Stephen Hawking Fellowships
Closing Date: 20th June (Intent) and 24th July 2019 (Full)

Quick Reference: Please read the full Call document for guidance before submitting your proposal.

Funding available: Up to £15 million is available over up to five annual calls. UKRI are providing funding for up to 10 Fellowships per call, to be delivered jointly by the EPSRC and STFC.

How to apply: Intent to submit (for administrative purposes only), followed by full proposal and interview.

Assessment process: Full proposals will go out for external peer review, followed by an interview panel stage.

Key dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Intention to submit</td>
<td>20th June 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Full Proposals</td>
<td>24th July 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview panel</td>
<td>January 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding decision</td>
<td>February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant start date</td>
<td>October 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Information: Funding is available for up to 4 years funding for post-doctoral researchers in the field of theoretical physics and/or fundamental mathematical and computer sciences that underpin them. The funding will also support fellows to engage in training on public engagement and scientific communication to develop the skills to explain complex scientific ideas to wider audiences.

Contacts: EPSRC fellowship inbox: EPSRCfellowships@epsrc.ukri.org, STFC fellowship inbox: fellowships@stfc.ac.uk. George Adams, Portfolio Manager (EPSRC). Email: george.adams@epsrc.ukri.org or telephone: 01793 44 4437 and Caroline Sweeting, Portfolio Manager (STFC). Email: caroline.sweeting@stfc.ac.uk or telephone: 01793 442019.

For queries related to scientific content or remit please contact the relevant portfolio manager.

This document contains guidance for applicants. The headings below indicate the topics covered in the document. Please click on the links below to be taken straight to that section:

1. Objectives of the Stephen Hawking Fellowship
2. Research Scope
3. Who can apply?
4. Assessment Process
5. Assessment Criteria
6. Key Dates
Objectives of the Stephen Hawking Fellowship

In recognition of Stephen Hawking’s exceptional contributions to scientific knowledge and popularisation of science, UK Research and Innovation will support and develop up to 50 of the next generation of visionary scientists in theoretical physics at the beginning of their careers. There will be up to five calls for these fellowships, 1 call per year between 2019 and 2024 with each call to fund up to 10 fellowships. The total amount being made available by UKRI for this scheme is £15 million.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- To fund new high quality research and support the development and training of postdoctoral researchers in the field of theoretical physics.
- To train a cohort of researchers with the skills to continue a legacy of public engagement in the field of theoretical physics.

The fellowships will provide up to 4 years’ funding, dependent on the nature of the proposed research for fellows with a strong passion for curiosity driven science that seek to challenge current assumptions, advance scientific knowledge and inspire the public through their discoveries. The funding will support fellows to engage in training on public engagement and scientific communication to develop the skills to explain complex scientific ideas to wider audiences and with the aim of continuing Stephen Hawking’s work in bringing science into popular culture. Applications are welcomed from eligible researchers currently based in the UK or working abroad. Fellowship must be held at an eligible UK host institution.

Research Scope

Proposals are welcomed from all areas of theoretical physics and areas of mathematics and computer sciences which underpin and contribute to the development of theoretical physics. The scope of the fellowships extends beyond Stephen Hawking’s active areas of research such as cosmology, general relativity and quantum gravity and UKRI wish to invite other aspects of theoretical physics such as classical gravity, string theory, statistical physics, nuclear physics, particle physics, particle astrophysics, theoretical astronomy, solar and planetary physics.

Proposals are also welcome from across the fundamental mathematical and computer sciences where the applicant can demonstrate that the research will underpin these approaches and can directly build capability in the area of theoretical physics, such as quantum computing. The scheme will be delivered jointly by EPSRC and STFC on behalf of UKRI. UKRI will monitor this activity over its lifetime to ensure it meets its objectives. In future calls for Stephen Hawking Fellowships, the research scope may be evolved to reflect emerging trends and funding in the area of theoretical physics.
Who can apply?
This scheme aims to support excellent researchers with the potential to make significant contributions to the field of theoretical physics and continue to spark public interest in the field. Applicants must demonstrate within their application how the Stephen Hawking Fellowship will support and enable their research agenda, develop their skills in public engagement and science communication, and clearly demonstrate that their skills and experience at the time of application match those outlined in the person specification.

Applicant eligibility
• Applicants will hold a PhD by the start date of the fellowship or have equivalent research experience.

• Consideration will be given to applicants who have taken a non-standard career path after their primary degree. Applications are welcomed from candidates who wish to re-establish themselves after a career break or a period of absence from active research.

• Applicants must not currently hold a permanent academic post or equivalent. If you secure a permanent position prior to the offer of a Fellowship you will be ineligible.

• There are no nationality or residency restrictions. Where applicable, you will need to comply with Department of Employment requirements and hold a work permit prior to taking up the Fellowship. Work permits are a matter for direct negotiation between the institution, the Department of Employment and the Home Office.

• Applicants should not be in receipt of duplicate funding for the same or similar proposal from more than one funding agency. Applicants who have a live application for the UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships cannot also apply for a Stephen Hawking Fellowship.

