

James McCune Smith Scholarships 2024 – Information for Prospective Supervisors

- The Scholarships are now live for the third intake of scholars who will commence in October 2024. This year, the University is funding 3 scholarships per College. The webpage is <https://www.gla.ac.uk/scholarships/mccune-smith/>
- To be invited to University-wide and College-specific information sessions, prospective applicants should be encouraged to submit an expression of interest at: <https://forms.office.com/e/2AyHvRmJBc>
- The deadline for full applications to be submitted is 31 January 2024.
- As was the case last year, applicants must apply via MyCampus but also submit their details on the JMS scholarship portal <https://frontdoor.spa.gla.ac.uk/ScholarshipApp/> . This allows greater tracking of applications and ensures they can be forwarded promptly to supervisors for review.
- Candidates are advised that the requirements for any research proposal are those specified on the website (appended below for information). Following feedback there is one set of guidance across all Colleges.
- In terms of eligibility the scholarships are available for Black UK Domiciled students, i.e. applicants classified as ‘home’ for fee purposes. Applicants confirm their eligibility when they submit an application to the portal. The Graduate Schools will also check eligibility before forwarding the list of applications by 2 February (see schedule below).
- The School PG Directors/Conveners should confirm details of their preferred 3 candidates as per the schedule below to the College Dean of Graduate Studies/Dean of Postgraduate Research. The Dean and an interview panel which must include an academic member of staff with links to an EDI committee will select up to 8 candidates for interview. Interviews are an important part of this process and feedback shows that they are particularly valued by candidates. It is not only about us selecting them but about candidates perceiving that the University is supportive and welcoming.
- All supervisors are required to commit to attending anti-racism training.
- All students are provided with a mentor and there is a 6 month placement at the start of their third year of study (the schedule for this can be negotiated with the supervisor depending on the project needs). If those organisations on the existing list are not suitable for the latter, the supervisor can suggest an alternative.
- The scholarship duration is four years.
- Students receive a stipend at the UKRI rate, plus £3000 per year RTSG/consumables.
- You can follow the Scholarship twitter account @UofGJMSPHD.
- Queries can be directed to JMSPHD@glasgow.ac.uk . College-specific questions should be directed to your Graduate School.

TIMELINE

Early November 2023	Scholarship portal and webpage live
November (date TBC)	Applicant information session
18 December 2023	Application information session
January 2024	Drop-in session for applicants to ask application questions
31 January 2024	Application deadline
2 February 2024	Graduate Schools confirm list of applications received via the Scholarship Portal with School PG Directors. CoSE Graduate School forwards the personal statements to the named supervisors
9 February 2024	Supervisors confirm to School PG Directors/Conveners if there is an applicant they wish to put forward
23 February 2024	School PG Directors/Conveners forward top 3 candidates for consideration to the Dean of Graduate Studies
26 Feb-1 March 2024	Shortlisting undertaken by Dean of Graduate Studies and Senior Academic who will sit on the interview panel
4 March 2024	Deans of Graduate Studies confirm 8 candidates to be interviewed
4-8 March 2024	Candidates invited to interview by Graduate Schools. Interview guidance to be shared
15 March 2024	Applicants not selected for interview to be notified by Graduate Schools
18-22 March 2024	Online interviews held during this week
25-29 March 2024	Successful candidates to be notified

SELECTION GUIDANCE

Supervisors should review the applicant CV and degree transcript along with their 500 word personal statement written on their research interest and why they wish to be a James McCune Smith Scholar. They should also review, of course, the research proposal if required. Supervisors should then confirm with the School PG Director/Convener that they wish to put forward this candidate for the scholarships.

The School PG Director/Convener/School Selection Panel (and deputy if appropriate) will then rank their candidates using the below marking scheme. There is no explicit requirement for a Masters degree, however reviewers could judge whether a Masters degree qualification (particularly in a relevant subject) balances perceived weaknesses of the undergraduate degree grade. Any wider experiences (e.g. work or volunteering in a relevant industry) can also be considered when ranking candidates and in relation to their academic standing. EDI and Widening Participation aspects should also be considered when reviewing applications and the JMS also enables part-time study.

School selection panels will be sent a selection form to complete which is provided below for information. Further to this the College selection panel will then undertake a similar process from the list of highly ranked candidates to determine the shortlist for interview.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

The research proposal* should be a detailed description of the intended research topic. It will form the basis for assessing the application, along with the Personal Statement and academic qualifications. The proposal should be written in a clear and concise manner. The main body of the research proposal (excluding the bibliography) should be a maximum of 1,500 words.

Reviewers of this proposal will include those beyond your discipline in the respective Colleges so the overview should be accessible to those from different subject areas.

The Research Proposal should include the following sections:

- Title
- Overview – a general introduction that succinctly sets out exactly what the project seeks to explore. This should also include the research question(s) to be addressed and the overall aim of the project.
- Context – situate the research within the relevant literature/s. Why is the research important? This should include a brief summary of research already taken in the field, addressing key works and researchers/scholars. Specific attention should be paid to problems in the existing literature and ways in which your proposed research challenges/addresses these problems. You should also give an account of the theoretical issues relevant to your research, and whether you intend to test existing theories or develop new ones.
- Methodology – provide a detailed account of the methodology and/or methods that will be used. Specific attention should be paid, where relevant, to any innovative aspects of the proposed methodology.
- [Where relevant] An indication of ethical issues associated with this proposal (including those that may impact on formal ethics committee approval and those requiring ongoing consideration in the field/during analysis) and proposed actions to mitigate these.
- Impact – a brief discussion of the implications of the proposed research for the broader discipline, any practical applications, and/or any policy relevance.

