

Experimental Medicine Initiative

Clinical PhD Studentships and Lectureships

Overview

The [Experimental Medicine Initiative](#) (EMI) is a strategic scheme to train the triallists of the future and address the shortage of suitably qualified clinicians in industry and academia skilled in the rigorous design, conduct and evaluation of experimental medicine studies.

We need to find out much earlier if a treatment is going to work. And we do that by looking not just at a drug's safety in those early trials but also by studying what it's doing to the patients. For that we need people with an unusual skillset who are in very short supply".

(Prof. Ian Wilkinson, Professor of Therapeutics and Director of the Cambridge Clinical Trials Unit).



EMI provides an industrial funding framework for clinical PhD studentships and academic clinical lectureships. The Office for Translational Research manages EMI on behalf of the University of Cambridge and in partnership with Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, NIHR Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) and industry partners. EMI is **open to further industry partners** for one-off or multiple clinical PhD studentships and/or lectureships.

Clinical PhD studentships

EMI PhD studentships are fully funded posts for **3 years**. Funding for these posts is mainly provided by the industrial partner with possibility of co-sponsoring from the University and NIHR Cambridge BRC. It covers the student's stipend, university tuition and college fees as well as a fixed amount towards relevant education, training and travel. The programme **does not** provide funding for the PhD research component, which is sourced separately by the academic and/or industry supervisor.

The clinical trainees are employed by the University of Cambridge as Clinical Research Associates and, in parallel, undertake a PhD in a relevant University department. Typically, a trainee has both an academic and an industrial supervisor. Where appropriate, PhD studentships may include a research stay with the industry partner.

Within the programme, trainees undertake clinical studies to de-risk projects in areas of interest to industry. These studies, which aim to bridge the translational research gap, are enabled via access to world-leading research expertise at the University of Cambridge and unparalleled access to patient cohorts, clinics and facilities at Cambridge University Hospitals.

Each industry partner is actively involved in all stages of the research from proposal through to publication. Working towards a PhD qualification, trainees benefit from industry, academic and clinical supervision as well as direct exposure to industry drivers. Through this approach, trainees develop further essential research skills and gain insight into the range of opportunities for clinicians in a commercial setting.



“The EMI programme exemplifies how a collaboration between academia and industry supporting new clinical investigators provides clear mutual benefits and demonstrate how innovative clinical studies using novel methodologies can inform the design of future experimental medicine studies”.

(Dr Nic Wisniacki, Head of Discovery Medicine, GSK)

Academic Clinical Lectureships

Academic Clinical Lecturer (ACL) posts are funded 50% by Cambridge University Hospitals and 50% by EMI. This ensures that each ACL has the opportunity to spend 50% protected time on academic research with the remaining 50% in clinical training, during which time clinical competencies must be met. ACL posts are funded for up to four years. A programme allowance is included for relevant education, training and travel, however post-holders are expected to seek independent funding to support their chosen programme of research. All trainees must hold a PhD when appointed.

EMI in figures



16 PhD Studentships
6 Clinical Lectureships



3 industrial partners
incl. AZ & GSK



> 120 publications



2 trainees were subsequently
hired by industry



Trainees awarded
19 research grants
totalling £5.4m



4 trainees moved into a senior
clinical-academic role



2 prestigious international
awards by professional bodies



Co-funding from partner
organisations > 1.5m



Novel research techniques and
biomarkers utilised in industry-
sponsored clinical trials

Contact information

Organisations wishing to obtain further details about the EMI programme are welcome to contact the Programme Manager, Dr Luis Pennanen (ljcp2@medschl.cam.ac.uk) in the first instance.