

## ESRC Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) Guidance Notes

### What is RTSG?

All Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP students are eligible for a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG). This allowance is intended to be used to pay for expenses which the student/supervisor/department deem to be in direct support of a student's research.

### **Examples include:**

- UK fieldwork expenses
- UK, EU and overseas conferences and summer schools
- language training courses usually undertaken in the UK prior to an overseas fieldwork trip
- reimbursement of interpreters, guides, assistants
- survey costs e.g. printing, stationery, telephone calls
- purchase of small items of equipment e.g. cameras, recorders, films
- gifts for local informants
- books and other reading material not available through libraries

In exceptional circumstances, the DTP may consider requests from students to purchase laptops or other computer equipment using this allowance. Any such request must be clearly and adequately justified based on the nature of the research being undertaken and must be essential for the successful completion of the PhD.

Please be aware that **any** equipment (including laptops or other computer equipment, cameras etc.) purchased using RTSG will remain property of the DTP and, following completion of the award, must be returned to the Midlands Graduate School, via your institutional DTP administrator at the end of your studentship.

The total sum of RTSG available to each student will normally be equal to £2,250 across the course of their ESRC DTP studentship. If students are applying for RTSG funding to attend an advanced training session at one of the Midlands Graduate School partner institutions, or attending a supervision meeting at the joint institution (for students undertaking an MGS joint studentship), the funding allowance for these requests is considered in addition to your notional RTSG budget.

Applications for RTSG funding requests are considered on a rolling basis across the academic year. Please refer to the end of this document and the [Midlands Graduate School website](#) for further details.

Travel should be by the most economical means possible, and should be by standard class public transport except in exceptional circumstances.

### Eligibility for Requesting Funds

- Individuals must be registered as an ESRC-funded Masters or Doctoral student.
- Normally requests for RTSG will be made by students during the 'research' component of their +3 or +4 studentship. While 1+3 students are eligible to request access to RTSG funds in their Masters year, such requests should demonstrate that the expenditure is essential to their PhD project - i.e. they should not be used to meet costs associated with the Masters such as participant payments for the Masters dissertation.
- Funding cannot be provided before 1st October of the starting year of the student's ESRC funding.
- Requests cannot be considered outside of a student's ESRC-funded period and funding cannot be provided after the end date of ESRC funding.
- Requests cannot be considered during a period of suspension/temporary withdrawal.
- Any RTSG requests must be supported by the student's supervisory team.

## How to Request RTSG Funds

- Proposals for spending RTSG should be initially discussed with your supervisor.
- Once you've discussed your proposal, you should complete an RTSG request form including a summary explaining the purpose of the funds/ the reason for the funding request and why the activity/item is necessary for your research. Please include links to relevant information where appropriate (e.g. link to a conference website) and the intended dates of the activity.
- Please indicate via the tick box if the RTSG request relates to attendance at an advanced training session at one of the MGS partner institutions, or attending a supervision meeting at the joint institution (for students undertaking an MGS joint studentship).
- The RTSG request must also include a summary of the total amount of funding requested, along with a breakdown of all requested costs, including appropriate details. Where relevant, provide copies of all quotations and documentation to support your request, and ensure that travel and accommodation costs are by the most economic means possible.
- Seek approval from your supervisor, have them sign your RTSG request, and send the signed and completed form to your [Institutional DTP Administrator](#).
- You are welcome to submit more than one request at a time, as long as you are within your total overall allowance.
- Please provide and submit separate RTSG request forms for each different individual RTSG spending proposal (e.g. one RTSG request to attend a conference and one RTSG request for UK fieldwork).
- Your home institution will give you instructions on how to claim your funds and you should follow these carefully should your RTSG request be approved. They will differ between institutions. All claims must be supported by original itemised receipts or other proof of expenditure. Please refer directly to your home institution for details as to your University's procedure for accessing these funds.

## Once your RTSG Request has been submitted

- Your RTSG request will be processed by your Institutional DTP office and sent to your ESRC DTP Institution Academic Lead or a nominated representative for approval.
- Once your request has been considered your Institutional DTP office will email you to confirm the outcome of your request. If you are successful this email will contain further instructions regarding your University's procedure for accessing these funds, so please ensure you read the entire email carefully. All expenditure must be in accordance with your University's Financial Regulations.
- **Please note that all RTSG requests must be submitted, and have been approved, prior to any expenditure occurring**, as not all RTSG requests are approved, and the ESRC DTP **may not** reimburse expenditure already incurred in these instances.

## Deadlines

Requests for RTSG funding are considered on a rolling basis across the academic year. However, we recommend that you submit your RTSG funding request **at least 3 weeks prior to the expected date of expenditure**.

Completed and signed RTSG requests should be submitted to your [Institutional DTP Administrator](#). The completed forms can take the format of **EITHER**

- i) a signed electronic PDF document (this can be either [electronically signed](#), in which case you must copy in your supervisors to your submission or a scanned PDF copy displaying physical signatures),  
**OR**
- ii) a Microsoft Word electronic attachment, with a physical signed hard copy either dropped off or posted to your institutional ESRC DTP Office