

# Carnegie PhD Scholarships Covid-19 Extension Policy

The Carnegie Trust recognises that the majority of Carnegie PhD Scholars have been affected by the pandemic, albeit in different ways depending on the nature of the doctoral research and the scholars' personal circumstances. Lockdowns and restrictions on interpersonal contact have also affected both mental and physical health and wellbeing, which in turn has been detrimental to concentration or motivation.

The Trust further acknowledges that many Scholars have had to adapt their research plans or methodologies as a result of changing restrictions and rules, but that making these changes may also have an impact on productivity and progress. As a consequence of this disruption, many Scholars require additional time to complete their research and thesis preparation. To meet requests for funded extensions, the Trust is setting aside resources to support Carnegie PhD Scholars who have been adversely affected by the pandemic, irrespective of the field of research. This document explains the scope of the policy and process for applying for an extension.

## Who is eligible for an extension?

The policy covers Carnegie funded doctoral students who, during the pandemic, have suffered delays regardless of the start date of their funding.

There are many reasons or circumstances that might have hindered progress. Students may have been faced with closures or reduced access to research facilities/resources (including libraries or archives), travel restrictions, loss of childcare provision, home schooling, caring responsibilities for relatives affected by Covid, shielding requirements etc. The effects of the pandemic on mental health and wellbeing have been, and continue to be felt by many scholars. Often a combination of factors will have limited a student's ability to engage fully with their research during the pandemic. Therefore, all requests for funded extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account both the research challenges and the personal circumstances experienced by each Scholar.

## What does the extension include?

The extension includes continuation of the stipend and use of the research allowance throughout the agreed extension period. The duration of the extension will be decided by the Trust on the basis of the circumstances presented. Extensions will not be awarded beyond the month in which the PhD thesis is submitted for examination.

Additional tuition fees are excluded, as are writing up fees, college or bench fees. Universities are expected to waive these fees for Carnegie Scholars during the extension and not to pass such costs on to the Scholar.

## When can Carnegie Scholars apply for an extension?

Carnegie scholars who wish to apply for a funded extension can do so approximately 3 months before the end of their scholarship. The application must include:

- a summary of the work completed to date;
- an estimate of the amount of time lost since the start of the pandemic in March 2020;
- a description of the challenges faced while conducting their research as well as of factors that have affected the Scholar in their personal life and may continue to be in place during the extension;
- a timetable for completion of the PhD up to a new submission date for the thesis.
- Written confirmation from the Head of Department/Director of Graduate studies that the university has approved the extension request.

The application for an extension must be approved by the Scholar's supervisor who should confirm the extent of delays incurred and the feasibility of the plans for completion.

NOTE: While the pandemic is still ongoing, the timetable for completion should take into account any factors, restrictions or other limitations (including personal ones) that may continue to affect the Scholar's ability to fully engage with their research during the extension.

## Progress reports and updates

It is essential that scholars and their supervisor continue to submit the progress reports requested by the Trust in each year of the Scholarship. Any delays or setbacks should be recorded by the Scholar in the annual progress reports and confirmed by their PhD Supervisor.

In addition, the Trust may from time to time request further updates by email during the academic year. Scholars and their supervisors are strongly encouraged to respond to any update requests from the Trust and to use their own initiative in order to share with us any concerns they may have about their progress.