

Funding opportunity

Future Leaders Fellowships: round 11

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	UK Research and Innovation, Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) , Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) , Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) , Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) , Innovate UK , Medical Research Council (MRC) , Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) , Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
Funding type:	Fellowship
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Closing date:	16 June 2026 4:00pm UK time

Last updated: 2 February 2026 - [see all updates](#)

Apply for funding to support ambitious research and innovation across UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)'s remit.

You must be a researcher or innovator who is either looking to establish or transition to independence.

You must be based at, and have the support of, a UK organisation eligible for UKRI funding.

There is no minimum or maximum project cost. UKRI will fund 80% of the full economic cost (FEC).

Who can apply

This opportunity is open to organisations with standard eligibility. [Check if your organisation is eligible](#).

Fellowships must be held at a UK-based organisation that meets the following criteria:

- a UK-based organisation currently registered as eligible to apply for funding from UKRI
- any non-academic organisation eligible to receive subsidies from the UK government that will provide an innovation and/or research environment of international standing
- academic-hosted applicants (including NHS trusts) should apply via the UKRI Funding Service and non-academic hosted applicants (including charities) via Innovation Funding Service. Catapults should apply through the Funding Service if eligible, if not they can apply via the Innovation Funding Service

UKRI has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the new UKRI Funding Service.

For full details, visit [Eligibility as an individual](#).

Who is eligible to apply

Researchers and innovators who are either transitioning to or establishing independence or developing their own original and ambitious plans within a commercial setting. There are no eligibility rules based on whether you currently hold a permanent or open-ended position or job role.

To assess and justify your suitability, go to supporting documents in the 'Additional information' section and read the person specification annex in the 'Round 11 Guidance for Academic-hosted Applicants'.

For applicants based in academic organisations, there is a fixed cap on the number of applicants who can apply from each institution. Full details are provided in the 'Additional information' section. Please ensure you notify your host organisation of your intention to apply and allow time for internal shortlisting processes.

UKRI cannot confirm eligibility prior to submission.

Who is not eligible to apply

You are not eligible to apply if:

- you have already achieved research or innovation independence, for example, by securing funding aimed at this career stage or by already managing your own significant programme of work within a business
- you are a senior academic or innovator

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
- from diverse career backgrounds
- coming to the UK from abroad. Researchers and innovators are eligible for a [Global Talent visa](#) under the 'exceptional promise' category for future research leaders. They must have the support of their host organisation

[UKRI can offer disability and accessibility support](#) for UKRI applicants and grant holders during the application and assessment process.

For this funding opportunity, joint applications on a job-share basis are permitted. If your application is a proposed job share, please state this where relevant in your application and set out your proposed arrangements in the Applicant capability to deliver and Career development sections. Both applicants for any joint applications will be able to list themselves as the 'fellow'.

What we're looking for

Aim

This funding opportunity aims to:

- develop, retain, attract and sustain research and innovation talent in the UK

- foster new research and innovation career paths including those at the academic, business and interdisciplinary boundaries, and facilitate movement of people between sectors
- provide sustained funding and resources for the best early career researchers and innovators
- provide long-term, flexible funding to tackle difficult and novel challenges, and support adventurous, ambitious programmes

In your application, you must clearly demonstrate and articulate the following:

- what you are hoping to achieve with and how will you deliver your proposed work
- why you are the right individual to successfully deliver the proposed work
- why this fellowship is the right way to develop your career and how will you use it to benefit others
- how the host organisation will support your fellowship
- what ethical or RRI implications and issues are relating to the proposed work
- what you will need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost

Scope

Applications are encouraged from the entirety of the UKRI remit. We welcome and encourage applicants from remits including the arts, humanities and social sciences and the five critical technologies as set out in the Department for Science and Innovation's [Science and Technology Framework](#).

Fellowships can also lead and develop innovation. We define innovation as the practical translation of disruptive ideas into novel, relevant and valued products, services, processes, systems or business models, making them readily available to markets, government and society, creating economic or social value from ideas.

Future Leaders Fellowships (FLF)'s are personal awards to support fellows to develop as impactful and influential research or innovation leaders.

