



IAPETUS2 Studentship Competition 2022-2023

Applications from Prospective Students

28th October 2022 - V1.1.1

1. Applications are made via an online form. A Word template is provided so that applicants may edit their responses in advance, and applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their applications with supervisors. The assessment criteria used to evaluate applications are given in [Appendix 3](#) of this document and again we strongly encourage applicants to use these criteria to structure their answers. **The candidate must complete the IAPETUS2 [Online Application Form](#) on the IAPETUS2 website by Friday 6th January 2023 at 12 pm.** Prospective Students must also complete [an EDI form](#) online which is required for NERC quality-control processes, but none of the information from this form is passed on outside the IAPETUS2 administration.
2. The IAPETUS2 Manager will send anonymized applications to the supervisory teams of each project on Wednesday 11th January 2023 for initial shortlisting for each project. Using the application forms only, supervisors will choose up to three candidates they would like to consider and then inform IAPETUS2.
The application form requests information from those from underrepresented groups in order to identify applicants who may be guaranteed an interview (up to 30 % of interview places). This information will NOT be passed on to supervisors.
3. A combined longlist of applicants will be collated on Friday 20th January 2023, and IAPETUS2 longlisted applicants including those who are part of the widening participation scheme will be invited to put in a full application at the degree-awarding institution. Applicants will also be asked to send their CVs and transcripts to the Primary Supervisor by Monday 23rd January 2023. Applicants will be advised not to include a photograph and write their CV without gender specific pronouns to avoid unconscious bias during the application process. Applicants' references will then be contacted directly by IAPETUS.
4. Applicants who have been longlisted for multiple projects will be asked to discuss with the supervisory teams which **one** project they wish to be considered for. This decision must be communicated to the IAPETUS2 administrator by **Friday 27th January 2023 at 12pm.**
5. All HOs need to ensure that the correct application documents are provided by prospective students and that they are subject to the HO standard fee status assessment process. This information must be available by **Tuesday 27th February 2023** at the latest for evaluation by the studentship panel. The full application includes:
 - a) Nomination form with completed supervisor nomination statement
 - b) Current CV - candidates should not include a photograph and write without using gender -specific pronouns.
 - d) Full transcripts of qualifications.
 - e) 2 references on the IAPETUS2 proforma

