Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27:
Intelligent Earth (UKRI CDT in AI for the Environment)

Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	4 years	6-8 years

About the course

The Intelligent Earth CDT is a doctoral degree, available in both full- and part-time modes, designed to equip a new generation of students with advanced AI skills to tackle some of the most pressing environmental issues.

The Intelligent Earth CDT will train a new generation of quantitative environmental data scientists to make substantial contributions in environmental and data sciences.

The course is intrinsically interdisciplinary. You will be advised by both an environmental science supervisor and an AI supervisor from two different departments, as well as a non-academic partner who also serves as host for a secondment. This course is suitable for quantitative applicants from data science, mathematical, physical and environmental science backgrounds.

Course structure

An overview of the course structure is provided below. Details of the compulsory and optional elements of the course are provided in the *Course components* section of this page.

Key components of the teaching programme:

- Induction week
- Core courses in foundations of AI/ML and foundations of the four environmental themes
- Responsible AI training
- Computational skills training
- Advanced cross-cohort courses will focus on specific areas of AI applied to grand challenges and associated datasets from the four environmental themes
- Professional skills training
- Teaching skills training

After introductory lectures, you will be introduced to the corresponding AI tools, frameworks and environmental datasets to apply the taught material in tutorial-based project work. You will work in interdisciplinary groups tackling grand challenges in environmental science of increasing complexity with AI. The course will be individually tailored to your needs.

In addition to the formal teaching programme, student experience and training will be enriched by:

- Weekly Intelligent Earth seminars
- Annual hackathon
- Annual two-day CDT conference

Following the initial training period, you will undertake a three-month research project supervised by one of the potential DPhil supervisors. In year two (years three to four if studying part-time), you will transition to your primary department and supervisors, and you will start your DPhil research. In year four (years seven to eight if studying part-time), you will finalise your DPhil research and complete your thesis writing. Professional training will focus on career development, job/fellowship applications and interviews.

To learn more about the research topics you'll have the opportunity to explore, please refer to the *Research areas* section on this page.

Attendance

The course can be studied full-time or part-time with both modes requiring attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements. (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/accommodation/residence-requirements) Part-time students are required to attend course-related activities in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year.

If you are studying part-time you will be required to commit to allocating an average of 20 hours per week (50% full time equivalent) to doctoral study. As a part-time student you will follow an individually-tailored training programme that is adjusted to suit your work pattern, with the opportunity to undertake additional training as needed during the later years of your

studies. Where possible you are encouraged to allocate additional time to your studies at the beginning of your first year of study to fully benefit from induction processes, cohort interactions and foundational training. If you are part-time you will be assessed at milestones that are adjusted to take your working hours into account (eg 12 terms for transfer of status for a student working at 50% FTE).

One of the following departments will serve as your primary department from year two onwards, when you will begin your DPhil research:

- Department of Biology (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/biology)
- Department of Computer Science (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/computer-science)
- Department of Earth Sciences (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/earth-sciences)
- Department of Engineering Science (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/engineering-science)
- School of Geography and the Environment (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/geography-and-the-environment)
- Department of Physics (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/physics)
- Department of Statistics (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/departments/statistics)

Provision exists for students on some courses to undertake their research in a 'well-founded laboratory' outside of the University. This may require travel to and attendance at a site that is not located in Oxford. Where known, existing collaborations will be outlined on this page. Please read the course information carefully, including the additional information about course fees and costs.

Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students to support with learning and research, as well as guidance on what technology to bring with you as a new student (https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring) at Oxford.

The Intelligent Earth CDT is resourced by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) with contributions from the University and partners. It is integrated in Oxford's Doctoral Training Centre and training may take place in a number of locations across the University. Students will often work together on problem sets, or in groups, with the support of demonstrators.

You will have access to computational facilities as well as a laptop. When you move out to your department you will also have access to the facilities provided by that department. You will remain a member of the CDT and be able to return to the CDT facilities, based within the Doctoral Training Centre, on Keble Road, to use the facilities there.

You will have access to seminars in all seven departments as well as across the wider university. In addition to the training modules offered by the CDT, you will be able to sign up for a wide range of training courses and modules offered by departments across the university via the University's Researcher Training Tool.

You will also have access to Oxford's wide library network, including the recently refurbished Radcliffe Science Library.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Intelligent Earth CDT and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Intelligent Earth CDT.

During your first year (first two years if studying part-time), you will have a supervisor from the academic leadership of the CDT. Meetings with your supervisor will serve to monitor academic progress as well as to discuss any academic issues or questions arising. When you transition into one of the participating departments to commence your research project in year two (three to four if studying part-time), you will be co-advised by two supervisors, one from an environmental science department and one from an AI department. First-year supervisors will act as mentors throughout the programme, providing academic and pastoral guidance.

Students will have the opportunity to meet their supervisors on a regular basis to discuss their progress. For full- time students, these meeting are usually at least once every two weeks, averaged across the year and once a month for part-time students.

Assessment

You will be assessed continually throughout the first-year training courses modules. In the second half you will undertake a four-month research project and will be required to deliver a written report that will be assessed.

At the end of the second year, you will be required to write a report and give a presentation on your research, and to present a detailed and coherent plan for the research-intensive phase in the third and fourth years of your doctoral studies. Progress towards completion is again formally assessed some way into the final year of study.

If studying part-time, you will be assessed over the first two years. Timings will differ for the presentation for part-time students.

You will carry out your DPhil project in the department of your primary supervisor and will gain your DPhil from the department in which you carry out your research project.

