2020 Application Form Guidance

Deadline – 12pm, Tues 24th March 2020

These notes are to assist you with the SURE application form, which is available here: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sure/301

Student Applicant Details

Eligibility to apply:
- Students must be currently registered as an undergraduate on any course at the University.
- Students must not be in their first or final year of study.
- Students must not have taken part in the scheme before.
- Previously unsuccessful applicants can reapply to the scheme as long as they are still eligible (e.g. a student on a 4 year course who was unsuccessful in their 2nd year can reapply again in their 3rd year).
- International students are eligible to apply. A SURE bursary is not classed as employment, therefore any student can apply for funding even if they do not currently have a legal right to work in the UK.
- Student researchers may only be associated with one SURE application.
- Students must have the agreement of an academic member of staff to act as their supervisor before they apply.
- Students are advised to contact academic staff with similar research interests to their proposed project. There is a list of previously funded projects on our website and guidance on approaching a potential supervisor, which may be a useful first point of reference.
- It is acceptable to submit an application for one project with two student researchers (and therefore two bursary applications) involved. In this instance, two applications should be submitted, with each student’s application on a separate form, and each should clearly indicate that the project is linked. Each student’s research role within the project should be clearly defined within each individual application.

Supervisor Applicant Details

Eligibility to apply:
- Supervisors must be employed by the University, either as an academic or research associate with demonstrable experience of supervising student research. Supervisors must also be available to support the student researcher during the six-week project (though for occasional absences, a second supervisor can be nominated).
- From 2020 onwards, supervisors must have a named researcher at the point of application. They may only be lead supervisor on one SURE application. SURE is not responsible for appointing student researchers.

Application Process

- The SURE Showcase provides an excellent opportunity to gain more information. The event will be held on Thursday 20 February 2020 (5pm-7pm) in the Octagon Centre. Prospective applicants can see the range of research projects undertaken during SURE 2019, and past participants can share their experiences, challenges and successes. There is also the chance to speak to members of the SURE team and find out more about the scheme.
- The application process consists of a short google form and a full word document application, which should be converted to PDF once completed, and uploaded following the prompt at the end of the google form. Links to these are available from the SURE website.
All parties involved in an application should be satisfied with the content of the form before it is uploaded and each should keep a copy for reference.

### Project Details

#### Project Title

Provide the full title of your proposed project.

#### Project Start and End Dates

Most SURE projects start on **Monday 15 June 2020** and finish by **Friday 24 July 2020**. However, it is understood that in some cases this may not be possible due to prior commitments. If projects need to start or end slightly later, please provide a valid reason. Please take into consideration that:

- A project cannot start before Monday 15 June 2020 or finish after Friday 7 August 2020.
- The academic supervisor (or a nominated secondary supervisor) must be available and willing to supervise during the chosen period.
- Students may miss some of the SURE Community events and additional support sessions for student researchers.
- Start and end dates cannot be changed from those stated on the application form.

#### Outline (500 words max)

This is your opportunity to outline your project to the SURE bursary Funding Panel. All applications are sent to the Panel for their consideration. Each Faculty has its own Panel, and usually comprises two representatives from research and learning and teaching within that Faculty (e.g. Faculty Director of Learning and Teaching). Each Panel will use the criteria below to determine whether or not projects are deemed fundable. If the number of fundable projects exceeds the funding available, the Panel may consider how projects fit with departmental and Faculty research priorities in order to decide which will be awarded bursaries.

Project outlines should also be clear and concise, and avoid technical jargon or specialist language that may be difficult for someone unfamiliar with your area of research to understand. The supporting information should demonstrate the value of the project to the student. The panel are unlikely to fund a proposal where the student's contribution appears limited or menial, or if it would be more appropriate for the supervisor to complete the work themselves. Your **project outline** should therefore demonstrate:

- Interesting and innovative research ideas;
- a clearly defined objective, which could form part of a much larger research activity;
- an authentic research activity in the subject discipline, whether desk-based or empirical;
- a clearly-defined and meaningful role for the student, providing them with a worthwhile research experience;
- realistic aims and objectives that are achievable within 6 weeks (i.e. the hypothesis is sensible and the facilities, student skills and equipment are all available during the time period);
- clear and well thought-out project outputs, with a clear dissemination plan for the outcomes of the project within and beyond the department;
- it is not part of the normal programme of work for the student.

References are not included in the word count.

The decision of the panel is final and there is no opportunity to appeal. Due to the volume of applications that are reviewed, unfortunately it is not possible to provide detailed individual feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

There will be a briefing for all successful SURE applicants on **Wednesday 20 May 2020**. Please keep this date free as you will be required to attend should your application be successful.
### Milestones and targets

List the main milestones and targets that you will achieve during your project. You may wish to organise this into achievements or aims for each week of the project.

### Dissemination Plan

The project structure, aims and objectives will be determined by the student researcher and/or academic supervisor. However, students are expected to produce three project outputs:

- a conference abstract
- a reflective diary
- dissemination of the research

Please provide a brief description of how you will disseminate your project outcomes (e.g. poster, PowerPoint presentation, podcast, journal article etc).

The aim of SURE is to provide students with a genuine research experience. Consolidation and reflection is a key part of this process, therefore we ask each student researcher to submit a reflective diary and a conference abstract at the end of their project. Training will be offered on this as part of the SURE Community.