Further Information

Professor Philip Stephens - Lead DTP Director

Tel: 0191 33 49102

Email: philip.stephens@durham.ac.uk

Jennifer Gadouleau - DTP Manager

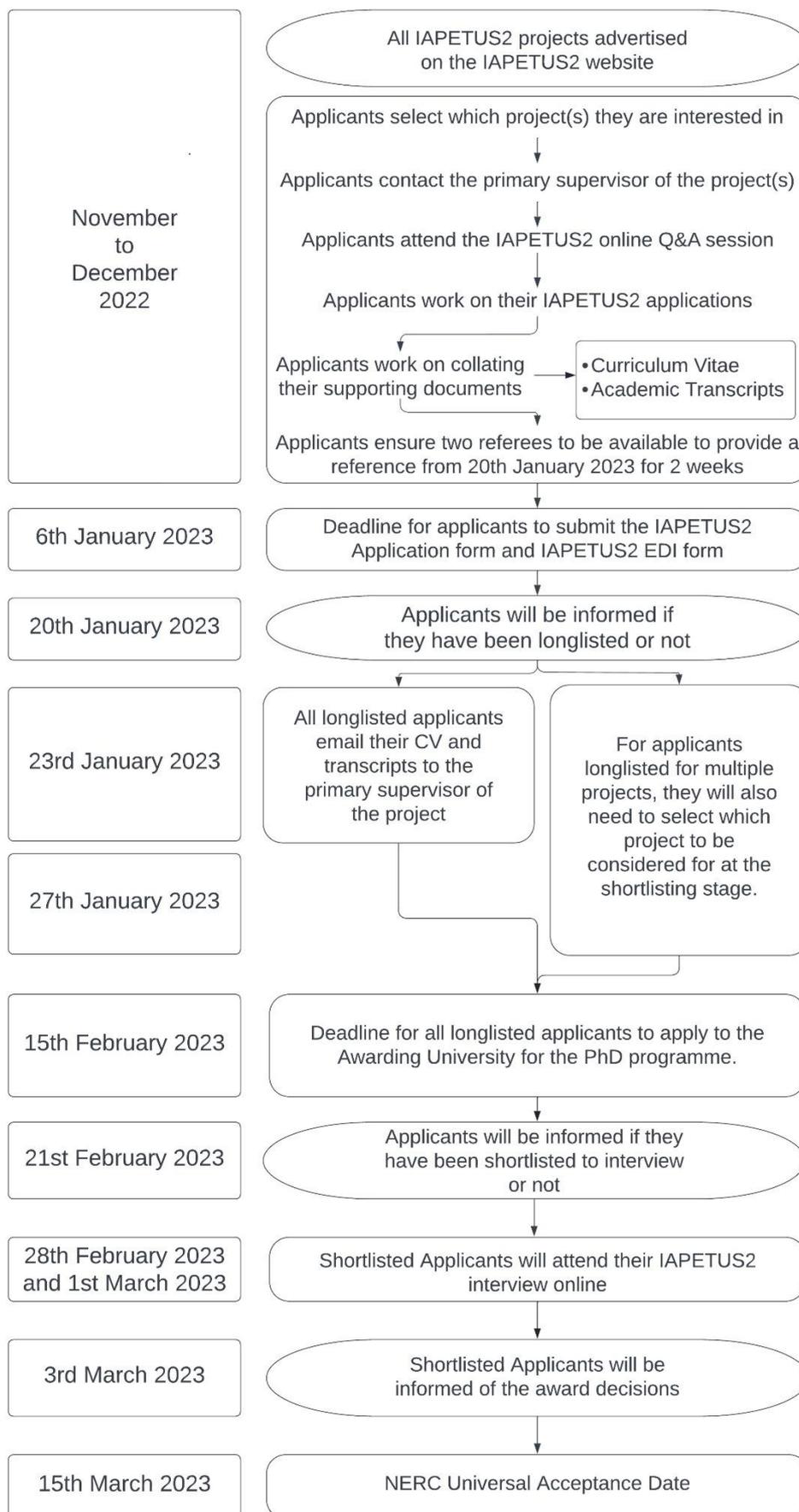
Tel: 0191 33 41023

Email: contact.iapetus@durham.ac.uk

Appendix 1 - Timeline

Dates	Activity / Milestone
Tuesday 1 st November 2022	IAPETUS2 Applications open
Friday 6 th January 2023 12pm	Deadline for applicants to apply for a studentship
Friday 20 th January 2023	Applicants will be informed if they have been longlisted or not
Monday 23 rd January 2023 5 pm	Longlisted applicants send their CV and transcripts to the primary supervisor of the project
Friday 27 th January 2023 12pm	Deadline for applicants longlisted for multiple projects to select which project to be considered for
Wednesday 15 th February 2023	Deadline for longlisted applicants to apply to the Awarding University for the PhD
Tuesday 21 st February 2023 5pm	Applicants will be informed if they have been shortlisted to interview or not
Tuesday 21 st February 2023 5 pm	Invitation to Interviews sent out to all nominated candidates
Tuesday 28 th February 2023 9am-5pm	Interviews of nominated candidates
Wednesday 1 st March 2023 9am-12pm	Interviews of nominated candidates
Wednesday 1 st March 2023 1pm-5pm	IAPETUS2 Studentships Panel convenes
Friday 3 rd March 2023	All nominated candidates notified by IAPETUS2 of award decisions
Wednesday 15 th March 2023 12 noon	Deadline for selected candidates to accept or decline their award offer. (NERC Universal Acceptance Date)
Thursday 16 th March 2023 onwards	Reserve offers made (where required)

Full details of the competition process are shown in the flowchart below.



Appendix 2 - IAPETUS2 DTP Host Organizations

Partner Organization	Departments/Schools
British Antarctic Survey	All staff active within NERC's disciplinary remit.
British Geological Survey	All staff active within NERC's disciplinary remit.
UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology	All staff active within NERC's disciplinary remit.
Durham University	All staff active within NERC's disciplinary remit.
Glasgow University	Engineering Geography & Earth Sciences Mathematics & Statistics Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health & Comparative Medicine
Heriot-Watt University	School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society except those part of the Oil and Gas CDT and SUPER DTP
Newcastle University	All staff active within NERC's disciplinary remit except those part of the One Planet DTP
St Andrews University	Earth & Environmental Sciences Centre for Biological Diversity, and relevant parts of the Biomedical Sciences Research Complex (and not those part of the SUPER DTP) Geography & Sustainable Development
Stirling University	Biological and Environmental Sciences

Appendix 3 - Student Assessment Criteria

Marking Scheme for selection of applicants for IAPETUS2 interview based upon documents received including CV, nomination form and references.

