



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

## **Future Leaders Fellowships: Reviewers' Guidance – Renewal scheme**

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### **Version History**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Change</b>
1.1	4.7. Continued Professional Development (Academic host)	Additional wording added for clarification about applicants not doing additional activities

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## 1. The Future Leaders Fellowships Scheme

### 1.1. Overview

The UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) [Future Leaders Fellowships \(FLF\) scheme](#) supports early career researchers and innovators with outstanding potential in universities, UK registered businesses, and other research and user environments including recognised Independent Research Organisations (IROs), and Research Councils' institutes and laboratories. The aims of the scheme are:

- To develop, retain, attract and sustain research and innovation talent in the UK
- To foster new research and innovation career paths including those at the academic/business and interdisciplinary boundaries, and facilitate movement of people between sectors
- To provide sustained funding and resources for the best early career researchers and innovators
- To provide long-term, flexible funding to tackle difficult and novel challenges, and support adventurous, ambitious programmes.

Fellowships are not restricted to work that would be seen as formal research in their area but can also lead and develop innovation. Innovation is defined as the practical translation of disruptive ideas into novel, relevant and valued products, services, processes, systems or business models, making them readily available to markets, government and society.

Innovation means creating economic and/or social value from ideas. Within the FLF scheme, innovation projects are those that aim to move research through the development pathway towards commercialisation and/or application.

### 1.2. How the scheme differs from existing fellowship schemes

The FLF scheme provides long-term support, for four to seven years, to enable fellows to tackle ambitious programmes or multidisciplinary questions, and new or emerging research and innovation areas and partnerships. It is the first UKRI-wide investment and provides assessment and support across UKRI's remit, with no barriers to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research/innovation.

These are personal awards supporting fellows development as impactful and influential research or innovation leaders and supporting fellows from diverse career paths, including those who returned from a career break or followed time in other roles. Fellows have the intellectual and financial freedom to develop and change direction over this period, subject to approval from UKRI.

In order to support excellent research and innovation wherever it arises and to facilitate movement of people and projects between sectors, fellows can be based in universities, businesses or other eligible independent research organisations. To ensure the successful development of the fellow, FLFs come with a requirement for the Host Organisation to commit significant support. For fellows in academia, this includes confirmation that an open-ended contract has been attained or a definite route has been described to an open-ended contract, which will be attainable by the completion of the fellowship.

Fellows and host organisations have benefited from a flexible scheme that allows part-time working and job share; the opportunity to network and collaborate with talented researchers and innovators from different disciplines and sectors, and time and investment in training and professional development.

Fellows have been encouraged to think broadly about the type of activities they may pursue as part of their research and/or innovation objectives. This includes time for work in other environments, developing international links, and development of new skills.

Fellows also will have considered what career development support opportunities are appropriate, for example mentoring and professional training and development, and relevant training courses that will underpin their future career ambitions and learning.

### **1.3. The Renewal Scheme**

Successful applicants to the FLF scheme have the opportunity to extend their four-year fellowship by up to a further three years with the [FLF Renewal Scheme](#).

The aim of the renewal is to provide a continuation of the original fellowship. The renewal funding will continue to support the development of a leading-edge fellow and further the fellow's work to undertake adventurous, ambitious programmes that tackle difficult and novel challenges.

The continuation may be made up of a single programme of work or through multiple consecutive or concurrent interlinked projects led by the fellow (a 'portfolio fellowship'). It should go beyond what other, smaller or project grants could support.

Renewal applications can be submitted within or across any areas of research or innovation covered by the UKRI.

The renewal project should be a continuation of the original FLF application. However, it is recognised that the project will have developed and progressed, and a fellow may change the direction of their project over the period of the fellowship.

It is expected that fellows may choose to alter their planned programme of research or innovation in response to new discoveries or techniques. This is to build on their own changing experience, or to reflect changing business requirements and market opportunities.

## **2. Principles of Peer Review**

Peer review is governed by several underlying principles, including those of integrity, confidentiality and anonymity.

### **2.1. Integrity**

The integrity of peer review is of paramount importance. This means that any personal interests as a reviewer must never influence or be seen to influence the outcome of the review.

Please see [Annex B](#) for further details on conflicts of interest.

Please contact the office prior to completing a review if you are unsure whether there is a conflict of interest.

### **2.2. Confidentiality**

Our assessment process is confidential in order to protect the innovative research ideas proposed by the fellows. All reviews are processed via the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system to ensure this confidentiality. When you agree to review for UKRI you are bound by a confidentiality agreement, either through the Je-S terms and conditions and reviewer protocol or a standalone agreement.

This means that everything we send you is confidential and must be treated as such at all times. You must not discuss or share the proposal with anyone. If you do not consider that you have the expertise to provide a useful review, without discussing it with a colleague for example, you should decline the invitation. When reviewing proposals, it is important that reviewers avoid storing confidential UKRI data on their local IT system, computer or mobile device.

### **2.3. Anonymity**

Peer Review is anonymous to support the free and frank exchange of views. You should ensure that you do not inadvertently identify yourself in the text of your review, for example by describing aspects of your own research or by identifying where you have worked. All comments made should be suitable to be fed back to the fellow without alteration. Any information entered into the 'Declaration of Interests' and 'Reviewer Expertise' sections will be removed before the review is shared with the fellow but will be available to the Panel.

### **2.4. Information Rights Legislation**

All information we hold, including information around peer review, is subject to the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). All requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and in some cases, it might be necessary to seek your view on releasing information relating to the review you have provided.

Further information on how the peer review process is used by UKRI to make funding decisions and how information relating to peer review and the funding of proposals is managed by UKRI is available on the [UKRI website](#).

### 3. Considerations when completing a Review

Your review must be evidence-based and the evidence used should be stated clearly in your comments. In order to ensure that your review is as useful as possible to the panel please provide clear comments and recommendations that justify, and are consistent with, your scores and ensure that your comments are comprehensive and concise, clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the application in a constructive manner and raise any concerns in the form of a question for the panel to consider.

We also ask reviewers to consider other aspects of the research and/or innovation, including the potential impact and the pathways to achieving this impact, ethical issues, appropriate use of animals and/or human tissue, methodology and experimental design and [data management plans](#).

Guidance on animal usage can be found in [Annex C](#).

#### 3.1. New Reviewers

Reviews are welcome from experts with all levels of experience of review writing, providing they are confident in their ability to assess the proposal.

Advice on writing a good review can be found in [Annex E](#).

#### 3.2. Bias

You must avoid bias in your assessment including on the grounds of a protected characteristic such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Before writing a review, you should familiarise yourself with UKRI's [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy](#).

