Funding opportunity

Early independence: BBSRC fellowships: outline

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	**Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)**
Funding type:	Fellowship
Total fund:	£9,000,000
Publication date:	11 February 2026
Opening date:	11 February 2026 9:00am UK time
Closing date:	22 April 2026 4:00pm UK time

Last updated: 13 February 2026 - **see all updates**

Apply for a Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) fellowship to further your career through an early independence research fellowship.

You must:

- be based at a UK research organisation eligible for BBSRC funding
- meet the individual eligibility criteria
- hold a PhD qualification or have relevant research experience combined with clear evidence of leadership potential

There is no limit on the value of the grant. BBSRC will fund 80% of the full economic cost.

Your fellowship will last three years. You can work full time or part time (pro rata).

> (!) This award now includes an outline stage. You are therefore advised to carefully read all the guidance we have provided, before submitting your application .

Who can apply

This opportunity is open to organisations with standard eligibility. **Check if your organisation is eligible.**

Applications are welcomed from applicants of all nationalities, including those not currently located in the UK, however, this is subject to the fellowship being based at an **eligible UK research organisation**.

Who is eligible to apply

This funding opportunity is open to early career researchers (as well as to a diversity of research and innovation staff including Research Technical Professionals and Research Software Engineers) wishing to carry out independent research. Applicants on an upward trajectory to pursuing working independently and developing research leadership are encouraged to apply .

You should be able to demonstrate appropriate and relevant research or innovation experience. You must also be able to evidence reasonable scientific and technical skills and competencies, in line with the ambitions of the BBSRC fellowship scheme.

This could be through:

- recent completion of a PhD or other higher qualification
- relevant employment within a research or innovation environment

You do not need to hold, or be studying for, a PhD in order to apply. However, if you are currently studying for a PhD, you are only eligible if you are expecting to have submitted your PhD thesis before the BBSRC fellowship interview with the condition of having been awarded the PhD by your fellowship project start date.

There is no limit on the number of years postdoctoral or work experience. Holders of postdoctoral training fellowships such as the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions can apply. Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin fellows and Daphne Jackson Trust fellows who meet all eligibility requirements may also apply.

Applicants that have been included on applications as a researcher co-lead (previously known as a researcher co-investigator) are eligible to apply, provided they still meet all eligibility criteria.

You may only submit one application for a BBSRC fellowship scheme each year.
This funding opportunity was renamed in 2024, it was formerly known as the 'BBSRC Discovery Fellowships'.

This is the only BBSRC fellowships opportunity open in 2026.

Who is not eligible to apply

You are not eligible to apply if:

- you have applied to a concurrent UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) fellowship of the same type (career transition)
- you are the project lead on a UKRI grant application and it is being assessed
- you have secured grants as a project lead, that include support for and leading of research staff such as postdoctoral research associates (PDRAs) as this would indicate you have already made the step-change to independence
- you are not planning to be based at an **eligible UK organisation** for your fellowship

You should not apply if you hold, or have ever held:

- a position at lecturer level (or the equivalent in an institution other than a university), unless this is a teaching-only post or did not provide an opportunity to start an independent research group
- an equivalent competitive fellowship that allows you to establish an independent research group, and therefore independent researcher status

In addition, you should not have been offered such an appointment before taking up a BBSRC fellowship. This applies to both fixed-term and permanent positions, and includes positions held at overseas institutions.

If you hold or have held a fellowship where you are eligible to supervise PhD students (as first supervisor) or are able to submit research applications as a project lead, then we consider that equivalent to a lectureship. As a result, you are not eligible to apply.
Examples of these fellowships include, but are not limited to:

- Wellcome Trust Sir Henry Dale Fellowships
- Medical Research Council career development awards
- UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships
- Royal Society University Research Fellowship

If you are unsure of your eligibility status, then email **postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org** to confirm before you apply.

Applicants cannot submit applications to concurrent **UKRI fellowships of the same type**.

International applicants

Fellowships are open to applicants of any nationality, with the condition that your fellowships must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for BBSRC Funding.
Where applicable, you will need to comply with the UK Visas and Immigration requirements and hold a work permit prior to taking up the fellowship. Work permits are a matter for direct negotiation between the institution, the UK Visas and Immigration department and the Home Office.

