

University of Westminster Scholarship Programme

Professor Geoffrey Petts Memorial Fund 2025-26

In memory of the late Professor Geoffrey Petts, former Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Westminster, the University has established a research fund to recognise the distinguished contributions he made to interdisciplinary river science research and his belief that all doctoral researchers, regardless of their financial situation, should have the opportunity to succeed.

The Professor Geoffrey Petts Memorial Fund offers two forms of financial support to PhD Researchers:

1. Financial support to undertake fieldwork
2. Financial support for the purchase of research equipment

The fund offers particular support for interdisciplinary research which addresses global challenges.

Scholarship funding

The Fund will cover expenses **up to £1000**. The fieldwork fund is intended to offset additional costs incurred by doctoral researchers due to the need to conduct research outside of the University of Westminster. It is not meant to cover costs that would be accrued regardless of fieldwork status (e.g. books, conference costs, subsistence costs, tuition fees, other equipment and/or services considered a normal student expense).

Eligible expenses include:

- Student travel costs necessary for the research
- Accommodation costs necessary for the research
- Incentive payments or token gifts to research participants
- Materials, supplies or other services essential to the research.
- Costs for accessing datasets

N.B. While the Graduate School will endeavour to ensure payment is made promptly following a successful application, there may be occasions when a successful applicant needs to front the initial costs while the award is requested from Finance colleagues.

Eligibility

The scheme is open to:

- All fully enrolled doctoral researchers, full-time/part-time and distance learning (i.e. at the time of application and undertaking the fieldwork, applicants should be fully enrolled),
- Applicants should not have been awarded their degree before the fieldwork takes place.
- Fieldwork that takes place between 1 August 2025 and 31 July 2026.
- Self-funded doctoral researchers will be given first consideration in selecting the successful applications.
- Retrospective applications are not permitted (retrospective in this case means fieldwork done in the previous academic year or in a period coinciding with a previous call deadline).

N.B. Unfortunately, researchers doing PhD by Published Work are not eligible for this scheme which is there to support fieldwork and research which has yet to be undertaken, whereas the nature of a PhD by Published work means that the research element is usually already done (and published).

Please note that:

- An ethics application needs to have been begun for the proposed research/fieldwork.
- Students must also complete a [risk assessment](#) prior to going on fieldwork.
- Doctoral researchers on visas must make sure to report their change in location to the University and ensure that they continue to engage with their supervisors (via video conferencing, telephone and email) through the period of fieldwork.
- Please note that the University is unable to offer advice to doctoral researchers on obtaining visas for other countries. Doctoral researchers are directly and solely responsible securing the necessary documentation themselves.

N.B. If the fieldwork does not go ahead due to a lack of ethics approval, the risk assessment not being approved, or for any other reason, any funds awarded to an applicant must be returned to the Graduate School.

Completing the Application

Applicants must complete an application form and submit information that demonstrates:

- The key aims and objectives of the funding request; justification for how this enhances doctoral research and leads to timely completion.
- Supporting statement from Director of Studies/supervisory team that (1) the proposed fieldwork falls within the remit of the doctoral research and (2) student progression is on track for timely completion (3) that an ethics application for the proposed fieldwork is in progress/has been approved.
- Confirmation of no outstanding APRs (i.e. student has met own APR deadline; no outstanding remedial action).
- Indicative budget and itemised list of anticipated costs, including: travel, accommodation and equipment.
- Evidence that an ethics application for the proposed fieldwork is in progress.

Please note:

- Accommodation costs should not exceed a maximum of £100 per night.
- Travel options should consider environmental sustainability and be in keeping with University's [sustainability goals](#). For example, for travel within the UK, train travel should be considered before flying.
- Meals and/or subsistence are not eligible costs and should not be included in the indicative budget.
- Wages or salary are not eligible costs and should not be included in the indicative budget.
- Where the itemised list of anticipated costs exceeds £1000, the researcher should indicate which parts will be self-funded.

Timetable

There are four calls for applications throughout the academic year:

CALL 1 – AUGUST 2025

Call opens: **01 August 2025**

Deadline for receipt of applications: **5pm, 27 October 2025**

Outcome by: 10 November 2025

CALL 2 - NOVEMBER 2025

Call opens: **01 November 2025**

Deadline for receipt of applications: **5pm, 26 January 2026**

Outcome by: 09 February 2026

CALL 3 - FEBRUARY 2026

Call opens: **01 February 2026**

Deadline for receipt of applications: **5pm, 27 April 2026**

Outcome by: 11 May 2026

CALL 4 - MAY 2026

Call opens: **01 May 2026**

Deadline for receipt of applications: **5pm, 22 June 2026**

Outcome by: 06 July 2026

Please note the following:

- All applications will be reviewed following the deadline for submissions and applicants notified of the outcome as per the timetable above.
- Late submissions will not be considered.
- Successful applicants will be required to submit a multi-media report detailing how the experience has benefited their research and personal development. This report must be submitted within one month of their return from fieldwork. This should be sent to their Doctoral Coordinator and the Graduate School. The Graduate School may then upload these reports onto the Graduate School website for promotional purposes.

Selection Procedure

The scholarship scheme is run competitively, and the application and selection procedures are overseen by the University's Graduate School.

Self-funded doctoral researchers will be given first consideration in selecting the successful applications.

N.B. While the Graduate School will endeavour to ensure payment is made promptly following a successful application, there may be occasions when a successful applicant needs to front the initial costs while the award is requested from Finance colleagues.

Payment of Scholarship

Upon confirmation of a successful application, you will be asked to supply your bank details to the Graduate School. Once the details for all successful applicants in that Call have been received, the Graduate School will request that University Finance Colleagues arrange payment of the award.