#### 3.3. Journal Impact Factors

We are committed to support the recommendations and principles set out by the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#). You should not use journal-based metrics, such as journal impact factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an investigator's contributions, or to make funding decisions.

For the purpose of research assessment, please consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets, software, inventions, patents, preprints, other commercial activities, etc.) in addition to research publications. You should consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice.

The content of a paper is more important than publication metrics, or the identity of the journal, in which it was published. Therefore, you should not use journal impact factor (or any hierarchy of journals), conference rankings and metrics such as the H-index or i10-index when assessing UKRI grants. Reviews that do not adhere to this may be returned for amendment and both the fellow and Panel will be asked to disregard these comments.

### 3.4. Timescales

You will have 15 working days to provide your review. If you cannot comment within this timescale, please confirm by reply or by emailing [flfrenewal@ukri.org](mailto:flfrenewal@ukri.org) immediately, so we can discuss extending the deadline or, if you are still not able to provide a review with an extension, so that we can invite another reviewer in your place as quickly as possible. If you are able to suggest possible alternatives we could approach when you decline, this would be much appreciated.

### 3.5. Assessment Criteria

Proposals will be assessed according to the scheme's four assessment criteria:

- Research & Innovation Excellence
- Fellow & their Development
- Impact & Strategic Relevance
- Research and Innovation Environment & Costs

Before writing your review, you should familiarise yourself with the full [assessment criteria](#) and ensure that each one is addressed at some point.

Across all four factors throughout the review, a key issue will be whether the added value of the fellowship mechanism of support– e.g. the scale, flexibility and duration offered – is well demonstrated, as opposed to more standard project grant support.

For business applications, consideration of the added value will include, for example, whether the novelty and levels of risk involved in the project mean that it is beyond the normal activity of the business.

### 3.6. Eligibility

This funding opportunity is available to current FLF award holders only, so any individual applying for this scheme will have already completed any eligibility checks when the proposal was initially assessed and so you will not need to assess this as part of your review.

The FLF scheme welcomes applications from fellows with a diverse variety of backgrounds including those on a job share, working part-time, who have taken career breaks or are working flexibly, and all should be assessed equally.

More information on reviewing Job Share applications can be found in [Annex F](#) and more information on career breaks and flexible working can be found in [Annex G](#).

Renewal applications can be submitted within or across any area(s) of research and/or innovation covered by UKRI and should be a continuation of the original FLF application. However, it is recognised that the project will have developed and progressed, and a fellow may change the direction of their project over the period of the fellowship. It is expected that fellows may choose to alter their planned programme of research and/or innovation.

The FLF renewal must not be used to request funds for a completely new, unassociated project however, so if you believe this to be the case, please mention it in your review.

### 3.7. Host Organisation

Changes to the Host Organisation are permitted where a fellow can clearly demonstrate personal or professional reasons for requiring this change, including transfers between academic and business-based Host Organisations, depending on the development of their project and career. A new host must maintain any commitments to the fellow as per the original application.

If reviewing a proposal where the fellow is changing hosts, please comment on both the support provided by the previous host to date and on the commitments of the new host.

### 3.8. Language

Please use plain English wherever possible and avoid using idioms or slang when writing your review. This is to help ensure inclusivity, recognising that English will not always be the first language of the candidate.

Avoid the use of jargon, bearing in mind that the panellists who rely on your review for their decisions may not be specialists in your field.

### 3.9. Value for Money

As part of your review, you are asked whether the resources requested are justified and therefore whether the project offers value for money.

In the first question you should consider whether the proposal has demonstrated an understanding of the amount of work to be done. Has the applicant identified the level of staffing (both the amount in full time equivalent and the experience and skills), travel and subsistence and other costs that will be needed in order to achieve the aims of the project?

For example, in terms of the work planned for the research assistant, is the amount of work achievable within the timescale for someone with that level of expertise, and with the level of support and resource described?

In the second question, you are asked to consider whether the importance and significance of the research is appropriate for the amount of resource requested.

Finally, here are some illustrative examples of the sort of issues reviewers may be asked to consider under the value for money section, in the hope of further clarifying the way in which reviewers should be approaching this part of a review:

- We are not expecting reviewers to say whether £200 is the correct price for a flight but we would like them to consider whether all the trips that have been requested on a proposal are justified as being needed to conduct the research
- We are not expecting reviewers to comment on whether the researcher should receive a certain salary, rather, we ask reviewers to assess whether there is sufficient work, of the appropriate level, to warrant a researcher being employed for the period which the proposal requests
- We are not expecting reviewers to comment on whether a project should cost £300,000 rather than £350,000, but we would like them to consider whether the total amount of resources (staff, trips or equipment) is warranted by the amount of project outputs and if the project is going to be completed in an effective way
- We are not expecting reviewers to comment on whether a particular piece of equipment should cost £1,000, but we would ask them to consider whether a piece of equipment offers the most efficient way to do that piece of work.



### 3.10. Covid-19

UKRI understand that the pandemic has had a major impact across all the communities that we fund, as well as across all stages of the research and innovation pipeline from discovery research to innovation, commercialisation, and implementation of ideas.

UKRI is committed to ensuring that individual applicants, their wider team, including partners, networks and students are not penalised for any disruption to their career and projects caused by the pandemic.

UKRI continues to monitor the situation and will respond swiftly and appropriately to the challenges our community faces in the short and long term due to the pandemic.

When undertaking your assessment of the research project, you should consider the unequal impacts of the impact that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the fellowship and the track record and career development of those individuals included in the proposal, and you should focus on the capability of the fellow and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing.

Where disruptions have occurred applicants can highlight this within their application. There is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption, just the impact.

Where an application is successful, any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed as a post-award issue.

### 3.11. Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI)

The Resume for Research and Innovation (R4RI) is a narrative CV format currently being piloted by UKRI. It is an evolved version of the Royal Society's Resume for Researchers (R4R), adapted for UKRI's needs. R4RI aims to broaden what is visible and valued in assessment, providing space for individuals and teams to evidence a wider range of contributions to the R&I landscape. Feedback on the R4RI and its use is welcomed at any point in the process. Further details on the implementation of R4RI can be found on the [UKRI website](#).

The R4RI is provided for the fellow and any co-investigators. Specifically, for the fellow, the R4RI should be used to reflect on their progress to date whilst undertaking their Future Leaders Fellowship.

You are asked to comment on the progress that the fellow has made to date, considering how their achievements and contributions to research and/or innovation, teams and wider society demonstrate development in their independence and leadership.

Please be mindful of how the writing style or language used by the applicant is influencing your assessment; reviewers are asked to assess the R4RI for the broad contributions evidenced within, as linked to the assessment criteria.

