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****Processes for ESRC Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)**

**Guidance for current ESRC DTC students**

**What is RTSG?**

Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) is a limited source of funding available to all ESRC DTC students in their Masters and doctoral study period (grant funded students will have separate funds allocated as part of the grant). The DTC receives £750 per allocated studentship per year for RTSG (pro-rata for part-time students), and this is pooled into a single pot from which all ESRC DTC students can claim.

Full award, fees only, full time and part time students are all eligible to receive RTSG support.

**What can be funded by RTSG?**

RTSG can be used to pay for expenses incurred in direct support of your research. Examples include:

* UK fieldwork
* UK and international conference attendance
* Research related costs e.g. printing, stationery
* Additional training courses
* Small items of equipment e.g. camera, tape recorder
* Books not available through library

RTSG will not cover:

* IT equipment in any form
* Software where available on campus computers
* Subsistence (outside of a conference package)
* Interview transcriptions and translation

**Requirements**

* Travel should be by the most economical means possible, and should be by standard class public transport except in exceptional circumstances.
* Students will be eligible to apply for funds to attend up to **1 international conference OR  2 domestic conferences only within a single academic year and as long as you remain within your total RTSG allowance**
* Applications cannot be considered during a leave of absence
* Applications cannot be considered outside of your funded period (during writing up status)

**The application and approvals process**

All decisions about the awarding of RTSG will be made by the DTC Director and administered by the University Graduate School (UGS) using the following process:

* Applications are processed in four batches across the academic year (4pm on Friday 25th October 2019, Friday 24th January 2020, Friday 24th April 2020 and Friday 24th July 2020)
* There is only a **limited allowance** of £750 per year available for each student (£375 for part-time students) and all claims must be approved by the UGS and the DTC Director
* You are welcome to submit more than one claim as long as you are within your total overall allowance (i.e. £750 multiplied by years of award). Claims exceeding your annual and/or total allowance may be considered in **exceptional circumstances**
* Given the limited availability of funds, to ensure fair and equitable use of these we strongly advise you **to apply for funds in advance wherever possible.** Although retrospective claims will be considered there is **no guarantee that they will be approved**. Retrospective claims for expenses incurred more than 6 months prior to the application being submitted will not be considered
* With regards to conference attendance, we also strongly encourage you contact the UGS (studentships@contacts.bham.ac.uk) about your RTSG allocation for the year before submitting abstracts to conferences
* Download the most recent versions of the ESRC RTSG form from the following web link <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/graduateschool/funding/currentESRC.aspx>
* Complete your form. Where relevant, provide copies of all quotations and documentation to support your claim, and ensure that travel and accommodation is by the most economic means possible
* Students must obtain a supporting statement from their supervisor for **any single application that totals more than £750 (or £375 for part-time students)**
* Students must obtain a supporting statement from their supervisor for **subsequent applications that pushes their annual allocation over £750**
* We will **prioritise the allocation of funds for conferences** to those students who have not already spent over their annual or total allocation
* Please ensure that your bank details are correctly entered onto the form as failure to do so could delay payment
* Seek approval and endorsement from your supervisor and send your signed and completed form and supporting documentation to studentships@contacts.bham.ac.uk
* Your claim will be processed by the UGS and sent to the DTC Director for approval
* If your claim is successful the UGS will email you to confirm this and will submit a form to Finance to arrange your payment
* You can expect to receive your payment within 3 weeks of your form being submitted to Finance. Please contact studentships@contacts.bham.ac.uk if you believe your payment is late and the UGS will chase this for you