



# trees

Training, Research & Equity  
in Environmental Sciences

**Application form: Guide for prospective students**

[www.trees-dla.ac.uk/](http://www.trees-dla.ac.uk/)

[trees.admissions@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:trees.admissions@ucl.ac.uk)

[trees@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:trees@ucl.ac.uk)

# TREES

**TREES** is collaboration between **10 Hosting Partners** (7 universities and 3 environmental science research centres) and **79 Collaborative Partners** (e.g., industry, NGOs, and the public sector).

## 10 Hosting Partners



### Universities

- Birkbeck, University of London <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/>
- Brunel University of London <https://www.brunel.ac.uk/>
- King's College London <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/>
- Queen Mary University of London <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/>
- Royal Holloway, University of London <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/>
- University of Portsmouth <https://www.port.ac.uk/>
- University College London <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/>

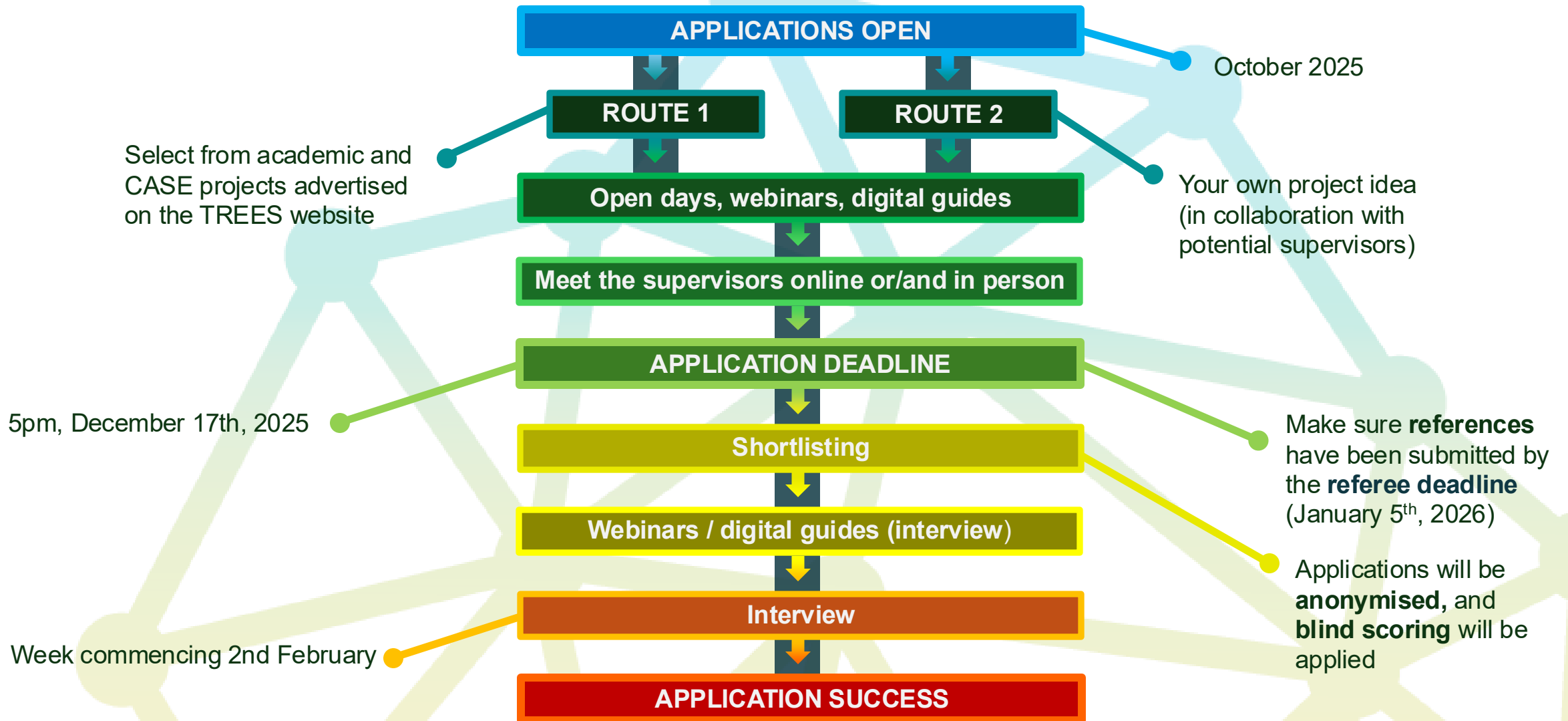
### Environmental research centres

- Natural History Museum <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/>
- Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew <https://www.kew.org/>
- Zoological Society of London <https://www.zsl.org/>