You are encouraged to think broadly about the type of activities you may pursue as part of your research or innovation objectives. This could include:

- time for work in other environments
- developing international links
- developing new skills (for example, in policy or commercialisation)

You should also consider what career development support opportunities are appropriate. This could include mentoring and professional training and development, and relevant training courses that will underpin your future career ambitions and learning. A clear programme of skills development is an essential component of this fellowship.

The fellowship may be made up of a single programme of work, or multiple consecutive or concurrent interlinked projects, led by the fellow (known as a 'Portfolio Fellowship').

There is flexibility to alter the programme once a project is underway to ensure you can:

- react to the changing research landscape
- capitalise on advances in understanding
- react to changing business needs

In all cases, the work must allow you to fully develop your leadership potential and result in high quality research or innovation, or both.

Duration

The duration of this award is up to seven years.

Fellowships will be funded for four years in the first instance (or equivalent length of time extended pro rata for part-time applicants), with the option to apply to renew for a further three years during the last year of the fellowship.

Time commitment

FLF awards allow fellows protected time to concentrate fully on their research or innovation, training and development and establishing an independent position by the end of the award. In most cases a fellow is expected to spend 100% of their working time on their fellowship (which includes all activities associated with the fellowship).

If you are hosted by an academic organisation, you may spend up to six hours a week (pro rata for part-time applicants) on other commitments or related activities, provided they enhance career development.

Clinically active applicants (including veterinarians) can work up to 20% of their time on average, over the lifetime of the grant, on their clinical commitments. Exceptions are made for applicants undertaking patient-oriented research as part of their fellowship, who may undertake up to 40% of their time on these duties. This is not in addition to the six hours per week.

If you hold substantial ongoing research commitments as a result of participation in other grants, you must relinquish these in order to hold a UKRI FLF award.

Awardees will have the flexibility to develop a breadth of experience and partnerships, and secure further research or innovation funding later in the award. However, they should ensure that these other activities do not compromise their focus or achievement of the aims of the fellowship.

What we will fund

There is no limit to the amount of funding you can request under this scheme. Requests must be appropriate to the project, and you must be able to justify the amount you need to meet the objectives of your proposal. The FLF scheme has funded fellowships from £300,000 to over £2 million, and there is no preference for lower or higher cost proposals as long as the requested value is fully justified.

The fellowship will provide salary support. This is tapered throughout the fellowship, with host organisations required to commit to funding an increasing percentage of the applicant's salary as the fellowship progresses.

The host organisation's support should commit to the salary of the fellow. For academic applicants, the host should confirm an open-ended UK-based independent research or innovation position to be taken up during or on the completion of the fellowship (in line with organisational employment policies and practices).

Number of applications from academic host organisations

The FLF scheme is highly competitive. Increasing numbers of applications in previous rounds led to the extension of timelines and an increased peer review burden on our research and innovation community. To administer this funding opportunity in a timely manner, the number of applications which can be submitted by each academic host organisation is capped. Read the section on application caps in the host organisation guidance available in the 'Additional information' section for more information.

It is the academic host organisation's responsibility to ensure that applicants and research support staff have adequate time to work on their full submissions.

Inclusive selection process

Host organisations are asked to provide statements describing the inclusive process they used to select their chosen candidates. These statements contributed to an external review undertaken by the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) titled ['Inclusive selection and support for the Future Leaders Fellowship scheme – Investigation of current practice and identification of good practice examples'](#).

The [UKRI response to CRAC report \(PDF, 201KB\)](#) includes the implementation of a pilot, where academic host organisations wishing to submit applications to round 11 of the FLF scheme must complete diversity monitoring templates. Providing anonymised information on the number of prospective applicants by sex and gender, ethnicity, disability, and broad disciplinary groupings.

Hosts will also be asked to highlight any updates to their inclusive selection statements.

Further details of this requirement by host organisations for round 11, and questions to consider for updates to inclusive selection statements, are contained within the host organisation guidance available in the 'Additional information' section. The deadline for hosts to submit this information is 16 June 2026.

Information provided will not be used in the assessment or outcome of this funding opportunity. UKRI reserve the right to reject proposals submitted by host organisations that have not reported on this process.

