

MRC career development award: Sep 2021

Opportunity status:	Upcoming
Funders:	Medical Research Council (MRC)
Funding type:	Fellowship
Publication date:	24 September 2020
Opening date:	6 August 2021
Closing date:	15 September 2021 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 3 November 2020

This award can help you become an independent investigator through a programme of research and training lasting up to five years.

We will provide your salary plus support for research staff, consumables, travel costs and appropriate capital equipment.

To apply, you must have:

- research plans within MRC's remit which do not overlap with those of your current group leader or proposed sponsor
- a track record of challenging, original and productive research across past appointments, and an upward trajectory
- identified opportunities for developing and progressing in your career.

[Open all](#)

Who can apply

To be eligible for the MRC career development award, you should:

- have a PhD although we will still consider applications if you can show that your skills and experience match those of the transition to independence career stage in [our applicant skills and experience table](#)

- be able explain why a fellowship is the best way to support your long-term career goals and chosen career path
- be able to describe how a fellowship would help you to move to the next level in your career through a change in your current role.

We will take into account any career breaks, flexible working and changes in discipline when assessing your research experience and current track record.

Read our [guidance for reviewers on career breaks and flexible working \(PDF, 40KB\)](#).

You do not need to have a specific period of postdoctoral experience.

You are not eligible to apply if:

- you want to continue research that you are undertaking in your current position, if this is the same as your current group or group leader is working on
- you have previously held a comparable intermediate fellowship from any organisation.

You can find out more in our [guidance for fellowship applicants](#). Our [frequently asked questions](#) page also has further details of eligibility.

If you need advice on your suitability for an MRC fellowship scheme, email your CV using the [template we provide \(Word, 27KB\)](#), to fellows@mrc.ukri.org including a one-page project outline, a list of your publications and a description of how you meet the [skills and experience](#) for this scheme.

The Global Talent visa

Career Development Award holders are eligible for a Global Talent visa under the 'exceptional promise' category for future research leaders. Find out about the [Global Talent visa](#).

The career development award opens twice a year, closing in April and September. Use our [funding finder](#) to check dates for future competitions.

What we're looking for

We are looking for proposals that will focus on any [areas of MRC's scientific remit](#), ranging from basic studies with relevance to mechanisms of disease to translational and developmental clinical research.

Science areas include:

- infections and immunity
- molecular and cellular medicine
- population and systems medicine
- neurosciences and mental health
- translation
- global health

- methodology
- public health.

We also welcome proposals for interdisciplinary approaches or research which will address global health issues and be of benefit to those living in low and middle-income countries.

The career development award provides support for up to five years. We expect you to take advantage of the full five years' funding available. If you are intending to apply for a shorter period, you should contact the programme manager on fellows@mrc.ukri.org before submitting a proposal.

We expect you to take up your fellowship no more than six months after the date of the review meeting.

This fellowship scheme provides a competitive salary, giving you the chance to concentrate fully on your research, training and development. You may spend up to six hours a week (pro-rated for part-time fellowships) on other commitments such as teaching, demonstrating and other funded projects.

We may allow greater flexibility on the time dedicated to non-fellowship activities (for example, those detailed above or obtaining grant support) during the second half of a fellowship. Email the programme manager on fellows@mrc.ukri.org to discuss your plans.

The career development award will cover 100% of the cost of your contracted working time as well as:

- support for research staff
- consumables expenses
- travel costs
- appropriate capital equipment.

Find out more about [MRC's guidance for research staff development](#).

The award will also support a period of research overseas, at a second UK institution or within industry, whichever is most appropriate. We encourage successful applicants to take advantage of the opportunities this will provide to establish collaborative networks and cross-sector development.

There is no limit to the amount of funding you can request under this scheme but we expect requests to be appropriate to the project and you must be able to justify the amount you need to meet the objectives of your research proposal.

Awards are made under the full economic costing framework.

You cannot hold a salaried position and a fellowship at the same time. If you are awarded a fellowship, you will need to give up the permanent position for the duration of the fellowship or change to a proleptic appointment.