All successful applicants who require a visa to work in the UK will be eligible to be considered under the **Global Talent visa** route.

This visa route is designed for people who are internationally recognised as world leaders or potential world leading talent in the fields of science and the arts and enables the holder to be both adaptable and flexible during their research in the UK.

The grant of any visa is always subject to the standard Home Office general grounds for refusal of a visa. UKRI is able to provide additional guidance regarding the appropriate evidence required to complete the visa application process under the Global Talent visa route. If you have queries around the Global Talent visa, please contact **globalmobility@ukri.org**

Applications are welcome from candidates who intend to use the fellowship as a means of re-establishing themselves in the UK following a period overseas.

Part-time fellowships

BBSRC fellowships may be held full or part-time. We welcome applications from candidates who wish to work on a part-time or flexible basis to combine their responsibilities with a career.

BBSRC fellowships can be held on a part-time basis down to 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE). In all cases, the length of the fellowship must be extended accordingly on a pro rata basis. For example, a three-year fellowship on a full-time basis would equate to a six-year fellowship with the fellow working 0.5 FTE, but the value of the award would remain the same.

It is possible to change from part time to full time, or full time to part time at any point during the lifetime of the award but with an expectation of a min 0.5 FTE.

A part-time fellow may not hold another part-time position in conjunction with the fellowship.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

- career breaks
- support for people with caring responsibilities
- flexible working
- alternative working patterns

UKRI can offer disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders during the application and assessment process.

Resubmissions

Resubmissions of identical fellowship applications are not permitted. However, applicants may submit revised applications that clearly address feedback from previous assessment.

Applicants to the 2025 BBSRC Fellowships Scheme that did not receive feedback on their applications may submit an outline for an otherwise unaltered project.

What we're looking for

Aim

The aim of this fellowship is to support talented researchers to:

- lead their own research plans to establish their own research niche
- make the first step-change towards independence

Scope

The BBSRC fellowship will provide support for researchers wishing to undertake independent research and gain leadership skills. The scheme will support the transition of early-stage researchers to fully independent research leaders. As such, BBSRC fellows represent part of our commitment to the supply of highly skilled professional scientists to the UK.

Through our Fellowship Scheme, we will invest in researchers who are seeking to conduct their own independent research within a host laboratory.

You must provide strong evidence of working towards this goal, demonstrating an upward trajectory to pursuing independent work within a host organisation. You must show high potential to become future research leaders.

This scheme supports excellent investigator-led research across the breadth of our scientific remit.

You can apply to undertake biotechnology or biological research in:

- plants
- microbes
- animals and humans
- developing tools and technology relevant to biological research

We also support non-hypothesis driven applications, including:

- data-driven, discovery led projects
- technology development projects

Where a project is not guided by an explicit hypothesis, there should be clearly articulated goals, justification, and potential outcomes of the project.

Investigations within and across scales are supported from molecules and cells to tissues, whole organisms, populations, and landscapes.

We welcome multidisciplinary applications that cross into other research council areas but expect the primary focus of your work to fall within BBSRC's remit.

We work with other research councils to ensure that applications close to remit boundaries are assessed by the most appropriate lead council. Please contact **postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org** with any queries about the suitability of your application before applying.

We have a strong commitment to funding curiosity-led research and advancing excellent bioscience across our portfolio.

You should continue to indicate how a proposal aligns to BBSRC's research and innovation priorities, where relevant, and you are encouraged to consider the relevance of your proposed work in line with the long-term research and innovation priorities set out in **BBSRC's strategic delivery plan 2022 to 2025**.

Duration

The duration of this award is three years.

Projects must start by 1 July 2027.

Funding available

There is no limit on the value of the grant. BBSRC will fund 80% of the full economic cost (FEC). We aim to award approximately 15 grants with the funds available.

Although there is no upper FEC limit for this award, in the full application, you will be encouraged to justify how the resources requested are reasonable in the context of the proposed research. Please note what we will and will not fund below.

Project partners fund their own involvement. We will only fund minor incidental expenses, such as some travel costs, if needed for project partners.

What we will fund

Funding can be used to support:

- personal salary
- travel and subsistence
- training activities
- research consumables
- technician support
- visa costs if required

Please note that technical support should be solely for delivering any 'technical' skills that are required for the project, such as microscopy, bioinformatics or computational experts. You should not include technical support for the delivery of the day-to-day research of the fellowship.

