Guidance note for prospective visitors

CREDS VIPs (Visitors: International Programme)

# Introduction

The vision for CREDS (the Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions) is to make the UK a leader in understanding the changes in energy demand needed for the transition to a secure and affordable, low carbon energy system.

Our objectives relate to energy use in the UK, but we are interested in learning from international experience. Therefore, we would like to invite international researchers, policy makers and business/ industry people working in the field of energy demand to visit CREDS as visiting fellows or on secondment.

The purpose of these visits is to:

* Ensure we use international research to learn and improve
* Develop collaborative research to produce outputs targeted at international audiences
* Engage in joint dissemination that will impact on international debates
* Build networks and ongoing relationships that will support energy demand research communities in the UK and internationally.

It is important visitors benefit from their stay. We envisage that this will require financial support for accommodation and for costs associated with travel to, and within, the UK. There are other potential areas of non-financial support, including help with visa applications, finding appropriate accommodation and organising research and social interactions.

# Description

This first call closes on the **10th September 2019**. Thereafter, this will be an annual scheme. Visits need to take place within 18 months of being agreed.

Visitors will be located within one of the following areas of CREDS (or may wish to visit more than one centre). The application should make clear with whom you would like to collaborate:

* The CREDS core team (focusing on knowledge exchange)
* One of our research themes or challenges (see [website](http://www.creds.ac.uk) for details)
	+ Buildings and energy
	+ Transport and mobility
	+ Materials and industry
	+ Flexibility
	+ Digital society
	+ Policy and governance
	+ Decarbonising heat
* One of our industry/ policy partners.

# Selection criteria

Visitors will need to meet the following criteria:

* Demonstrate a motivation to engage with CREDS. This is the most important criteria.
* Show that your visit has compatibility with our work – experience in energy demand or related topics.
* The visitor holds a degree or equivalent experience. Early career professionals are welcome but this is not a scheme for students.
* The ability to travel to and within the UK (you will need to make your own visa arrangements where required, though we will support your application with the relevant documentation, such as a letter of invitation and possibly with funding).
* Describe your preparedness to make at least one presentation and contribute to at least one written output, and to engage with our evaluation procedure.
* Demonstrate how you will link us to your home institution to ensure a lasting legacy.

These criteria will be assessed through a written application form, CV and a commitment from the host to support the visit.

# Application process

The normal application process is as follows:

* Visit the CREDS website and become familiar with the themes. Decide on a host for your visit.
* Download the VIP guidance and application form from the website.
* Contact the CREDS Core team (credsadmin@ouce.ox.ac.uk) or relevant CREDS person from the theme to discuss the possibility of them hosting your visit.
* Agree an outline work plan, timing of visit, outline budget, etc. (see application form) your CREDS host (via Skype, email, etc.).
* Applicant completes the application and sends it, with their CV, to CREDS Admin by Tuesday 10th September.
* The Host completes an invitation form and sends it to CREDS Admin.
* Please note that after submission the application will be assessed for eligibility and if accepted the funding will be approved. However, this is an approval from CREDS in principle only for the funding aspect. It is conditional on customs and immigration regulations being satisfied and the visit will only go ahead once these regulations are agreed in full.

# Funding available

CREDS will pay:

* Travel expenses to and from the UK (return journey)
* Pre-agreed travel within the UK for research/ exchange purposes (see <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/> and <https://www.nationalexpress.com/en>)
* Accommodation (see <https://www.roomgo.co.uk/> and <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-to-rent.html>)
* We can arrange for the pre-payment of flights, accommodation deposits and other upfront costs before arrival. Applicants need to contact us to arrange this.
* Pre-agreed accommodation, subsistence and travel expenses during the stay, supported by receipts.
* Bench fees (though payment from the visitor or in kind support from the host is welcomed)
* Other out of pocket costs as outlined in the application form. This would not include things like meals out, sight seeing, leisure travel, hair cuts etc. If in doubt, the visitor needs to ask for clarification before purchasing any items.

The maximum funding available is £12,500 for a maximum of a six-month stay, including bench fees. Most visits are expected to cost significantly less than this.

Costs will be reimbursed based on receipts and so visitors will be expected to keep these. If necessary, certain costs like travel to the UK and the first month of accommodation can be paid in advance of the visit. Please talk to us about this as there are some administrative matters to deal with in this case.

# Equality and diversity

We are interested in a broad range of applicants:

* This call is not restricted to academics. Colleagues working in government and industry are very welcome.
* Early career professionals as well as, senior staff are welcome to apply.
* We are happy to support short and longer visits (maximum six months) and will support attendance at CREDS conferences/ events.
* We are particularly interested in applications from women and other groups under-represented in UK energy research.
	+ We will support applications from families and can consider the costs of dependents .
	+ We welcome applications from the majority world and will actively support visa applications. Extra financial support may be available for these applications – please ask us.
	+ We will provide other non-financial support such as help finding accommodation and social activities
	+ If you have any special needs, particularly if these have cost implications, are relevant to your host, or may influence your accommodation requirements, please let us know and we will try to accommodate them.

# Monitoring and evaluation

Visitors will be asked to complete a short written task at the end of their visit to help us evaluate their experience and the success of the programme.

# Timing

The deadline for this first round of applications is Tuesday 10th September 2019.

Visits will last between one week (for particular CREDS events) and six months.

Visits need to be completed (with monitoring and evaluation and expenditure claims sent in) within 18 months of being agreed.

# Application form

Applicants need to:

* Submit a CV detailing their educational and work experience
* Complete the application form
* Make sure the host submits an invitation form

# More information

If you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact Dr Sarah Higginson, sarah.higginson@ouce.ox.ac.uk and copy to credsadmin@ouce.ox.ac.uk. Please entitle your email **Visitors: International Programme**.