If you want to retain an existing position and combine this with research funding, we recommend you look at one of our grant scheme funding opportunities instead. Check our [funding finder](#) for current funding opportunities.

Find out more about [what to expect as an MRC fellow](#).

How to apply

You must apply using the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#).

We recommend you start your application early. You can save completed details in Je-S at any time and return to continue your application later.

When applying select 'New document' then:

- Council: MRC
- Doc type: Fellowship proposal
- Scheme: Fellowships, FEC
- Call/type/mode: Career development awards.

You can find advice on completing your application in the [Je-S handbook](#).

If you need further help, you can contact the Je-S help desk on 01793 444164 or by emailing JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org

Your host organisation will be able to provide advice and guidance on completing your application.

The career development award opens twice a year, closing in April and September. Use our [funding finder](#) to check dates for future competitions.

You may apply to any MRC fellowship scheme no more than twice even if you change your proposal.

Apply for a jointly-funded fellowship

MRC collaborates with the [Multiple Sclerosis Society](#), [Parkinson's UK](#), the [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#), the [Borne Foundation](#) and the [Tuberous Sclerosis Association](#) to offer jointly-funded fellowship awards.

As well as the prestige of having these organisations co-fund your award, you may also have opportunities to report on your project, present your work at meetings and take part in professional networking.

To apply for a fellowship that is co-funded with an external organisation, you must include the [joint funding form \(Word, 63KB\)](#) as part of your application.

For more information on the application process, read the:

- [guidance for fellowship applicants](#)
- [choosing the right fellowship](#)
- [applicant skills and experience table](#)
- [career development award – frequently asked questions](#)

If you need further information, you can email us on fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

How we will assess your application

When we receive your application, we will check it to make sure it is within remit. It will then be peer reviewed by at least three independent experts from the UK and overseas.

You can nominate up to three independent reviewers. We will invite only one to assess your application and may decide not to approach any of your nominated reviewers.

Peer reviewers will assess your application and provide comments. They will also score it using the peer reviewer scoring system against the following criteria:

- importance: how important are the questions, or gaps in knowledge, that are being addressed?
- scientific potential: what are the prospects for good scientific progress?
- resources requested: are the requested funds essential for the work? And do the importance and scientific potential justify funding on the scale requested? Does the proposal represent good value for money?

A sub-committee of members of the non-clinical training and career development panel will review these scores and comments at a shortlisting meeting. We continue with the highest-quality applications with potential to be funded.

If your application passes the shortlisting stage, we will invite you to interview and send you copies of the external reviewers' comments.

Interviews with the non-clinical training and career development panel will usually last 30 minutes. We will contribute towards the cost of your return travel, modest subsistence costs and reasonable additional family care costs.

Read the detailed [assessment criteria for each fellowship type](#).

Feedback

We will let you know as soon as possible after we have made a final decision about your application. This is usually within five working days of your interview.

If you reach the interview stage, we will send you feedback and let you know the reasons for the panel's decision. If you are not invited to interview we will send you copies of the external reviewers' comments.

We aim to make a decision within six months of receiving your application.

Find out more about the [fellowship assessment process](#) and read an overview of our [peer review process](#).

Contact details

You can contact the MRC fellowships team by emailing fellows@mrc.ukri.org.

Additional info

Supporting documents

- [Fellowship handbook for applicants \(PDF, 300KB\)](#)
 - [CV template \(Word, 27KB\)](#)
-

Timeline

- **6 August 2021**
Competition opens
- **15 September 2021**
Competition closes
- **13 January 2022**
Shortlisting date
- **16-17 February 2022**
Meeting dates

Related content

[MRC's areas of scientific remit](#)

[MRC's current research strategy](#)

[MRC applicant skills and experience table](#)

[Choosing the right fellowship](#)

[What to expect as an MRC fellow](#)

[Guidance for fellowship applicants](#)

[Career development awards - frequently asked questions](#)

[Fellowship assessment process](#)

[Peer review process](#)

[How MRC manages the peer review process](#)

[Dates for future competitions](#)

[12 top tips for writing a grant application](#)

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](#).

© 2020 Copyright UKRI [Cookie policy](#) [Privacy notice](#) [Terms of use](#)