More specifically, the R4RI should be used to demonstrate the following key competencies from the assessment criteria, which may also be demonstrated in the case for support.

Please consider:

- Clear evidence of fellow development and leadership during the fellowship to date
- Contribution to the success of a team or advancement of colleagues
- Clear evidence of independence and thought leadership

- Contribution to the research and innovation landscape, including realisation of short-term impacts of the original proposal
- Demonstrate an ability to be a clear communicator and disseminator of knowledge and innovation, able to inspire and lead others; and ability to develop new relationships and influence across multiple disciplines and sectors
- A broad understanding of the research / innovation landscape at both the national and international level and clarity on how their research / innovation will contribute to it
- Progress against the aims and objectives of the original proposal

## 4. Completing the Review Form

This is a UKRI scheme, hosted by the Medical Research Council (MRC) for system purposes. Please ignore the MRC logo.

All sections of the review must be completed and all assessment factors in each section must be commented on. Do not enter 'N/A' for any section, except the 'Continued Professional Development and other commitments' section if the applicant is being hosted by a business. Doing so may result in the review being returned to you for amendment or being considered unusable.

### 4.1. Declaration of Interest

**Before you complete a review, please ensure that you do not have a conflict of interest with the proposal.** The number one reason for a received review being considered unusable is because of a conflict of interest, so we request that you make yourself familiar with the policy available at [Annex B](#) and inform us before writing the review if you have or suspect any conflicts of interest with the proposal you have been asked to review by email to [flfrenewal@ukri.org](mailto:flfrenewal@ukri.org).

UKRI, as a publicly funded organisation, is accountable to the Government and the public for its actions and the way it conducts its business. UKRI has a conflicts of interest policy in place to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved in providing it with knowledge and advice and to reduce the risk of impropriety or any perception of impropriety. This section is not shared with the fellow.

### 4.2. Fellow and their Development to Date

Please comment on the fellow and their development during the fellowship considering their:

- **Current research and/or innovation standing relative to their career stage** – Whether they have clearly evidenced that they are of the highest standard considering where they are currently in their research and/or innovation career.
- **Trajectory towards becoming a world-class research and/or innovation leader** – Whether they have actively taken opportunities to develop themselves as a leader (e.g. through network building, collaborative work in the UK or abroad, or in partner organisations in the private, public and civil society sectors) and whether their current progress is enough to reasonably ensure a long-term research and/or innovation career path beyond the end of the fellowship.
- **Understanding of the research/innovation landscape both nationally and internationally** – Whether they have demonstrated a broad understanding of their area and how clear they are on what short-term impacts their research and/or innovation has had on it.
- **Level of independence and thought leadership** – Whether this is beyond the level normally expected of their current position and their current ability to be a clear communicator and disseminator of knowledge and innovation, able to inspire and lead others; and their ability to develop new relationships and influence across multiple disciplines and sectors.
- **Support and development of team members so far, if applicable** – If the fellow has led a team or any individuals during the fellowship, whether they have done anything to foster their growth and help further their careers.

When assessing fellows undertaking their fellowship within a business, please also consider that:

- Fellows may not have a comparable publication record to a fellow from academia and may

demonstrate their involvement in trade publications, patents, etc. Business fellows should not be penalised if they have a limited number of or no publications.

#### 4.3. Proposed Development of the Fellow

Please comment on the fellow's plans to continue their development during the renewal period considering:

- **Their ability to carry out the proposed extension** – Whether they have the necessary level of skills, knowledge and experience to take forward the proposed extension.
- **Further training and development plans for themselves and, if applicable, for team members** – Whether they have identified opportunities to access career development support, mentorship and relevant training courses that will underpin their future career ambitions and learning, supporting not only the programme but also their broader professional development and that of their team.
- **Appropriateness of proposed and continuing placements or collaborations** – Whether they have demonstrated the ability to choose and develop appropriate collaborations and networks nationally, internationally or across disciplines that add value to the development of the fellow.
- **Appropriateness of their career aspirations (relative to their career stage) and how the fellowship will allow them to achieve these** – Whether their career intentions are realistic and whether they have described how the proposed extension will continue to have a demonstrable impact of their career trajectory and provide added value, over standard grant support.

#### 4.4. Programme of Work to Date

Please comment on the importance, competitiveness and impact of the research and/or innovation to date, including:

- **The quality of the research and/or innovation work to date** – Whether the excellence of the work carried out so far is well-evidenced and how much they have contributed to the Research and Innovation landscape.
- **Progress against the aims and objectives of the original proposal** – Whether the original goals have been achieved and, if not, whether the explanation for not achieving them is reasonable.
- **Evidence of realisation of the short-term impacts of the original proposal** – Whether they have demonstrated an understanding of the effect their project so far has had on their area and also the steps they have taken to maximise that impact.
- **How the fellow has responded to unforeseen challenges, if any** – Whether circumstances have forced the fellow to compensate for or reevaluate any part of the project and how well they have accomplished this.

#### 4.5. Proposed Programme of Work

Please comment on the importance, competitiveness and impact of the proposed research and/or innovation for the renewal period, including:

- **Strength of the research and/or innovation case** – How convincing the quality and excellence of the proposed research and/or innovation is and whether the additional support of an extension is needed to enable it, especially where the project is changing or has changed direction.
- **Importance, novelty and feasibility of the programme of work proposed** – Whether the proposal aligns with a specific priority area identified by UKRI, how strongly the

proposal fits within the aims for the area, how original proposed contributions will be alongside other proposals and activities in the same priority area, and how likely the work is to succeed.

- **Appropriateness and rigour of the methods and study designs** – Whether the methodology is robust and whether there is appropriate consideration of research and/or innovation reproducibility, openness, governance and ethical/social responsibility issues.
- **Whether the plans and scope of the programme justify additional support** – Whether plans to achieve the aims of the proposed extension are well understood and feasible and whether there is sufficient justification for the extension to achieve these aims above and beyond other funding options.
- **Overall potential of the renewed fellowship to establish or maintain a distinctive and outstanding research and/or innovation activity** – Whether the proposed extension is likely to be or remain competitive and whether plans to maintain competitiveness are well developed.
- **Importance and potential impact of the research/innovation for society and/or the economy** – Whether the potential short and/or long-term impacts, and how significant they are, are well articulated and whether plans for maximising impact (from the applicant and host organisation) are proportionate, timely and credible.

When assessing fellows undertaking their fellowship within a business, please also consider:

- Fellows may not be in a position to disclose commercially sensitive information and their proposal should not receive a lower score if this is the case. The excellence of the research and/or innovation must still be clearly conveyed.
- Business hosted fellowships may directly benefit the business and/or generate IP for business use; both outputs are acceptable under the Future Leaders Fellowships scheme and a business fellow should not be penalised in this situation.

