

## **APPLYING FOR ESRC FUNDING AT THE CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF YORK**

First familiarize yourself with the ESRC web-site - [www.esrc.ac.uk](http://www.esrc.ac.uk) following the link (at the top of the home page) to postgraduate funding and then to funding opportunities where you will find links to application forms and guidance notes. Read the ESRC Guidance notes carefully in conjunction with the advice given here. Your prospective supervisor and the Director of the Centre will also offer you personal help and advice on filling in the forms and developing your research proposal to the required standard. Staff in the Centre for Women's Studies are very experienced in helping students through the process and we pride ourselves on our high success rate.

### **How the ESRC funds postgraduates**

The ESRC funds home and EU postgraduates on two bases:

1+3 funding for a recognized research training Masters course followed by a PhD, i.e. for four years. Our MA in Women's Studies (Social Research) has such recognition.

+3 funding for a PhD only – available to those who have completed an ESRC recognized research training Masters, at York or elsewhere. A list of recognized courses is available on the ESRC website.

### Implications

The ESRC does NOT fund free-standing masters programmes. They fund only masters programmes leading to doctoral research

The ESRC does NOT fund PhD candidates unless they have received the requisite postgraduate research training, normally through a recognized Masters course. For a PhD in women's studies this can be in any social science discipline.

ESRC funding is COMPETITIVE. This means you and we have to be prepared to put a great deal of work into the form filling to produce a high quality application that gives you the best possible chance of success. For the reasons explained below, 1+3 funding is more difficult to obtain than +3 funding

### **ESRC 1+3 Funding for MA+PhD and other funding options for the MA year**

Some departments ('outlets') in some institutions have Quota Awards, which means that they, rather than the ESRC decide on the candidates' suitability for the awards (information on quota awards and departments holding them is available on the ESRC website). There are no quotas currently allocated to women's studies at any institution. The remainder of 1+3 awards are allocated through competition. Each outlet is only permitted to enter ONE candidate for the 1+3 competition. We will therefore enter the best candidate from among those who apply to us on the basis of their qualifications, references and the strength of their research proposal. We ask all those interested in applying to complete the forms: and will judge the strength of your application on the basis of these forms. Note that some candidates drop out at the last minute and we therefore need to ensure that reserve candidates have forms ready to go.

We also have our own Masters studentships (fees only). Reserve candidates for the ESRC competition will be given priority in the allocation of these studentships.

If you are not successful in gaining either form of funding for the masters year, but can fund yourself, you will have the opportunity to apply for +3 funding for your PhD. While this is still very competitive, there is no limit to the number of applications we can submit – thus chances of success are higher than in the 1+3 competition.

### **ESRC +3 funding for PhD**

Funding is available through open competition – there is no limit to the number of candidates we can enter. To be eligible you must have successfully completed or be undertaking a recognized research training Masters course or be able to demonstrate that you have fulfilled the ESRC's training requirements by some other means. If you have a masters qualification that is not recognized it may be possible to make a case for +3 funding if you can provide evidence that your masters course (or other training you have received) fulfils all or most of the requirements of the ESRC's post-graduate training guidelines (available on the ESRC's web-site). If you think this may apply to you, seek our advice.

### **General points to note**

1. In order to be eligible for either form of funding you must first be accepted by the University. If you are intending to apply to the ESRC you must, therefore, apply to the University.
2. Candidates can only make an application from one institution. If you apply simultaneously from two universities you will be disqualified.
3. Applications to the ESRC are made through the institution. Individual candidates cannot apply directly to the ESRC.
4. Therefore the forms must be completed in consultation with us and referees must also return their references (testimonials) to us and not to the ESRC.
5. It takes time to develop a good research proposal and also to co-ordinate the various individuals contributing to the process including your supervisors and testimonial writers.
6. Deadlines are absolute. The ESRC deadline is the beginning of May and our internal deadline is generally around mid April.
7. In order to ensure success you must keep in touch with us throughout the process.