ICASE 2021 guidance
This information relates specifically to the ICASE 2021 process, which began in spring 2020

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1. Introduction
EPSRC ICASE awards provide funding for PhD studentships where businesses take the lead in arranging projects with an academic partner of their choice. The aim is to encourage productive engagement between partners who benefit from a motivated, high-quality PhD student undertaking cutting-edge research relevant to your organisation’s priorities and objectives. The PhD students are provided with a first-rate, challenging research training experience, within the context of a mutually beneficial research collaboration. Your allocation and this guidance is based on current planning assumptions.

2. Requirements of ICASE
To be eligible to receive ICASE vouchers your organisation must have an established UK-based research capability and/or commercial production capability. Please notify us if this is not the case.

EPSRC ICASE vouchers fund 4-year PhD studentships. This is in line with our Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) and allows for the potential alignment of ICASE students to CDTs, harmonises EPSRC with other Research Council CASE schemes and allows for a longer industrial placement if needed. Please note that if you do choose to align your ICASE student with a CDT, the ICASE student cannot be part of the CDT’s initial core of 10 students. The Principal Investigator of the CDT should be able to provide clarification on this.

EPSRC will fund the estimated total award for each studentship: ~£88,885.

Students are expected to spend at least 3 months of the 4-year award on the premises of the Industrial Partner. Students can spend longer periods with the company, subject to the HEI’s minimum attendance requirements for students to remain registered for the higher degree.

As a measure of its interest and involvement, Industrial Partners must make a financial contribution to each project. Such a contribution should cover
- expenses (e.g. travel and accommodation costs) incurred by the student as a result of periods spent with the Industrial Partner. The student should not be out of pocket as a result of undertaking the project.
• an annual cash contribution, to the HEI research organisation, towards the cost of the project and support of the student. The value of this contribution will be at least £29,628 - one third of the funding provided by EPSRC. There is an expectation that the stipend of an Industrial CASE student will be increased above the minimum payment using part of the industrial cash contribution.

You may place these studentships with the academic partner of your choice, provided that they receive Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) funding from EPSRC. A list can be found here.

Projects must be in EPSRC remit. It may be helpful to filter by relevant Theme before looking for research areas.

You may involve an additional UK-based industrial partner if you wish. Please see details below.

You must respond, or submit required information, by the deadlines noted below. We encourage you to respond/submit info as soon as you are able, as early receipt will facilitate administration.

3. Instructions for ICASE Allocations 2021

I. **By 17/07/2020**: In order to help us plan during this unprecedented time, we would appreciate feedback from organisations letting us know if they are able to use their allocation or not, and if so, whether they have potential to use more vouchers.

   Please respond with one of these options:
   
   A. We can use the allocated vouchers, and are interested in potentially receiving additional vouchers through reallocation.
   B. We can use the allocated vouchers, but do not expect to bid for additional ones.
   C. We cannot use the allocated vouchers this year.
   D. We are unsure whether we will be able to use the allocated vouchers but will confirm by the 30th September deadline.

II. **By 30/09/2020**: If you responded “D” in the previous step, confirm to EPSRC whether or not you will be able to utilise any or all of your organisation’s allocation. Please let us know at the earliest opportunity. If we have not received confirmation by the deadline then your allocation will be withdrawn.

III. **By 30/10/2020 (optional action)**: We occasionally receive returned vouchers from organisations which are unable to use their full allocation. We plan to run a process to reallocate any returned vouchers, so to help us facilitate this, please let us know:

   a) if you have capacity for any additional vouchers, and how many you could potentially use.

   b) for up to two of these potential projects

   I. provide a brief summary (up to 200 words per project) describing the topic area, plans for the student’s placement, and details of any other project partners.
II. outline how these projects were identified (including any details around internal competition) and how they align with your strategy (150 words max).

The reallocation process will be conducted by EPSRC staff. When reallocating vouchers, priority will be given to projects in EPSRC remit which come from the private sector and
- demonstrate strong local or regional collaboration aligning to national priorities
- have plans for the student’s wider training
- align to EPSRC’s strategic priorities
- involve SMEs

IV. By 01/01/2021 (ideally by the end of November): For each of your vouchers (including any additional ones assigned through the reallocation process), identify Research Organisation (university) partners and agree suitable projects.
- Projects must be related to the Engineering and Physical Sciences remit. Details of EPSRC research areas can be viewed here. Projects which are unclear or deemed out of remit will be returned/rejected.
- Your chosen Research Organisations must receive DTP funding from EPSRC (a list of eligible organisations is here). The rationale for this is:
  - to provide a potentially better student experience (e.g. the student being part of a larger cohort of individuals working in leading research teams)
  - to facilitate the strategic use of all EPSRC’s studentships (via EPSRC working with a smaller group of companies and research organisations) to target training at areas of particular strategic importance.
- Other considerations:
  1. We recommend academic and industrial partners work together when writing the advertisement for recruitment.
  2. Very narrowly focused projects may struggle to attract many applicants, so try to make descriptions as open and interesting as possible.
  3. EPSRC encourages you to support a diverse and inclusive research environment where there is equal access to opportunities.
  4. The Lambert Toolkit may be useful when creating a collaboration agreement between universities and businesses.

