

## Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships (KESS2)

The Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships programme supports **PhD, MRes and MPhil scholarships in Welsh Universities**, undertaken in collaboration with an external partner. Cardiff University has **MRes and MPhil studentships** available to start in 2021/22. KESS2 scholarships are **open to all academic Schools** at Cardiff University on a **competitive first-come, first-served basis**.

### CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

Research projects must demonstrate through the application process:

- co-development with an external partner in Wales, addressing the partner's research needs;
- an on-going benefit to the relevant regions of West Wales and the Valleys (see map – local authorities in yellow) OR East Wales (white);
- fit to one of the Welsh Government's priority economic sectors: ICT & Digital Economy; Low Carbon, Energy and Environment; Life sciences and Health; Advanced Engineering and Materials.

External partner: Partners are normally expected to have a base in the relevant region of Wales in order to strengthen on-going benefit to that region – this does not have to be a headquarters.

A range of organisations can participate, including Micro companies, SMEs, and Large companies, third and public sector. **Partners are required to make a minimum annual cash contribution of £5,500-7,000, excluding VAT per year (depending on project type and size of partner):**



Partner type	No. of Employees	KESS2 West		KESS2 East	
		Cash PhD (x3)	Cash MRes (x1)	Cash PhD (x3)	Cash MRes (x1)
Micro	<10	No further projects available	£3,750	£5,500	£5,500
Small	<50		£3,750	£5,500	£5,500
Medium	<250		£4,250	£6,000	£6,000
Large	>250		£4,750	£6,500	£6,500
Inter-trans-multi-national	n/a		£4,750	£7,000	£7,000
Third /Social/ Public		Dependent on Organisation Type/size as above			

Eligible students must have: Home/EU status; meet the minimum academic qualifications for entry onto the University course; and, have the right to work in the UK on completion of the scholarship. Eligible students must be able to provide documentary evidence of a **home or work address in the relevant region of Wales** (East or West) at the time of their KESS2 application and on enrolment for study.

Funding: KESS2 supports a **student stipend (circa £11K/£14K) plus c.£3K\*\* per year for consumables, training, travel and small equipment costs**. Fees are not an eligible KESS2 cost, but are accounted for centrally by the University (no charge to School accounts). Academic supervisors must complete timesheets to evidence their time spent on the project, which will be used as in-kind match-funding. (\*\*Additional consumable budget is available under the KESS2 East programme on a *first come first serve basis; a justification of need will be required.*)

**Intellectual Property:** will be owned by the University in order to comply with European State Aid regulations. External partners can obtain an exclusive or non-exclusive licence, charged at market rates, to exploit IP. Partner's background IP is secured at the start of each scholarship.

**Skills training and Postgraduate Skills Development Award (PSDA):** KESS2 students must achieve a PSDA in addition to their academic qualification. The PSDA is awarded by Bangor University, following achievement of 60 credits (PhD) and 30 credits (MRes/MPhil) of skills training and attendance at a mandatory residential KESS Graduate School. Existing PGR training provision and external courses contribute to these credits.

**Reporting and submission periods:** Academic and partner supervisors and KESS2 students will be required to prepare quarterly progress reports as evidence of activities, including skills training attained. Students are expected to spend at least 30 days a year with the partner. The University will provide annual reports to the partner. KESS2 students are expected to **submit their thesis within 6 months (PhD) and 3 months (MRes/MPhil)** of the end of their funding period.

**Covid-19 Mitigation:** It is important that applicants carefully consider and address how their project can be delivered taking into account the present pandemic. Please explain how you will deliver the project in the current environment, highlighting the mitigation measures that will be put in place should there be further outbreak of Covid-19. Also, provide how student and company partners expectations will be managed in such circumstances.

## DEADLINES

No further PhD places are available for East and West Wales.

**East** - MPhil and MRes applications with **SME/Charitable** organisations can be submitted at any time.

Academic supervisors must **liaise with their School PGR/Research offices** when preparing applications – applications should be submitted via the School office to the KESS2 Administration team at [kess@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:kess@cardiff.ac.uk) with School approval.

## CARDIFF UNIVERSITY APPLICATION PROCESS

Academic supervisors complete a KESS2 **Project Application Form** with their external partner, providing an outline of the proposed research project that demonstrates fit to KESS2 criteria. Applications should be reviewed and approved by School Directors of Postgraduate Studies or Directors of Research, prior to submission to the KESS2 administration team in Cardiff.

**Due to the prevalence impact of Covid-19, applications will now have to be signed-off by the Dean of College, confirming that the mitigation plans provided by applicants to minimise disruption to project delivery is adequate and proportionate to the level of risk identified.**

Project applications will be checked for eligibility and fit to KESS2 criteria, then referred to a Central KESS2 Allocation Panel, managed by Bangor University. The Central KESS2 Allocation Panel confirms allocation of funding to projects.

Academic supervisors and external partners should widely advertise and co-recruit an eligible student for funded projects. Students must be accepted on a University PGR course before an offer of KESS2 funding is made. Supervisors nominate a student for a KESS2 scholarship, and the student completes a **'Participant Form'**, triggering eligibility checks and induction/briefing by the KESS2 Administrative team.

Students and Partners will be asked to sign 'KESS2 Agreements' which provide terms and conditions of participation.

The KESS2 project 'Application Form', student 'Participant Form' and sample agreements are available by emailing [kess@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:kess@cardiff.ac.uk) and as downloads on the KESS2 intranet site.

## CONTACTS AT CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

Cardiff KESS2 Administrative team [KESS@Cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:KESS@Cardiff.ac.uk) / Phone: +44(0)29 208 79439

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/business/develop-your-workforce/kess>

*Mae Ysgoloriaethau Sgiliau'r Economi Wybodaeth (KESS2) yn fenter sgiliau lefel uwch Cymru gyfan dan arweiniad Prifysgol Bangor ar ran y sector Addysg Uwch yng Nghymru. Mae'r fenter wedi'i hariannu'n rhannol gan raglen gydgyfeirio Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop Llywodraeth Cymru. Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships (KESS2) is a pan-Wales higher-level skills initiative led by Bangor University on behalf of the Higher Education sector in Wales. It is part-funded by the Welsh Government's European Social Fund (ESF).*