What we will not fund

We will not fund researchers or research staff, including research technicians.

No equipment of any value may be purchased using this funding. This includes items that might otherwise fall under consumables, such as personal computers, laptops, other computing equipment, cameras, or the hire of equipment.

Choice of institution

The choice of host institution will be assessed at the invite-only full application stage. However, you should consider this early in the application process since we place considerable weight in the awarding of fellowships on evidence that you have given full and careful consideration to the choice of institution.

In all cases, the choice of institution should relate to the research environment and scientific infrastructure of the selected institution. There is therefore no expectation for you to move to a new institution provided the choice of institution is justified.

We expect host organisations to provide additional commitments to our fellows. At full stage, the reviewers and committee are looking for evidence that the host organisation is contributing sufficient support in terms of career development, research environment, and infrastructure for fellowship-specific activities funded by the award.

To demonstrate commitment to the support and development of BBSRC fellows, full stage applicants will be required to describe discussions had with their host organisation, and the package of support that has been agreed.

This should provide details of the support the organisation will be providing to the fellow in support of their fellowship in terms of:

- financial support: state amount and duration
- equipment (including provision of dedicated equipment or waiver of access charges)
- consumables
- facilities and lab space
- staff time or support: state amount and duration
- travel
- training: give titles of specific courses
- career development support
- PhD students: state number and duration
- any other support

We recognise that in some instances, this information may be provided by the research office, the technology transfer office (TTO) or equivalent, or a combination of both.

You must also include the following details:

- a significant person's name and their position, from the TTO or research office, or both
- office address or web link

Supporting skills and talent

We encourage you to follow the principles of the **concordat to support the career development of researchers** and the **technician commitment**.

Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I)

UKRI is committed in ensuring that effective international collaboration in research and innovation takes place with integrity and within strong ethical frameworks. TR&I is a UKRI work programme designed to help protect all those working in our thriving and collaborative international sector by enabling partnerships to be as open as possible, and as secure as necessary. Our **TR&I**

principles set out UKRI's expectations of organisations funded by UKRI in relation to due diligence for international collaboration.

As such, applicants for UKRI funding may be asked to demonstrate how their proposed projects will comply with our approach and expectation towards TR&I, identifying potential risks and the relevant controls you will put in place to help proportionately reduce these risks.

See further guidance and information about TR&I, including where you can find additional support.

How to apply

Overview of the BBSRC fellowship application process

This fellowship funding opportunity is comprised of an outline stage and a full stage. The full stage of the opportunity will be invite-only for applications successful at the outline stage.

Outline

This is open to all applicants.

Prospective fellows will provide a summary application describing their proposed project idea and why they are the right person for this early independence fellowship. This will consist of:

- outline vision (750 words)
- outline approach (1,500 words)
- applicant capability to deliver (1,650 words)

Costs are not requested for outline applications.

Full proposal stage

This will be open to applicants who have been invited to submit following assessment of an outline proposal. More details will be published in July 2026 with the full stage opportunity.

This will consist of:

- vision (1,100 words)
- approach (3,000 words)
- applicant capability to deliver (1,650 words)
- career development (1,000 words)

- host organisation support (1,000 words)
- resources and cost justification (1,000 words)
- ethics and responsible research and innovation (500 words)

UKRI Funding Service

We are running this funding opportunity on the new Funding Service so please ensure that your organisation is registered. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

The fellow is responsible for completing the application process on the Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application.

Only the lead research organisation can submit an application to UKRI.

Your host organisation will also be able to provide advice and guidance.

To apply

Select 'Start application' near the beginning of this Funding finder page:

1. Confirm you are the fellow.
2. Sign in or create a Funding Service account. To create an account, select your organisation, verify your email address, and set a password. If your organisation is not listed, email **support@funding-service.ukri.org** Please allow at least 10 working days for your organisation to be added to the Funding Service. We strongly suggest that if you are asking UKRI to add your organisation to the Funding Service to enable you to apply to this opportunity, you also create an organisation Administration Account. This will be needed to allow the acceptance and management of any grant that might be offered to you.
3. Answer questions directly in the text boxes. You can save your answers and come back to complete them or work offline and return to copy and paste your answers. If we need you to upload a document, follow the upload instructions in the Funding Service. All questions and assessment criteria are listed in the How to apply section on this Funding finder page.
4. Allow enough time to check your application in 'read-only' view before sending to your research office.
5. Send the completed application to your research office for checking. They will return it to you if it needs editing.
6. Your research office will submit the completed and checked application to UKRI.

