



IAPETUS2 Studentship Competition 2022

Applications from Prospective Students

7th September 2021 – 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 7th January 2022 at 5 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 administrator will send anonymized applications to the supervisory teams of each project on Wednesday 12th January 2022 for initial shortlisting for each project. Using the application forms only supervisors will choose up to three candidates they would like to interview 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 50 % of interview places). This information will NOT be passed on to supervisors.
3. A combined longlist of applicants will be collated on Monday 17th January 2022, and IAPETUS2 longlisted applicants including those who are part of the widening participation scheme invited to put in a full application at the degree-awarding institution. Applicants will also be given a pro forma to pass onto the people providing their references. They will be advised not to include a photograph and write their CV without gender specific pronouns to avoid unconscious bias during the application process. Some HOs will request applications from a wider group of applicants, so please confirm with the institutional administrator what is required in each case.

If applying for a project hosted by, or with lead supervisor at BAS, BGS or UKCEH then send a copy of the completed application with all supporting documents to the lead supervisor by email at BAS BGS or UKCEH.
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 21st January 2022.**
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 15th February 2022** 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.
 - c) Names and contact details for two (or more) references. Candidates must **not** use members from the supervisory team of the PhD project that they are applying for – questions for the people who provide references will be sent to applicants.
 - d) Full transcripts of qualifications.

Note: University HO's have an online application form. If applying for a project hosted by, or with lead supervisor at BAS, BGS or UKCEH then the completed application with all supporting documents should be sent to the lead supervisor by email at BAS BGS or UKCEH.

Further Information

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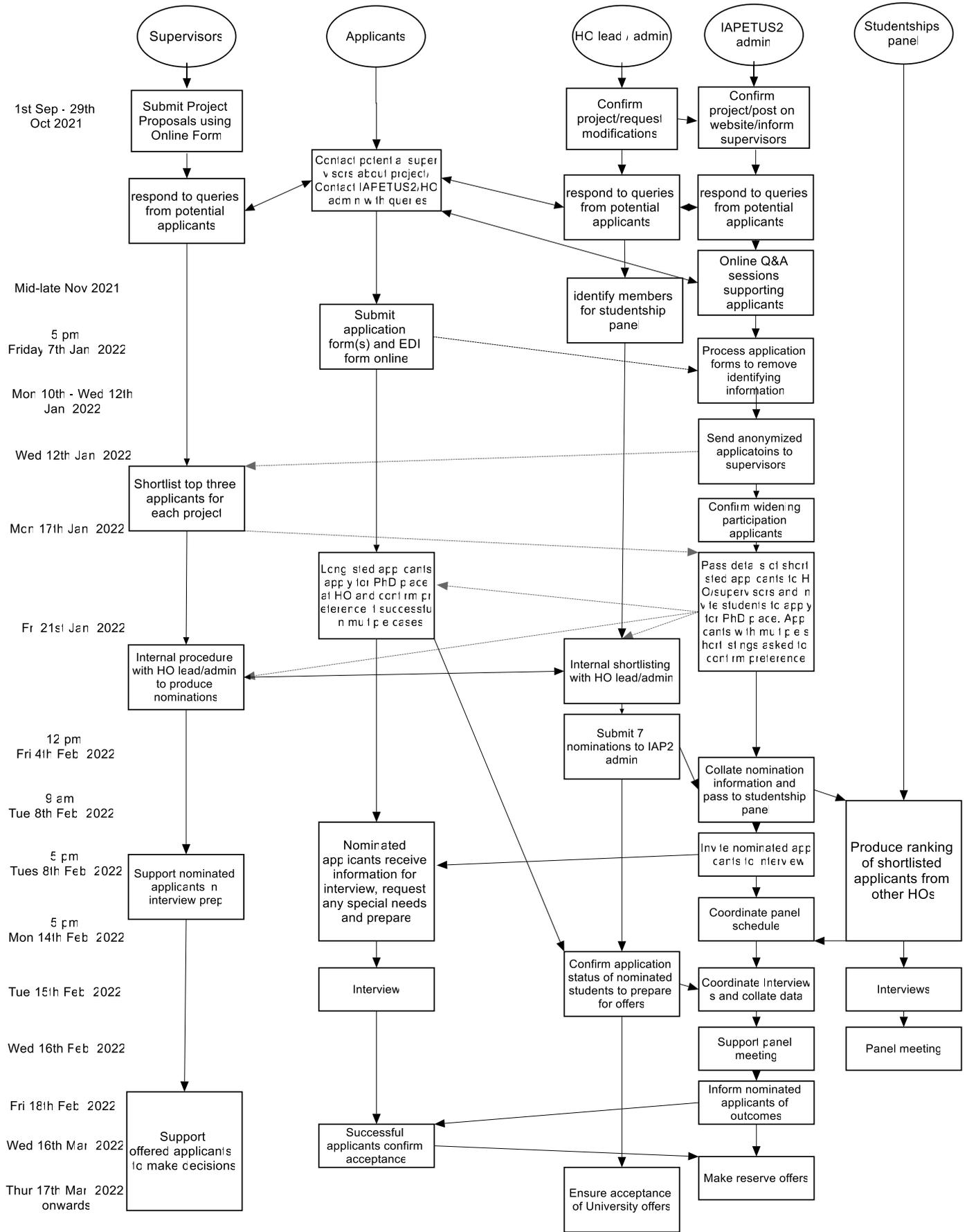
Tel: 0191 33 41023

Email: contact.iapetus@durham.ac.uk

Appendix I – Timeline

Dates	Activity / Milestone
Wednesday 1 st September 2021	Project Form on the IAPETUS2 website opened for supervisors to submit projects.
Friday 29 th October 2021, 5 pm	Last date for new projects to be submitted by supervisors on to the IAPETUS2 website using the Project submission form
Friday 7 th January 2022 5 pm	Deadline for prospective students to apply for a studentship
Wednesday 12 th January 2022	IAPETUS2 administrator sends anonymized application form to supervisory teams
Monday 17 th January 2022 5 pm	Lead supervisor for each project submits top three applicants to each project to IAPETUS2 administrator
Friday 21 st January 2022 5 pm	Deadline for students who have applied to more than one IAPETUS2 project to decide which project to be considered for
Friday 4 th February 2022 12 noon	Deadline for Host Organizations to submit ranked nominations to the IAPETUS2 Administrator
Tuesday 8 th February 2022 9 am	Nominations circulated to the IAPETUS2 Studentships Panel.
Tuesday 8 th February 2022 5 pm	Invitation to Interviews sent out to all nominated candidates
Tuesday 15 th February 2022	Interviews of nominated candidates
Wednesday 16 th February 2022	IAPETUS2 Studentships Panel convenes
Friday 18 th February 2022	All nominated candidates notified by IAPETUS2 of award decisions
Wednesday 16 th March 2022 12 noon	Deadline for selected candidates to accept or decline their award offer. (NERC Universal Acceptance Date)
Thursday 17 th March 2022 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>	10

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 in person (usually in Durham) or by Skype/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.