**EPSRC CDT in Machine Learning Systems
first-stage Application Form**

**for entry in September 2026**

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| This document is a guide only, to help you prepare filling in the final form via the below link:[Link to the Online first-stage Application Form for final submission (Jisc)](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/edinburgh/epsrc-cdt-in-machine-learning-systems-first-stage-application-f)Please refer to our [Application Process and Guidance webpage](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/apply/application-process-and-guidance) for guidance on the whole application process and in particular to check by which deadline you must submit this form. |

\*Required

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| 1 - Personal Details |
| Last name\* |  |
| First name(s) \* |  |
| Nationality\* |  |
| Current address (including the country) \* |  |
| Email\* |  |

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| 2 - EDI and Widening Participation formAll applicants must also submit the CDT EDI and Widening Participation form which collects EDI and WP data separately from this application form, for reporting and processes improvement purposes. You are not obliged to complete it and can submit it blank if you prefer:[Link to online EDI and Widening Participation form](https://forms.office.com/e/1kuD97teMq) |
| Please tick the box to indicate that you have submitted your EDI and WP form\* |[ ]
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| 3 - Higher Education Record\*Please indicate below the details of all your higher education degrees obtained to date or expected at the end of this academic year. International applicants should refer to the [Postgraduate Entry Requirements by country](https://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/postgraduate-entry) directory to find out about entry requirements for a PhD in the University of Edinburgh. |
| Undergraduate (UG) or Postgraduate (PG) | University attended & City/Country | Dates attended | Principal subjects studied | Title of Qualification obtained (or expected) | Overall Class / Grade |
|  |  | From | To |  |  |  |
| \**UG min* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Honours, Scholarships, Prizes or Awards obtained during studies |
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| 4 - Fees Status Pre-Assessment\*Please read carefully and tick the relevant box. We will use this information to estimate your fees status category. See more details on fees statuses categories on our [website](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/apply/eligibility-and-entry-requirements):  |
| (1) [ ]  **I am a UK national**, AND I was living in the EEA or Switzerland on 31 December 2020, AND I have lived continuously in the EEA, Switzerland, the UK or Gibraltar since then AND will do until the start of the course (September 2026).(2) [ ]  **I am an Irish citizen**, AND I was living in the EEA or Switzerland on 31 December 2020, AND I have lived continuously in the EEA, Switzerland, the UK or Gibraltar since then AND will do until the start of the course (September 2026).(3) [ ]  **I am an EU (except Irish), EEA or Swiss citizen living in the UK who has obtained settled or pre-settled status under the EU settlement scheme**, AND I will have been living in the UK, EEA, Gibraltar or Switzerland for at least 3 years immediately before the start of the course (September 2026).(4) [ ]  **I am a non-EU citizen living in the UK, who has obtained Indefinite leave to remain (ILR) or Indefinite leave to enter (ILE)**, AND I will have been living in the UK for at least the last 3 years immediately before the start of the course (September 2026).(5)[ ]  **I am not in any of the above categories.**(6) [ ]  I am unsure of my situation. *Please give details below.* |
| If you are unsure of which category is relevant to your situation (6), please provide below the details of your situation and we will get back in touch: |
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| 5 - Research ExperiencePlease give a short description of any research project(s) you have carried out in the past both within and out with your academic study and highlight the scientific skills you have gained in these projects and during your studies.\* *[min 100 - max 400 words]* |
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| List up to 5 publications you have been involved with and detail your contribution to these: |
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| Provide any external links which can complement your statement (GitHub or other coding webpages, research profile, extensive list of publications etc.) |
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| 6 - Professional / Other experience out with academiaPlease describe some professional experience or other experience and achievements which you think will be relevant to a PhD. We recognise that aptitudes and skills required for a successful PhD project come from many sources both within and out with your academic study. *[max 400 words]* |
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| 7 - Special Circumstances and BarriersIf you would like the prospective supervisors and the selection panel to know information about any setbacks, challenges and/or disadvantages faced during your studies to maybe help understanding gaps in studies, lower grades and/or lack of extra-curricular opportunities that could come through your application, please briefly explain these below – *[max 200 words]****Please note that this information will be seen by prospective supervisors and the CDT selection panel. You can also disclose confidential information via our Widening Participation form (not seen by supervisors/selectors).*** |
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| 8 - PhD Project Application Path\*There are two ways you can apply for a PhD studentship within our CDT. Please tick as relevant: |
| 1. [ ]  **STUDENT-LED PROJECT: find a prospective supervisor and submit a research proposal of your choice** – *The research proposal helps us to assess your suitability and potential for a PhD. Your final PhD project will be defined by you and your supervisor in year 1.*
* *Please complete sections 9 below.*