Academic supervisors are expected to discuss the abstract with their student, and may wish to provide comments and feedback before the final submission of the form.

All students are expected to disseminate their research at the SURE Showcase the following year. Approaches to this may include producing a poster, video, presentation, podcasting, or writing an article for a professional journal. Academic supervisors should provide advice and guidance to student researchers on appropriate dissemination methods for their project. Outstanding disseminations will be celebrated at the SURE Showcase with the presentation of several SURE Awards.

### Student Statement

**What interests you about this project? What skills can you bring? (150 words max)**

Explain why you want to carry out this project and why you are a suitable candidate (considering your abilities and motivations, for example).

**What do you hope to gain from taking part in SURE? (150 words max)**

Explain what the impact will be on your current academic career and beyond.

### Support for Student Researchers

A range of opportunities will be available for SURE students to socialise with each other, share experiences, and exchange useful research tips and ideas.

The SURE community includes:

- Training sessions - e.g. preparing to be a researcher, poster presentations, digital media, maths and statistics help, getting your research published and how to communicate to non-academic audiences.
- Social events – opportunities to meet other SURE students and discuss projects.
- Weekly chatroom support and information sessions.

In addition to signing up to training events offered through the SURE period, we would also recommend some self-preparation prior to the project start date, such as devising a structured timetable or programme of work with your supervisor or finalising practicalities (e.g. work space/access to printing etc.) SURE students will also be required to take a 301 skills audit to help identify strengths and training needs.
### Supervisor Statement

**The role of the academic supervisor**

One of the defining aims of the SURE scheme is to offer students the chance to work in collaboration with academic staff and develop their research skills. For many students, this is their first experience of working on a research project, and they are likely to require considerable support during the early stages.

We would therefore recommend that all academic supervisors are available during the first few weeks, and where necessary offer a structured induction for their students. It may also be useful to consider any practical arrangements in advance (e.g. workspace/seating arrangement, access to printing etc). Once the project is up and running, the level of supervision is left to the discretion of the supervisor. However, we would recommend nominating a second supervisor if you are going to be away at any point during the project. You may choose to nominate a PhD student, as it would provide them with useful supervision experience.

We hope that supervisors will also promote the SURE Community events and actively encourage their students to take part in the wide range of events and opportunities available.

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<th>What is the relevance of this research? (150 words max)</th>
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<td>Outline how your project will contribute to your own research and/or your department’s research culture, and the experience it will provide an undergraduate researcher.</td>
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<th>How would the student benefit from undertaking this SURE project? Please include reference to the student’s aptitude and potential. (150 words max)</th>
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<td>Provide information endorsing why the student is suitable to work on the project, considering their aptitude, ability and interest (if applicable).</td>
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<th>What are the arrangements for supervision? (150 words max)</th>
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<td>Include details of the intended support provision for the student (i.e. supervisory arrangements, training and skills development opportunities available, opportunities for the student to engage with the research community of the department).</td>
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### Bursary Requirements

Should an application be successful, both the student and academic supervisor will be sent an ‘Expectations’ document before the start of the project. This document outlines what is expected of students and supervisors during the project, as well as follow up activity such as project outputs and dissemination. The document will need to be read and acknowledged (through a tick). Bursary payments will be made following this acknowledgement.

SURE bursaries are paid to student researchers in one instalment, at the end of the first week of the project. Bursaries are awarded based upon the standard rate of £208 per week (up to a maximum of £1,250 for a six-week full-time project).

Applications for shorter research projects are welcome, but they must take place within the same period as the other SURE projects (i.e. start on or after 15 June 2020 and finish no later than 7 August 2020). This is particularly applicable to those who do not have holiday in the regular vacation period (e.g. students from the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health). Part-time students receive funding on a pro-rata basis. It is not possible to receive extra funding even if the project takes longer than six weeks.

Students will be asked to upload their bank details via MUSE. If students would like payments to be made to an overseas bank account, completion of an additional form will be required.
(available upon request from a member of the SURE Team). Please note that payments made to an overseas bank account will take slightly longer to process.

### Additional Costs

A small budget has been made available to support additional costs. However, if your project application is successful, **funding for additional costs is not automatically guaranteed**. Please consider whether additional costs can be met elsewhere, where possible.

Each SURE project may request up to £150 for additional costs (£300 for lab-based projects). This could include material costs (e.g. stationery, photocopying, text books, USB stick), journal or newspaper subscriptions, travel expenses (e.g. train tickets, bus or taxi fares), or entrance fees (e.g. museum exhibition, art gallery). **We are not able to reimburse any commuting costs associated with projects.**

All planned expenditure must be outlined in the application. Funding is allocated based on every aspect of the project proposal, therefore it is unlikely that participants will be able to claim for any other additional expenditure at a later stage, so please be as accurate as possible. Note that the cost of producing dissemination posters for the SURE showcase is covered by the scheme, so this cost does not need to be factored into planned expenditure.

### Ethics

Students and supervisors must both be aware of the importance of any ethical issues surrounding their project. This may include considering the safety or vulnerability of participants and yourselves as researchers. You will be asked to indicate on your application form if you expect the project to require ethics approval.

**Please note that it is the department’s responsibility to secure an ethics approval and the SURE Team is unable to secure this on your behalf.**

**Further questions? Visit our FAQs sections for students / for supervisors or email the team: surescheme@sheffield.ac.uk**