#### 4.6. Host Organisation

Please comment on the commitment of the host organisation(s) where the fellowship has been based to realise the potential of the fellow, including:

- **Evidence of support provided to date for the fellow and their programme of work** – Whether the host organisation(s) have supported opportunities for development as impactful and influential research and/or innovation leaders (e.g. time for work in other environments, developing international links, development of new skills, mentoring and professional training and development, and relevant training courses).
- **Support or plans to support the fellow in an open-ended role** – For academic fellows, whether confirmation of an open-ended UK based independent research and/or innovation position, that the fellow has been successful in securing, has been highlighted. If an open-ended position has not yet been secured, whether the commitment from the Host Organisation(s) and the progress the fellow has made towards securing an open-ended position, to be taken up during or upon the completion of the renewal fellowship, has been detailed (in line with organisational employment policies and practices).
- **Whether there is a demonstrable commitment from supervisors, mentors and host organisation(s) to establish the fellow as a research and/or innovation leader** – Whether the fellow has secured the backing of an institution that is prepared to host them/the business that employs them and the level of commitment to realising the potential of the fellow (e.g. plans for supporting the fellow's programme of work; enabling the time commitment needed; ensuring access to space, equipment/facilities, other resources and other relevant programmes and ability to enable the fellow to maximise the social/economic impact of their work.).
- **Consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion in support of the fellow and, if applicable, their wider team** – Whether considerations have been made to ensure

assistance and support is provided regardless of background or any protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act (2010), such as using the fellowship's provision for flexible working.

#### 4.7. Continued Professional Development (Academic host)

Academia hosted fellows can spend up to 50% of their time on non-FLF renewal project related career-development activities. Please comment on:

- **The appropriateness of these non-FLF related commitments** – Whether sufficient justification has been made that each additional commitment will contribute to the development of the fellow into a future leader.
- **How these activities support the professional and career development of the fellow as a leader** – How the fellow will be developed both within the Host Organisation and more widely.
- **Whether proposed time spent on these commitments/ activities is realistic** – Whether the amount of time spent on these activities is enough to be valuable, but that there will still be appropriate time left to achieve the desired outcomes of the fellowship.
- **The added value to be gained from the fellowship alongside these commitments** – Whether the continuing benefits the fellow will receive from FLF funding alongside the time spent at these additional activities is still clear, as opposed to the benefits gained from standard project grant support.

Whilst fellows can spend time on non-FLF activities, this is not mandatory, and fellows should not be penalised for having no additional activities on their application. For these proposals, please enter N/A on the form.

Subsidy Control rules mean that, for business-hosted fellows, it is not possible to fund salary costs for activities outside of the fellowship, so please enter N/A for them.

#### 4.8. Ethics and Data Management

Please comment on any ethical and/or research governance issues, including:

- **Whether the proposed research/innovation is ethically acceptable in relation to risks to humans, animals or the environment** – Whether there are any ethical considerations that have not been adequately addressed including (where applicable): the need to use animals and lack of realistic alternatives; evaluation of the scientific strengths and weaknesses of proposed animal use, and plans to obtain ethical approval from the relevant bodies.
- **If applicable, whether the Data Management Plan indicates the fellows have a sound plan for managing the data funded through the award and in the long-term** – Whether the plans for data management during the fellowship and beyond have been sufficiently considered and are feasible including: the methodologies for data collection/generation; storing and curating data; data repository, and suitability for sharing.

When assessing fellows undertaking their fellowship within a business, please also consider:

- Businesses hosted fellows may be under commercial constraints with regard to data sharing. A fellow should not be penalised for abiding by their organisational policies and practices on data management.

## 4.9. Resources Requested

Please comment on:

- **Whether funds requested are appropriately justified to deliver the proposed renewal project, highlighting any costs that you feel may be excessive, inappropriate or insufficiently justified** – Whether all funds have been addressed in the Justification of Resources and whether the justification for these funds is clearly described and appropriate.
- **Whether the proposal demonstrates value for money in terms of the resources requested** – Whether funds requested for the next three years for the project plan and management arrangements are proportionate to the scale and complexity of the activity to be undertaken.
- **Whether any animal use is fully justified in terms of need, species, number and conformance to guidelines** – Refer to [Annex C](#) for information.

When assessing fellows undertaking their fellowship within a business, please also consider:

- Business hosted applications are subject to different funding regulations to academic hosted applications. You should not comment or score an application based on the percentage contribution requested as this is pre-determined by legal requirements.
- Business hosted applications do not enter their costings in Je-S when submitting their application. Instead, business-based fellows will have completed a 'Finance Form for Business Applicants' to indicate their costings.

## 4.10. Reviewer Expertise

Recognising the potential multidisciplinary nature of the applications, you should, without specifically identifying yourself, comment on your areas of expertise and experience and indicate whether you have provided comment on the whole of the application or specific portions, indicating which sections of the proposal you have provided comment on. This section is not shared with the fellow.

For business applications, if you do not feel able to confidently review the commercial aspects, please indicate that here and only comment on the portion of the proposal that is relevant to your expertise.

## 4.11. Overall Assessment

Having provided comment against each of the above headings, please also provide a score for the proposal as detailed in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Overall Assessment Score descriptions

Score	Overall Assessment
1	This proposal is scientifically or technically flawed
2	This proposal does not meet one or more of the assessment factors
3	This proposal meets all assessment factors but with clear weaknesses
4	This is a good proposal that meets all assessment factors but with minor weaknesses
5	This is a strong proposal that broadly meets all assessment factors
6	This is a very strong proposal that fully meets all assessment factors



Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the scheme, there are no specific guidelines or examples for what a proposal needs to do to achieve each score and instead you should score a proposal based on which assessment description best matches your overall comments.

Additionally, this score will not directly affect whether a proposal is successful or unsuccessful; all proposals will be reviewed by the panel regardless of the reviews' scores.

## 5. What Happens Next

Renewal applications are assessed by a minimum of two independent experts who provide peer review comments. The FLF Team will assess your review to confirm that it meets all of the necessary criteria. You may receive a request to amend your review if not and will have 5 working days to amend it. Failure to amend the review means that it may not be used to assess the application.

A moderating panel will then consider the application based on the fellowship's progression to date and proposed plans for the renewal against the [FLF renewal assessment criteria](#) and provide feedback to the applicant.

The renewal will be awarded following peer review and the moderating panel if there is a prima facie case for progression, that the fellow has demonstrated in their proposal.

If a prima facie case for renewal is not agreed, a further formal discussion will be required. This will be with both the fellow, and separately, potentially the associated host organisation (Head of Department or equivalent) to determine whether or not the renewal award is made.

