

Co(l)aboratory

Universities for
Nottingham

Guidance for PhD Project Teams

Research Project Co-Creation 2024-25



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1. KEY INFORMATION

All project proposal submissions must be received through our new online submission form. There is one form for Research Placement projects and one for PhD projects.

We cannot accept any submissions by email or any other format. Any proposals sent by email will not be considered.

- While development of all Co(I)laboratory project proposals should be a collaborative effort between academic and community partners, it is strongly recommended that an academic team member completes the proposal submission form. This is because we ask for some institutional specific information that community partners will not know.
- The online form allows you to save your progress and return at a later date.
- An offline copy of the proposal form questions is available to download [HERE](#). This is only to support your team's preparation and we will not accept any proposals that are not submitted through the online form.
- Please be aware of minimum and maximum word counts.
- All word limits include citations.

Peer Reviews:

Each proposal must be submitted with 2 peer reviews. Peer reviewers should have expertise in an area relevant to the proposed research project, and where possible, participatory action/community engaged research. They can be from any academic institution, however, we recommend approaching colleagues locally at either NTU or UoN in the first instance as they are more likely to have familiarity with Co(I)laboratory.

A standard form to send to your peer reviewers is available to download [HERE](#).

DEADLINE:

Proposals must be submitted by 12pm on Monday 23rd September 2024

Submission forms will automatically close at the deadline.

All project teams will be notified of outcomes by 17th October 2024.

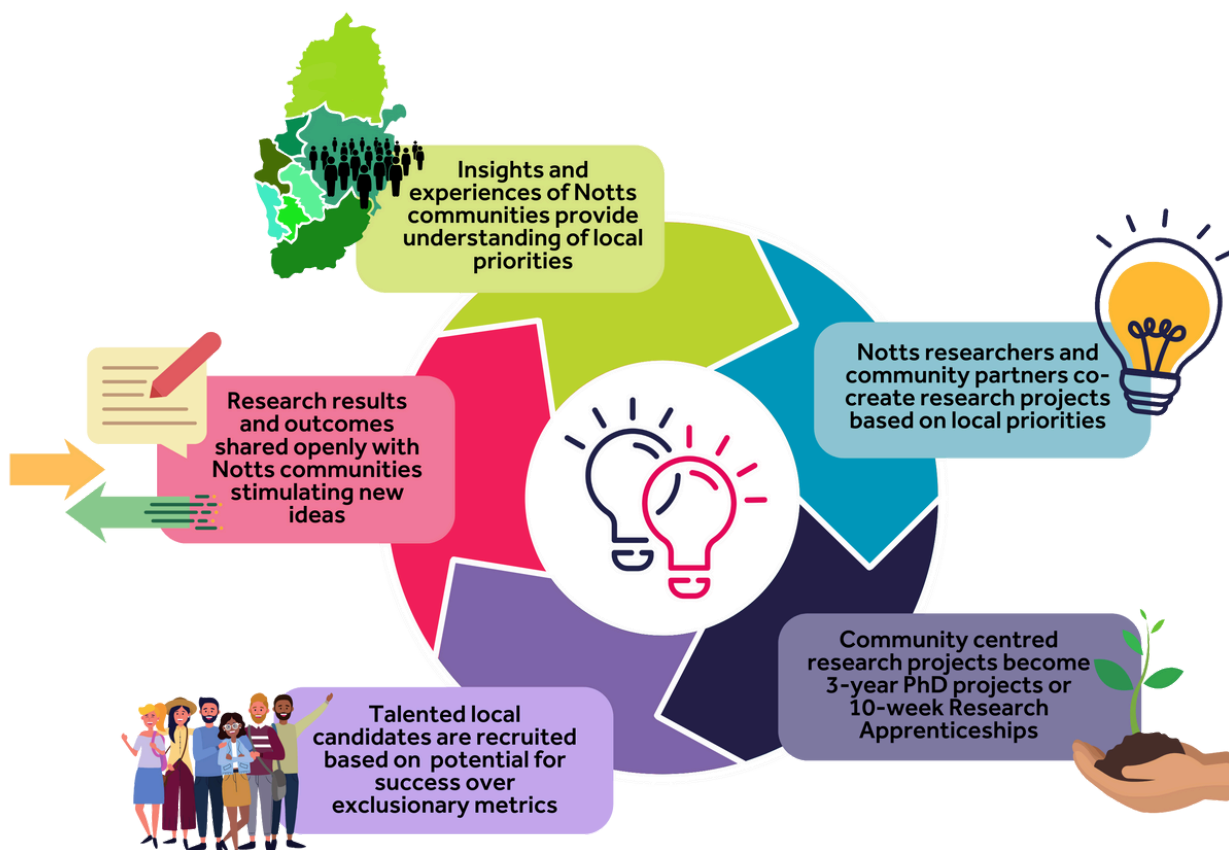
2. OVERVIEW OF CO(L)LABORATORY PHD STUDENTSHIPS

Co(l)laboratory's PhD Research projects are an integral part of our work to create a comprehensive cycle of community engaged research. The Co(l)laboratory programme has been developed based on the principles of responsible, community engaged research, and the latest evidence and best practice in inclusive research approaches.