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](#).

International collaboration

If your application includes international applicants, project partners or collaborators, visit [UKRI's trusted research and innovation](#) for more information on effective international collaboration.

Find out about [getting funding for international collaboration](#)

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. Trusted Research and Innovation (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 applicants can find additional support.

How to apply

We are running this funding opportunity on the UKRI Funding Service for academic-hosted applicants and the Innovation Funding Service (IFS) for non-academic hosted applicants. 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.

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](#)

You can find advice on completing your application in the round eleven guidance in the Additional information section.

Unlike earlier rounds of the Future Leader Fellowship scheme, there is no outline proposal stage required.

You should ensure you are aware of and comply with any internal institutional deadlines that may be in place. We recommend you start your application early, liaising with your host organisation who may also be able to provide additional advice and guidance.

Inclusion and accessibility

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and are committed to making our application process accessible to everyone. For round 10, UKRI ran a pilot programme to provide support to disabled applicants applying to the scheme. This has been paused for round 11 while we review the scheme and our future approaches.

If you require any support in writing your application, please contact your host organisation who should be able to provide some reasonable adjustments.

If you require any reasonable adjustments to help support your attendance at interview, please get in touch with the team at fellows@ukri.org.

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

UKRI must receive your application by 16 June 2026 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 the funding opportunity, your application cannot be changed, and applications will not be returned for amendment. If your application does not follow the guidance, it may be rejected.

Personal data

Processing personal data

UKRI will need to collect some personal information to manage your UKRI 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 fellows@ukri.org.

Include in the subject line: [the funding opportunity title; 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

UKRI will publish the outcomes of this funding opportunity at [Future Leaders Fellowships](#).

If your application is successful, we will publish some personal information on the [UKRI Gateway to Research](#).

Summary

Word limit: 550

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
- research and innovation associate
- visiting researcher
- specialist
- technician
- professional enabling staff

Only list one individual as the fellow, unless you are applying on a job-share basis.

UKRI has introduced a new addition to the ‘Specialist’ role type. Public contributors such as people with lived experience can now be added to an application.

Find out more about [UKRI's core team roles in funding applications](#).

Vision and Approach

Create a single PDF document that includes your responses to all criteria. The document should not be more than five sides of A4, single spaced in paper in 11-point Arial (or equivalent sans serif font) with margins of at least 2cm. You may include images, graphs, tables.

Within the page limit it is mandatory to include a legible diagrammatic workplan, for example, PERT or Gantt chart illustrating the full duration of the project, with additional emphasis on the first four years including project-specific timelines and milestones clearly and accurately shown. The Gantt chart must be on one full page, in 11-point Arial (or equivalent sans serif font).

For the file name, use the unique UKRI Funding Service number the system gives you when you create an application, followed by the words 'Vision and Approach'.

Save this document as a single PDF file, no bigger than 8MB. Unless specifically requested, please do not include any sensitive personal data within the attachment.

If the attachment does not meet these requirements, the application will be rejected.

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply.

You should address the following question:

What are you hoping to achieve with and how will you deliver your proposed work?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

For the Vision, 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

In the Vision section we also expect you to:

- identify the potential direct or indirect benefits and who the beneficiaries might be

For the Approach, explain how you have designed your work so that it:

- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
- is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how you will manage them
- uses a clearly written and transparent methodology (if applicable)
- summarises the previous work and describes how you will build on and progress this work (if applicable)
- will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts

Within the Approach section we also expect you to:

- demonstrate access to the appropriate services, facilities, infrastructure, or equipment to deliver the proposed work

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 UKRI Funding Service.

The word count 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.