Each criterion is marked out of 10 by Panel Reviewers and is then weighted to reflect their respective importance to the total score for each application.

Description	Scoring
Very High Priority for Funding	9 to 10
High Priority for Funding	8
Should be Funded if Possible	7
Suitable for Funding in Principal, but in a Competitive Context is Not a Priority	6
Not Recommended for Funding	1 to 5
Not Sufficient Evidence to Judge Proposal	0

Criteria

All eligible nominations for studentships will be assessed by the IAPETUS2 Studentships Panel against all of the following criteria. Sections indicated below refer to the nomination form filled in by the student and potential supervisors. Potential supervisors should be aware of issues of unconscious bias when filling out forms, and be appropriately considerate of a candidate's background and career trajectory.

Criterion	Weighting
<p>1. Background</p> <p>This criterion focusses on the candidate's ability to conduct high-quality doctoral research in the environmental sciences. Reviewers should look for evidence of the candidate's interest in the research topic, and demonstration that the candidate has a clear interest in the project itself. Supporting information for example might come from section 3.2 of the nomination form, in relation to past research experience and from section 3.3, and in relation to evidence of research into the topic area beyond what is available in the advertised project description. Evidence of a demonstration of initiative in proactively seeking information about the project and research topic and the DTP (in section 3.3 of the nomination form) is also useful.</p> <p>Evidence from sections 3.2-3.4 of an ability to take on responsibilities (not necessarily directly relating to research) and meet deadlines is useful. Evidence of written communication skills from these sections should also be considered when evaluating this criterion.</p> <p>Although at least a 2:1 at undergraduate level is generally required by HOs, other contextual information should be considered in relation to academic qualifications to avoid the potential for unconscious bias. Other evidence of 'research experience' in section 3.2 should be used, for example, for candidates seeking to embark on a research project after graduating some time ago.</p> <p>Contextual information from section 5 of the nomination form can also be used for supporting evidence that the candidate has an appropriate background for carrying out the research project.</p>	50
<p>2. Project Fit</p> <p>Candidates need to demonstrate clearly how their skills, qualifications, experience and interests fit to, and support the project they intend to study. Section 4 provides a specific statement on this criterion. However, reviewers should be careful to assess contextual information (for example in section 3.4 of the form) and to balance past specific experience in relation to the project with more generic research skills. Demonstrations of a candidate's abilities to pick up new approaches and take initiatives in developing skills should also be considered, for example as illustrated in sections 3.2 and 3.3.</p> <p>A strong application will clearly articulate the candidate's interests and experience relevant to the project, whilst also outlining their anticipated training and development needs during their studies. Demonstration of a strong motivation to develop new skills may be used to support the</p>	40

Criterion	Weighting
<p>assessment of a candidates fit to the project. As the purpose of the DTP is to train students in appropriate skills, it should not be assumed that existing experience in a particular method or past activities should outweigh the demonstration of the motivation to find out about new topics, not least because applicants from different backgrounds may have had limited access to facilities or opportunities. Candidates may also be hoping to change career paths based upon new or recent interests and activities. Further information from sections 3.4 and 5 of the nomination form may be useful in evaluating these aspects.</p>	
<p>3. Future Potential</p> <p>Reviewers should consider the profile of a candidate relative to their current career stage and access to past opportunities.</p> <p>Reviewers will also consider the candidate’s future potential to deliver their specific research project, for example, based on statements in relation to personal skills such as self-discipline and time management. Statements in the nomination form demonstrating confidence in a candidate’s abilities should be balanced in relation to how realistic these statements might be.</p> <p>A candidate’s future career aspirations should be considered, but as the DTP contributes to training in relation to the broader environmental science sector, no preference is given to those wanting to develop an academic or a non-academic career pathway. The key element to consider is a demonstration of a keen interest in the topic and a wish to pursue activities related to this research topic in the future.</p> <p>A strong candidate will demonstrate that they are well equipped to deliver their proposed research project and also able to engage in other related activities and initiatives that will not only support their individual research, but the wider IAPETUS2 and/or disciplinary community.</p> <p>Contextual information arising from interviews and other forms of interaction/assessment (section 5 of the form) may provide Reviewers with further useful evidence as to the future trajectory of the candidate.</p>	<p>10</p>

Interviews and Overall Evaluation

All nominees will be interviewed in a single set of panels (see Appendix I) using a set of common questions about their application and PhD. Nominees are requested to ensure that they are available on Zoom on the advertised dates. These interviews are weighted 40 % in the overall evaluation of the studentships panel, with 60 % coming from the evaluation of the initial nomination.