Where indicated, you can also demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant.

When including images, you must:

- provide a descriptive caption or legend for each image immediately underneath it in the text box (this must be outside the image and counts towards your word limit)
- insert each new image on a new line
- use files smaller than 5MB and in JPEG, JPG, JPE, JFI, JIF, JFIF, PNG, GIF, BMP or WEBP format

Images should only be used to convey important visual information that cannot easily be put into words. The following are not permitted, and your application may be rejected if you include:

- sentences or paragraphs of text
- tables
- excessive quantities of images

A few words are permitted where the image would lack clarity without the contextual words, such as a diagram, where text labels are required for an axis or graph column.

For more guidance on the Funding Service, see:

- **how applicants use the Funding Service**
- **how research offices use the Funding Service**
- **how reviewers use the Funding Service**

References

References should be included within the word count of the appropriate question section. You should use your discretion when including references and prioritise those most pertinent to the application.

Hyperlinks can be used in reference information. When including references, you should consider how your references will be viewed and used by the assessors, ensuring that:

- references are easily identifiable by the assessors
- references are formatted as appropriate to your research
- persistent identifiers are used where possible

General use of hyperlinks

Applications should be self-contained. You should only use hyperlinks to link directly to reference information. You must not include links to web resources to extend your application. Assessors are not required to access links to conduct assessment or recommend a funding decision.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Use of generative AI tools to prepare funding applications is permitted, however, caution should be applied.

For more information see our policy on the **use of generative AI in application and assessment**.

Deadline

Outline applications

BBSRC must receive your outline application by 22 April at 4:00pm UK time.

You will not be able to apply after this time.

Make sure you are aware of and follow any internal institutional deadlines.

Following the submission of your application to this funding opportunity, your application cannot be changed, and submitted applications will not be amended. If your application does not follow the guidance, it may be rejected.

Full applications

Only applicants who are invited by BBSRC may submit a full application.

The full application opportunity is expected to open in early July 2026 and to close in September 2026. We expect the opportunity to be open for 10 weeks. Details will be published in July 2026.

Personal data

Processing personal data

BBSRC, as part of UKRI, will need to collect some personal information to manage your Funding Service account and the registration of your funding applications.

We will handle personal data in line with UK data protection legislation and manage it securely. For more information, including how to exercise your rights, read our **privacy notice**.

Sensitive information

If you or a core team member need to tell us something you wish to remain confidential, email **postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org**

Include in the subject line: BBSRC fellowship; sensitive information; your Funding Service application number.

Typical examples of confidential information include:

- individual is unavailable until a certain date (for example due to parental leave)
- declaration of interest
- additional information about eligibility to apply that would not be appropriately shared in the 'applicant and team capability' section
- conflict of interest for UKRI to consider in reviewer or panel participant selection
- the application is an invited resubmission

For information about how UKRI handles personal data, read **UKRI's privacy notice.**

Institutional Matched Funding

There is no requirement for matched funding from the institutions hosting the project lead, project co-leads or other staff employed on the application, beyond the standard 20% FEC. Expert reviewers and panels assessing UKRI funding applications must not consider levels of institutional matched funding as a factor on which to base recommendations. Direct and in-kind contributions from third party project partners are encouraged.

This policy does not remove the need for support from host organisations who must provide the necessary research environment and infrastructure for award-specific activities funded by UKRI. For example, research facilities, training and development of staff.

Publication of outcomes

BBSRC, as part of UKRI, will publish the outcomes of this funding opportunity at **what BBSRC has funded**.

If your application is successful, we will publish some personal information on the **UKRI Gateway to Research**.

Summary

Word limit: 300

In plain English, provide a summary we can use to identify the most suitable experts to assess your application.

We usually make this summary publicly available on external-facing websites, therefore do not include any confidential or sensitive information. Make it suitable for a variety of readers, for example:

- opinion-formers
- policymakers
- the public

- the wider research community

Guidance for writing a summary

Clearly describe your proposed work in terms of:

  - context
  - the challenge the project addresses
  - aims and objectives
  - potential applications and benefits

Core team

List the key members of your team and assign them roles from the following:

  - fellow
  - technician

Only list one individual as fellow.