Career development

Word limit: 1,000

Why is this fellowship the right way to develop your career and how will you use it to benefit others?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Ensure that you have identified:

- career development goals appropriate to the fellowship funding opportunity
- how the fellowship will provide a feasible and appropriate trajectory for your personal development and to achieve your stated career development goals (as appropriate to your career stage and field)
- how you will instigate positive change in the wider research and innovation community, for example through Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), advocacy or advisory roles, stakeholder engagement, participation in peer review, influencing policy, public engagement, or outreach

Within the Career Development section we also expect you to describe:

- how you will ensure continued research and professional development in those you will be managing on the project, to have a positive research and innovation experience, with opportunities or support to progress their own careers (useful links [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) and [Technician Commitment](#))
- how the proposed work will provide a feasible and appropriate trajectory for you to acquire additional skills, like research, leadership, communication and management
- what mentoring arrangements are proposed and how they are appropriate to you

Host organisation support

Word limit: 1,000

How will the host organisation support your fellowship?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a support statement including:

- evidence detailing how the host will support you, as appropriate for your career development and the vision and approach of the fellowship
- who you have engaged with in your host organisation (name and role)
- how your research environment will contribute to the success of the work, in terms of suitability of the host organisation and strategic relevance to the project
- how the host organisation will ensure your time commitment to the fellowship is protected
- what development and training opportunities will be provided and how they form a cohesive career development package tailored to your aims and aspirations
- what financial or practical support, such as access to the appropriate services, facilities, infrastructure, or equipment, is being provided and how this strengthens your application

Within the Host organisation support section, we also expect you to describe:

- details of the fellowship work to be conducted at another UK or overseas host organisation and how they will support you (if applicable)

The Host organisation support statement should be written from the perspective of a senior representative from your organisation such as pro-vice chancellor.

Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)

Word limit: 500

What are the ethical and RRI considerations, implications and issues relating to the proposed work? If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated:

- the relevant ethical and RRI considerations
- how you will manage these considerations

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

Please refer to the [UKRI position statement on funding ethical research](#) and [responsible innovation](#) for more information around our expectations on ethical and responsible research and innovation.

Resources and cost justification

Word limit: 1,000

What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Justify the application's more costly resources, in particular:

- project staff
- significant travel for field work or collaboration (but not regular travel between collaborating organisations or to conferences)
- any equipment that will cost more than £25,000
- any consumables beyond typical requirements, or that are required in exceptional quantities
- all facilities and infrastructure costs
- training costs
- all resources that have been costed as 'Exceptions'

You can request costs associated with reasonable adjustments where they increase as a direct result of working on the project. For further information see [Disability and accessibility support for UKRI applicants and grant holders](#).

Assessors are not looking for detailed costs or a line-by-line breakdown of all project resources. Overall, they want you to demonstrate how the resources you anticipate needing for your proposed work:

- are comprehensive, appropriate, and justified
- represent the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes
- maximise potential outcomes and impacts

Resubmissions

Word limit: 200

Is this application a resubmission of a proposal to the Future Leader Fellowship scheme or have you applied to the scheme before?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If a resubmission, please include the Je-S or Funding Service grant reference of your previous submission and briefly outline changes that have been made to your application, including how this submission addresses feedback from reviewers (and interview panel where applicable).

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Instrument development

Word limit: 400

What equipment are you requesting for instrument development and why is it required? (For applications that include instrument development only).

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Justify any request for instrument development costs by demonstrating how the development:

- will either enable research capability not available using any existing instrument, or will substantially improve research capability beyond what currently exists in a way that opens significant new research or innovation opportunities
- will function. For example, construction of a wholly new instrument from its basic components, substantial modification of an existing instrument, integration of two or more existing instruments into a new combined one

Equipment for instrument development only will be funded at 100% FEC, although UKRI reserves the right to request organisational contributions in exceptional circumstances.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Project partners

Add details about any project partners' contributions. If there are no project partners, you can indicate this on the Funding Service.

A project partner is a collaborating organisation who will have an integral role in the proposed research. This may include direct contributions for example cash, donated equipment and resources, or staff seconded to the project, or indirect and in-kind contributions for example use of project partner's equipment, datasets, or facilities. Project partners may be in industry, academia, third sector or government organisations in the UK or overseas, including partners based in the EU.

Add the following project partner details:

- the organisation name and address (searchable via a drop-down list or enter the organisation's details manually, as applicable)
- the project partner contact name and email address
- the type of contribution (direct or in-direct) and its monetary value

If a detail is entered incorrectly and you have saved the entry, remove the specific project partner record and re-add it with the correct information.

