LJMU- Thematic Doctoral Pathways (TDP) Application 2022/23

It is with great pleasure that we announce the 1st LJMU-Thematic Doctoral Pathway’s programme, that is now open for applications.

The consolidation of UKRI funded Doctoral Training Programmes across UK HEIs has created a ‘gold standard’ for PhD studentships. Doctoral training consortia with an inbuilt structured, cohort-style doctoral experience have become an established mechanism for investment in doctoral training. Despite changes in consortia membership to include more post-92 institutions, UKRI funded Doctoral Training Programmes are still typically concentrated in pre-’92 research intensive universities.

LJMU is piloting an internal Thematic Doctoral Pathway (TDP) to develop our own programmes of cohort-PhD offer. This will support research excellence, enhance our reputation for outstanding training and research opportunities for postgraduate students, and directly underpin external applications to join funded Doctoral Training Programmes.

The Vice-Chancellor and the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee have endorsed the 2022/23 version of the programme and we invite applications from exceptional teams, with high quality project plans, as well as innovative training and support plans for their cohort.

We are seeking to support, in the first instance, up to three high quality Thematic Doctoral Pathways (TDP) that take a student-centred approach, focusing on research excellence, positive research culture and wider training opportunities. The awards will be made after application and presentation/interview with the specific intent of providing the impetus for an externally funded Doctoral Training Programme application soon. The awards will consist of 3 full-funded, Full-time PhD scholarships to each TDP for two consecutive years (6 PhD scholarships in total). The second-year award will be ratified after successful completion of review documentation in relation to the first year’s award. The first cohort of students will start in February 2023, the second in February 2024.

Each TDP should be linked to at least one area of expertise across LJMU (assessed as being a minimum of 50% of overall rating at 3\* and 4\* in REF 2021).

Each TDP should consider the nature of the team and focus area of the proposed work and should identify interdisciplinarity where relevant as well as collaborations between Research Groups, Centres and Institutes within LJMU (potentially across Faculties). External academic collaboration must be significantly “additive” to the quality of the TDP and the student experience. These collaborations must be formally confirmed in any application (appended letters).

Each TDP will be coordinated by an academic expert in the area but must identify members of the “team” and the skills and experiences they bring. There is value, also, in identifying early career researchers who will contribute to the TDP. After the award of the TDP, open advertisement and application for the PhD positions is required.

Students can expect a fully-funded three-year PhD scholarship, comprising:

* Annual full-time study fees
* An annual full-time stipend (£16,062 per annum in 2022/23, rising in line with UKRI rates) paid in monthly instalments for full-time study
* A contribution towards running costs (£1600 per annum)
* A comprehensive transferable skills development programme from LJMU’s Researcher Development Programme
* Coaching and/or mentoring support
* Additional subject-specific training relevant to the cluster (this may include guest lectures, research sandpits, advanced methodological training, depending on the cluster)

Each studentship also carries a ‘flexible supplement’ that could include (this list is not exhaustive):

* Exceptional training opportunities, such as overseas fieldwork, internships/placements and training in new advanced research skills
* Opportunities to provide training in partnership working with industry or at the interdisciplinary interface, including internships/placements and collaborative training
* Opportunities to gain paid teaching and public engagement experience through The Brilliant Club’s Scholar’s Programme
* Options to take up a paid internship, paid HE teaching or demonstrating experience, or paid conference organization.
* Access to a Global Scholar scheme to support international placements and engagement
* Experience of working with non-academic partner organisations

Students within each TDP will be expected to meet (with academic support teams) regularly for skills-based training, seminars and workshops. A small budget (up to £2000 per annum) will be available to each TDP to support training development opportunities for each TDP, which can be supplemented by local or external support as available.

**HOW TO APPLY**

The case for support should not exceed four sides of A4 and should be completed on the attached proforma

**Pathway lead**

The name and contact details of the person who will be acting as lead for the application and subsequent award, if successful.

**Summary rationale**

Please outline your vision for the TDP and give detail of how potential studentships will fit into the research strategy of the team, the collaboration (within and outside LJMU as appropriate) as well as the overall vision values and strategy of LJMU.

Applications should also outline the priority research areas that will be addressed by the doctoral students and explain clearly what additional benefits will arise for LJMU. Applications should explore the interdisciplinarity and/or collaborative value of the proposed research. Applications should evaluate the potential impact of the proposed areas of research.

**Supervisory capacity and track record**

Please demonstrate sufficient staff capacity to provide supervision and training for the students recruited to the Pathway across the duration of the award. For interdisciplinary research proposals, we ask that you identify supervisors covering the different disciplines the research will explore.

**Provision of training support and enhanced student experience**

In this section, you should give details of training offered by the TDP, and its wider collaborators, such as inductions, and specialist training opportunities that may be offered to candidates where relevant to their field of study. Please provide details on how training requirements will be identified, and the process for ensuring that these are provided to students.

Please outline your approach to enabling students to undertake additional development opportunities as part of a richer PhD programme. Assessors will be looking for commitment to novel activities and opportunities for students to be involved in. We will also be looking for details of how the TDP’s will seek to give students the opportunity to put training into practice, both for use in their research activities as well as in career development. Please outline how the cohorts of students will be given the opportunity to interact and support each other.

**Collaborative Partners**

Where HEI and non-HEI organisations are collaborating, please list all the partners involved, giving brief details of their involvement (for example, provision of expert input on an aspect of a student’s project) and any specific additional support or resources that they provide (not otherwise mentioned in the application).

