

Policy internship scheme summary: FAQs for applicants

For information on the scheme, you should refer to the scheme summary, which is available on the Academy of Medical Sciences website. This FAQs document is intended to answer specific questions that you may have in relation to your application.

Eligibility

Who is eligible for the scheme?

The scheme is open to Wellcome Trust four-year PhD Programme students who will be in the third or fourth year of their studentship when their internship takes place. The scheme is presently not open to clinicians, veterinarians, social scientists, or to PhD students working at the Sanger Centre.

Am I able to participate after my PhD funding has finished?

The scheme can also be undertaken in the three-month period immediately following the end of a student's fourth year. For example, a student who is in their fourth year in May 2019 (and whose funding finishes in September 2019) would be eligible for the October 2019 – December 2020 slot, but not the slots between January 2020 and September 2020.

Can I choose the timing of the internship?

The 2019/20 internship scheme will run four times: from October 2019 - December 2019, January 2020 – March 2020, April 2020 – June 2020 and July 2020 – September 2020. You can indicate on your application your preference regarding timings; however, positions are limited and we cannot guarantee that places will be offered on the preferred dates. Exact start and end dates for successful applicants will be confirmed within a month of the beginning of each internship.

Application process

What happens after I submit my application?

Candidates whose applications are shortlisted will be invited for interview at the Academy's offices on **Friday 19 July 2019**. If, due to exceptional circumstances, you are unable to attend on this date, you should state this on your application form and the Academy will contact you to make alternative arrangements.

Do I need to include referees in my application?

Your application must be endorsed by your primary PhD project supervisor and the Programme sponsor (the PhD Programme Director). There is a section on the application form for your supervisor and sponsor to complete. Make sure that you leave enough time to secure this endorsement before they submit their application.

Written article

What are you hoping to see from my written article?

We are looking for a well-constructed, considered article, which demonstrates an interest in a policy topic and an appreciation of what makes your topic of relevance to policy-makers. There are many ways that you could achieve this. If you are writing about your own area of research you should focus on its policy implications – not simply describe your research. We are particularly interested in the relevance to the Academy and/or Wellcome Trust of the policy issue you choose. The most important thing to remember is that we are offering the internship as a learning experience; we do not expect you to submit a perfectly polished piece of policy writing.

Who is the written article meant to be aimed at; what is their level of scientific expertise?

The piece should be aimed at a non-specialist audience and written at a level that an interested lay person could understand, while conveying the policy significance of the issue/research.

Can you provide previous examples of written articles?

We do not make previous examples available to applicants. Examples of policy-writing can be found on the Academy's website and those of other relevant organisations (for example, the Wellcome Trust, the Royal Society, the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology).

Should I include references in my written article?

Please include references where you think they are appropriate. This is not a science-based essay, so perhaps does not need some of the robust referencing that you might include in a journal article. However, as a policy essay it should be evidence-based; so, for example, you should look to back up claims with appropriate references (e.g. if you are quoting statistics).

Financial arrangements

What practical and financial arrangements need to be in place for me to participate?

The three-month internships will be full-time positions based at the Academy's offices at 41 Portland Place, London, which you will need to attend. If you are successful in your application, you will receive a three-month extension to your Wellcome Trust PhD stipend while you are based at the Academy.

What if I live outside of London and need to travel or temporarily relocate in order to take part in the scheme?

Further financial support to cover travel or subsistence costs will be decided on a case-by-case basis, up to a maximum of £2000 per intern and subject to agreement by the Academy and Wellcome Trust. In certain circumstances, we will consider exceeding this limit if candidates can provide documentary evidence of the costs incurred above £2000.