• Applicants can choose to spend anywhere between 50 and 100% FTE on their fellowship. Where a fellow is ordinarily employed part-time, their UKRI fellowship may be held part-time at a minimum level of 50% and be extended pro-rata. Where a fellow is employed full-time but does not spend 100% of their time on their fellowship, the fellowship duration will not be prorated.

These fellowships support applicants from diverse career paths, including those returning from a career break or following time in other roles. We encourage applications from those wishing to work part-time to combine the fellowship with personal responsibilities. Review panels will take into account time spent outside an active research or innovation environment, whether through career breaks, flexible working or as a consequence of working in other roles.
Personal Specification
A competency-based person specification is used to describe the desired qualities, skills, experience and attributes expected at the Post-Doctoral researcher career stage. In conjunction with the host institution, you should evaluate your track record against the personal specification and ensure that you are able to demonstrate how you fulfil each of the expected attributes.

Applicants should:
- Demonstrate knowledge in the area of theoretical physics, including a clear vision of the excellence and importance of the proposed research.
- Have their own original and ambitious research plans/ideas.
- Demonstrate the suitability of the proposed environment for the research and its impact.
- Provide an approach to maximise the impact and influence of the proposed work.

Experience and potential:
- Applicants must have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to take forward the proposed project.
- Applicants should demonstrate an enthusiasm for communicating their research findings and a clear understanding of the role of public engagement in the research landscape.

Skills:
- Applicants should have strong communication and interpersonal skills and aim to develop these through engagement with different audiences.
- Applicants should demonstrate how the outcomes of the fellowship will be communicated and used within and outside of their immediate research community.

Personal Development:
- Applicants should as part of their application have identified opportunities to access career development and support that will underpin their future career ambitions.
- A clear programme of skills development is an essential component of this fellowship and must include the development of public engagement/scientific communication skills.

Responsibilities of the applicant
UKRI expects all the researchers and innovators it funds to adopt the highest achievable standards in the conduct of their work. This means exhibiting impeccable integrity and following the principles of good research practice detailed in the RCUK Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct.

Host organisation eligibility
Fellowships can be held at any UK Higher Education Institution (HEI), Independent Research Organisation or Research Council Institute that is eligible for Research Council funding. They are individual awards allowing for the possibility of future transfer. Individuals are required to discuss their application with their chosen HEI prior to application.
Assessment Process
Submission for the Stephen Hawking Fellowship will follow three stages, an Intent to Submit, independent review of Full Proposals and an Interview Stage.

Intent to Submit

Applicants are required to submit an Intent to Submit form via SmartSurvey [https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/TBYG3/] by 20th June 2019. You will be asked to provide:

- Applicant Name
- Host Organisation Name
- Department Name
- Title of Project
- Short Summary of maximum 4000 characters (including spaces)
- Category of the Fellowship
- Contact email address
- Initial estimate of funding requested- final funding values requested at full proposal stage must be within +/-10% of the final value
- Host Organisation Statement.

The Intent to Submit will be used by EPSRC and STFC to assess demand of the call and inform panel selection. For the category, please choose the main areas your research fits into. EPSRC/ STFC reserve the right to reject, at any stage, applications that do not fit the remit or eligibility of the scheme.

Full Proposals

Full proposals will be allocated to the most appropriate research council and independent reviews will be obtained. Applications will be allocated to a lead Council and will follow that process for obtaining reviews. Various sources are used to obtain appropriate expert reviews. Applicants are encouraged to nominate up to three reviewers in their application which can include nominees from the international community. Applicants will be asked to respond to reviewer comments to respond to any factual inaccuracies. Please see our guidance on how to respond to reviewers. Your application, reviewers’ comments and any response by you will be considered by the Stephen Hawking Fellowships Prioritisation Panel where they will be ranked and a shortlist of applicants will be invited to interview.

Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the interview panel that will recommend candidates to be funded. More details of the interview process will be issued to shortlisted candidates.
**Assessment Criteria**

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria, please note that at each stage of the peer review the assessment will focus on different elements of these criteria. You should cover all aspects of the below criteria as part of your written application and be prepared to answer questions from across your proposal at interview stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>At external peer review stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Quality</strong></td>
<td>- Candidate presents an excellent research programme which is novel and timely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Candidate outlines a robust methodology to attain their stated objectives, which is appropriate and feasible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Candidate demonstrated a clear vision of the contributions they will make and evidence of independence of research ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Importance</strong></td>
<td>- Candidate provides evidence of how the research will make a significant contribution to the research field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Candidate articulates the strategic importance of the research and how it may contribute to the economic, social and cultural prosperity of the UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The potential outcomes arising from the research are identified and plans for maximising their impacts are proportionate, timely and credible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant and their development</strong></td>
<td>- Demonstrates an ability to deliver the proposed research activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provides a well-considered plan for skills development, including and advancement of public engagement skills that is appropriate given their current experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Demonstrates an ability to be, or become, a clear communicator and disseminator of knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ability to outline career aspirations and justify why the fellowship is an appropriate route to achieving them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Environment</strong></td>
<td>- Candidate presents an evidenced case as to the benefits to the research of their chosen host organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- An appropriate level of support and commitment to support the development of the candidate is provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources and Management</strong></td>
<td>- Candidate fully justifies the planning and project management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Resources are fully justified and appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Risks are identified and appropriate contingencies put in place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>