The prima facie should demonstrate the following:

- Clear evidence of fellow development and leadership during the fellowship to date
- Contribution to the research and innovation landscape, including realisation of short-term impacts of the original proposal and how the fellow has responded to unforeseen challenges
- A distinctive and outstanding research or innovation project, with robust methodology
- That the fellow articulates a continued route to realise potential and clearly demonstrates the added value of continuing the fellowship mechanism of support
- That the host organisation has confirmed that an open-ended contract has been attained or described a definite route to an open-ended contract, which will be attainable by the completion of the fellowship.

For a full breakdown of the entire assessment process, please refer to [Annex D](#).

Any reviewer that has provided a usable review received by UKRI from 23 November 2020 via Je-S, can get 'review credits' to their Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) account. This is an anonymous recognition of the reviewer's contribution to UKRI peer review each year. These contributions are uploaded to ORCID six times a year, but will not show in your ORCID account until at least 30 days after a funding decision has been made on the proposal reviewed.

To receive these, you must have both a Je-S and ORCID account and have linked your ORCID account to your Je-S account.

For more information, please visit the [UKRI website](#).



## 6. Queries

If you have any queries about the review process or concerns regarding your written review, please contact the FLF team via either:

Email: [flfrenewal@ukri.org](mailto:flfrenewal@ukri.org)

Further guidance on using Je-S can be found on the [Je-S handbook](#), or by contacting them directly via either:

Email: [je-shelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:je-shelp@je-s.ukri.org)

Phone: 01793 44 4164

## Annex A Assessment Criteria

### Scheme objectives

- To develop, retain, attract and sustain research and innovation talent in the UK
- To foster new research and innovation career paths including those at the academic/business and interdisciplinary boundaries, and facilitate movement of people between sectors
- To provide sustained funding and resources for the best early career researchers and innovators
- To provide long-term, flexible funding to tackle difficult and novel challenges, and support adventurous, ambitious programmes.

### Factors assessed

Across all four factors assessed (below) a key issue will be whether the added value of continuing the fellowship mechanism of support is clearly demonstrated – e.g. the continuing benefits from the scale, flexibility and duration of the fellowship funding offered is clear, as opposed to the benefits gained from standard project grant support. For business applications, consideration of the added value will include, for example, whether the previous outputs are maximised and whether the levels of risk involved in the project mean that the fellowship is continuing to support beyond the normal activity of the business.

Factor	What the assessment will look for:
<b>Research &amp; Innovation Excellence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence of the research and innovation of the fellowship's programme of work to date and of proposed programme of further work</li> <li>• Progress against the aims and objectives of the original proposal</li> <li>• Importance, novelty and feasibility of the programme of work proposed for the renewal period</li> <li>• Robust methodology and appropriate consideration of research and innovation reproducibility, openness<sup>1</sup>, governance and ethical/social responsibility issues</li> <li>• Overall potential of the renewed fellowship to establish or maintain a distinctive and outstanding research/innovation activity</li> </ul>
<b>Fellow &amp; their Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear evidence of development during the fellowship to date and evidence the fellow is of the highest standard relative to their career stage and on a trajectory to become world-class</li> <li>• For non-business based fellows any proposed non-FLF project activities are appropriate and add value to the development of the fellow</li> <li>• Clear evidence of independence and thought leadership, which may go beyond the level normally expected of their current position</li> <li>• Demonstrate an ability to be a clear communicator and</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> For business hosted fellowships UKRI still supports the principle of open access for a project which has specifically identified a requirement to publish outcomes as a route to dissemination. This requirement should be included within a project's collaboration agreement. It should also follow the guidelines contained in the [UKRI policy on open access](#).

	<p>disseminator of knowledge and innovation, able to inspire and lead others; and ability to develop new relationships and influence across multiple disciplines and sectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A broad understanding of the research / innovation landscape at both the national and international level and clarity on how their research/innovation will contribute to it</li> <li>• A clear plan to support the further training and development of the fellow (and, if applicable, their team) and for gaining advice or mentorship over the renewal period; supporting not only the research programme but also their broader career and professional development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact &amp; Strategic Relevance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of realisation of the short-term impacts of the original proposal</li> <li>• Importance and potential impact of the research/innovation for society and/or the economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are the potential further short or long-term impacts, and how significant are they?</li> <li>○ Are the pathways to achieving this impact well understood, and are the plans for maximising impact (from the fellow and host organisation) proportionate, timely, and credible?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Where the Fellowship renewal aligns with a specific priority area identified by UKRI, the assessment will also address how strongly the proposal fits with the aims for the area; and what it will contribute alongside other proposals and activities in the same priority area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research and Innovation Environment &amp; Costs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host has provided the support outlined in the original application, or as outlined by any head of department (or equivalent) statement in support of a fellow moving host, and already supports the fellow in an open-ended role or has described a definite path to an open-ended role for the fellow prior to or on completion of the renewal period</li> <li>• A demonstrable commitment from the host organisation to realising the potential of the fellow; and establishing them as a research / innovation leader</li> <li>• Consideration has been given to equality, diversity and inclusion aims of UKRI in support for the fellow and, if applicable, their wider team, and in using the Fellowship's provision for flexible working</li> <li>• Plans for supporting the fellow's programme of work; enabling the time commitment needed; ensuring access to space, equipment/facilities, other resources and other relevant programmes; and enabling the fellow to maximise the social / economic impact of their work</li> <li>• Funding requested is appropriate and fully justified</li> <li>• The project plan and management arrangements are proportionate to the scale and complexity of the activity to be undertaken</li> </ul>

## **Annex B Conflicts of Interest**

UKRI defines a conflict of interest as a set of circumstances that creates a risk that an individual's ability to apply judgement or act in one role is, or could be, impaired or influenced by a secondary interest. Even a perception of competing interests, impaired judgement or undue influence may be damaging to UKRI's reputation.

As a reviewer for the Future Leaders Fellowships scheme, a conflict of interest occurs if you:

### **Relationship with fellow(s):**

- Have a close family relationship (e.g. spouse, partner, parent, sibling, child, in-law) or share a household with any individual named on the proposal.
- Have an existing close business or professional relationship with any individual named on the proposal.
- Have had a PhD/PhD Supervisor relationship with any individual named on the proposal within the last five years.
- Have collaborated on a research project and/or have co-published with any individual named on the proposal in the last three years.
- Are directly involved in the work that the fellow proposes to carry out and/or have assisted the fellow with their application for funding.

