

The Food Consortium Industrial Doctoral Landscape Award (IDLA)

APPLICATION FORM 2026

Please complete this form if you are applying for one of the five PhD projects offered by The Food Consortium Industrial Doctoral Landscape Award (IDLA). Please indicate the specific project that you are applying for below and check where this project is hosted (i.e., host university) when making your application.

The Food Consortium IDLA is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion, welcoming applications from all backgrounds and fostering an environment where every researcher can thrive.

This application form will be shared in full with the supervisory team of the project to which you are applying, so please do not include any information that you do not want shared. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion monitoring information will be collected on a separate online form (instructions below).

You will need the following documents to support your application (please see further submission instructions at the bottom of this application form):

- Official transcripts of your higher education qualifications, inclusive of grades.
- Evidence of your proficiency in English, if English is not your first language. (You can provide this later if you have not yet completed an IELTS test). We may contact you for further information if your application is shortlisted.
- If you have completed a degree or higher degree in a course that was taught in English this may be sufficient evidence of your language proficiency

*If your application is successful, and English is not your first language, you will need to meet language proficiency requirements at the university that will be hosting the PhD Studentship (the university where the project lead supervisor works). For more information, please check the relevant host university website

You will also be asked to provide the names and email addresses of two individuals who will provide confidential academic reference letters. *The IDLA will request the letter from your referee if you are shortlisted for interview.*

Several checkbox response questions are provided throughout this form. To 'check/ tick' the relevant box, please double click and select the option 'ticked' under default value. This function works best when using Microsoft Word. If you are using alternative software to open and complete this application form, please indicate your selected option by placing a clear 'X' to the left of the relevant checkbox.

Your personal information will be processed in line with our obligations under all applicable Data Protection Laws. The Data Controller for your personal information is the University of Reading and our contact details are: University of Reading, Information Management and Policy Services, Room 2.22, Whiteknights House, Shinfield Road, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6DT.

- We will use the information provided in this application form to process your application for a PhD studentship.

- If your application is successful, your information will be kept by the University of Reading until 5 years after the IDLA ends (for purposes of monitoring).
- Names, date of birth, current country of residence, contact details and fees status of successful applicants may be shared with the relevant team at the host universities.

Under Data Protection laws you have rights to access, restrict, correct, erase, rectify and object to uses of your data. You also have a right to complain to the UK data protection authority. Our Data Protection officer can be contacted at imps@reading.ac.uk for more information.

I have read and understood how the IDLA will use my data

Do you agree ☐ Yes ☐ No

SECTION 1 – APPLICANT DETAILS

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|
| Title: | <input type="text"/> | First Name: | <input type="text"/> | Surname: | <input type="text"/> |
| Preferred Name: | <input type="text"/> | | | | |
| Email address | <input type="text"/> | | | | |
| Phone number | <input type="text"/> | | | | |

Please confirm your UK residency / university fees status. You will be required to show evidence of your residency status at a later stage of your application.

- ☐ I am a UK National and meet residency requirements
- ☐ I am an Irish National and meet residency requirements
- ☐ I have pre-settled status in the UK and meet residency requirements (under EU Settlement Scheme).
- ☐ I have settled status in the UK and meet residency requirements (under EU Settlement Scheme).
- ☐ I have indefinite leave to remain in the UK or enter
- ☐ I am a refugee (recognised by the UK government) or the spouse/civil partner or child of a refugee.
- ☐ I have applied for asylum and have been granted Exceptional Leave or Humanitarian Protection in the UK
- ☐ I am an international student (for example, you need a visa to live and study in the UK OR you are a UK/Irish national who does not meet residency requirements)

What is your current country of residence?

If you are an **international student**, please declare that you have **already secured funding (or are able to self-fund)** to make up the shortfall between the home fees (which are funded by the IDLA) and the required international fees for the host institution.

☐ Yes, I am an international student and I declare that I have already secured funding or am able to self-fund the shortfall between the home fees (funded by the IDLA) and the required international fees for the host institution.

☐ Not applicable, I am a home student.

SECTION 2 – APPLICANT EDUCATION

The minimum qualification we require is a 1st or upper 2nd class degree in a subject appropriate to the PhD project applied for. Applicants with a lower class of Bachelors degree will also be considered if they have good performance at the Masters level (“merit” or above).

*If you have an international qualification, please check the degree course eligibility information provided by the host universities before you submit your application.