As a place-based research programme, we are looking for proposals which embody the values of the project and seek to deliver meaningful change for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire communities by addressing locally relevant challenges through rigorous, collaborative research

Co(l)laboratory seeks to remove structural barriers, making research degrees more inclusive and accessible to strong, promising local candidates who otherwise may be excluded from traditional routes into PhD study. Furthermore, this approach also aims to support the growth of more equitable, meaningful partnerships between Nottingham researchers and local community-focused organisations.

Our cohort-based PhD studentship scheme is a boundary pushing initiative involving many hours of specialist development and support work. Each project and its candidate represents an investment of approx. £120,00 by Co(l)laboratory.



3. FUNDING OVERVIEW

Structure

- All PhD projects and their associated studentships are offered as 3-year, fully funding, full-time programmes (plus a 4th, unfunded thesis-pending year). We regret that we are no longer able to offer part-time PhD Degrees due to funding limitations.
- Successful projects that go onto recruitment stage will begin on 1st April 2025.
- All candidates are required to take part in Co(l)laboratory's unique training and development programme, as a condition of funding.

Co(l)laboratory PhD Offering

All successful Co(l)laboratory PhD projects receive the following funding:

- All PhD candidates receive the UKRI basic stipend of £19,237 per year, paid monthly, in arrears.
- Full payment of tuition fees (approx. £4,700 per year)
- Purchase of a student laptop up to the value of £1050
- A Research Training and Support Grant of £500 per year. This is to be used towards the candidate's specialist training and development, and research consumables.
- Support payments of £50 per half day for Community Supervisors to support their attendance at essential events such as shortlisting, interviews, induction, and regular project meetings.
- PhD candidates receive full access to both universities.
- Candidates benefit from extensive, support and training developed and delivered by the Co(l)laboratory team, NTU's Doctoral School, and UoN's Researcher Academy.
- Candidates will undergo training on our programme's bespoke Civic Leadership in Research module, created in partnership with the [National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement](#), which aims to develop our researchers into future leaders of community-engaged research.

NOTE: Any project costs in excess of the funding outlined above must be sourced by the project team. Details of any additional funding requirements must be detailed in the proposal submission form.

4. SUPERVISORY TEAM REQUIREMENTS

All PhD project supervisory teams require the following named partners, as a minimum:

Nottingham Trent University Supervisor

At least 1 academic
researcher or similar staff
member.

University of Nottingham Supervisor

At least 1 academic
researcher or similar staff
member.

Community Partner

At least 1 member of a
Nottingham(shire)-based
organisation which works
with 1 or more
Nottingham(shire)
communities.

- Community Supervisory partners must hold an active, formal position with a Nottingham(shire) organisation. This can be paid employment or a voluntary position.
- Community-focused organisations based/operating outside of Nottingham(shire) may be named as additional supporting partners but cannot be named as a primary Community Supervisor.
- The role of a Community Supervisor is to provide insight and guidance to the candidate based on their real-world, professional expertise and experience working with relevant communities. They can also provide access to defined communities, data, resources, etc., where relevant.
- Up to 1 additional Community Supervisor may be named on the proposal, if relevant to the needs of the project.
- Up to 1 additional Academic Co-Supervisor from each institution may be named on the proposal, if relevant to the needs of the project.
- Named academic supervisors **MUST** meet their local institutional and departmental supervision regulations. This is non-negotiable.
 - This must be confirmed prior to proposal submission.
 - The eligibility of named academics to take on a new PGR supervision will be checked against local records. If any named academic supervisor on a proposal is not or will not be eligible to take on a supervision by 1st April 2025, then the proposal cannot be considered.
- Named academic supervisors must receive approval from their line manager in order to be awarded Co(l)laboratory PhD Studentship funding.

5. WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR IN A PHD RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL?

Project Focus

- Proposals can be based in any academic discipline. The core requirement is that every project must seek to address one or more defined local challenges relevant to one or more defined Nottingham(shire) communities.
- Each proposal must be of appropriate scope for a full, PhD-level research project.
- Projects must have a legitimate academic and community basis.

We strongly recommend that teams interested in submitting a project proposal explore the profiles of our previous and current PhD research projects to understand the nature and scope of the work we will fund. Each project profile also includes a link to our candidate profiles which allow you to learn more about the kind of people we recruit.