# Abbreviations

- **DLA:** Doctoral Landscape Award
- **EDI:** Equality, diversity and inclusion
- **NERC:** Natural Environment Research Council <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/nerc/>
- **PTP:** Personal Training Programme. This is part of the TREES programme. Training needs for students are identified (regarding PhD and career), focusing on the next 6 months. This identification happens each 6 months. There are various activities a students may do (e.g., attending MSc modules, gaining university teaching experience, etc.). Activities are associated with **training points** which are noted in the Personal Training Record (PTR), and students have a set a target of how many points to achieve in the year. PTP also features a **3-month placement**, and student produces written content about their placement for the TREES website.
- **TREES:** Training, Research & Equity in Environmental Science <https://www.trees-dla.ac.uk/>
- **UKRI:** UK Research and Innovation <https://www.ukri.org/>

# Application timeline



# Application form

APPLICATIONS OPEN

<https://www.trees-dla.ac.uk/apply>

APPLICATION FORM

Application steps

- ☐ APPLICANT TYPE
- ☐ PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☐ REFEREE
- ☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☐ FUNDING
- ☐ DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☐ EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☐ APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☐ EDUCATION
- ☐ RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ☐ RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ☐ INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
- ☐ PERSONAL STATEMENT
- ☐ ☒ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
- ☐ APPLICATION PREVIEW

I AM APPLYING FOR

Students are welcome to apply for a single route of entry, or submit their own for review.

☐ Enter Route 2 Project Supervisor confirmation email sent on Application submission.

[Save and Continue](#)

## Limits

You can submit **up to 3** applications in a cycle—the **maximum** is either:

- **3** Route 1s
- or
- **2** Route 1s + **1** Route 2

# Route 1

## ROUTE 1

**Route 1:** Through this route, the applicant selects a **project plan** from this the list of project plans on the TREES website. These project plans have been submitted by potential supervisors based at any of the **10 Hosting Partners**. The list of project plans can be found on the TREES website. On our website, you can see the project plans grouped by **research theme**. Click on a project plan for more information including the contact details of potential supervisors. You must contact the project supervisor(s) as part of your application and arrange to meet with them to discuss the project in more detail. We will check with the supervisors of your selected projects that a meeting has taken place.

### APPLICATION FORM

#### Application steps

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#### I AM APPLYING FOR

Students are welcome to apply for a single route of entry, or submit their own for review.

##### Route 1 Projects

- ☐ [View](#) Hominin brain evolution in a comparative context
- ☐ [View](#) Digging up the history of infection and symbiosis, fossilised in genomic sequence
- ☐ [View](#) Assessing the impacts of armed conflict on ecosystems
- ☐ [View](#) Microplastics on Sandy Beaches and Coastal Dunes
- ☐ [View](#) Building environmental records from arid Iraqi lake sequences using phytoliths
- ☐ [View](#) Endocrine Disruption in marine mammals: relationships between contaminant exposure and reproductive physiology in the common harbour porpoise
- ☐ [View](#) Neuroanatomical insights into the evolution and biogeography of alligatoroid crocodylians
- ☐ [View](#) Effects of forest diversification on floral reward production for pollinators
- ☐ [View](#) Changing life and changing ocean in the Oligocene icehouse
- ☐ [View](#) Testing Earth's weathering thermostat with novel isotope tracers
- ☐ [View](#) Evolutionary ecology of animal memory
- ☐ [View](#) Oceanic metal cycling at divergent and convergent plate margins: the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and Santorini
- ☐ [View](#) The role of giant virus endogenizations in host adaptations
- ☐ [View](#) How is climate change reshaping insect biodiversity?
- ☐ [View](#) Quantifying the global human-wildlife interface
- ☐ [View](#) Advancing seismic risk assessments through consideration of detailed fault geometries and slip-rates
- ☐ [View](#) Extreme carbon cycles - deciphering key carbon-cycling microbes in acidic environments
- ☐ [View](#) Airborne microplastics and tire-wear pollution in Greece and the UK
- ☐ [View](#) Fruit bats in a changing world
- ☐ [View](#) Unlocking the potential of the large-scale participatory citizen science to the benefit of people and nature
- ☐ [View](#) Establishing temperature controls on the human occupation of Britain during interglacial periods

Click on **View** to see the details of a project

# Route 2

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☐ APPLICANT TYPE
- ☐ PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☐ REFEREE
- ☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☐ FUNDING
- ☐ DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☐ EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☐ APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☐ EDUCATION
- ☐ RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ☐ RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ☐ INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
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- ☒ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
- ☐ APPLICATION PREVIEW

### I AM APPLYING FOR

Students are welcome to apply for a single route of entry, or submit their own for review.

Route 1 Projects

☒ Enter Route 2 Project Supervisor confirmation email sent on Application submission.

Project Title \*

Project Description \*

TREES Research Theme \*

AI, Big Data & Geospatial Analysis in Environmental Science

Lead Supervisor \*

- Select -

Second Supervisor \*

- Select -

Save and Continue

## ROUTE 2

In this route, the applicant, with their potential supervisor or supervisory team, submits a **project plan**. This route allows for greater flexibility in project choice. However, regardless of whether an applicant applies through Route 1 or Route 2, we want to cultivate researchers who can make independent contributions whilst being able to function well in teams.

You can find the full **list** of potential supervisors on the TREES website. On that section of the website, you can search for supervisors in different ways (e.g., by research theme or by keyword). The **email addresses** of the potential supervisors are on there, as are links to **webpages**.

# Route 2

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☐ APPLICANT TYPE
- ☐ PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☐ REFEREE
- ☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE
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Route 1 Projects

☒ Enter Route 2 Project Supervisor confirmation email sent on Application submission.

Project Title \*

Project Description \*

TREES Research Theme \*

AI, Big Data & Geospatial Analysis in Environmental Science

Lead Supervisor \*

- Select -

Second Supervisor \*

- Select -

Save and Continue

- **Project Title:** Straight to the point.
- **Project Description:** Consider the **aims** of your potential project, the **methodology**, as well as the **impact** of your research (e.g., in academia, applied contexts, or wider society).
- **TREES Research Theme:** Out of the **9 TREES research themes**, pick the one which best matches your project.
- **Lead Supervisor Name:** Select a name from a dropdown list. The contact details of name on this list, and the dropdown list regarding secondary supervisors, can be found on the TREES website: <https://www.trees-dla.ac.uk/route-2-projects>.
- Make sure that you have contacted the **lead supervisor** before you submit your application. Your application will not proceed to the interview stage if the lead supervisor does not **verify** that they are willing to supervise you.
- **Second Supervisor Name:** Route 2 projects **require** a second supervisor (at the application stage) if the lead supervisor is not affiliated with a degree-awarding institution. So, the Second Supervisor must be affiliated with either of **7 universities** within our 10 Hosting Partners.





# Personal details


- During the **shortlisting process**, applications will be given **scores**. On the basis of the score their application received, an applicant will, or will not, progress to the **interview** phase.
- Scorers will **not** see the **personally identifiable information** of the **applicant**.
- TREES is using this approach in order to alleviate any effect of bias against underrepresented groups in the shortlisting process.


## APPLICATION FORM


Application steps


☒  APPLICANT TYPE


☐  PERSONAL DETAILS


☐  REFEREE


☐  ENGLISH LANGUAGE


☐  FUNDING


☐  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS


☐  EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY


☐  APPLICANT DECLARATION

☐  EDUCATION


☐  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE

☐  RESEARCH OUTCOMES

☐  INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE

☐  PERSONAL STATEMENT

☐ ☒ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST

☐  APPLICATION PREVIEW

### PERSONAL DETAILS

First name(s) \*

Surname \*

Mobile \*

Date of birth \*

Nationality \*

Gender \*

Passport or ID number















Country of birth \*

Country of ordinary residence \*

# References

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☐  **REFEREE**
- ☐  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
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### REFEREE DETAILS

Guidance on the TREES application process can be found here. Please read this application form overview for detailed information on how to complete each section of this form.

Once you have entered your referee's details you will be able to see the status of each reference request.

Submitted – This means that the reference has been received from this referee and no further action is required.

Pending – This means we have not yet received a reference for you from this referee. You can resend the request yourself by clicking 'Resend Notification', you will only be able to do this once a day.

We recommend contacting your referees to let them know to expect our reference request. The email request will be sent to them from [trees.admissions@ud.ac.uk](mailto:trees.admissions@ud.ac.uk), it may take several hours to arrive to some email accounts.

Remember, both references need to be received by the closing date for your application to be considered.

#### Referee 1

Full name \*

Position \*

Relation to you \*

Time period which referee covers \*

Address \*

Phone \*

Email \*

Notify Referees and continue

**Two referees** are needed, and they **must** be from education, paid employment, or volunteering.

After you click on the **Notify Referees and continue** button, an email is sent to the referee, requesting them to complete a reference by a deadline. Both of the references for your application must have been submitted by the **referee deadline** for your application to progress to the next stage.














- It would be a good idea for you to **notify your referees** of your intention to use them!
- Please be aware that you can use the TREES website to keep an eye on whether references have been submitted.

# English language

- If your **first language** is **not** English, then you will need to provide evidence that your spoken and written English language ability is of sufficient proficiency for the TREES DLA studentship.
- You are not required to upload this evidence in the application itself, however, if an offer is made, you will need to provide us with **recent evidence**.

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☒  REFEREE
- ☐  **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**
- ☐ £ FUNDING
- ☐  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☐  EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☐  APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☐  EDUCATION
- ☐  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
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- ☐  PERSONAL STATEMENT
- ☐ ☒ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
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### ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Is English your first language? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Have you been educated at degree level in English \*

☐ Yes
















☐ No

[Save and Continue](#)

# Funding

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☒  REFEREE
- ☒  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☐  **FUNDING**
- ☐  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☐  EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☐  APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☐  EDUCATION
- ☐  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ☐  RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ☐  INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
- ☐  PERSONAL STATEMENT
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- ☐  APPLICATION PREVIEW

### FUNDING

The UKRI has confirmed that all students meeting the residency requirements will be eligible for postgraduate studentships covering both the stipend to support living costs **and fees at research organisations UK rate**. UKRI funding will not cover international fees set by universities.