**OR/AND** |
| 1. [ ]  **COMPANY-LINKED PROJECT: a****pply for one of the pre-defined or exploratory company-linked PhD projects advertised** [**here**](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/apply/cdt-company-linked-studentships) – *These PhD projects are generally funded or partly-funded by Industry and will not vary from the initial project description.*
* *Please complete section 10 below.*
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| **Mode of study**\* **-** Please note that part-time PhD study is only available for students who do NOT need a Visa to come study in the UK. Students who would like to consider part-time studies are encouraged to discuss with the supervisor of the project(s) they are applying for as this will require their full approval. There is further guidance on part-time studies in our [Applicants Support FAQs](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/apply/applicant-support/applicant-faqs). |
| [ ] Full time [ ] Part-time |
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| 9 – Student-led PhD Projects: Proposed Research and Supervisors\*Please provide details of your proposed PhD project, based on your interests and strengths. For guidance on research projects to best fit the CDT remit, please refer to our [website](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/programme). The full research proposal will be required at the next stage of the application process. |
| Title |  |
| Key words |  |
| Research Proposal Summary *[min 200 - max 400 words]* |
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| The CDT MLSystems sits at the intersection of two disciplines: Machine Learning and Systems. All CDT projects must include both aspects but they will naturally be more of one or another. Indicate below, to the best you can, the main discipline in which your proposed project stands:  |
| [ ] Machine Learning [ ] Systems |
| Fit to CDT *[min 50 - max 200 words]*Explain how this research fits within the CDT MLSystems remit and why you think the CDT MLSystems would constitute an ideal environment for it. |
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| Prospective SupervisorsApplicants should investigate and approach potential supervisors for their PhD ahead of completing their first-stage Application form. For more guidance on doing so, refer to our [website](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/apply/application-process-and-guidance).  |
| Supervisor NominationList below two supervisors who you would like to conduct your PhD research with\*: |
| 1. \*
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| It is useful for us to know who you have been in touch with already and the response you got so we can best look for and advise on any other suitable supervisors. Please indicate this below, as relevant. |
| Supervisor name | Expressed an interest in the project | Not replied yet | Does not/Cannot support application |
|  |[ ] [ ] [ ]
|  |[ ] [ ] [ ]
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| *\* Please note that supervisor allocation is reviewed by the CDT team and might change during the course of the application due to a number of factors (mainly depending on remit and availability)* |

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| 10 – Company-linked PhD Project: Fit-to-project and Supervisor support\*If you are applying for a CDT pre-defined or exploratory company-linked project, as advertised on this [page](https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/cdt-in-machine-learning-systems/apply/cdt-company-linked-studentships), please specify which project below and give details of your motivation. |
| Project title |  |
| Project supervisor |  |
| Explain below why you think you are a good fit for this project. *[min 100 - max 400 words]* |
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| Have you contacted the supervisor of the project? | [ ] Yes [ ]  No |
| If yes, have they: |
| [ ]  Expressed an interest in supporting your application | [ ]  Not replied yet | [ ]  Stated that they do not wish to support your application |

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| 11 - Where did you hear about the programme? Please tick all applicable\* |
| Via prospective PhD supervisors  |[ ]  BBStem.co.uk |[ ]
| Via peers and colleagues |[ ]  Jobs.ac.co.uk |[ ]
| Via a CDT industry partner |[ ]  Findaphd.com |[ ]
| Via Internet search / MLSystems website |[ ]  Other (please specify: |[ ]

PRIVACY NOTICE- The information you provide on this form will be used by the CDT MLSystems to process your application. We will share this information with the CDT management and selection team as well as with prospective supervisors for the proposed PhD project, in order to review and assess your application. We will use your email address to get in touch with you with regards to your application. We will securely hold the personal data you provide us for a maximum of 1 year following the end of the applications cycle in case you were not successful with your application. If you have any questions about your personal data and how it is managed, please email mlsystems-enquiries@inf.ed.ac.uk or refer to the University of Edinburgh [Continued privacy notice](https://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/admissions/privacy-statement) for more information.