc@kent.ac.uk if your school would like to arrange this.

The GCDC panel will consist of the Dean of the Graduate School, the GCDC Director and Deputy Directors and the Associate Deans for Graduate Studies from all three faculties. The panel will judge applicants on the quality of their applications, communication skills as demonstrated in the interview and compliance with ODA and GCRF funding requirements.

GCDC Project Competition Timetable

Staff-led competition call circulated	Monday 19 th August 2019
Deadline for applications from academic staff	Monday 23 rd September 2019
Applicants notified of outcome	By Tuesday 1 st October
Schools send project description and interview dates to kentgcdc@kent.ac.uk and scholarships@kent.ac.uk for the project Find a Scholarship page.	By 15 th October 2019
Deadline for students to apply for projects	Sunday 19 th January 2020
Supervisor/school selects candidate plus reserve via school-level interview process and sends applications, shortlisting grids and interview grids to kentgcdc@kent.ac.uk .	By 5pm Friday 7 th February 2020
Scholarships confirm eligibility	Monday 10 th February 2020
GCDC Panel reviews/approves applications	10 th – 14 th February 2020
Schools/supervisors are notified of outcome & schools communicate outcome to successful and unsuccessful applicants	By Friday 14 th February 2020
Applicants confirm acceptance of place to school; school notifies GCRF Officer (kentgcdc@kent.ac.uk); GCRF Officer notifies Scholarships.	By Monday 24 th February 2020
Scholarships send out offers to students	By Wednesday 26 th February 2020