We can offer a **number of studentships** to applicants eligible to pay international fees. These studentships will cover overseas fees and pay the standard UKRI stipend but may be restricted to one, or a subsection of our partners, depending on funding availability. Any restrictions will be clearly explained at the point of offer. We also accept applications from international students with complementary funding in place to cover the difference between home and overseas fee rates.

What best describes your situation? \*

- ☐ I am a UK student and I confirm I have read and understood the funding statement
- ☐ I am an EU student with settled or pre-settled status, and I confirm I have read and understood the funding statement
- ☐ I am an EU student without settled or pre-settled status, and I confirm I have read and understood the funding statement
- ☐ I am an overseas student and I confirm I have read and understood the funding statement

[Save and Continue](#)
















- The TREES DLA studentships will cover university **fees** and provide a tax-free **stipend** for UK home students.
- Whilst UKRI funding does not cover international fees, TREES will be making available a number of studentships for **international** students. International students will still receive the UKRI stipend.

# Disability/special needs

If you have any accessibility requirements, or wish for any reasonable adjustments to be made, you are more than welcome to contact us

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
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- ☒  REFEREE
- ☒  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☒  FUNDING
- ☐  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☐  EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☐  APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☐  EDUCATION
- ☐  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ☐  RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ☐  INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
- ☐  PERSONAL STATEMENT
- ☐  DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
- ☐  APPLICATION PREVIEW

### Disability/special needs

Disability refers to a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For further guidance, please see the [UK Government's definition of disability](#).

Do you have a disability? \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Save and Continue

Do you have a disability? \*

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

#### Support During the Recruitment Process

TREES is committed to ensuring equitable access and inclusivity throughout the recruitment process. If you have accessibility needs or require reasonable adjustments during the application process (e.g., assistance with completing the form or alternative formats), please contact the TREES team directly at [trees.admissions@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:trees.admissions@ucl.ac.uk).

Some funds are available to support applicants with specific needs during the recruitment process, including costs related to adjustments or accommodations. If you require financial assistance to enable your participation in the recruitment process, please let us know when you contact the team.

#### Support During Your Studies

If you have a disability or accessibility needs that may require reasonable adjustments during your studies, you should independently contact your project supervisor in the first instance to discuss your requirements. The supervisor, together with the TREES team and the relevant services at your hosting institution, will work with you to identify, explore, and implement any necessary adjustments to ensure equitable participation and support during your PhD programme.
















Some funds are also available to support reasonable adjustments during your studies. These funds can help address specific accessibility needs, such as the provision of specialist equipment, software, or other resources required to ensure your success in the programme. If you require financial assistance to enable adjustments during your studies, please contact the TREES team to discuss your needs.

TREES is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. If you have any questions or concerns about support during the recruitment process or your studies, please don't hesitate to reach out to the TREES team.

# Equal opportunity policy

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☒  REFEREE
- ☒  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☒  FUNDING
- ☒  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☒  **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**
- ☐  APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☐  EDUCATION
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### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

TREES is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive research community. We are looking for motivated, curious, and capable environmental researchers who can bring unique perspectives to their projects and the broader TREES programme. We strongly believe that diversity in background, experience, and thought drives innovation, strengthens research culture, and enhances productivity.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are central to our eligibility and selection criteria. We assess candidates holistically, considering not only academic achievements but also work and life experiences, motivation, and potential. Our aim is to create a supportive environment where all researchers—regardless of their circumstances—can thrive and contribute meaningfully to environmental science.

To ensure that we uphold our commitment to inclusivity and equity, all applicants will be asked to complete a diversity monitoring form as part of the application process. This information will be used solely to help TREES assess and improve its practices and ensure compliance with EDI principles. Responses will remain anonymous and confidential, with no impact on the assessment of your application.

By joining TREES, you will become part of a community that values collaboration, inclusion, and positive research culture, while addressing some of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. We are excited to work with a cohort of PhD researchers who represent a wide range of lived experiences and perspectives, enriching both their projects and the TREES programme as a whole.








Save and Continue

- Upon **submission** of your application form, you will be asked to complete an **equal opportunities monitoring** form.








# Applicant's declaration

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  **APPLICANT TYPE**
- ☒  **PERSONAL DETAILS**
- ☒  **REFEREE**
- ☒  **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**
- ☒  **FUNDING**
- ☒  **DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS**
- ☒  **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### ☐ **APPLICANT DECLARATION**

- ☐  **EDUCATION**
- ☐  **RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE**
- ☐  **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**
- ☐  **INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE**
- ☐  **PERSONAL STATEMENT**
- ☐  **DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST**
- ☐  **APPLICATION PREVIEW**

### APPLICANT'S DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is accurate and complete. TREES reserves the right to refuse admission or terminate a student's participation in the programme if any false statements are made or significant information is omitted. If you are offered a place, you will be required to provide evidence of your qualifications.

#### Data Protection (Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR):

I agree to TREES processing personal data contained in this application form, as well as any additional data TREES may obtain from me or other organisations during my application to the programme. I consent to the processing and disclosure of such data for purposes connected to my studies, health and safety, or any other legitimate purpose while engaged with the consortium institutions. TREES will ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Signature \*

Date \*


Save and Continue

The signature is your name **typed** out

# Education

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☒  REFEREE
- ☒  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☒  FUNDING
- ☒  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☒  EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☒  APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☒  **EDUCATION**
- ☐  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
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### EDUCATION

(most recent ones, any further education please state in your CV)

#### University 1

University attended \*

University location \*

Degree subject \*

Degree classification \*

Start year \*

End year \*

Degree award \*

Year in Industry or Sandwich Year? \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### Module results

You must enter the grades from your transcripts. You need to enter the grade for each subject you took, not just your final overall grade for the degrees. If you do not do this, we cannot accept your application.

Year	Title	Grade
------	-------	-------

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
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#### University 2

University attended

University location

Degree subject

Degree classification

Start year

End year

Degree award

Year in Industry or Sandwich Year?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### Module results

You must enter the grades from your transcripts. You need to enter the grade for each subject you took, not just your final overall grade for the degrees. If you do not do this, we cannot accept your application.

Year	Title	Grade
------	-------	-------

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
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If you have more than two university qualifications, please list the **most recent two**.



# Research and work experience

TREES values **equity**, **diversity**, and **inclusion**. This section is an opportunity to showcase your **research experience**, focusing on the aspects most relevant to your **future goals**.

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ✓ APPLICANT TYPE
- ✓ PERSONAL DETAILS
- ✓ REFEREE
- ✓ ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ✓ FUNDING
- ✓ DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ✓ EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ✓ APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ✓ EDUCATION
- ☒ **RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE**
- ☐ RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ☐ INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
- ☐ PERSONAL STATEMENT
- ☐ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
- ☐ APPLICATION PREVIEW

### Research experience

Use this section to outline your research experience, focusing on its relevance to your future goals in environmental science. Briefly describe the project title, objectives, your role, and key outcomes. Highlight any skills gained, such as fieldwork or data analysis, and reflect on how the experience shaped your development. If applicable, mention dissemination activities, such as presentations or publications. For more detailed info, refer to the accompanying guidance document.

#### Project 1

Supervisor/institution \*

Duration (in months) \*

- Select -

Type of project \*

Start time \*

dd/mm/yyyy

Project details \*

Max 300 words

#### Project 2

Supervisor/institution

Duration (in months)

- Select -

When describing your research, include:

- **Project Title and Summary:** Provide a brief title and outline the project's objectives and relevance to environmental science.
- **Your Role and Contributions:** Highlight your responsibilities, tasks, and skills or methodologies used (e.g., fieldwork, data analysis). Include teamwork or collaboration where relevant.
- **Outcomes or Learning:** Summarise the project's key outcomes and what you learned. Reflect on how the experience shaped your academic or professional development.
- **Dissemination (if applicable):** Mention dissemination activities (e.g., presentations, publications) or explain how the project prepared you for such opportunities.

Focus on the **most relevant** aspects and ensure your response aligns with your aspirations in environmental science.

# Research and work experience

APPLICATION FORM

Application steps

✓

APPLICANT TYPE

✓

PERSONAL DETAILS

✓

REFeree

✓

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

✓

FUNDING

✓

DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS

✓

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

✓

APPLICANT DECLARATION

✓

EDUCATION

RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE

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Project 1

Supervisor/institution \*

Duration (in months) \*

- Select -

Type of project \*

Start time \*

dd/mm/yyyy

Project details

Max 300 words

Project title

Supervisor

Duration (in months)

- Select -

Type of project

Work experience

If you have any relevant work experience in environmental sciences, please provide details below. Include a brief description of your responsibilities and contributions, the start and end dates, and whether the role was paid or unpaid. This can include internships, volunteering, or any other professional roles that align with your goals in environmental science. \*

Max 300 words














Save and Continue

This section is designed to highlight a **variety** of professional experiences, including paid roles, internships, volunteering, or any other relevant work, emphasizing how these experiences align with **your goals** in **environmental science**.

# Research outcomes

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☒  REFEREE
- ☒  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☒  FUNDING
- ☒  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ☒  EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ☒  APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ☒  EDUCATION
- ☒  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ☐  **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**
- ☐  INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
- ☐  PERSONAL STATEMENT
- ☐  DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
- ☐  APPLICATION PREVIEW

### RESEARCH OUTCOMES (MAX 4)

Do you have any relevant research publications?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

Save and Continue

### RESEARCH OUTCOMES (MAX 4)

Do you have any relevant research publications?

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

For each publication, please provide a full citation with author list, title, year of publication, volume, page numbers and URL. \*



Do you have any relevant outputs from other dissemination activities? E.g. presentations (poster/talk at research conference), other science communication. \*



Save and Continue














If you have engaged in relevant **dissemination activities** (e.g., you gave a poster presentation or an oral presentation at an academic conference), but you do not have any relevant research publications, then still select the **Yes** option. Selecting Yes will allow you to write about such activities in the second box. If you have no publications, you can write “**not applicable**” in the first box.

