Round 2 of the scheme has just concluded and some useful messages to prospective applicants and host organisations are below:

- The success rate for Round 2 is expected to be around 19% (78 awards offered); and we are excited by the quality of the successful applicants and the range of topics
- We could have offered a higher number of awards (up to 100) for applications in Round 2 and are aiming for this number (or higher) of top-quality awards in future rounds
- We note that:
  - Only a small number of applicants are making use of the flexibility for fellows to be based in business or to develop their R&D across the academic and business sectors
  - There is less diversity than expected in applications which is reflected in the awards
  - The flexibility we offer on budgets is being used well. Budget requests are well justified and, as you would expect, vary widely depending on the nature of the work. However, applicants could make more of the scope to set out longer term, broad ambitions for up to seven years.

The deadline for Round 4 outline proposals is 8 October 2019. The quality of applications remains key, along with an application’s fit with the aims of the scheme to support excellence, ambition, flexibility and diversity.

We would also welcome an increase in applications that work in partnership with business, alongside a greater diversity of candidates.

We will be providing further guidance for Round 4 applications in coming weeks and following up with additional communications and a community engagement event. Further information on the engagement event is available here.