Undergraduate institution and country

Undergraduate qualification type (e.g., BSc) and subject

Undergraduate start and end date (mm/yy – mm/yy)

Undergraduate qualification result

Is this result achieved or expected?

☐ Achieved ☐ Expected

Postgraduate institution and country

Postgraduate qualification type (e.g., MSc) and subject/discipline

Postgraduate start and end date (mm/yy – mm/yy)

Postgraduate qualification result

Is this result achieved or expected?

☐ Achieved ☐ Expected

First Academic Referee's name

First Academic Referee's email address

Second Academic Referee's name

Second Academic Referee's email address

SECTION 3 – PROJECT SELECTION

| Project ID | Project title | Host Institution |
|------------|--|--------------------------|
| 2601 NSP | Happiness by design: Consumer-centric approaches to product evaluation | University of Nottingham |
| 2602 LED | Modelling aroma solubility and headspace composition for reduced-alcohol formulation | Loughborough University |
| 2603 RIN | Machine Learning-Based Modelling of Flavour Formation in Alternative Cocoa Aroma Sources | University of Reading |
| 2604 NLN | Sodium reduction in coated frozen foods | University of Nottingham |
| 2605 RIY | Yogurt - enhancing satiety through the gut microbiota | University of Reading |

Please indicate your project choice by writing the Project ID and title below:

Project ID

Project Title

SECTION 3 – YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

How do your **academic qualifications** prepare you for your chosen project?

(150 words max)

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| How do any work/ placement/ voluntary experiences (or other type of experience which may have involved relevant skills) prepare you for your chosen project? (150 words max) |
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SECTION 4 – Personal statement

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| Set out your reasons and motivation for applying to your chosen project (this may refer to the topic, the host institution and/ or the industry placement opportunity). (150 words max) |
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| Please detail your understanding and expectations of doctoral study. (150 words max) |
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| Please provide a summary of why you are ready to undertake a PhD now and how you will thrive as a result of PhD funding. |
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You might include, for example, personal challenges that you have overcome or achievements that you are proud of in your work, study, or life experiences and how these map onto the skills required to succeed in a PhD programme and make a positive contribution to the IDLA community.

Skills might include teamwork, problem solving and resilience, co-ordination/ organisation and inter-personal communication.

(200 words max)

Reflecting on your own background and/or chosen project for PhD study and the opportunities which it may present, how will you support diversity and inclusion?

(150 words max)

SECTION 6 – EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY DATA

The IDLA is required to report on Equality and Diversity data to its funder, the BBSRC. This information is being collected separately via an online form (link below).

[Click here to complete the IDLA EDI Form](#)

Please confirm that you have completed this form here:

YES, I confirm that I have completed the online EDI form ☐

The IDLA is offering a guaranteed interview scheme for applicants who meet the following criteria:

- UK Home Student Fee status
AND
- Are from a minority ethnic background OR have a disability, impairment, health condition or learning difference?
AND
- Hold or expect an upper second or first class undergraduate degree in a subject relevant to the project applied for
AND
- Meet any essential candidate criteria relevant to the chosen project listed in its respective advert

If you meet these criteria and would like to access the guaranteed interview scheme please indicate below:

- ☐ Yes, I declare that I meet the criteria and would like to be considered for a guaranteed interview
- ☐ No / Not applicable

***Please note that this scheme is not available for applicants with international student fee status.**

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Thank you for taking the time to complete the IDLA Application Form.

Along with this Application form, we also require the following documents to support your application:

1. Degree certificates and transcripts
2. If English is not your first language, please submit evidence of your proficiency in English. If you do not currently have these documents available to upload, you can provide them at a later date. We may contact you for further information if your application is shortlisted.
3. If you have completed a degree or higher degree in a course that was taught in English this may be sufficient evidence of your language proficiency

If your application is successful, and English is not your first language, you will need to meet language proficiency requirements at the university that will be hosting the PhD Studentship (the university where the project lead supervisor works). For more information, please check the relevant university website

Please do NOT submit a CV alongside your application.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please email your application as a PDF document along with the supporting documents as outlined above to the email address below by 28th February 2026.

The subject line of your email must read: 'IDLA [Project ID] SURNAME'.

For example: 'IDLA 2601 NSP – SMITH'

Submission email address: idla@reading.ac.uk

Failure to fully complete the application and any of the associated tasks may impede or prevent consideration of your application.

If you are interested in applying for more than one project, please complete and submit a separate application for each project (but you only need to complete the online EDI form once).

For any informal queries about the IDLA programme, please contact E-mail: idla@reading.ac.uk.