**Inclusivity Planning**

We wish to support students from a diverse range of backgrounds and ensure any barriers to participation are mitigated. Please outline how the TDP will ensure all recruited students have equitable access to opportunities and receive the support they need to successfully complete their studies and develop their careers. Please note that TDP are only available to full-time PhD studentships and full-time commitment to the TDP from the students is vital.

[ ] **Tick here to confirm the name and contact details of the person who will be acting as lead for the application and subsequent award, if successful**

[ ] **Tick here to confirm the supervisory team has the resources and expertise to support the project.**

[ ]  **Tick here to confirm that the lead supervisor of the TDP is a permanent academic member of staff at LJMU.**

[ ] **Tick here to confirm that all formal letters of support from HEI and no-HEI collaborators are attached, (not part of the 4-page submission).**

[ ] **Tick here to confirm that the information given on this form is true, complete and accurate and that no information or other material information has been omitted. You accept that if this is the case, LJMU shall have the right to cancel your application and you shall have no claim against LJMU.**

The offer of a TDP is contingent on the students meeting the necessary qualifications and admissions regulations that are required for PhD study.

## APPLICATION

## TDP Lead

Please provide details of the supervisory team.

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| --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Email:** |  |
| **Current position:** |  |
| **Faculty / School / Institute:** |  |
| **Successful supervisions:** | **MPhil:** |  | **PhD:** |  |
| **Current supervisions:** | **MPhil:** |  | **PhD:** |  |
| ***Brief* description of major research achievements and list of related key outputs since 2016** |  |

### Additional LJMU and non-LJMU member(s) of the TDP Team

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| --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Email:** |  |
| **Current position:** |  |
| **Faculty / School / Institute:** |  |
| **Successful supervisions:** | **MPhil:** |  | **PhD:** |  |
| **Current supervisions:** | **MPhil:** |  | **PhD:** |  |
| ***Brief* description of major Contribution to TDP** |  |

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| **Email:** |  |
| **Current position:** |  |
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| **Current supervisions:** | **MPhil:** |  | **PhD:** |  |
| ***Brief* description of major Contribution to the TDP** |  |

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| **Current supervisions:** | **MPhil:** |  | **PhD:** |  |
| ***Brief* description of major Contribution to the TDP** |  |

**Please add additional boxes as appropriate**

## Title of TDP

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TDP’s are awarded based on the merit of the project area, the team and the training and development programme to support the TDP Cohort .

**Summary Rationale (max 2 pages)**

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**Provision of training support and enhanced student experience** (max 2 pages).

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**Statement of link between the proposed TDP and either; the relevant Faculty Research Strategy and/or the University Strategic Plan/Vision. (max 100 words)**

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Submit your application via email to M.Campbell1@ljmu.ac.uk by 5.00pm on 19th September 2022

**Guidance on Completing the Application Form**

* Applications (including this form) to the 2022 TDP should be submitted by the TDP Lead (on behalf of the team) via email to m.campbell1@ljmu.ac.uk by 5.00pm on 19th September 2022. No further applications will be considered once the 5 pm deadline has passed.
* TDP applications without an identified academic lead will not be accepted.
* Once all of the applications have been received, they will be judged by a two-stage process
	+ An initial Faculty-based Panel will be set up by the Faculty Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange in association with the Faculty Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. The panel will include staff with relevant academic expertise, extensive PGR supervision experience, and will reflect broad coverage of equality and diversity in the Faculty. The Faculty panel will be tasked with a review of eligibility of applications.
	+ A second-stage University Panel will consider Faculty recommendations and will make an initial judgement on quality of the overall bid. This panel will be chaired by Professor George (PVC Research and Knowledge Exchange), Associate Deans for Research and Knowledge Exchange and other members of the University Research and Knowledge Exchange committee, taking into account issues of academic and PGR supervision experience and equality and diversity as noted above. Academic decisions will be based on the consistent application of the criteria of excellence associated with both the proposed project research focus of the TDP and the associated training and development plan. The University panel will make a recommendation for 4-6 TDP’s to go to a final assessment stage.
	+ The final assessment stage is an institutional level interview. Invited, TDP applicants will be asked to give a presentation along with an interview which will involve a small panel including the PVC RKE, the Dean of the Doctoral Academy and expert external panel members with TDP experience.
	+ It is hoped that a result will be known sometime in Mid-October 2022. Mel will inform all applicants of the outcome whether successful or not and will copy in the Lead Supervisor.
* Applications should be submitted as a single file PDF starting with the cover letter, then the application form, and then any other collaborative support etc. To merge the documents into a PDF go to the Windows Menu, click on JMU App Player, then click on Adobe Acrobat Pro XI, then click on Combine Files into PDF.

\* Criteria of excellence associated with both the student and the proposed project.

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria of excellence:

* The quality and coherence of research record in the proposed TDP team;
* The research excellence identified by the team as the focus for the TDP
* The training and development plans proposed for the PhD cohort
* The clarity and relevance of the statement about the connection/link with Faculty or University Strategies/Vison within LJMU.

Please note:

* The number of TDP’s available is limited (a maximum of 3 for this round)
* TDP’s must be filled, with full-time PhDs, in the February 2023 fixed enrolment point, or the offer will be withdrawn.
* The TDP Lead supervisors must be L/SL status or above. Postdoctoral Researchers or Research Assistants are not eligible to be Lead Supervisors on this scheme, but they may be included in supervisory teams.
* An academic can only be the TDP lead for one application
* For PhD appointments TDP must follow institutional process of open advertisement, short-listing, interview and on-line application for successful candidates.

**For further advice call Mel Campbell on 0151 904 6377**