

## **Postgraduate bursary proposal**

This proposal is for the introduction of a postgraduate bursary. The bursary would support the student in the period immediately following submission of the thesis, to enable the student to produce engagement materials based on the research. The bursary would enable:

- 1) Support for postgraduate students during a precarious time when funding for the thesis (if the student were funded) has run out and the student is trying to build a profile whilst seeking employment.
- 2) The production of exciting materials that showcase the value of Modern Languages research.

Postgraduate students are the future of the discipline and as a community we need to do more to support them in what can be precarious times. The production of engagement materials would be developmental, helping them to boost their own profile and support their career trajectory. The materials would also help to promote the value of Modern Languages research and reinforce its intrinsic link to the study of languages. This is key at a time when cultural elements are being removed from languages GCSE in England and some UK HEIs are moving from providing language degrees to focussing on Institution-Wide Language Provision, which in most cases have only the space to look at language learning.

The proposal is for a bursary of around £1500 for a month, calculated as follows:

Living Wage (£9.50) x 7 hours per day = £66.50 x 22 working days in a month = £1463

London Living Wage (£10.85) x 7 hours per day = £77.96 x 22 working days in a month = £1671

There are different models for delivering this:

- (a) One bursary is offered to one student for the whole amount. The advantage of this model is that it provides full funding and to enable them to carry out meaningful and focussed work over a one-month period without needing to obtain additional employment. The disadvantage is that we can support fewer students.
- (b) The bursary is split between multiple students (e.g. 3 x £500). The advantage to this is that it enables more students to access the funding. The disadvantage is that the bursary is not providing full support as it implies the student would need additional employment / funding to secure living costs. As such it would need to be a longer time-frame (3 months?) to enable meaningful work to be produced.

## **What would be produced**

The funding would enable students to produce engagement material based on their research. The forms this could take are varied and there is lots of scope for innovation. The main criteria would be that the research engages a wider audience beyond the academy. They might be aimed at specific groups (such as schools or special-interest community groups) or at a more general public. These might be physical resources or activities, exhibitions or public displays, digital resources or activities

shared with specific groups, digital resources disseminated to a broad public through social media platforms, or other appropriate engagement activities and resources.

### **Eligibility and selection criteria**

Students who have submitted or are due to submit a thesis at a UK HEI are eligible. Funding must be taken up within 6 months of submission of the thesis.

Applicants should:

1. Provide a brief outline of their research (500 words).
2. Explain how they intend to develop this into engagement materials, outlining the intended audience (e.g. schools, the general public, special interest groups, specific community groups), the form of the materials/activity (e.g. physical resources, digital resources to be shared with specific groups, online resources to be disseminated broadly through social media platforms), and how these will engage the intended audience (500 words).
3. Provide a brief outline of future aspirations and research plans, explaining how this project supports this trajectory (300 words).

Selection will be based on:

- the excellence of the intended project
- the potential of the materials to engage the intended audience with the research
- the potential of the funding to support the applicant's career development

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