For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

Project partners: letters (or emails) of support

Upload a single PDF containing the letters or emails of support from each partner you named in the project partners section. These should be uploaded in English or Welsh only.

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Enter the words 'attachment supplied' in the text box, or if you do not have any project partners enter 'N/A'. Each letter or email you provide should:

- confirm the partner's commitment to the project
- clearly explain the value, relevance, and possible benefits of the work to them
- describe any additional value that they bring to the project
- have a page limit of two sides A4 per partner

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply. If you do not have any project partners, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Ensure you have prior agreement from project partners so that, if you are offered funding, they will support your project as indicated in the project partners' section.

For audit purposes, UKRI requires formal collaboration agreements to be put in place if an award is made.

Letters of support from mentors are not permitted.

Clinical fellowships

Word limit: 400

Is your application a clinical FLF application?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If your application is a clinical FLF application, please provide the following additional information to justify your eligibility.

Please provide a short justification that your proposed project falls within [MRCs core remit](#).

Please provide details of how you meet the criteria as both clinically active and a registered healthcare professional, including the following information if relevant:

- professional registration number (name of body and registration number, for example, HCPC/GMC 1234567)
- clinical speciality or profession
- current training stage or nearest equivalent (foundation, speciality registrar with grade, consultant)
- do you intend to be clinically active during or after the fellowship

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Research involving the use of animals

Does your proposed research involve the use of vertebrate animals or other organisms covered by the Animals Scientific Procedures Act?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing research that requires using animals, download and complete the [Animals Scientific Procedures Act template \(DOCX, 74KB\)](#), which contains all the questions relating to research using vertebrate animals or other Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 regulated organisms.

Save it as a PDF. The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Conducting research with animals overseas

Word limit: 700

Will any of the proposed animal research be conducted overseas?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing to conduct overseas research, it must be conducted in accordance with welfare standards consistent with those in the UK, as in [Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research](#). Ensure all named applicants in the UK and overseas are aware of this requirement.

If your application proposes animal research to be conducted overseas, you must provide a statement in the text box. Depending on the species involved, you may also need to upload a completed template for each species listed.

Statement

Provide a statement to confirm that:

- all named applicants are aware of the requirements and have agreed to abide by them

- this overseas research will be conducted in accordance with welfare standards consistent with the principles of UK legislation
- the expectation set out in Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research will be applied and maintained
- appropriate national and institutional approvals are in place

Templates

Overseas studies proposing to use non-human primates, cats, dogs, equines or pigs will be assessed during [NC3Rs review](#) of research applications. Provide the required information by completing the template from the question 'Research involving the use of animals'.

For studies involving other species, such as:

- rodents
- rabbits
- sheep
- goats
- pigs
- cattle
- xenopus laevis and xenopus tropicalis
- zebrafish

Select, download, and complete the relevant Word checklist or checklists by [exploring NC3Rs checklist for the use of animals overseas](#).

Save your completed template as a PDF and upload to the Funding service. If you use more than one checklist template, save it as a single PDF.

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply.

If conducting research with animals overseas does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Research involving human participation

Word limit: 700

Will the project involve the use of human subjects or their personal information?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing research that requires the involvement of human subjects, provide the name of any required approving body and whether approval is already in place.

Justify the number and the diversity of the participants involved, as well as any procedures.

Provide details of any areas of substantial or moderate severity of impact.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Research involving human tissues or biological samples

Word limit: 700

Does your proposed research involve the use of human tissues, or biological samples?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you are proposing work that involves human tissues or biological samples, provide the name of any required approving body and whether approval is already in place.

Justify the use of human tissue or biological samples specifying the nature and quantity of the material to be used and its source.

If this does not apply to your proposed work, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Year of PhD completion

Word limit: 50

What year did you complete your PhD?

If you do not have a PhD, then please answer 'N/A'. Please note this will not be used to assess your application, only for data monitoring purposes.

Career breaks

Word limit: 200

Have you had any career breaks since working in research and innovation?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Please provide the dates of any career breaks you have taken for any reason (no reason needs to be provided). Further detail on what is considered a career break can be found in the 'Round 11 Guidance for Academic-hosted Applicants' Annex C in the additional information section. This will be taken into consideration by the panel when reviewing your outputs over your career.