V. By 01/01/2021 (ideally by the end of November): Complete one electronic Sign-Up Information Form per voucher using the link below. A blank template showing what information we require can be found at the end of this document. The information can be completed by the industrial partner or the Research Organisation. You can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted – you will receive a link to log back in. These details can be used by individuals at both the university and company to ensure all parties are aware of the information provided.

https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/JIEE0M/

A separate letter of support from your company is required for each project/voucher and will need to be uploaded during completion of the Sign-Up Form. Each should be:
- on company headed paper
- addressed to EPSRC, Polaris House, Swindon SN2 1ET
and must include:

- the voucher number
- the project title
- written confirmation that you intend to support the studentship at the partnering university
- The value of your cash contribution (minimum of one third of the EPSRC award: i.e. at least £29,628 for each ICASE 2021 voucher)

Each letter of support should be on headed paper, dated, and signed by you, and should be uploaded as a scanned PDF no larger than 5MB in size.

Next steps: EPSRC will collate the information provided, and funds will be allocated directly to the relevant Research Organisations as a Training Grant (UKRI Training Grant Terms and Conditions and guidance can be viewed here). Specific ICASE Terms and Conditions apply. ICASE 2021 conditions will be similar to the previous round's which can be viewed here. Student details are not required before EPSRC releases funding to the Research Organisation, allowing flexibility in the timing and recruitment of students.

VI. **By 01/10/2022: Research Organisations have until 1 October 2022 for a suitable student to be recruited and start.** In the unlikely event that your chosen academic partner is unable to recruit a student before the deadline, we may agree for you to seek an alternative partner. If the new partner is from a different Research Organisation this institution should also hold a Doctoral Training Partnership, and the organisations should arrange a funds transfer between them as EPSRC is unable to transfer Training Grants.

4. **Additional industrial partners on ICASE**

An industrial partner in receipt of ICASE vouchers may involve one additional UK-based industrial partner on a project.

The industrial partner which was allocated the ICASE vouchers becomes the lead industrial partner, and in line with the standard ICASE requirements, remains responsible for ensuring the minimum cash contribution is delivered and student expenses are covered during visits. Student placements may be with either industrial partner, or both. The ICASE contact at the lead industrial partner will be the point of contact between the additional industrial partner and EPSRC.

The collaboration agreement between the lead industrial partner, the partnering university and the additional industrial partner should formalise exactly how any contributions from the additional industrial partner are delivered (e.g. via the lead industrial partner, or directly to the university).

The lead industrial partner and partnering university will be responsible for ensuring the quality and funding of the studentship.
5. **The allocation process**

1. The annual £17M ICASE budget is divided by the estimated cost of a four-year PhD, giving the total number of vouchers available for that year. The budget has remained static for a number of years, while the cost of studentships increases annually, meaning the total number of available vouchers decreases each year.

2. Organisations are ranked by their annualised contributions to EPSRC research (i.e. if there is one year remaining on a 4-year grant, then one quarter of that original contribution is included) weighted by number (i.e. multiplied by the number of grants on which they are a partner).

3. The total number of vouchers is divided approximately equally across 5 Bands. Organisations in Band 1 receive 10 vouchers each, those in Band 2 receive 8 vouchers each, those in Band 3 receive 6 each, those in Band 4 receive 4 each, and those in Band 5 receive 2 each. This determines how many organisations fall into each Band.

4. Organisations are then placed into the Bands based on their ranking, starting with highest ranked going into Band 1.

**WORKED EXAMPLE:** If there were 200 vouchers in total, then 40 vouchers would be available in each Band (200 ÷ 5 = 40). The 40 vouchers in Band 1 would be allocated to the four highest-ranked organisations which would each receive 10 vouchers. The 40 vouchers in Band 2 would be allocated to the next five highest-ranked organisations, which would receive 8 vouchers each, and so on.

To avoid organisations’ ICASE allocations varying too much year-by-year, we apply a movement rule which stipulates that an organisation’s initial allocation cannot increase or decrease by more than 2 vouchers per year.

