



Royal College of Music AHRC Block Grant partnership

Guidance Notes for all applicants

The AHRC Block Grant Partnership

From October 2009, through select institutions, the AHRC is funding the majority of its postgraduate studentships through a Block Grant Partnership (or 'BGP') for a period of 5 years. The RCM's selection for this partnership recognises the consistently high level of its applications made to the AHRC in previous years.

Doctoral Awards

AHRC funded Doctoral Awards provide support for full-time and part-time students undertaking the College's Doctor of Music (DMus) programme. The scheme is open to applicants who will be starting their DMus in September 2011. It is also open to current DMus candidates provided they have already completed at least 12 full-time months by October 2011, or they still have 12 months of full-time or 20 months of part-time supervised study remaining. The AHRC duration of doctoral study is no more than three years for full-time candidates and five for those who are part-time. If you are unsure about this, please consult your Directing Supervisor or the DMus Handbook. AHRC doctoral awards are normally for a maximum duration of three years full-time, or five years part-time.

Professional Preparation Masters (PPM)

An AHRC-funded Professional Preparation Masters award in music provides support for full-time and part-time students undertaking postgraduate music study on a programme which focuses on the development of high-level skills and competencies as a preparation for professional practice as a musician. PGDip, MPerf, MComp and MMus awards within the RCM's Masters programme are eligible. Professional Preparation Masters (PPM) awards are normally for a minimum of nine months full-time (or twelve months part-time) and for a maximum of twelve months full-time (or 24 months part-time). Exceptionally, the AHRC may fund longer courses, of up to 24 months full-time and 48 months part-time, where the value and necessity of the additional training has been demonstrated in the application.

Application process

Applicants for an AHRC award (except DMus students who have already commenced their study) should have applied to the RCM via CUKAS, and have accepted a guaranteed conditional or unconditional place by the time of submitting the application for AHRC funding.

Application for AHRC funding requires completion of a further process to the CUKAS application, including an application form and the submission of two references by 5pm on Monday 4 April 2011. All forms and supporting documents can be downloaded from the RCM's website at www.rcm.ac.uk/ahrcawards.

Eligibility

AHRC studentships are available only to UK or EU students. Persons designated by the RCM as EU for fee-paying purposes may be eligible for a fees-only award or a full award, depending on their period of residency in the UK. An applicant must have gained an undergraduate degree from a recognised higher education institution, or be a current undergraduate expecting to graduate before 31 July 2011. Persons applying for a doctoral award should normally have, or be studying for a Masters degree. For further information regarding eligibility for AHRC studentships, applicants must consult information on the AHRC website:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Documents/Guide%20to%20Student%20Eligibility.pdf>

Telephone queries relating to the Block Grant scheme should be addressed to Pamela Mason at the AHRC, 01793 416063.

How the application will be assessed and awards allocated

Applications for AHRC-funded awards will be assessed by a Panel comprising Graduate School staff in consultation with Heads of Faculty as appropriate. The Panel will grade each application it considers and will agree a ranked ordering. This will reflect an assessment of the entire application, including the information and evidence provided about the applicant's ability, aptitude, commitment and preparedness for the programme, and the quality of work to be produced. Referees involved in an application should address the questions asked of them as fully and as honestly as possible, commenting in detail on the applicant's work and his/her preparedness for the proposed programme.

With reference to the number of AHRC funded awards available for each award type (five for PPM and one for Doctoral in 2011-12), the Panel will make recommendations for the awards. Reserves will also be identified

Each application will be judged on its own merits using the following criteria:

Doctoral awards

- quality of the applicant
- preparedness of the applicant – for the proposed project and future career
- quality and feasibility of the research project (including ethical issues, where relevant)

Professional Preparation Masters awards

- quality of the applicant
- preparedness of the applicant – for the proposed study and future career
- quality and feasibility of the proposed study

Applicants are advised to refer to the assessment criteria when completing their application form. These are included in the relevant Guidance Notes, available on the website at www.rcm.ac.uk/ahrcawards

The RCM is committed to promoting equality and diversity in all of its practices and activities, including those relating to student admission and studentship nomination, and to working by the following principles: fairness; transparency; professionalism; accessibility; consistent application of policy and procedure.

Notifying the AHRC of studentship nominations

The RCM will forward to the AHRC details of applicants nominated for an award. Students are asked on the application form to indicate whether they have applied to more than one institution for an AHRC award. Students should note that if they are offered more than one award place by different institutions, **they must choose which one to accept before the institution confirms the nomination to the AHRC.** If the AHRC receives more than one nomination form for the same student, **they reserve the right to reject all nominations and applications for that student.**

Timetable

Key dates are:

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| 4 April 2011 | application form with supporting documents plus two supporting references must be submitted to the RCM Registry |
| Mid-late April 2010 | Registry staff check applications and residency criteria; panel meets and confirms award nominations |
| May/June 2010 | Applicants are informed |

If you need to receive this documentation in a different format owing to a disability, please contact Tania Mooring in Registry to discuss your requirements, 020-7591 4399 tmooring@rcm.ac.uk.