### **Organisational conflict:**

- Are a current, visiting or honorary member of staff or a Professor Emeritus/Emerita at the same research organisation as any individual named on the proposal.
- Are at a past research organisation or have recently moved from the current organisation of any individual named on the proposal.
- Are at the same research organisation as another reviewer on the proposal.
- Are at a research organisation that is named as a project partner on the proposal or is the same organisation as that of a visiting researcher on the proposal.
- Have a vested interest, or stand to gain a financial or professional advantage from a particular outcome for an application which they are asked to review.

### **Current involvement with UK Research and Innovation:**

- Have submitted a proposal to the same round of the scheme as the application which they have been asked to review.
- Have been approached and agreed to be a member of a committee connected with a research project, for example an advisory group or steering committee.
- Are a member of the panel for which the application is being moderated.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive, if you are in doubt whether or not you should assess a proposal due to a conflict of interest please contact the Future Leaders Fellowships Team before completing the review at [fellowsppeerreview@ukri.org](mailto:fellowsppeerreview@ukri.org).

## Annex C Animal use

### Use of animals

The elaboration of a compelling research or innovation case is an essential prerequisite for justifying the use of animals. Over the past few years there have been a number of important initiatives that have been aimed at raising the sometimes-inadequate standard of reporting of animal experiments in scientific literature. The National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement & Reduction of Animals in Research's (NC3Rs) ARRIVE guidelines, for example, lay out criteria that should be met in reporting animal studies in order that their results and conclusions can be appropriately evaluated by readers. These criteria address a range of issues relating to transparency and validity of experimental design, the avoidance or minimisation of bias and the adequacy of statistical aspects of the study including statistical power and appropriate statistical analysis.

In light of these initiatives UKRI has revised and updated its guidelines on what information needs to be provided to allow appropriate and thorough evaluation of the scientific strengths and weaknesses of proposals for funding involving animal use. In some cases, adherence to the principles defined in this section will require additional resources e.g. for animal identification such as 'microchipping', increased maintenance charges resulting from the randomisation procedure, or salary costs associated with obtaining statistical support. We recognise this and will support such costs where fully justified in the appropriate sections.

The NC3Rs has developed [guidance](#) for fellows when choosing contractors for animal research and the expectations of UK public funders, including a [presentation](#) detailing the information that fellows should provide.

All applications involving the use of non-human primates, cats, dogs, pigs and equines will be referred to the NC3Rs via their peer review service. In some circumstances, applications involving the use of other species may also be referred at the discretion of UKRI.

### Home Office licences and ethical and welfare standards

Experiments using animals must comply with the [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986 \(ASPA\)](#), amended 2012 and any further embodiments. Institutions and grant holders are responsible for ensuring that all appropriate establishment, personal and project licences required under the Act have been granted by the Home Office, including gaining approval via their institution's local ethical review process. All awards are made on the absolute condition that no work that is controlled by the Act will begin until the necessary licences have been obtained.

In addition, fellows must ensure that they are following best practice in relation to animal husbandry and welfare. Where proposed work is not covered under an existing ASPA project license, fellows should make certain that their proposals are received by their local Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB), prior to submission and ensure that any ethical or welfare implications raised are addressed.

## **Replacement, reduction and refinement of animal experiments**

Fellows are expected to have developed their applications in accordance with the cross funder guidance for the use of animals in research: [Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research](#) and [NC3Rs Guidelines: Primate Accommodation, Care and Use](#).

Experiments using animals funded by UKRI must comply with ASPA in:

- Using the simplest possible, or least sentient, species of animal appropriate.
- Ensuring that distress and pain are avoided wherever possible.
- Employing an appropriate design and using the minimum number of animals consistent with ensuring that objectives of the proposal will be met.

Advice on opportunities and techniques for implementing these principles can be found on the [NC3Rs website](#). This includes the [Experimental Design Assistant \(EDA\)](#), a free online tool from the NC3Rs to help optimise experimental design and ensure that the number of animals used is consistent with the objectives of the proposal.

## **Proposals involving animal use**

Fellows are strongly advised to read the following section carefully before preparing a proposal to ensure all the relevant information required is included in the appropriate sections of their application. Fellows should ensure their proposal clearly sets out and justifies the following:

- Research objectives and how the knowledge generated will advance the field.
- The need to use animals and lack of realistic alternatives.
- Choice of species of animals to be used.
- Type of animal(s), for example, strain, pathogen free, genetically modified or mutant.
- Planned experimental design and its justification.
- Numbers of animals and frequency of measurements/interventions to be used.
- Primary outcomes to be assessed.
- Planned statistical analyses.

Fellows proposing to use animals must complete the following sections of the Je-S form:

### **Animal Costs**

Detailing the costs associated with the purchase, breeding and maintenance of each species of animal.

### **Animal Research**

Detailing any procedures categorised as moderate or severe (in accordance with the maximum prospective severity rating in the Home Office licence under which the work will be carried out) in order that the assessment of the proposal can balance the importance of the potential scientific advancement to the welfare of the animals.

