

Writing a good application

Writing a good application: Planning

- Choose a course you are *really* interested in. You will need to be dedicated, so need a subject that will keep your interest for the duration of the course.
- Check you meet the criteria for:
 1. The CBSI program
 2. The specific project/course
 3. The university that will host your project/course.
- Read the application form notes *and* go through the form, to know which documents you need. ***Make a list and a plan to get all the documents.***

Writing a good application: Your Experience

- **How does your previous research and professional experience demonstrate your potential and ability to complete the project successfully? 500 words**
 - A good answer tells us about the things you have done in the past to show that you have the potential and ability to do the project.
 - Think about including relevant modules from your university courses, academic prizes received, competencies such as programming in a computing language, or field competencies, experience of training courses, experience of fieldwork, study placements, voluntary work, relevant past employment, or relevant reports or publications that you have written or contributed to.
 - Address the specific course you are applying for, including the pre-requisites section, to ensure you cover these points.
 - Show you have the potential to meet the research outcomes.
 - Write clearly, as we may read your statements fast!

Writing a good application: Why this course?

- **Why do you want to do this MSc course / PhD project?**
500 words
 - A good answer tells us about why YOU want to do this project and your motivations, clearly and succinctly.
 - Include evidence that you have thought about the project/course and have the motivation to complete the programme of study, which can include academic experience *and* experience beyond your academic studies.
 - You may include more personal motivations, and any relevant background to them.
 - Write clearly, as we may read your statements fast!

Writing a good application: Why CBSI?

- **Why would you like to join the CBSI research and capacity building programme? 500 words**
 - A good answer tells us about why YOU want to do a CBSI-linked Masters or PhD project, clearly and succinctly.
 - Read the CBSI website, the CBSI Science and Capacity Plan, and White et al. 2021 *Nature*.
 - Include your motivations as they link to the wider CBSI scholarships programme, and/or the wider CBSI Science and Capacity Plan, and/or influencing policy.
 - Think about including how you might benefit from, or contribute to, other parts of the CBSI research and capacity building programme.
 - Write clearly, as we may read your statements fast!

PhD's only: Developing the Project Statement

- Upload a 2 page statement to describe how you would develop the project that you are applying for. This document is very important!
- This could include developing the fieldwork, data collection, data collation, analyses, or other aspects of the project given in the advertisement for the project, or related avenues of research to answer questions posed in the advertisement for the project
- One good structure is to follow a scientific paper, with a short introduction that includes the rationale and hypotheses/questions posed, including the development of these, development of the methods to tackle the hypotheses/questions, what you might find (future results) and what it means (discussion). Tailor these to any research outcomes given, and the wider CBSI programme, including possible links to policy.
- Diagrams and graphs can be useful to include.
- Include relevant references and define specialist terms so we know you understand them.

Your CV

- Tailor your CV to applying for a specific CBSI scholarship.
- This is an academic CV, so can be longer than 2 pages.
- Include:
 - Personal details – name, address, phone number and email.
 - Education and employment history, put your most recent achievements first.
 - Include publications, Prizes, field courses, summer schools etc, anything that can help you stand out!
- Here is what to avoid: <https://career-advice.jobs.ac.uk/cv-and-cover-letter-advice/10-things-not-to-do-on-your-cv/>

Final checks

- Re-read your application before you submit. Check for spelling, grammar, and that it is clearly written. Use this read through to improve your application.
- Ask someone else to read your application.
- Re-read your application again, make final improvements.
- Submit!
- Do not wait until the last moment to submit. Your internet might go down!