



Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education

Project Planning a Research Internship

The template below offers a starting point for designing research internship projects that support progression to postgraduate research, as well as a prompt to think about how internship opportunities can be promoted to target groups.

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1st April 2025

YCEDE cannot guarantee that all information contained in this resource is accurate at the time of reading, particularly with regard to dates, deadlines, and funding availability.

YCEDE

Suggested Audience: Staff

Suggested Sub-Audience: Project Management, Recruitment & Selection

This resource is intended for use in improving equity and outcomes for ethnically minoritised individuals interested in doctoral study or careers in research.

This resource was produced by the staff named above on behalf of the YCEDE project. Please ensure appropriate credits are clearly included in any external use of this resource.

TO CITE THIS

Carson, L. & Gisborne, G. (2025). *Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education* [online] available at: [Project Planning a Research Internship - Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education](#)

Research internship project planning

Research internships offer prospective doctoral students an opportunity to experience the research environment in their field, inform decision making around progression to postgraduate research, and to develop knowledge, skills and experience that can support their applications.

Feedback from supervisors and other university staff involved in the doctoral recruitment process highlight a lack of relevant, independent research experience as one of the major weaknesses in applications to postgraduate research programmes. Research internships can, therefore, be of particular value to prospective doctoral students from non-research intensive institutions or those who were less likely or able to make the most of opportunities to develop this experience through their undergraduate or taught postgraduate degrees.

The template below offers a starting point for designing research internship projects that support progression to postgraduate research, as well as a prompt to think about how internship opportunities can be promoted to target groups.

What knowledge, skills and/or experience will be developed by interns undertaking this project?

What knowledge, skills and experience you would expect a PGR applicant in your discipline to demonstrate?

How will the knowledge, skills and/or experience be developed?

What activities or tasks could interns undertake to develop the knowledge, skills and/or experience identified above?

How will the knowledge, skills and/or experience be evidenced?

What project outputs could interns produce that evidence the development of the knowledge, skills and/or experience identified above?

What will be the impact of the project?

How can the internship projects be applied to achieve real-world impact?

What support will be provided for interns?

How often will interns meet with the project supervisor? Will interns attend any staff meetings during their time on the project or have opportunities to meet and/or work with any wider research teams? Will any training be provided?

How will reflection be encouraged?

How will you encourage interns to reflect on their experience of the project as a way of informing decision-making around progression to postgraduate research? How will you support interns to reflect on the knowledge, skills and/or experience that has been developed and the value of this in terms of progression to postgraduate research or employment?

How will you communicate the project?

How will you describe the project, its outputs and impact and support in a concise and accessible way as part of your promotion and recruitment activity?

Who is your target audience for the project?

Does the project require existing knowledge, skills and/or experience or support progression to postgraduate research in a particular discipline? What kind of degree programmes are relevant?

Will the project be 'ring-fenced'?

Are you hoping to promote progression to postgraduate research among particular groups through this internship to address underrepresentation? If so, you can use the YCEDE Positive action in doctoral recruitment document to help establish and set out a case for the application of positive action.

How will the project be promoted?

What communication channels or internal/external networks will you use to ensure potential applicants from the target groups identified above are aware of the internship opportunity?

How will you recruit to the project?

Are there any essential criteria prospective interns will need to demonstrate through the application process? Are these realistic for applicants who may be less likely to have existing research experience?

How will interns be remunerated?

Is it possible to provide an upfront stipend for interns (rather than salary payments in arrears)? This can make it easier for interns who may need to cover the cost of travel or accommodation in order to undertake the project. You may need to discuss this with relevant finance teams before reaching a decision.

How will the internship be funded?

How will you cover the cost of remunerating interns as well as any other costs such as those associated with access to facilities, consumables or training necessary?