## **Animal Species**

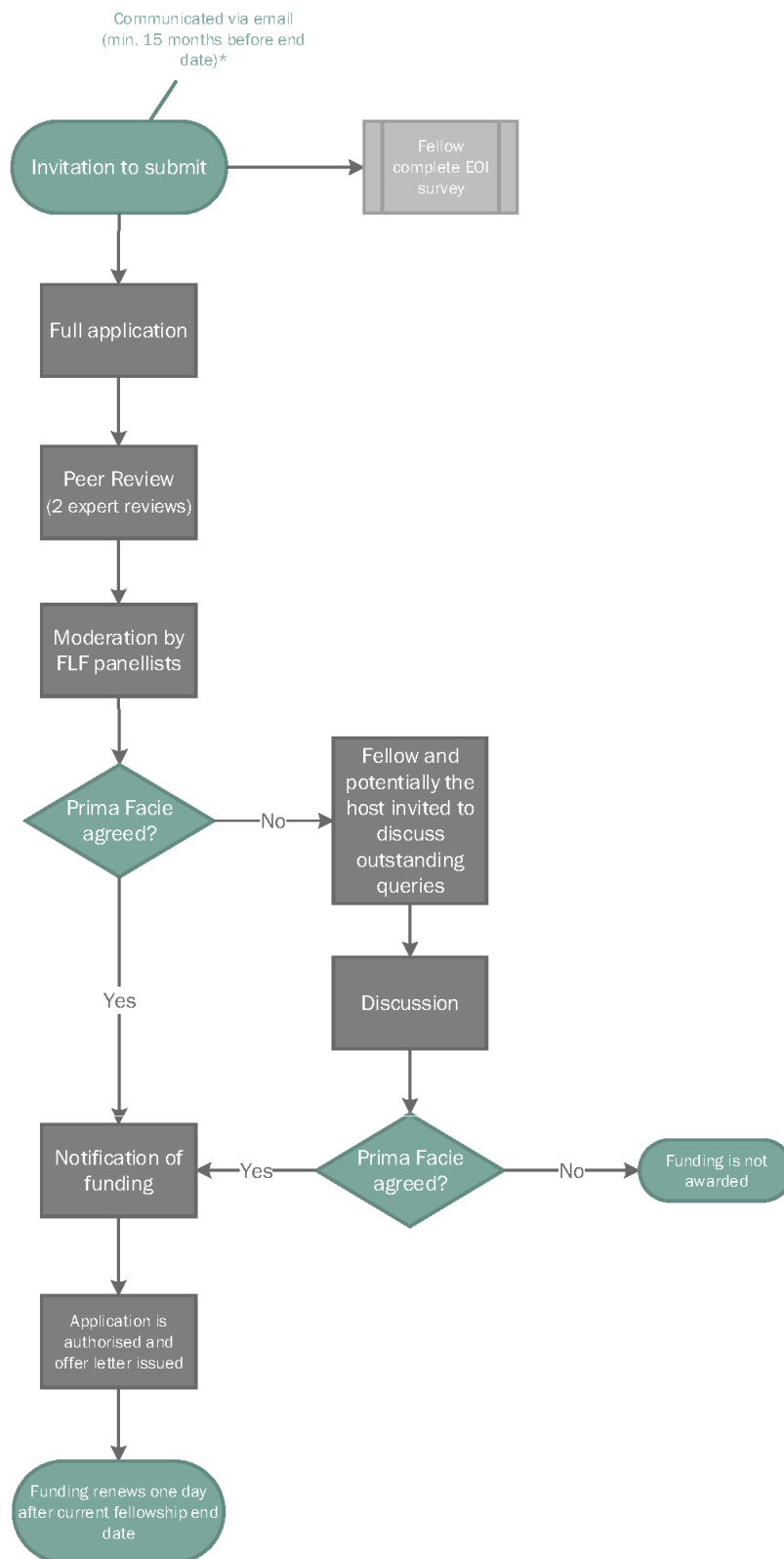
Detailing scientific reasons for the use of animals and an explanation as to why there are no realistic alternatives must be given, with an explanation of how the choice of species complies with ASPA.

## **Use of animals overseas**

If the proposal involves the use of animals overseas, fellows must submit a signed statement (uploaded as a Letter of Support to the Je-S application) from both UK and overseas partners confirming that:

- They will adhere to all relevant national and local regulatory systems in the UK and overseas.
- They will follow the guidelines laid out in the NC3Rs' [Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research](#) document and ensure work is carried out to UK standards.
- Before initiation of the proposed work, appropriate approvals from Organisational and/or central animal ethics committees will be obtained for experimental protocols to be adopted in their projects. Successful fellows may be expected to provide copies of these permissions before funding is released.
- Details on where the animal research will take place (UK or overseas) and through which funder the resources are being sought.

## Annex D Overview of the Assessment Process



\*Note the end date **includes** any no cost extensions.  
If a one year extension is requested, the renewal will be postponed by one year.  
The renewal must not be used in place of no cost extensions.



## Annex E How to Write a Good Review

Good reviews are invaluable in helping the panel make funding decisions for the FLF scheme. They also provide constructive feedback to fellows in order to help them improve their research, and you should bear in mind how your review will be used. Your review will be fed back anonymously to the fellow, who will have an opportunity to respond to the questions you raise. Panel members will also use your comments and score to help them in their assessment.

### Do:

- Read and address all the of the FLF scheme's [Assessment Criteria](#).
- Reflect on the final written review and assign an appropriate overall assessment score based on the score descriptors.
- Be objective and professional – comments should be evidence-based.
- Provide clear and concise comments.
- Clearly identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Provide justification for your comments and grade, whether you are supportive of the proposal or not.
- Be aware that not everyone reading the comment will be a specialist in that field.
- Be aware of the impact of unconscious bias.
- Consider the added value of the FLF award to the candidate's career trajectory.
- Keep a back-up of your comments in case of a system timeout or error.

### Don't:

- Make it personal.
- Use an emotive or confrontational tone or language.
- Reiterate the proposal or re-state the assessment questions.
- Include anything in the assessment that will identify you, such as references to your own work, where you have worked or who you have worked with.
- Be too brief, even if you deem the application very strong.
- Use Journal-based metrics to measure quality.
- Allow your review to be influenced by bias for your own field of research.
- Exceed the space restriction in Je-S (which is 4000 characters per section) or the rest of your review will be lost.

## Questions to ask yourself

- How important are the research questions, or gaps in knowledge, that would be addressed?
- Are the researchers up to the job? Do they have the right team, experience and infrastructure?
- Have you appropriately considered any unequal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic described by the applicant?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses?
- Is the methodology and experimental design clearly set out and justified? Are the methods appropriate? What could they do better? Are there alternative approaches?
- Are there major flaws or weaknesses?
- Are there any ethical issues?
- Does this proposal represent good value for money?

## Helpful and Unhelpful Comments

*“Excellent application – must be funded”* – Sparse comment offering no context. Comments of this quality are of little assistance to the moderation panel.

*“This is a very important and timely application. However, I am concerned that the project may not success as it depends critically upon one technique, with which the applicant has little expertise and requires a resolution level never previously reported. Can they demonstrate they can actually obtain these measurements?”* – A strong comment that makes a compelling point. It raises and explains a concern so that its nature and importance are both clear to the panel and also to the applicant in terms of how they need to respond.

*“This is a strong applicant, however multiple career breaks have affected their publication output and the few publications they do have are all in low-impact journals”* – The FLF scheme allows applicants from a variety of backgrounds including those who have taken career breaks and this should not be held against them. Additionally, UKRI has signed [DORA](#) and do comments relating to journal impact factors cannot be accepted either.

*“This is an excellent application in an important area and the combination of experimental and theoretical methods is a key strength. However, the work plan lacks detail leaving me unclear if work package three is needed. I also doubt whether work package four can be fully completed, but I do not think that is a big issue. The impact has been well-described and excellent collaborators identified. A minor point is that the travel costs sought seem to be based on a higher level of visits than required for the meetings scheduled.”* – Applications will have both strengths and weaknesses. This comment highlights both, indicates their relative importance and, where appropriate, balances them one against another. This gives the panel a lot of information to help them in coming to a decision.

*“Application is studying the economic situation in coastal areas, however I don’t think this is a worthy area of research or that they should be receiving any funding”* – This is a clear example of personal bias unrelated to the application and would not only be disregarded as a comment, but the entire review would also be marked as unusable as there would be no guarantee the rest of the review is unbiased.