* A research proposal is not required for applicants to the College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences or in the Schools of Chemistry, Mathematics and Statistics and Physics and Astronomy. Applicants should, however, provide a short overview of their proposed research area in their Personal Statement.

How your Application will be Assessed

The academic supervisor will review your proposal and personal statement and confirm if they wish to support your application. Applications will then be reviewed and ranked to shortlist for interview in each College on the following categories: candidate capabilities (academic achievements), and professional and life experiences. Both areas are given equal weighting. They will also review the quality of the research proposal where this is required and/ or personal statement. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to interview.

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOLS/COLLEGES

1. Candidate Capabilities – Score out of 10

This component of the marking framework is aimed at assessing the whole person - not just academic achievements but also resourcefulness, commitment and resilience as demonstrated by broader professional and life experiences.

It focuses on likely preparedness and potential to: • undertake and complete a PhD; • to succeed with the JMS funding; • and, to contribute to a positive PhD community

Assessment is split into two parts: obtained and expected academic achievements; and, professional and life experiences. Each part is allocated 5 marks.

Scores	Descriptors for <i>Academic Qualifications</i> <i>Please consider submitted transcripts, references, candidate CV.</i>	Scores	Descriptors for <i>Professional and Life Experiences</i> <i>Please consider submitted candidate CV and Personal Statement</i>
5	Student has obtained (or there is a strong evidence that the candidate will obtain) a first class degree / distinction at Masters AND has been awarded prizes or other significant academic distinctions	4-5	Drawing on their professional / life experiences, showing resilience, resourcefulness and commitment, the Student explicitly articulates very good / outstanding potential to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake and complete a PhD; • To flourish as a result of PhD funding, and; • To be a productive contributor to a positive research culture.
4	Student has obtained (or there is strong evidence that the candidate will obtain) a first class degree / distinction at Masters OR student has obtained (or there is strong evidence that the candidate will obtain) a 2:1/merit		
2-3	Student has obtained (or there is strong evidence that the candidate will obtain) a 2:1 class degree/ merit at Masters OR student has obtained (or there is strong evidence the student will obtain) a 2:2/pass at Masters AND with a 2:1 class/ distinction for the dissertation.	2-3	Drawing on their professional / life experiences, showing resilience, resourcefulness and commitment, the Student explicitly articulates good potential to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake and complete a PhD; • To flourish as a result of PhD funding, and; • To be a productive contributor to a positive research culture.

1	Student has obtained (or there is strong evidence that the candidate will obtain) a 2:2 class degree / pass at Masters	0-1	Application does not adequately draw out potential to undertake and complete a PhD and flourish as a result of PhD funding as evidenced by academic background and professional/life experiences
0	No evidence or likelihood of obtaining a 2:2 degree at undergraduate level.		

2. Research Proposal– Score out of 10

Particular attention should be paid to the stage of the candidate, i.e., candidates without a recent Masters might be expected to have a less well worked through research proposal that is nonetheless thought to be excellent in its originality, use of conceptual framing, broad methodological approach and/or likely societal impact. It is anticipated that supervisors can provide guidance on the research proposal and to help strong applicants strengthen this.

Score	Description
10	An excellent proposal scoring well in terms of both cogency and originality. All components – overview, context, methodology, and impact – will be well thought out and clearly expressed <i>for the stage of the candidate</i> . Plus
	Proposal is exceptionally good in all of its components and fulfils criteria 7 to 9 below.
9	Proposal is original and at the cutting edge of developments substantively and/or methodologically (<i>this may be less well specified but still discernible for students without Masters training</i>). Plus Fulfils criteria 7 and 8 below.
8	Proposal contains awareness of the potential impact of the research (<i>this may be less well specified but still discernible for students without Masters training</i>). Plus Fulfils criterion 7 below.
7	A well-defined proposal with researchable questions, appropriately identified sources, an awareness of the theoretical and empirical background to the research and an appropriate methodology cognisant of potential ethical issues. The proposal should display an awareness of what is feasible within 3.5 years of a funded PhD including appropriate risk assessment where relevant. <i>Levels of methodological detail and conceptual framing may be less detailed for those students without Masters training.</i>
6	A good proposal with only minor but still identifiable weaknesses. The research question will be clear, the methodology appropriate and clearly presented, and most of the appropriate literature identified.
5	A promising proposal that includes some underdeveloped areas. The methodology is appropriate but ill-expressed. The proposal is only weakly grounded in relevant literature.
4	A proposal with one serious weakness or several minor ones, which suggests gaps in knowledge and a weak grasp of the proposed methodology and its suitability.
3	A proposal with significant weaknesses in multiple components, little appreciation of possible methodologies, and/or awareness of relevant literature.
0-2	A problematic proposal that would need considerable additional work before being fundable. All or most components of the proposal will require further work and/or demonstrate little or no background or interest in their subject.