



Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland Graduate School

Prize PhD Studentships - GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

The Marine Alliance for Science and Technology for Scotland (MASTS; www.masts.ac.uk) is offering one more fully funded PhD studentship, by open competition, to outstanding candidates from the UK and overseas. This "Prize" Studentship complements other MASTS PhDs, which have been allocated across institutions and Research Themes.

The Prize Studentship will involve prolonged periods of research at more than one partner institution, and will benefit from specialized training and development programmes under the auspices of the MASTS Graduate School.

If you are a recent graduate of higher education and can demonstrate the achievement of academic excellence, please study the guidance below.

1. Identify a project area that fits within the general scope of one or more of the MASTS Research Themes

We welcome proposals that address the strategic policy priorities that have evolved from the Scottish Government's vision for "clean, healthy, safe, productive, biologically diverse marine and coastal environments, managed to meet the long terms needs of nature and people" (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/marine/science/assessment/atlas>) and the Safeguarding Our Seas vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas (http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/marine/documents/marine_stewardship.pdf).

2. You may wish to refer elsewhere on the MASTS website, or those of partner institutions, in order to gain an understanding of the expertise available in your area of interest.
3. You are expected to make contact with potential supervisors for your project - to discuss your ideas. You should be clear about this in your application.
4. Proposals involving formal collaboration with business/industry will be especially welcome.
5. The format for applications is given below.
6. Submit your *curriculum vitae* and proposal before midnight on **Monday 1st May 2012**, [If you upload any files to us (e.g. your *curriculum vitae*, university qualifications or transcript), please make sure that the filename begins with your last name (e.g. *Miller-certificate.pdf*).]
7. Applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee by the end of May 2012.
8. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for interviews taking place in June/July 2012.
[Economy class travel and accommodation expenses may be reclaimed from the point of entry to the UK, up to a limit of £200.]

FORMAT FOR APPLICATIONS

The application process will require the following information.

1. Your *curriculum vitae*, comprising:
 - i. **Your contact details**, including an email address that will be checked over the application and appointment period.
 - ii. **Details of two referees**, who have already agreed to provide references to us online by the deadline for applications: **Monday 1st May 2012**.
 - iii. **Details of your higher education** (after high school) academic record.
 - iv. **English language qualifications** (scores and grades) - if applicable
 - v. **Details of your academic achievements**, prizes, awards and publications.
 - vi. **A brief statement** of what makes you a suitable candidate for a MASTS Prize Studentship (approximately 250 words).

2. A scanned certificate and/or transcript of your first degree (after high school); to be uploaded during the application process. Please remember to use a filename begins with your last name (e.g. *Miller-certificate.pdf*)

3. A project proposal (maximum two sides A4, using text no smaller than Arial font size 11 and allowing margins of no less than 2.5 cm). This should include:
 - i. **Project title**
 - ii. **Your chosen Research Area and how this fits with MASTS Research Themes**
 - iii. **Your lead MASTS institution(s)**, through which to undertake your research programme and register for your PhD: including your agreed supervisor.
 - iv. **Your collaborating MASTS institution(s)**; including the names of co-supervisors
 - v. **Background** - the rationale for the proposed project
 - vi. **Hypothesis**
 - vii. **Objectives**
 - viii. **Methodology**, including a timetable for the programme of research
 - ix. **Dependency** on any cruises, specialist facilities, software, high cost items, etc.
 - x. **Bibliography**

Where applicable, candidates are invited to include a statement (max 250 words) of the relevance of their project to Government and/or management objectives/agendas.

All documents should be emailed to masts@st-andrews.ac.uk.

NB: If any part of the application is missing your application will not be evaluated.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

MASTS Prize Studentships are funded, to a sum of £20k per year:

- MASTS contribute 50%: the remainder will be provided through the lead/registering institution.
- Funding is available for up to four years. The minimum agreed funding will be three years; with additional time at the discretion of the lead/registering institution.
- Funding will cover student stipend, at Research Councils UK published rates; university registration fees, at the 'Home/EU rate'; consumables and equipment; travel and subsistence.

- Students who do not meet the Home/EU eligibility criteria will be liable for 'Overseas' fee rates. The cost difference between Home/EU and Overseas fees is a matter between the candidate and the institution; and should be discussed during the application stage.

SELECTION OF APPLICANTS

Applications will be judged by a Selection Committee, drawn from across the MASTS partnership. Following the criteria described below, the Selection Committee will take into account the quality of the candidate (judged by the *CV and references*) as well as the quality of the proposed research. They may suggest or require modifications to the research proposal if some elements are judged to be impractical or inappropriate. The Selection Committee may also recommend changes to supervisory teams, according to the scope of the project and their knowledge of expertise across Scotland.

The Selection Committee will judge all applications, taking into account:

- Presentation of a project which fits well with one or more of the MASTS Joint Research Themes.
- The academic qualifications and scientific potential of the candidate, as based on the *curriculum vitae* and the academic references. [Credit will be given to students who already have a background in the proposed topic; hold a masters qualification; who have prior experience of working in a research environment; and/or are authors on refereed publications.]
- The scientific quality of the proposed research. Original, innovative science will be favoured and the programme of research must be such that there is very high expectation of generating publishable results.
- Research involving periods at more than one MASTS institution will be favoured.
- The strict, anti-discriminatory, equal opportunities recruitment policy of all MASTS institutions.

The decision of the Selection Committee will be final.

CONFIRMATION BY INTERVIEW

1. MASTS 'Prize' studentships are valued as a mechanism of integrating supervisory capacity across institutions, thus providing exceptional teams to attract students of the highest international calibre. In order to provide a check on the selection process, the top candidates will be invited for face-to-face interview.
2. Candidates will be encouraged to visit institutions where potential supervisors of their proposed projects are based.
3. The interview panel will be comprised of the MASTS Dean of Graduate Studies along with a sub-group of the MASTS Community.
4. The successful candidate will be expected to start their programme of research on **1st October, 2012**.
5. The successful candidate will be inducted into the MASTS Graduate School in addition to following their own institutional procedures.

For clarification of matters relating to the application process, please email the MASTS Dean of Graduate Studies, Prof. Axel E.J. Miller: axel.miller@sams.ac.uk.

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