

Call for PhD Projects and Student Applications for September / October 2022 Entry

Call summary

The University of Reading and Cranfield University are awarding a total of two PhDs. These will align with and further the aims of the FoodSEqual consortium '*Co-production of healthy, sustainable food systems for disadvantaged communities*', one of four consortia funded by the UKRI 'Transforming UK Food Systems' SPF. The PhDs will provide additional research opportunities that are relevant to but not delivering the core activities/outcomes of the consortium.

One PhD will be registered at Cranfield University and co-funded by both universities. This PhD will be supported by the Cranfield School of Management so the topic focus should be relevant to this area. One full PhD will be registered at the University of Reading and is open to academic collaborations across all relevant fields. Each PhD will have a supervisor from each university.

PhD students will receive a full UKRI studentship (including stipend, university fees at UK home student rate, and RTSG of £1K per annum) for three years. The studentships will be open to individuals eligible for UK home student status and to international students. Applicants will need to source additional funds to cover international fees.

The consortium is initially opening a **call for PhD project topics** from supervisory teams for both studentships. These will be evaluated by the consortium's Selection Committee, shortlisted and then publicised for a **call for student applications** for each studentship. The proposed timeline for this call is detailed below.

Call timeline

Action	University of Reading	Cranfield University
Call for project proposals opens		17 Dec 2021
Call for project proposals closes		31 Jan 2022
Projects sent out to Selection Committee for review (loaded to Teams private channel)		By 7 Feb 2022
Selection Committee meets to identify which projects will be advertised		By 28 Feb 2022
Management Board ratifies Selection Committee decision (online)		By 4 March 2022
Project shortlist publicised on website and externally (FindaPhD etc)	After 7 March 2022	21 March 2022
Deadline for students to apply for chosen PhD	12 April 2022 (17:00 BST)	12 May 2022
Student interview window	12 Apr – 13 May 2022	23 May – 10 June 2022
Final Interview by Independent Panel (CU PhD only)		10 – 20 June 2022
Selection Committee meets and confirms awards	Online	Online
Management Board ratifies awards	Online	Online
Award/rejection letters sent to shortlisted candidates	By 27 May 2022	By 24 June 2022
Deadline to accept studentship	10 June 2022	1 July 2022
Studentship start date	1 Oct 2022	26 Sept 2022

Applications

Applications for project proposals and prospective students (students for UoR PhDs only) must be submitted to the FoodSEqual email account (foodsystemsequality@gmail.com). Deadlines for submissions are outlined in the table above.

Scientific scope of projects

FoodSEqual remit: As one of four consortia funded by the UKRI 'Transforming UK Food Systems' SPF, this multi-disciplinary project is bringing together academic, industry and civic organisations to co-create new approaches to ensure healthy, sustainable food choices are available across UK society. The consortia will re-imagine food policy, food products and food supply chains jointly, develop new solutions and a framework to address the current lack of access of healthy and sustainable foods to all.

The scope of the PhD call reflects a desire to support research that complements the activities/outcomes of the consortium. Proposals can be submitted across the agri-food system (for the University of Reading PhD) or specifically within the topic of logistics, procurement and supply chain management (for the Cranfield University PhD).

Supervisor eligibility

- The lead supervisor must be from Cranfield University or the University of Reading and meet BBSRC PI-status. The student will be based at the host department of their lead supervisor and registered as a PhD student at that university. The second supervisor (co-supervisor) must be from the consortium partner university.
- It is important that the lead supervisor has an employment contract that exceeds the length of the studentship (i.e. ending no earlier than January 2026).
- At least one of the supervisors must have successfully supervised at least one doctoral thesis to completion (as lead supervisor).

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

- Where a project is expected to involve a considerable length of time at the co-supervisor's university this must be stated in the proposal, alongside details of how any additionally incurred costs will be funded and an outlined of a provisional plan to support students who may have restrictions in moving location.

Budget

- The PhD awards will cover tuition fees, stipend at UKRI applicable rates and £1K/annum RTSG.
- The PI must provide details of other RTSGs that will support the proposed project and describe how research funding will be provided by their academic institution, industry or other partners.
- Any budget requested for consumables and a justification for any proposed spend must be provided in the application form.
- Any fees quoted as part of the PhD award apply to UK and ROI-based students only.

Assessment and selection process

- All project proposals and student applications will be checked to ensure that all required information has been provided. All applicants will be given 48 hours to respond to any requests for missing information. Proposals with missing information will not be forwarded to the selection committee for review.
- The proposals will be assessed by a Selection Committee drawn from the FoodSEqual Management Team.
- Any member of the Selection Committee who has a conflict of interest (CoI) will not be involved in the assessment of ranking of project proposals or student applications and will be asked to leave the selection

meeting as per standard practice. If there is disagreement regarding the selection of proposals or students, the Chair (or Co-Chair in the case of CoIs) will have the deciding vote.

Advertising information

- The call for project proposals will be advertised online, via websites and social media platforms including the FoodSEqual, UKRI 'Transforming UK FoodSystems', consortia partners, UKFS-CDT and FoodSEqual partners.
- Selected projects will be advertised on Find a PhD.com, other online platforms including the FoodSEqual, BBSTEM (Black British Professionals in STEM), UKRI, partner consortia and FoodSEqual partners websites and social media channels using a standardised template layout (included as part of the project proposal application process).

Selection Committee Contacts

The FoodSEqual Selection Committee members can provide more information to support development of project proposals and student applications. Selection Committee members include:

Cranfield University: Michael Bourlakis	University of Reading: Carol Wagstaff
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FoodSEqual Contacts/ Further Information

Please contact foodsystemsequality@gmail.com for general enquiries relating to project remit, project proposals and student applications.

Further information about the UKRI SPF and FoodSEqual can be found at the following websites

<https://www.foodsecurity.ac.uk/research/foodsystems-spf/>

<https://research.reading.ac.uk/food-system-equality/>