Find out more about **UKRI's core team roles in funding applications**.

Application questions

Outline Vision

Word limit: 750

What are you hoping to achieve with your proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Explain how your proposed work:

  - is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
  - has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
  - is timely given current trends, context and needs
  - impacts world-leading research, society, the economy, or the environment
  - meets the strategic aims of the funding opportunity

References may be included within this section.

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details are provided in the Funding Service.

Within the Vision section we also expect you to:

- provide the overall aims and objectives of your research, typically as a small number of bullet points
- describe your aims in the context of relevant prior work by your team and the wider bioscience research landscape
- highlight features that are particularly original or unique

If a full stage proposal is invited, it is expected that the high-level objectives will appear unchanged unless feedback from the outline stage assessment process indicates otherwise.

Outline Approach

Word limit: 1,500

How are you going to deliver your proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Explain how you have designed your approach so that it:

- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives

References may be included within this section.

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details are provided in the Funding Service .

Within the Approach section we also expect you to:

- provide an expected project plan, demonstrating feasibility within the project's timescale, in the form of a chart or diagram

Outlines will not be subject to a detailed technical assessment by subject-area experts, but broad feasibility will be considered. The approach should be written with this in mind, so that the information is accessible to a broad panel of experts from a range of different fields.

Applicant capability to deliver

Word limit: 1,650

Why are you the right individual to successfully deliver the proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Evidence of how you have:

- the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to make best use of the benefits presented by this funding opportunity to develop your career
- the right balance of skills and aptitude to deliver the proposed work

- contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community
- the appropriate team working or leadership skills (appropriate to career stage)

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant. Further details are provided in the Funding Service.

The word limit for this section is 1,650 words, 1,150 words to be used for Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) modules (including references) and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions.

Use the R4RI format to showcase the range of relevant skills you have and how this will help to deliver the proposed work. You can include specific achievements and choose past contributions that best evidence your ability to deliver this work.

Complete this section using the following R4RI module headings. You should use each heading once, see the **UKRI guidance on R4RI**. You should consider how to balance your answer, and emphasise where appropriate the key skills you bring:

- contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge
- the development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
- contributions to the wider research and innovation community
- contributions to broader research or innovation, users and audiences, and towards wider societal benefit

Additions

Provide any further details relevant to your application. This section is optional and can be up to 500 words. You should not use it to describe additional skills, experiences, or outputs, but you can use it to describe any factors that provide context for the rest of your R4RI (for example, details of career breaks if you wish to disclose them).

You should complete this section as a narrative. Do not format it like a CV.

The roles in funding applications policy has descriptions of the different project roles.

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

Please note, we reserve the right to amend this assessment process as necessary in response to unexpected demand.

We will assess your application using the following process.

Outline review

We will invite members of the BBSRC Pool of Experts and Research Committee E to review your application independently, against the specified criteria for this funding opportunity.

Outlines will not be subject to a detailed technical assessment by subject-area experts, but broad feasibility will be considered. Applications should be written with this in mind, so that the information is accessible to a broad panel of experts from a range of different fields.

Assessors at this stage will provide feedback and a recommendation to BBSRC regarding which applications to invite to submit a full stage application.

Shortlisting

We will review the comments and scores for each application. Shortlisted applications will be invited to submit a full application.

We expect to invite approximately 80 applications to submit a full application, however this will be subject to the assessor scores and feedback.

BBSRC will make the final shortlisting decision at the outline stage.

Feedback

You will receive feedback from the assessors on your outline application, although this may be limited to a brief justification for their score.

Invitation to full stage:

Full details of the assessment for full stage will be published in July, however this is expected to comprise of:

- expert peer review
- shortlisting
- interview

If you are invited to submit a full stage application, you can make changes to the proposed programme of work and team in response to feedback from the outline stage, but your high-level aims should remain the same. If you intend to make substantive changes to your high-level aims or objectives such as adding or removing entire objectives, please contact us at least 10 working days prior before submitting your full stage application.

The full stage is expected to open in early <mark>July</mark> 2026 and close in September 2026, being open for 10 weeks.