You will follow the same milestones and assessments as a standard DPhil, so you will have Probationer Research Student (PRS) status until you confirm your status as a DPhil student by term six. By term nine you will confirm status and you will submit your thesis for assessment by the end of term 12. If studying part-time the milestones will differ to a full-time student.

Course components

Compulsory study

In year one (first two years if studying part-time), you will take:

- Core courses
- Computational skills training courses
- Advanced cross-cohort courses
- Responsible AI training
- Professional skills training modules

This will culminate in a four-month research project followed by the annual hackathon and conference. The teaching model for all courses will be tailored towards training students to become independent researchers.

In year two (years three to four if studying part-time), you will transition to your primary department and supervisors, and you will start your DPhil research. You will take also take:

- Advanced cross-cohort courses
- Professional skill training modules
- Computational skill training modules

Secondment

A secondment with non-academic partners may take place in year three (years five to six if studying part-time), if it was not undertaken previously.

Options

In year three (years five to six if studying part-time), alongside your research you will have the opportunity to take the following, based on your individual needs:

- Optional advanced courses
- Professional skills training modules
- Computational skills training modules.

Research areas

You'll have the opportunity to undertake research within the specialised themes of this course, which include:

- Climate
- Biodiversity
- Natural hazards
- Environmental solutions
- Core AI/ML research on complex environmental data.

Following the initial training period, you will undertake a three-month research project supervised by one of the potential DPhil supervisors. Course free periods will be used for consolidation, supervisor matching, and DPhil proposal development.

In year two (years three to four if studying part-time), you will transition to your primary department and supervisors, and you will start your DPhil research.

Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out in this course page. However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or necessary for the University to make changes in course provision, either before or after registration. The safety of students, staff and visitors is paramount and major changes to delivery or services may have to be made if a pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency occurs. In addition, in certain circumstances, for example due to visa difficulties or because the health needs of students cannot be met, it may be necessary to make adjustments to course requirements for international study.

Where possible your academic supervisor will not change for the duration of your course. However, it may be necessary to assign a new academic supervisor during the course of study or before registration for reasons which might include illness, sabbatical leave, parental leave or change in employment.

For further information please see our page on changes to courses (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) and the provisions of the student contract (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) regarding changes to courses.

Costs

Annual course fees

The fees for this course are charged on an annual basis.

Fees for the 2026-27 academic year at the University of Oxford

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£10,470
Overseas	£34,700

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£5,235
Overseas	£17,350

What do course fees cover?

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional information section below, course fees do not cover your accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also don't cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional costs information below.

How long do I need to pay course fees?

Course fees are payable each year, for the duration of your fee liability (your fee liability is the length of time for which you are required to pay course fees). For courses lasting longer than one year fees will usually increase annually, as explained in the University's Terms and Conditions (//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract) .

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability will be required to pay a University continuation charge and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2026-27 is £656, please be aware that this will increase annually. For part-time students, the termly charge will be half of the termly rate payable by full-time students.

If a college continuation charge applies (not applicable for non-matriculated courses) it will be between £150 and £500, as explained in our information about continuation charges (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/continuation-charges) . Please contact your college for more details, including information about whether your college's continuation charge is applied at a different rate for part-time study.

Where can I find more information about fees?

Our fees and other charges (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges) pages provide further information, including details about:

- course fees and fee liability (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability) ;
- how your fee status is determined (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status) ;
- changes to fees and other charges (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges) ; and
- continuation charges (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/continuation-charges) .

Information about how much fees and other costs will usually increase each academic year is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions (//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract) .

Additional costs

Full-time study

CDT funded studentships come with an additional research training support grant (RTSG) to cover costs of associated equipment, research and travel. Individual research projects come with variable research costs and students will need to discuss these with their supervisor and plan a budget for their project. In some cases students may need to apply for additional funding, either from the RTSG or other sources. Students should always involve their supervisor with such funding requests.

Part-time study

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs. However, please note that, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department and/or college to help you cover some of these expenses.

Living costs

In addition to your course fees and any additional course-specific costs, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

Living costs for full-time study

For the 2026-27 academic year, the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student is between £1,405 and £2,105 for each month spent in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford. Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to budget for the costs of a student visa and immigration health surcharge (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) and/or living costs for family members or other dependants (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field_listing_content_content-item--2) that you plan to bring with you to Oxford (if dependant visa eligibility criteria (//www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family) are met).

Living costs for part-time study

Your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you will still need to cover your cost of living on a full-time basis for the duration of your course, even if you will not be based in Oxford throughout your studies. While the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student living in Oxford in the 2026-27 academic year is between £1,405 and £2,105 per month, living costs outside Oxford may be different.

Part-time students who are not based in Oxford will need to calculate travel and accommodation costs carefully. Depending on your circumstances and study plans, this may include the cost of a visitor visa to attend for short blocks of time (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) (if visitor visa eligibility criteria (//www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/visitors) are met).

Further information about living costs

The current economic climate and periods of high national inflation in recent years make it harder to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. For study in Oxford beyond the 2026-27 academic year, it is suggested that you budget for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

A breakdown of likely living costs for one month during the 2026-27 academic year are shown below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month in Oxford during the 2026-27 academic year

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£315	£545
Accommodation	£825	£990
Personal items	£160	£310
Social activities	£50	£130
Study costs	£35	£90
Other	£20	£40
Total	£1,405	£2,105

For information about how these figures have been calculated as well as tables showing the likely living costs for nine and twelve months, please refer to the living costs (//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) page of our website.

Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk).