



## Nuffield Foundation Science Bursaries for Schools & Colleges Guidance for students

This information has been sent out by Sentinus to describe how the science bursary programme works in Northern Ireland. These notes supplement the information in the colour brochure. You will find details for Sentinus on [www.sentinus.co.uk](http://www.sentinus.co.uk) and for the Nuffield Foundation on [www.nuffieldfoundation.org/science-bursaries-schools-and-colleges](http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/science-bursaries-schools-and-colleges)

The more you can take the initiative in liaising with your teacher and Sentinus to set up a project, the more likely you are to be successful.

### What happens if I am awarded a Bursary?

If you are awarded a bursary, your coordinator will work with you to find a project in an area of science, technology, engineering or maths that you are interested in. You will be given a supervisor who will oversee your work during the summer. The project you will be doing is likely to be part of on-going work of significance to your supervisor.

Projects run for **4 to 6 weeks** and take place during the summer vacation. The award consists of **£80 per week** to cover travel allowances and other expenses.

Before you start your project, you will be invited to an induction day at Queen's University Belfast to meet other Nuffield Foundation Bursary students. You may also have the opportunity to meet your project supervisor.

Once at your placement, there may be a talk by a member of the scientific/engineering staff to introduce you to the work of the organisation in a wider context. This is a chance for the organisation, which may seem to you at first to be a somewhat daunting place, to show its friendly face, and for you to meet some of the people with whom you will be working. Your supervisor will explain what the project involves, why the project is of interest, what contribution your work will make and what outcomes you might aim for during the time you are there. He or she will teach you any new techniques that you might need for the project, but the idea is that you learn by doing things for yourself. You are expected to use your initiative.

### What makes a good project?

Your project should be self-contained so that you can experience a beginning, a middle and an end within 4 - 6 weeks. A project should allow you scope to use your initiative.

The criteria for selecting projects are that they should:

- have clear scientific or technological content;
- contribute to the work of the host organisation;
- be well defined, having a clear outcome in mind from the beginning;
- allow scope for initiative on the part of the student.

It is worth noting here that we **do not provide any medical placements**. Students are able to work on biomedical projects, but these must be **research based** rather than clinical. The programme is designed for students interested in any area of STEM, and will give students an experience of scientific research. **For this reason it may not be the most relevant experience for those who have decided on medicine as a career.**



## How do I apply?

**Step 1:** Read the colour brochure carefully and look at the Nuffield Foundation website ([www.nuffieldfoundation.org/scb](http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/scb)). Think about the possible benefits to you and decide whether or not you would like to apply for a bursary.

### **Step 2:** Check at home

Make sure that you will be able to set aside at least 4 weeks between June and August 2012 for a bursary. Please note some organisations can work a project around a holiday while others are likely to have a strict schedule. Therefore the more flexible you are regarding availability during the summer the better your chances of securing a bursary and placement. Please make sure you indicate on your applications any dates when you are not available.

### **Step 3:** Talk to your teacher

Tell your teacher about your interest in the scheme. Describe the type of project that would interest you and ask for a copy of the application form.

### **Step 4:** Prepare your application and complete the form

You have two choices.

1. You may prefer to set up your own project placement using your own contacts or contacts provided by your teacher. If this is the case, contact Sentinus before you start. The Coordinator will be able to provide you with guidance to show to any potential project provider. We will make contact with the Project provider to confirm their involvement and will ask them to complete a registration form. ***Locating your own project placement does not guarantee that you will receive bursary funding however it is likely to increase your chances of receiving a bursary.***

2. Alternatively you may wish to apply for one of a number of projects with host organisations which Sentinus will set up. To apply for a bursary this way you should complete and return your application form to Sentinus. For Part D of the form students should list their interest areas in order of importance and indicate areas in N. Ireland they would be willing to travel to should it be difficult to source a placement close to the student's home. Sentinus will then review your application and will match you to a Project Provider if a suitable organisation and project is found.

Overall therefore you should complete parts **A, B, C** and either **D** or **E** of the application form. Then pass the form to your teacher who will complete part **F** and send it to Sentinus.

The student application forms should be returned to Evelyn Heaslip at Sentinus by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February. Most students can expect to hear back from Sentinus by June 2012, however there are a small number of instances where placement confirmation can run into July. Delays can occur while we wait to get confirmation in writing of a project from an organisation. Sentinus will inform students by letter, whether they have been successful or not. **Until you receive this letter you will know there are still bursaries to be allocated.**

As competition for bursaries is likely to be high we would therefore encourage students to complete and return their application as soon as possible. For instances where there are many students with the same area of interest (and all other factors are the same), preference may be given to early applicants.

Please note all Sentinus programmes are inclusive and as such we make no differentiation between students, regardless of gender, race, colour, religion or disability.



## Timetable

### **November 2011 to February 2012**

After your teacher or lecturer informs you about the Scheme you should study the information and register your interest by returning your application form to Sentinus before the deadline date (Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February).

During this time Sentinus will also be contacting organisations to locate suitable projects for the applications being received.

### **February to May 2012**

Await notification from Sentinus regarding the success of your application. If we find a suitable placement for you we will phone or email you with details of the placement and then ask you to confirm that you would like to accept it. Assuming you are happy to take the placement we will then post out to you information regarding the project placement including supervisor details. You will be asked to make contact with your supervisor to introduce yourself and to find out more information about the project so that you can best prepare for the experience. You will also be required to send a £50 deposit cheque (payable to Sentinus, no postal orders or bankers drafts please). This cheque is fully refunded assuming you complete the assignment.

If you do not accept a placement we offer to you, it will be offered to another student and we will continue to look for a placement for you, though there is no guarantee that we will be successful.

### **28<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

Attend an induction event at Queen's University Belfast (Room 2026 Peter Froggatt Centre 10am to 12pm) designed to help you get the most from your bursary experience.

### **Early June to end August 2012**

Carry out the bursary project (4 to 6 week period agreed with your supervisor), write a report and complete the Gold CREST award documents.

You receive your first payment (£160 cheque) in the post at the end of your first two weeks. If you are completing a 6 week placement, you will receive a second cheque (£160 cheque) in the post after four weeks.

### **11<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

Show off your work at a celebration event in the Whitla Hall at Queen's University Belfast.

Receive final payment (£160 cheque) and return of £50 surety cheque on the Celebration Event on satisfactory completion of placement, report and necessary documentation

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