Job share

Word limit: 100

Is this application being submitted on a job-share basis?

If so, please provide the full names of both applicants.

International collaborations

Word limit: 1,250

Does the proposed work involve any international collaboration or engagement?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Please list the name of the organisation and the country in which they are based for all your international co-leads, project partners, visiting researchers, and other collaborators including details of any subcontractors or service providers.

Data management and sharing

Word limit: 1,500

How will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed research?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a data management plan that clearly details how you will comply with UKRI's published [data sharing policy](#). Additional guidance can be found on the funding finder opportunity page.

Facilities

Word limit: 250

Does your proposed research require the support and use of a facility?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

If you will need to use a facility, follow your proposed facility's normal access request procedures. Ensure you have prior agreement so that if you are offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project.

For each requested facility you will need to provide the:

- name of facility, copied and pasted from the [facility information list \(DOCX, 35KB\)](#)
- proposed usage or costs, or costs per unit where indicated on the facility information list
- confirmation you have their agreement where required

Facilities should only be named if they are on the facility information list above. If you will not need to use a facility, you will be able to indicate this in the

Funding Service.

Some facilities also require a technical assessment, which should be obtained by contacting the relevant facility prior to submitting an application to discuss usage.

You do not need to submit these documents with your application, but we will contact you to provide them if your application is successful.

If you will not need to use a facility, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Clinical research using NHS resources

Word count: 250

Will your research involve participants from the NHS or health and social care duty of care?

If not, enter 'N/A' into the text box

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Researchers applying for clinical research in the NHS, public health or social care need to complete a Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Tool (SoECAT) to be eligible for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Clinical Research Network (CRN) portfolio. This is the route through which support and excess treatment costs are provided in England.

You must answer 'Yes' and complete and upload a SoECAT if you are applying for clinical research funding, and:

- you will carry out your research in the UK
- it is intended for the NIHR CRN portfolio; this may include studies in a social care or public health setting
- the research requires approval by Health Research Authority (England) or its equivalents in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales
- your research will use NHS resources

You must complete a SoECAT even if you don't think your clinical research will involve excess treatment costs (ETCs).

See MRC guidance 3.5.1 on [who needs to complete a SoECAT](#).

If you are applying for clinical research in the NHS, public health or social care and don't think you need to complete a SoECAT, answer 'Yes' and explain why a SoECAT is not necessary.

We want to know that you have taken the appropriate steps for the full costs of your research to be attributed, calculated and paid.

We want to see the expected total resources required for your project, such as Excess Treatment Costs (ETCs), to consider if these are appropriate.

How to complete a SoECAT

[SoECAT guidance](#) can be found on the NIHR website

These are the steps you need to take:

1. Contact an Attributing the costs of health and social care Research and Development (AcoRD) specialist as early as possible in the application process.
2. Complete an online SoECAT. Excel versions of the form have been discontinued. If you don't have an account for NIHR's Central Portfolio Management System (CPMS) you will need create and activate one. [See the user guide for instructions](#).
3. Request authorisation of your SoECAT.
4. Once authorised extract the 'study information' and 'summary' page from the 'Funder Export', combine them as a single PDF and upload it to your application.

Applications that require a SoECAT but have not attached the SoECAT funder export study information and summary may be rejected.

Contact fellows@ukri.org if you have questions about the UKRI aspects of this process or have concerns that your SoECAT may not be authorised in time for the application deadline.

Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I)

Word limit: 100

Does your proposed work relate to UKRI's Trusted Research and Innovation principles?

What the assessors are looking for in your response

Demonstrate how your proposed work relates to UKRI's Trusted Research and Innovation principles including:

- list any dual-use (both military and non-military) applications to your research
- if this project is relevant to one or more of the [17 areas of the UK National Security and Investment \(NSI\) Act](#), please list the area(s)
- please read the [academic export control guidance](#) and confirm if an export control licence is required for this project and the status of any application(s)
- if your project involves any items or substances on the UK strategic export control list, please provide a list

We may ask you to provide additional TR&I information later, in line with UKRI TR&I principles and funding terms and conditions (RGC 2.6.2, 2.7.1 and 2.7.2).

