



# Stephen Hawking fellowship

<b>Opportunity status:</b>	Closed
<b>Funders:</b>	<a href="#">Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)</a> , <a href="#">Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)</a> , UK Research and Innovation
<b>Funding type:</b>	Fellowship
<b>Total fund:</b>	£15,000,000
<b>Publication date:</b>	20 September 2020
<b>Opening date:</b>	21 September 2020
<b>Closing date:</b>	18 November 2020 16:00 UK time

*Last updated: 11 February 2021*

Stephen Hawking fellowships support a new generation of visionary scientists working in theoretical physics including related areas of mathematics and computer science.

A fellowship will enable you to undertake high-quality research and learn skills that will allow you to communicate complex scientific ideas through a programme of public engagement.

This funding opportunity is one of up to five rounds with each round funding up to 10 fellowships. We expect the next round for this funding opportunity to open in 2021. Our total investment in this scheme is £15 million.

[Open all](#)

## Who can apply

The Stephen Hawking fellowships support excellent postdoctoral researchers who demonstrate they can make significant contributions in the field of theoretical physics and spark public interest in their chosen field. Funding will support

excellent research and the development of skills in communicating science to the public.

This is a postdoctoral-level fellowship. You would not be at a suitable career stage to apply for this funding opportunity if you would consider applying for an Ernest Rutherford fellowship, EPSRC early career fellowship or a future leaders fellowship.

To be eligible to apply you must:

- hold a PhD or have equivalent research experience at the time you submit your outline proposal
- not currently hold or have held a permanent academic post or equivalent. If you secure a permanent position before you receive an offer of a fellowship you will be ineligible.

We welcome UK and international applicants. Proposals could also come from potential researchers who have followed diverse careers, including those returning from a career break or who have spent time in other roles. We also encourage applicants wishing to work part-time to combine their work with other responsibilities.

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## What we're looking for

Your research can be undertaken in all areas of theoretical physics and in the areas of mathematics and computer science that underpin and contribute to the development of theoretical physics.

These could include:

- cosmology
- general relativity
- quantum gravity
- classical gravity
- string theory
- statistical physics
- nuclear physics
- particle physics
- particle astrophysics
- theoretical astronomy
- theoretical plasma physics
- solar or planetary physics
- mathematical Physics
- condensed Matter physics
- theoretical quantum optics and information
- quantum fluids and solids
- cold atoms and molecules.

You will also need to show how the fellowship will help you to develop your skills in public engagement and science communication.

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## How to apply

You must first get support from your proposed host organisation in the UK. You will then need to complete an outline proposal via the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#). If successful, we will invite you to submit a full proposal for peer review.

We will hold interview panels during the week beginning 14 January 2021.

You should read all the fellowship documents before applying:

- [guidance for applicants \(PDF, 282KB\)](#)
- [guidance for reviewers \(PDF, 155KB\)](#)
- [equality impact assessment \(PDF, 325KB\)](#).

You must use our [CV template \(DOCX, 35KB\)](#) in your application.

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## How we will assess your application

We use a three-stage assessment process. We may change the process if this funding opportunity is oversubscribed.

We will check your application and only progress it to stage one if you meet the eligibility criteria and if your application is within the remit of this funding opportunity.

### Stage one: you submit an outline proposal

External experts will consider your outline proposal against the quality of the proposed research importance assessment criteria. If you are successful, we will invite you to submit a full proposal. You will receive feedback from the outline panel.

### Stage two: we invite you to submit a full proposal

We will send your full proposal for peer review by experts who will consider all the assessment criteria. We will reject your proposal if you do not receive enough supportive reviews at this stage. This decision will be made by appropriate panel members, and principal investigators will not be able to respond. If you get enough supportive reviews, you will have the chance to reply to the reviewers' comments in a principal investigator response document.

### Stage three: you attend an interview panel

If the peer reviewer scores you receive are high enough, we will invite you to an interview so that we can select the final successful applicants. The interview panel questions will mainly focus on the applicant and public engagement assessment

criterion although, to decide on the final rank ordered list, we will assess against all criteria and consider the peer review comments, principal investigator response and interview. We will send you full details of the interview process at the outline proposal stage.

[Find out more about our assessment process in our guidance for applicants \(PDF, 282KB\).](#)

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## Contact details

### EPSRC

- General fellowship enquiries – [researchcareers@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:researchcareers@epsrc.ukri.org)
- George Adams, Portfolio Manager – [george.adams@epsrc.ukri.org](mailto:george.adams@epsrc.ukri.org)

### STFC

- General fellowship enquiries – [fellowships@stfc.ukri.org](mailto:fellowships@stfc.ukri.org)
  - Clare Heseltine, Senior Programme Manager – [clare.heseltine@stfc.ukri.org](mailto:clare.heseltine@stfc.ukri.org)
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## Timeline

- **21 September 2020**  
Outline proposals opening date
- **18 November 2020**  
Outline proposals closing date
- **Week beginning 25 January 2021**  
Full proposals (invitation only) opening date
- **16 March 2021**  
Full proposals closing date
- **Week beginning 26 July 2021**  
Interviews
- **August 2021**  
Funding decision

NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – let us know if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [help us test new developments](#).

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