**Process for NDEvR-supported Industrial CASE studentships**

**Background**

This process describes the scheme and process for allocating Industrial CASE (ICASE) studentships that are co-funded by NDEvR using industry funding. The required contribution from NDEvR is approximately £15k per year per student and includes a stipend supplement for the student.

The principle behind NDEvR co-funding these studentships is to supplement the RCNDE Core Research programme with doctoral projects that are related to both the NDEvR 5, 10, 20-year Vision and to other research projects or proposals that have already been rated as highly relevant to RCNDE’s industrial members. These projects should also be better positioned as ICASE studentships than FIND CDT EngD or PhD projects.

As the funding is from the RCNDE core research programme, the project needs to be selected by the RCNDE Management Board in a way that shows its relevance to a significantly large proportion of the industrial membership. The selection will be competitive and not too onerous, but there will also be a threshold of academic quality above which the project must fall to be funded.

**Proposal and selection process**

The proposal should be submitted on the form in Annex A, defining the project, university, supervisors, industrial member(s) of RCNDE offering a total of at least three months of placements (including funding by the industrial member(s)) and an industrial supervisor, alignment to the NDEvR Vision and current/future core research. [NDEvR could underwrite the cost that first three months in the event of the arrangements being too difficult to organise. An Associate Member (NDT supply chain) may find it easier to cope with such a secondment.]

A minimum acceptable technical quality of the proposals for each year’s Industrial CASE tickets will be assured by an initial academic peer-review process performed by members of the management team and/or other non-compromised RCNDE academic, scoring each project out of 5 according to the following table:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score**  | **Academic quality includes quality of the proposal and proposed research, novelty, scientific approach and suitability of the team.**  |
| **1**  | Poorly written proposal, lacking in underlying science or dubious novelty.  |
| **2**  | The approach lacks novelty or the proposal is of poor quality. |
| **3**  | The proposal is of adequate quality for potential success, some shortcomings.  |
| **4**  | This proposal is novel and of a high standard with a high likelihood of success.  |
| **5**  | Well written proposal, well thought-through research path, sound science, novel approach. |

Only projects scoring an average of 4 out of 5 on quality will qualify to be entered into the industrial ranking process. However, the peer-review process may result in the proposer being asked to resubmit a revised proposal to take into account advice given by the reviewers.

The acceptable-quality proposals will then be ranked by the industrial members of the RCNDE Board in terms of relevance to their company/sector, allocating 10 points per member company between the proposals.

The successful projects will be taken from the top of the industrial rankings until the number of ICASE tickets for the year have been allocated.

**ANNEX A – Outline ICASE Project Proposal (1 page in total)**

**Title:** ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**University:** …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

**Main academic supervisor:** …………………………………………………………………………………………………………

**2nd academic supervisor (optional):** …………………………………………………………………………………………

**RCNDE Member/Assoc. Member company offering (funding for) at least 3 months of placements:**

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**Industrial supervisor (from an RCNDE member):** …………………………………………………………………

**Project description (include target application(s)), science involved and predicted research path:**

**Relevance to NDEvR 5, 10, 20-year Vision:**

**Alignment to RCNDE Core projects or proposals/EoIs:**

**Why this project is more appropriate as an ICASE than a FIND CDT EngD or PhD:**

**Process timeline**

* Vouchers allocated to NDEvR around September time.
* Academics submit their proposals for studentships by November

Note: iCASE studentships require an industrial partner and the student to do a placement at the industrial partner’s facilities of at least three months. At the November submission, academic must have identified an industrial partner. If they haven’t, NDEvR can underwrite the industrial contributions.

* NDEvR submits the proposals to EPSRC. Once accepted, the industrial partner and even the title of the studentship can change, but the university partner is locked.
* Studentships start on the October of the following year.

The 2022 vouchers will be used to complement the Core programme, with NDEvR acting as the industrial partner and making the cash contributions. As such the submitted proposals are prioritised via an industrial vote (10 points distributed in any combination amongst the proposals)> Despite NDEvR being the industrial partner, there is still a requirement for the student to have a placement at one of the RCNDE companies, and the university members needed to find an industrial partner and supervisor for the studentships.