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following process.

Application checking

We will check your proposal for:

- applicant and host organisation eligibility
- costings
- other relevant statutory examinations, for example animal usage or ethics compliance

Expert review

We will invite sector or discipline experts to review your application independently, against the specified criteria for this funding opportunity. Your application is assessed by at least three independent experts from the UK and overseas.

You will not be able to nominate reviewers for applications on the new Funding Service. Research councils will continue to select expert reviewers.

We are monitoring the requirement for applicant-nominated reviewers as we review policies and processes as part of the continued development of the new Funding Service.

You will be invited to respond to reviewers' comments and will have 10 working days to write your response. All applications will proceed to the shortlisting panel.

Shortlisting

The independent reviews and your response will be used at a shortlisting meeting where your application is assessed against the four assessment criteria by members of the Future Leaders Fellowships panel college and other relevant experts.

Panels will consider the added value of fellowship support rather than the use of standard project grant support across all criteria, acting as a moderating panel.

Panel college members are experts from across the research and innovation landscape, including from business and public and third sectors. They have significant experience or understanding of assessing the quality of major research and innovation projects as follows:

- across a range of areas
- beyond their own specialist area
- across interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research

Multiple shortlisting panels take place at the same time by members of the Future Leaders Fellowships panel college and other relevant experts.

Roving panel members and UKRI observers move between the panels to ensure consistency. The shortlisting panel will make a recommendation for progression to interview. Not all applicants will progress from shortlisting to an interview.

Interview

For shortlisted applications, an expert interview panel will conduct interviews with applicants after which the panel will make a funding recommendation.

If you are selected for an interview, we will contact you with details of the time and date of interview, they are expected to take place in the week commencing 17 May 2027. Interviews will last for up to an hour and will be conducted over Teams.

Multiple interview panels take place at the same time by members of the Future Leaders Fellowships panel college and other relevant experts. Roving panel members and UKRI observers move between the panels to ensure consistency. Again, applications are assessed against the assessment criteria with panels considering the added value of fellowship support rather than the use of standard project grant support across all criteria.

UKRI will make the final funding decision. You will be notified of the outcome of your interview within eight weeks. The team will inform you when you are likely to receive written feedback, which will be shared alongside the system-generated email sent by the Funding Service with the final outcome.

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](#).

We reserve the right to modify the assessment process as needed.

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:

- vision and approach
- applicant capability to deliver
- career development
- host organisation support
- ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)
- resources and cost justification

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

The Funding Service collects personal data including on ethnicity, sex and gender and disability. We will use the personal data you give us to inform analysis investigating if applicants to the scheme who share a protected characteristic:

- suffer a disadvantage linked to that characteristic
- have different needs to other groups
- have a disproportionately low level of participation

If this results in an evidenced need, then UKRI may make appropriate and proportionate interventions including in final funding decisions. This is in accordance with our duty to advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

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 the Future Leaders Fellowships team at fellows@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

See more information about the [Future Leaders Fellowships](#).

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

[UKRI response to CRAC report \(PDF, 200KB\)](#)

[Round 11 Guidance for Academic-hosted Applicants \(DOCX, 230KB\)](#)

[UKRI FLF R11 Academic salary calculator \(XLS, 36KB\)](#)

[Round 11 Host Organisation Additional Guidance \(DOCX, 52KB\)](#)

Global Talent visa

Successful applicants who require a visa to work in the UK will be eligible to be considered 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

2 February 2026

Added opportunity details and application link

Timeline

- **2 February 2026 9:00am**
Opening date
- **16 June 2026 4:00pm**
Closing date
- **June 2026**
Non-academic funding opportunity opening date
- **November 2026**
Non-academic funding opportunity closing date
- **11 January 2027**
PL response issued
- **25 January 2027**
PL response due date
- **Week commencing 15 March 2027**
Sift panels
- **Week commencing 17 May 2027**
Interview panels

Guidance on good research

[Good research resource hub](#)