Principles of assessment

We support the San Francisco **declaration on research assessment** and recognise the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about **the UKRI principles of assessment and decision making.**

Using generative artificial intelligence (AI) in expert review

Reviewers and panellists are not permitted to use generative AI tools to develop their assessment, including to correct language, spelling, grammar and formatting. Using these tools can potentially compromise the confidentiality of the ideas that applicants have entrusted to UKRI to safeguard.

For more detail see our **policy on the use of generative AI**.

Assessment areas

The assessment areas we will use are:

- outline vision
- outline approach
- applicant capability to deliver

Find details of assessment questions and criteria under the 'Application questions' heading in the 'How to apply' section.

Contact details

Get help with your application

If you have a question and the answers aren't provided on this page

The helpdesk is committed to helping users of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Funding Service as effectively and as quickly as possible. In order to manage cases at peak volume times, the helpdesk will triage and prioritise those queries with an imminent opportunity deadline or a technical issue. Enquiries raised where information is available on the Funding finder opportunity page and should be understood early in the application process (for example, regarding eligibility, content or remit of a funding opportunity) will not constitute a priority case and will be addressed as soon as possible.

Contact details

For help and advice on costings and writing your application please contact your research office in the first instance, allowing sufficient time for your organisation's submission process.

For questions related to this specific funding opportunity please contact **postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org**

Any queries regarding the system or the submission of applications through the Funding Service should be directed to the helpdesk.

Email: **support@funding-service.ukri.org**
Phone: 01793 547490

Our phone lines are open:

- Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5:00pm
- Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

To help us process queries more efficiently, we request that users highlight the council and opportunity name in the subject title of their email query, include the application reference number, and refrain from contacting more than one mailbox at a time.

For further information on submitting an application read **how applicants use the Funding Service**.

Additional info

Background

UKRI has launched a new **Fellowship Investment Framework** to strengthen UK research and innovation .

A new approach to fellowships will make funding opportunities clearer, simpler and more effective for researchers and innovators at different career stages.

The BBSRC fellowship is an Early Independence Fellowship within this framework, aimed at supporting individuals to establish their own research niche and evidence of independence.

Research and innovation impact

Impact can be defined as the long-term intended or unintended effect research and innovation has on society, economy and the environment; to individuals, organisations, and the wider global population.

Supporting documents

[Equality Impact Assessment, PDF (276KB)](#)
[BBSRC Fellowships Terms of Award, PDF (237KB)](#)

Webinar for potential applicants

We will hold a webinar on 5 March 2026 at 10:00am UK time. This will provide more information about the funding opportunity and a chance to ask questions. Please register for the webinar ahead of time.

[Register for the webinar here](#).

Global Talent visa

Successful applicants at full stage are eligible for a **[Global Talent visa](#)** under the 'exceptional promise' category for future research leaders.

Research disruption due to COVID-19

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities. We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career, such as:

- breaks and delays
- disruptive working patterns and conditions
- the loss of ongoing work
- role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the capability to deliver and career development of those individuals included in the application. They will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing.

Where disruptions have occurred, you can highlight this within your application if you wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.

Updates

13 February 2026
Removed the following bullet point under the 'Who is not eligible to apply' heading in the 'Who can apply' section: you have part of the fellowship project

as a grant application with any organisation and your application is being assessed.

13 February 2026
Removed the following bullet point under the 'Who is not eligible to apply' heading in the 'Who can apply' section: you have been awarded a comparable fellowship supporting early independence or a new investigator award from any organisation.

13 February 2026
Updated the first bulleted point under the 'Who is not eligible to apply' heading in the 'Who can apply' section from 'you have applied for another UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) fellowship of the same type (career transition)' to 'you have applied to a concurrent UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Fellowship opportunity of the same type (career transition)'.

Timeline

○ **11 February 2026 9:00am**
Opening date

○ **5 March 2026 10:00am**
Webinar

○ **22 April 2026 4:00pm**
Closing date

○ **End of June 2026**
Expected outline outcomes

○ **Mid <mark>July</mark> 2026**
Full stage launch (invite only)

○ **Mid September 2026**
Full stage close

○ **January 2027**
Expected shortlisting outcomes

○ **February 2027**

Interviews

○ **March 2027**
Outcomes

Guidance on good research

Good research resource hub

https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/early-independence-bbsrc-fellowships-outline