# Interdisciplinary experience and collaboration

Please describe your experience with **interdisciplinary research** in environmental sciences or related fields. Highlight examples where you have successfully combined knowledge and methods from **multiple disciplines**, such as integrating fieldwork with computational modeling, applying artificial intelligence or machine learning techniques to solve scientific problems, or linking biology with environmental physics, chemistry, or data analysis.

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒  APPLICANT TYPE
- ☒  PERSONAL DETAILS
- ☒  REFEREE
- ☒  ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ☒  FUNDING
- ☒  DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
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- ☒  RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ☒  RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ☐  **INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE**
- ☐  PERSONAL STATEMENT
- ☐ ☒ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
- ☐  APPLICATION PREVIEW

### INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE

Describe your experience with interdisciplinary research in environmental sciences or related fields. Highlight how you have integrated knowledge from multiple disciplines (e.g., fieldwork with computational modelling or linking biology with environmental physics). Reflect on your interpersonal and communication skills, particularly in collaborating with diverse teams or external stakeholders, and share examples of navigating challenges in interdisciplinary work.

See the guidance document for further details and resources on creating a narrative CV. \*

Max 300 words

Save and Continue

# Interdisciplinary experience and collaboration

Reflect on how you have developed and maintained effective **working relationships** during your research. Discuss your **interpersonal and communication skills**, including how you have collaborated with diverse teams, worked across disciplines, or engaged with external stakeholders. If applicable, share examples of how you have **navigated challenges** in interdisciplinary collaboration and **adapted your approach** to achieve successful outcomes.

You may find it helpful to draw inspiration from the [Résumé for Research and Innovation \(R4RI\) framework](https://researchsupport.web.ox.ac.uk/learn-more-about-developing-a-narrative-cv), which focuses on presenting your achievements in a **narrative format**: <https://researchsupport.web.ox.ac.uk/learn-more-about-developing-a-narrative-cv>

For more guidance on creating a narrative CV, you can refer to resources like [Developing a Narrative CV: Guidance for Researchers](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/develop-your-application/resume-for-research-and-innovation-r4ri-guidance/): <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/develop-your-application/resume-for-research-and-innovation-r4ri-guidance/>

The screenshot shows a web application form titled 'APPLICATION FORM'. On the left, a sidebar lists 'Application steps' with icons and labels: 'APPLICANT TYPE', 'PERSONAL DETAILS', 'REFeree', 'ENGLISH LANGUAGE', 'FUNDING', 'DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS', 'EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY', and 'APPLICANT DECLARATION'. The main content area is titled 'INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE'. It contains a paragraph of instructions: 'Describe your experience with interdisciplinary research in environmental sciences or related fields. Highlight how you have integrated knowledge from multiple disciplines (e.g., fieldwork with computational modelling or linking biology with environmental physics). Reflect on your interpersonal and communication skills, particularly in collaborating with diverse teams or external stakeholders, and share examples of navigating challenges in interdisciplinary work.' Below this is a large text input box with a 'Max 300 words' label and a 'Save and Continue' button. At the bottom, a partial view of the 'APPLICATION PREVIEW' step is visible.

# Personal statement

This section is your opportunity to tell us why you are **motivated** to pursue a PhD and why the TREES Doctoral Landscape Award (DLA) programme is the right fit for you.

We are keen to understand your **research interests**, your **potential** to contribute to the programme, and how your **background, skills**, and **experiences** demonstrate your suitability for doctoral study.

Please do not repeat information provided in earlier sections of the form. Structure your response into the three parts described on the next pages:

1. **Motivation and fit**
2. **Why You Are a Strong Candidate**
3. **Your Background and Path to TREES**

## APPLICATION FORM

### Application steps

- ☒ **APPLICANT TYPE**
- ☒ **PERSONAL DETAILS**
- ☒ **REFEREE**
- ☒ **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**
- ☒ **FUNDING**
- ☒ **DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS**
- ☒ **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**
- ☒ **APPLICANT DECLARATION**
- ☒ **EDUCATION**
- ☒ **RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE**
- ☒ **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**
- ☒ **INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE**
- ☒ **PERSONAL STATEMENT**
- ☐ **DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST**
- ☐ **APPLICATION PREVIEW**

### TREES PERSONAL STATEMENT

This is your opportunity to tell us why you are motivated to pursue a PhD and why the TREES Doctoral Landscape Award (DLA) programme is the right fit for you. The statement is structured into three parts, allowing you to share your motivations, showcase your strengths, and reflect on your background. If you prefer, you can submit any or all sections in an alternative format (e.g., video or audio). Please review the guidance document for detailed advice on completing this section and instructions for submitting alternative formats.