[Explore Our Research Placement Project Profiles](#)

How will proposals be assessed?

All proposals will be assessed by a panel comprising members of the Co(l)laboratory team, academic researchers from UoN and NTU, as well as members of local Community-focused organisations. All proposed will be assessed against the following criteria:

Community Basis | Academic Basis | Potential for Impact | Supervisory Team

Community Basis

- Proposals must have a clear and well-informed grounding in the needs and challenges of one or more defined Nottingham(shire) communities. We are looking to fund research centred around the nuances of local people and challenges, rather than research that could be carried out anyway and just happens to be set in Nottingham(shire).
- The local challenge(s) which the project seeks to address should be informed by the experience of local communities and/or the practice and experience of the community partner.
- Particular interest will be given to projects that address priorities detailed by our community workshops ([see Section 6. Local Priorities for Research](#)).
- The community context underpinning the proposal should be made explicit. In the interest of fairness, proposals where the connections to community need are assumed or implicit will not be considered.

Academic Basis

- Proposals must demonstrate a strong academic basis for the proposed research project, making it clear how the work intends to make a novel contribution to one or more academic fields.
- Projects must provide an academically robust justification for the proposed methods, and approaches.
- Sufficient detail about the proposed methods and any community-engaged approaches must be provided for their suitability to be judged in relation to the project's rationale, aims, and make-up of the supervisory team.

Potential for Impact

- Projects must explicitly demonstrate a strong potential for the proposed research to deliver genuine, relevant, and meaningful impact to one or more defined Nottingham(shire) communities.
- The potential impact of a project should be realistic and achievable given the scope of the work and funding available. The panel will be looking for evidence of the named Community Supervisor's input in exploring potential impacts.
- Sufficient detail should be provided to rationalise how such impact would be achieved through the proposed project, highlighting aims for potential outcomes, where relevant.

Supervisory Team

- Each project supervisory team must have an appropriate combination of relevant knowledge, skills, and expertise to guide a PhD Candidate in the defined research activities, and to ensure the project is successful.
- The balance of expertise from academic and community supervisors should be appropriate for the area of focus of the proposed research.
- Each project supervisory team must demonstrate how each member (including any additional named members) has the experience and expertise necessary for the project's success.
- Named academic supervisors **MUST** meet their local intuitional and departmental supervision regulations. This is non-negotiable and must be checked **BEFORE** submission.
- If any named academic supervisor does not meet the necessary supervision regulations the proposal will not be considered.

6. LOCAL PRIORITIES FOR RESEARCH

An integral part of our engaged research process involves working with local community stakeholders to set our research agenda.

Ahead of our 2024-25 research project co-creation project, Co(l)laboratory ran a series of workshops with local community professionals as part of our Notts Community and Research Partnership. These workshops brought together a wide range of professionals from areas such as the arts, education, healthcare, environment, and many more, to collectively identify specific priorities for our next research projects should look to address.



Throughout the workshop series, our group of community professionals worked together, using their professional insights and expertise, to identify specific local communities, challenges these communities face, and overarching themes between the challenges.

For our 2024-25 project funding call, we will be particularly interested in receiving submissions which address challenges and themes identified by our community workshops.

To explore the community priorities identified by our Notts Community & Research Partnership workshops, [visit our Padlet board](#).

7. RECRUITMENT OF PHD CANDIDATES

A core area of Co(l)laboratory's work is to pilot new, evidence-based recruitment mechanisms, with the aim of creating more inclusive pathways into doctoral research for promising local candidates who might otherwise be excluded from more typical opportunities.

Taking part in Co(l)laboratory's hyper local, competency based approach to PhD candidate recruitment is as an essential part of our programme which all successful project teams must go through.

Applicant Eligibility

- Co(l)laboratory PhD studentships are only open to candidates with UK Home Student status. Our funding will not cover Overseas student fees and visas.
- Current NTU or UoN staff are not eligible to apply.
- No candidate can be given preferential treatment. All candidates must apply through our open, competitive process.
- Candidates who do not meet the NTU and UoN minimum criteria (2.1 UG or 2.2 UG with a Masters) can be considered by applying via our Professional Equivalency route.

Recruitment Process

- The recruitment process is run centrally by the Co(l)laboratory team, targeting hyper local, non-academic channels, such as social media and local radio.
- Support from Community Partners who can spread word of the studentship opportunity through their professional networks has been found to be essential to attracting strong candidates to this programme.
- When recruiting candidates to successfully selected projects, we use a typical job advert-style format which provides a break down of core Co(l)laboratory competencies, as well as project-specific essential and desired competencies.

Project Summaries and Competencies

To help you write an effective project summary and to define appropriate essential and desirable candidate criteria, please see the examples at the links below.

[Example 1](#)

[Example 2](#)

[Example 3](#)