

## **P-06-1403 Reconsider cuts to Postgraduate funding and increase Doctoral Loans to match UKRI Stipend**

This petition was submitted by Micaela Panes, having collected 2,026 signatures online and 130 signatures on paper, making for a total of 2,156 signatures.

### **Text of Petition:**

Postgraduates play a pivotal role in advancing knowledge, innovation, and cultivating expertise. However – the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2024/25 announced the removal of £12.8m from Postgraduate grants and bursaries. This will discourage aspiring Postgraduate students due to increased financial burdens, jeopardise the diversity of our academic programmes, hinder the competitiveness of our institutions globally and have an impact on the growth of the Welsh economy and communities.

### **Additional Information:**

This petition also calls for the Welsh Government to increase Doctoral Loans to match the annual UKRI Stipend. Doctoral students who receive a loan from Student Finance Wales, receive £28,395 to cover tuition fees and living costs overall for three to four years of full-time study (anyone who meets the requirements can apply to these). Whereas those on a UKRI Stipend (only available to students funded by a Research Council) receive £18,622 per annum solely for living costs. This disparity leaves Doctoral Students on loans in very precarious positions, with many working multiple jobs while in full-time study, using food banks, and even leaving their Doctoral study. With the current cost-of-living crisis, the decline in funding and studentships available, and the pitiful rate of Doctoral loans, Wales runs the risk of a substantial decline in students pursuing Doctoral study which will have a serious impact on innovation and research.

### **Senedd Constituency and Region**

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central