#### How to Submit an Alternative Format

If you choose to submit any section in an alternative format:

- Prepare your file in MP4 (video), MP3 (audio), or a similar accessible format.
- Ensure your recording is concise and addresses the prompts for the relevant section (approximately 2 minutes per 300 words).
- Use a secure file-sharing platform to generate a weblink to your file (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox, WeTransfer).
- Paste the link into the corresponding "Alternative Format Link" box below each section.

For further details, refer to the guidance document.

#### Part 1: Motivation and Fit

Tell us why you are motivated to undertake a PhD in environmental sciences and why the TREES DLA programme is a good fit for you. Highlight your research interests, your alignment with TREES' values (EDI and sustainability), and how its interdisciplinary training and resources will support your growth as an environmental scientist. \*

Max 900 words

Alternative Format Link:

#### Part 2: Why You Are a Strong Candidate

Show us why you are a strong candidate. Use examples from your academic, professional, or personal experiences to demonstrate your achievements, creativity, organisation, resilience, and ability to work collaboratively. Include any relevant skills gained through work or volunteering that align with TREES' ethos. \*

Max 700 words

Alternative Format Link:

#### Part 3: Your Background and Path to TREES

Reflect on your journey to this PhD opportunity. Share how your personal, academic, or professional experiences have shaped your research aspirations. Highlight any challenges you've overcome, and explain how your background will contribute to the TREES community and environmental science. \*

Max 700 words

Alternative Format Link:

[Save and Continue](#)

# Personal statement

## Motivation and fit

Max 300 words

Please explain your **motivation** for undertaking a PhD in environmental sciences. Share what excites you about pursuing advanced research and how this aligns with your long-term goals.

Describe why the TREES DLA programme is the **ideal fit** for you, highlighting how its strong commitment to **equity, diversity, inclusion** (EDI), and sustainability resonates with your **values** and **aspirations**. Provide details on your **research interests**, explain your choice of **research theme(s)**, and demonstrate how they align with TREES' priorities to tackle critical **global challenges** such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.

In this section, consider reflecting on how TREES' interdisciplinary training, collaboration across 10 Hosting Partners, access to world-leading research facilities, and the programme's commitment to open science and ethical practice will support **your growth as an environmental scientist**.

## TREES PERSONAL STATEMENT

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Max 300 words

Alternative Format Link:

### Part 2: Why You Are a Strong Candidate

Show us why you are a strong candidate. Use examples from your academic, professional, or personal experiences to demonstrate your achievements, creativity, organisation, resilience, and ability to work collaboratively. Include any relevant skills gained through work or volunteering that align with TREES' ethos. \*

Max 700 words

Alternative Format Link:

### Part 3: Your Background and Path to TREES

Reflect on your journey to this PhD opportunity. Share how your personal, academic, or professional experiences have shaped your research aspirations. Highlight any challenges you've overcome, and explain how your background will contribute to the TREES community and environmental science. \*

Max 700 words

Alternative Format Link:

Save and Continue



# Personal statement

## Why you are a strong candidate

Max 700 words

Discuss why you are a strong candidate for the TREES DLA programme. Highlight evidence from your academic and professional background, skills, and experiences, addressing the following areas:

- **Academic performance:** Include achievements such as awards, distinctions, or other relevant academic accomplishments.
- **Capacity for creative thinking:** Share examples where you have generated new ideas, found innovative solutions, or approached problems creatively.
- **Overcoming challenges:** Reflect on how you have addressed and navigated difficulties, whether academic, professional, or personal.
- **Engaging with feedback:** Provide examples where you have used feedback constructively to improve your work or approach.
- **Organisation and workload management:** Demonstrate how you have effectively planned and managed tasks to meet deadlines or balance competing priorities.

You may also wish to include:

- Examples of your **capacity** for interdisciplinary collaboration, teamwork, or any outreach or communication activities relevant to TREES' ethos.
- **Experience** working with communities, engaging in citizen science, or fostering sustainability-focused projects.
- Professional or work-based experience, particularly if you are entering the programme from a **non-traditional** academic route or **mid-career**. This could include relevant skills developed in previous or current employment (e.g., project management, leadership, problem-solving, technical expertise).

This is your opportunity to showcase not only your achievements but also the **unique perspectives**, **skills**, and **motivations** that you bring to TREES.

You are also welcome to include any additional information that you believe is relevant to your application.



# Personal statement

## Your background and path to TREES

Max 300 words

As highlighted in our Equal Opportunities and EDI statement, TREES is committed to fostering a **diverse and inclusive** research community that values the **unique perspectives** and **lived experiences** of its members. With this in mind, we invite you to share your journey to this PhD opportunity.

Walk us through **your background**, reflecting on the path that has brought you to apply for TREES. You may wish to include:

- How your personal, academic, professional, or work-based experiences have influenced your interest in **environmental science** and shaped your **research aspirations**.
- Any **challenges or barriers** you have encountered and how you overcame them.
- The **unique** perspectives, motivations, and skills you bring to TREES and how they **align** with its mission to promote diversity, collaboration, and positive research culture.

We encourage all applicants to use this section to highlight how their **unique life experiences**—whether gained through education, work, volunteering, or personal context—will enrich the TREES community. This section is an opportunity to demonstrate how **your background** will contribute to **environmental science** and your potential to create **positive societal impact** through the TREES programme.

# Personal statement

## Alternative format submission

At TREES, we are committed to fostering an **equitable and inclusive** application process. We recognise that traditional text-based application formats may not suit everyone, particularly applicants who are neurodivergent, or have disabilities, or experience other barriers. To ensure that all candidates can showcase their potential in a way that works best for them, we offer the option to submit **any part** of the Personal Statement in an **alternative format**, such as a video or audio recording.

This option is designed to support applicants who find that alternative formats better enable them to communicate their skills, experiences, and motivations. Whether you choose a written, video, or audio format, all applications are assessed using the **same criteria**, and **no preference** is given to any specific format.

## Key Information

- **Voluntary Option:** This feature is optional and designed to provide flexibility for applicants who may benefit from non-traditional formats. There is no need or expectation to use the alternative format route.
- **Equal Assessment:** Neither format is favoured. All submissions—whether written, video, or audio—are evaluated solely on content, with no advantage or disadvantage based on the format or production quality.
- **Section Flexibility:** You can choose to submit one, two, or all three sections of your personal statement in an alternative format. Please clearly indicate which parts are being submitted in a non-written format.
- **File Requirements:**
  - Permitted formats: MP4 (video), MP3 (audio), or similar accessible file types.
  - Keep responses concise and within the equivalent word count (allow 2 minutes per 300 words).
  - Ensure your file is clearly labelled with your name and the relevant part title.

# Personal statement

## Note on Word Limits and Application Assessment

### APPLICATION FORM

Application steps

- ✓ APPLICANT TYPE
- ✓ PERSONAL DETAILS
- ✓ REFEREE
- ✓ ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ✓ FUNDING
- ✓ DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS
- ✓ EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- ✓ APPLICANT DECLARATION
- ✓ EDUCATION
- ✓ RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE
- ✓ RESEARCH OUTCOMES
- ✓ INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE
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- ☐ DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST
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Max 300 words

Alternative Format Link:

**Part 2: Why You Are a Strong Candidate**

Show us why you are a strong candidate. Use examples from your academic, professional, or personal experiences to demonstrate your achievements, creativity, organisation, resilience, and ability to work collaboratively. Include any relevant skills gained through work or volunteering that align with TREES' ethos. \*

Max 700 words

Alternative Format Link:

## Key Information

- The **word limits** for each section are designed to give you sufficient space to share the **most relevant** information about your motivations, background, and strengths. While the **second section** has a higher word limit, this does not mean it is weighted more heavily in the assessment process.
- All sections are assessed **holistically** and **contribute equally** to our understanding of your suitability for the TREES Doctoral Landscape Award (DLA) programme. The varying word limits simply reflect the depth of detail typically required for each section. For example, the second section allows more space for you to provide **specific examples** and **evidence** of your skills and experiences.
- If you have questions about how to structure your statement or what to include, please refer to the detailed guidance provided or contact the TREES admissions team at **[trees.admissions@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:trees.admissions@ucl.ac.uk)**

# Documents checklist

## APPLICATION FORM

Application steps

✓

APPLICANT TYPE

✓

PERSONAL DETAILS

✓

REFeree

✓

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

✓

FUNDING

✓

DISABILITY/SPECIAL NEEDS

✓

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

✓

APPLICANT DECLARATION

✓

EDUCATION

✓

RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE

✓

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

✓

INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE

✓

PERSONAL STATEMENT

DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLIST

APPLICATION PREVIEW

### DOCUMENT UPLOAD

#### Mandatory Documents

Your CV should be a maximum of 2 pages. Longer CVs are not permitted. Please ensure your CV does not contain your name, gender, age, sexuality, disability, hobbies and interests, marital status, date of birth, or any photos. If you upload a CV containing personal details of this nature they will be removed from your application. TREES operates a blind shortlisting stage.

2 Pages CV \*

Choose File

No file chosen

☐ Confirm Uploaded CV meets above requirements \*

Passport or other ID \*

Choose File

No file chosen

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#### Transcripts

Please upload the transcript document for each qualification you have declared in the education section. You should only upload the page of your transcript which confirms the grades you have entered. Supplementary pages and additional information are not required. Please do not upload your degree certificate.

Transcript for: x \*

Choose File

No file chosen

---

#### Optional Document

English certificate

Choose File

No file chosen

Upload files

Make sure that your **CV** is **anonymised**, e.g., it should not feature your name, address, date of birth, or age. EDI is crucial for TREES; we want to **minimise the bias** in the recruitment process which can unfairly disadvantage people who are from under-represented groups, and CV anonymisation is part of our approach.

If your CV is not anonymized, then we will anonymize it before it is seen by the individuals who will be scoring your application during the **shortlisting** process.

Your CV should be, at most, **2 pages long**.