If you have any queries about the arrangements for the scheme, or would like to provide any information on changes to your organisation which may affect allocations, please email industrialCASE@epsrc.ukri.org

6. **ICASE 2021 Timeline**

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<tr>
<th>Deadlines</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>17/07/2020</td>
<td>In order to help us plan during this unprecedented time, we would appreciate organisations letting us know if they are able to use their allocation or not, and if so, whether they have potential to use more vouchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Industrial Partner (you) email <a href="mailto:industrialCASE@epsrc.ukri.org">industrialCASE@epsrc.ukri.org</a> to:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Let us know if you are able or unable to use the vouchers. Please respond with one of these options:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. We can use the allocated vouchers, and are interested in potentially receiving additional vouchers through reallocation (see below)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
B. We can use the allocated vouchers, but do not expect to bid for additional ones.
C. We cannot use the allocated vouchers this year.
D. We are unsure whether we will be able to use the allocated vouchers but will confirm by the 30th September deadline.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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| 30/09/2020 | If you responded “D” in the previous step:  
Industrial Partner (you) email industrialCASE@epsrc.ukri.org to:  
Confirm whether you are able to utilise any or all of the ICASE studentships offered. |
| 30/09/2020 | Please note, if you fail to respond by 30 September 2020 then your allocation will be withdrawn. |
| 30/10/2020 (optional) | The following action relates to the possible reallocation of unused vouchers and is optional - if we don’t receive any correspondence relating to additional vouchers by 30 October 2020 we will assume you do not have capacity for more.  

Industrial Partner (you) email industrialCASE@epsrc.ukri.org to provide the following information:  
1. Let us know if you have capacity for additional vouchers, and if so, how many you could potentially use.  
2. For up to two potential projects which would make use of additional vouchers, provide a brief summary. |
| 16/11/2020 | Following evaluation of the submissions for additional projects, EPSRC begins issuing any unused vouchers. If you are assigned any additional vouchers you will be expected to meet the deadline for completing the Sign-up form for these extra projects. |
| 01/01/2021 | By this date, the Industrial Partner (you) will have:  
1. Identified the DTP-holding Research Organisations (universities) you will work with and agree all projects.  

Industrial Partner (you) together with your partnering universities will have:  
2. Completed an electronic Sign-Up Form for each project using the following link, uploading a PDF letter of support:  
https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/JIEE0M/  

EPSRC will check the details and remit of the projects. Any errors will be returned for correction. |
| EPSRC must receive a Sign-Up Form for each voucher by 1st January 2021. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of those vouchers. |
| 12/02/2021 | EPSRC emails letters of intent to academic and industrial supervisors. |
| 31/03/2021 | EPSRC announces Industrial CASE Account training grants to partnering universities. |
| 01/10/2021 | Funding starts. |
| 01/10/2022 | Latest date for students to have started. |
| 30/09/2026 | Funding ends. |
EPSRC Industrial CASE 2021 - Sign-Up Information

1. Use of Data in this Form

EPSRC complies with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (EU) GDPR). We process and handle personal information according to these regulations. The personal information that you provide on this form will only be used for the processing of information. The information will be viewed by EPSRC staff and those who are part of the decision-making process. Your information will not be used/shared for any other purpose without your specific consent. EPSRC reserves the right to publish and share anonymised aggregated information with stakeholders. For further information on how your personal data is used, how we maintain the security of your information, and your rights to access that information we hold about you, please contact the Professional Support Unit Information Team. The UK Research and Innovation privacy notice can be found on the UKRI website. This form has been developed using SmartSurvey. Data entered and submitted to EPSRC via the form will be held in SmartSurvey for a period in accordance with UKRI policy.

You will need to complete a separate Sign-Up Form for each ICASE voucher that you are using.

The information you provide in this SmartSurvey Form should relate to one specific project and its associated ICASE voucher and collaborating partners.

Please use the "Save and Continue" button if you need to complete this Form in more than one session. You will be emailed a link to enable you to return to the point where you left off. This can be used by contacts at both the university and company to ensure all parties are aware of the information provided. Please note that some firewalls may prohibit this feature, so you may wish to test it before entering lots of information.
Deadline for completion is 01 January 2021.
Please note that failure to meet this deadline will result in the withdrawal of any vouchers for which we have not received a submission. Earlier return of this information is welcomed.

Please take care to enter data correctly.

Information about the ICASE partnership Note: if more than one industrial partner is involved in this ICASE project, information on the additional industrial partner can be entered at the end of this survey. Please provide the following information pertaining to your ICASE project:

a) Voucher number (you will need to complete a separate survey for each voucher you are using)

b) Industrial Partner (name of the company in receipt of the ICASE vouchers)

c) Research organisation (the collaborating university - must receive EPSRC Doctoral Training Partnership funding)

d) Project title

2. Information about the ICASE project
Deadline: 01 January 2021
Please remember you can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted.

Project information This section is divided into several parts (see below). Firstly, please provide a short summary, placing the project in context, and highlighting key aims of the research. Limit of 200 words.
What are the novel research challenges? Limit of 100 words. *

Briefly outline what work the student will be expected to undertake over the course of the 4-year PhD. Limit of 150 words. *

Projects must lie within the remit of the EPSRC portfolio - please briefly but clearly state how the project aligns to our portfolio. You may wish to refer to the EPSRC research areas. Limit of 50 words. *

If possible, please indicate to which EPSRC theme(s) this project most closely aligns?

- Digital Economy
- Energy
- Engineering
- Healthcare Technologies
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Manufacturing The Future
3. Information about the Industrial Partner
Deadline: 01 January 2021
Please remember you can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted.

Information about the Industry Primary Contact. Please provide contact details for the central ICASE contact at the company. *

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<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Street address line 2</td>
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Town/City

County

Post code

4. Information about the Industrial Partner
Deadline: 01 January 2021
Please remember you can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted.

Information about the Industry Secondary Contact. Please provide contact details for an individual at the company who is able to answer queries about ICASE projects in the absence of the Primary Contact. *

Title/Full name

Telephone

Email

5. Information about the Industrial Partner
Deadline: 01 January 2021
Please remember you can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted.
Information about the Industry Project Supervisor. Please provide contact details for the Project Supervisor at the company. In some cases this may be the same individual as either the Industry Primary or Secondary Contact. *

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<td>Street address line 2</td>
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<td>Town/city</td>
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<td>County</td>
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<td>Post code</td>
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Industry cash contribution. Please confirm the cash contribution in Pounds Stirling from the industrial partner. This must be no less than one third of the EPSRC award but may be more. The minimum amount is stated in the voucher allocation letter. You do not need to type pound signs or commas. *

Choose File
8. Information about the Research Organisation Academic Partner
Deadline: 01 January 2021
Please remember you can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted.

Information about the University Project Supervisor. Please provide contact details for the Project Supervisor at the university which is hosting the student working on this ICASE project. *

Title

Full name*

Telephone*

Email*

Street address line 1*

Street address line 2

Town/city*

County
9. Information about the Additional Industrial Partner (if one is involved)

Information about the Additional Industrial Partner. Please note: this section is only required if there is more than one industrial partner involved in the ICASE project.

The industrial partner in receipt of ICASE vouchers may involve one additional UK-based industrial partner (such as an SME) on a project. The industrial partner which was allocated the ICASE vouchers becomes the lead industrial partner, and in line with the standard ICASE requirements, is responsible for contributing the industry cash contribution and the student’s expenses incurred during secondment. Student placements may be with either industrial partner, or both. The ICASE contact at the lead industrial partner will be the central point of contact between the additional industrial partner and EPSRC. The collaboration agreement between the lead industrial partner, the partnering university and the additional industrial partner should formalise exactly how the additional industrial partner’s contribution is delivered (e.g. via the lead industrial partner, or directly to the university). The lead industrial partner and partnering university will be responsible for ensuring the quality and funding of the studentship.

Please provide the following details for the additional industry partner.

Name of additional industrial partner (company name)

Street address line 1

Street address line 2
Is the additional industrial partner considered to be an SME?

10. Collaborative agreement
Deadline: 01 January 2021
Please remember you can save and exit the form at any time before it is submitted.

Please tick to confirm you intend to produce a collaborative agreement between the academic and industrial partner(s).

☐ Yes, we intend to produce a collaborative agreement

Thank you for completing this Sign-Up Form. Please be sure to complete a new Form if you need to provide details for any remaining ICASE vouchers.
Before submitting the form, please ensure all named parties agree to its contents. *

☐ I confirm that all individuals named on this Form are aware of and agree to its contents.
11. Thank you
You have completed this Sign-Up Form.
Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Please be sure to complete a new Form if you need to provide details for any remaining ICASE vouchers.

EPSRC complies with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (EU) GDPR). We process and handle personal information according to these regulations. The personal information that you provide on this form will only be used for the processing of information. The information will be viewed by EPSRC staff and those who are part of the decision making process. Your information will not be used/shared for any other purpose without your specific consent. EPSRC reserves the right to publish and share anonymized aggregated information with stakeholders. For further information on how your personal data is used, how we maintain the security of your information, and your rights to access that information we hold about you, please contact the Professional Support Unit Information Team. The UK Research and Innovation privacy notice can be found on the UKRI website. This form has been developed using SmartSurvey. Data entered and submitted to EPSRC via the form will be held in SmartSurvey for a period in accordance with UKRI policy.