



EPSRC New Investigator Award Scheme

Applicant Eligibility Guidelines

The New Investigator Award scheme is intended to support individuals who hold an academic lectureship position, and have not previously led a research group.

Am I eligible contractually?

Applicants must comply with the standard EPSRC terms for eligibility to hold research grants. These terms are consistent across all schemes and comprise the following:

- Investigators must be **academic employees (lecturer or equivalent)** of an eligible organisation.
- **Eligible organisations** include all UK higher education institutions that receive grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies, a number of research institutes, NHS bodies with research capacity and UKRI approved independent research organisations and Public Sector Research Establishments who possess independent capability to undertake and lead research programmes and satisfy various financial and legal criteria.¹
- If you have a **fixed-term appointment**, you are eligible providing your contract extends beyond the end date of the proposed research and your host research organisation provides you with the support they would normally offer a permanent employee.
- **Current holders of postdoctoral level fellowships are not eligible** to hold EPSRC research grants. These fellowships include the EPSRC Postdoctoral Fellowship, Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship, Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship and are likely to include the Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship, Ser Cymru Fellowship and Daphne Jackson Trust Fellowship.
- If you are employed in a staff post on a research grant, you are not eligible to be a Principal Investigator unless you hold an **early career fellowship and your university gives you the same stature as a permanent academic member of staff**. These fellowships include the EPSRC Early Career Fellowship, EPSRC Open Fellowship, UKRI Future Leader Fellowship, Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship, RAEng Research Fellowship, RAEng Industrial Fellowship, Royal Society University Research Fellowship and Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship.
- Applicants must be **resident in the UK**.

¹ Lists of eligible research organisations can be found at <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>

Am I eligible with my application history?

- The application to the New Investigator Award scheme must be the **applicant's first to EPSRC as a Principal Investigator** with the following exceptions:
 - Industrial CASE Studentship
 - Overseas Travel Grant
 - EPSRC Studentship (through DTP or CDT)
 - Workshop Grant
 - Proposal that was rejected at the outline stage.
- If you have **previously submitted an application for an EPSRC First Grant or New Investigator Award**, and were unsuccessful, you are not eligible to reapply.
- If you have previously submitted an EPSRC application in a **joint proposal as the PI of a child grant**, you are not eligible to apply.
- If you have been a **Co-I on a previous application to EPSRC** you would be welcome to apply, subject to meeting the other eligibility criteria.
Applicants who have **unsuccessful EPSRC early career fellowship, EPSRC Open Fellowship or UKRI Future Leader Fellowship applications** are welcome to apply to this scheme.

Am I eligible with my funding history?

- **Previous holders of postdoctoral level fellowships** are welcome to apply if they meet the other eligibility criteria.
- **Previous holders of early career level and above fellowships** are not eligible.
- **Current holders of early career level and above fellowships which include PDRA time are not eligible; Current holders of early career level and above fellowships not including PDRA time are eligible** if they meet the other eligibility criteria.
- If you have been a **Co-I on a grant funded by EPSRC** you would be welcome to apply subject to meeting the other eligibility criteria. **Please note that applicants who have acted as Co-I on a significant workstream with PDRA time, and have had significant input into the research proposal, would not be eligible to apply.**
- Applicants who have **previously directed the vision of a research group** are not eligible to apply. If applicants have been leading projects which **included more than 6 months PDRA time, capital equipment in excess of £20k or single research grants over £100,000 (FEC)**, your eligibility will be assessed on a case by case basis and you will need to provide EPSRC with information on the value of the project and what your role was, both in terms of obtaining the funding and on the project itself.
- Funding received from local sources whilst **working overseas** must be taken into consideration as the same scheme eligibility principles apply.
- The assessment of your eligibility is based on the **funding decision date** instead of the application date. For example, if you submitted another significant grant either before or after your NIA application (significant grant here refers to the scope of the grant over the limit in our above criteria (grant value, PDRA time, capital equipment etc.)), the following three situations apply:

- If your other significant grant (non-EP SRC grant) was unsuccessful then it does not affect your eligibility;
- If your other significant grant was successful and the decision was made before a decision is made regarding your NIA, then you are ineligible for the scheme and we expect you to withdraw your NIA application;
- If your other significant grant was successful and the decision was made after a decision regarding your NIA application, then it does not affect your eligibility.

I've read the above, and I still don't know if I'm eligible, what should I do?

- If you have read the guidance above, spoken with your research office and still don't know if you are eligible to apply, please contact **ResearchCareers@epsrc.ukri.org** for advice prior to submitting an application under this scheme. Assessment of appropriateness for this scheme will be undertaken by EPSRC on a case by case basis, based on the scheme principles, the individual circumstances of the applicant and their career path.

Acceptance to the scheme will be judged by EPSRC before the application is sent to expert peer review and is made on the basis of the content of the cover letter. If EPSRC assess that the applicant is not eligible to apply for the scheme, the applicant will be asked to withdraw the proposal.