## Annex F Applying for a Fellowship on Job-Share Basis

Fellows may apply to hold a fellowship as a job share, or transfer to a job share if appropriate at the renewal stage as one of the mechanisms through which UKRI supports applications from those wishing to combine the fellowship with personal responsibilities.

Please take the following into consideration when completing your review:

- **Research & Innovation Excellence** – This should include assessment of the fellows' joint track record in producing outstanding research or innovation. The proposed research or innovation activity should be a single coherent programme rather than separate activities.
- **Fellow & their development** – The fellows should both be recognised in their research/innovation community, as well as being ambassadors and advocates for their field. The fellows should both demonstrate how they intend to use the fellowship to develop as future leaders, noting that their roles may be split somewhat depending on how their team may be structured.
- **Impact & Strategic Relevance** – No further considerations.
- **Research and Innovation Environment & Costs** – The Head of Department's Supporting Statement from the host organisation should indicate that they are committed to supporting this joint arrangement and the careers of both fellows, as well as describing the commitment to open-ended positions for both fellows following completion of the fellowship. It should be clear how the fellowship and any associated staff will be jointly managed by the fellows.

Applications from those wishing to hold a Future Leaders Fellowship on a job-share basis are encouraged as one of the mechanisms through which UKRI supports applications from those wishing to combine the fellowship with personal responsibilities.

There may be times when an application for a fellowship as a job-share might be right for potential candidates.

Reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Timeliness i.e. where a full-time equivalent fellow is required to ensure that time-critical research and innovation can be completed within a shorter timescale than a part-time fellowship would allow.
- An existing job-share i.e. where researchers and/or innovators are already working within a job-share that they wish to maintain.

Fellows must be able to demonstrate why they and the proposed programme of research and/or innovation would not be better served by two part-time fellowships.

A job-share fellowship should not be considered because a PI does not currently have the full skill set to undertake the fellowship. In these instances, a Co-Investigator who brings complementary and different skills to the project can be included as part of the fellowship award for a time limited period while the fellow develops their skills in the areas covered.

**1) Is the expectation that the two individuals job sharing a fellowship have very similar skills and experiences, or is the expectation that their experience and skills should be complementary?**

Most job-shares are between individuals with similar skills and experience. Job-shares should not be used to upskill a fellow who requires complementary and different skills in order to

complete the project. Such upskilling should be achieved through the fellowship and is supported through the ability to include a time-limited Co-Investigator.

The fellows should make clear in their application the skills and experience of both applicants, and why they are applying via a job-share arrangement and not two separate part-time applications. It must also be stated in the application Cover Letter that the fellowship is being applied for as a job-share.

Please note that the Je-S form will list job-share fellowship fellows as Principal and Co-Investigator. This is entirely due to the limitations of our systems. The Co-PIs should have equal responsibility for the overall fellowship and programme of research and/or innovation. In addition, the joint fellows should be able to demonstrate a clear plan to support their own (and if applicable, their team) training and development needs. A plan should be in place for each of the joint fellows as part of the proposal.

This does not mean that the Co-PIs both have to have involvement in every aspect of the programme of research and/or innovation. For example, in terms of publications or other outcomes that result from the fellowship it may be that one Co-PI has more involvement in particular aspects than the other so we would not mandate that both Co-PIs have to have identical credit for these.

## **2) How do fellows apply as a job-share fellowship?**

Fellows are recommended to contact the FLF team before applying on a job-share basis.

Only one application is required. Due to the limitations of Je-S it is not possible to have joint Principal Investigators (PIs) on the application so the joint fellows (Co-PIs) will be a notional PI (the 'Fellow') and a Co-I. Throughout the review and assessment process it will be made clear that the joint fellows should be treated as Co-PIs and as such the fellows will be considered on equal terms with neither candidate considered the 'lead' or 'primary' PI apart from for system administrative purposes.

## **3) What guidance do reviewers get when considering job-share proposals?**

Noting that job-share fellowships are non-standard and that members of the research and innovation community may not have reviewed such proposals before, additional feedback is provided to those carrying out the external peer review of proposals and for those sitting on the Sift and Interview Assessment Panels.

This guidance:

1. Makes it clear that fellows are joint Principal Investigators
2. States that the:
  - a. consideration of the Research & Innovation Excellence and the Impact & Strategic Relevance assessment criteria need to include assessment of how the proposed project forms a single coherent programme rather than separate activities
  - b. consideration of the Fellow and their Development assessment criteria needs to consider both fellows jointly
  - c. consideration of the Research and Innovation Environment & Costs assessment criteria needs to consider the commitment of the host organisation to the development and establishment of both fellows, and how the host will support

the proposed programme of work as a whole

Additional guidance for those sitting on Interview Panels will also be available. This will make clear that both fellows will be attending the interview and that questions should be addressed to both fellows. Furthermore, it will be stated that that the fellow's joint Full Time Equivalent (FTE) spent on the Fellowship will be between the 0.5 and 1 required of a standard Fellowship.

## Annex G Career Breaks and Flexible Working

The assessment of fellowship applications frequently involves appraisal of the applicant's track record. In making this appraisal, review panels take into account time spent outside the active research / innovation environment, whether through career breaks or flexible working.

### Definitions

**Career breaks** are defined as a substantive period of time spent outside research/innovation. Reasons may include\* the following:

- Personal reasons
- Trying out a new career
- Parental leave
- Ill health, injury or disability
- Caring/domestic responsibilities
- Study/training/further education

**Flexible working** describes any working arrangement where the number of hours worked, or the time that work is undertaken, vary from standard practice and could include\* the following:

- Reduction in full time hours
- Long-term partial return to work
- Job sharing
- Compressed working hours
- Term-time only working
- Annualised hours

### Guidance for review panels

In assessing the effects of career breaks or flexible working, panels will note the applicant's career trajectory and potential at the beginning of a break, relative to the stage of the applicant's career. In assessing applicants, panels will recognise that the effects on productivity of a career break, or a period of flexible working, may continue beyond the return to work.

The following areas may be affected\*:

- Presentation and publication record
- Patents filed
- Track record of securing funding, including time to obtain preliminary data
- Maintaining networks of research / innovation contacts and collaborations
- Recruitment of staff
- Time required for training
- The ability to take up opportunities in different geographical locations
- The ability to take up courses, sabbaticals, 'visits', placements and secondments

## Guidance for applicants

Applicants should make clear any substantive periods of absence from research/innovation within their application. Further details on the nature of the absence and how it has affected track record, productivity and career progression may be provided if desired<sup>2</sup>. Information provided will be used only to make appropriate adjustments when assessing an individual's track record, productivity and career progression.

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<sup>2</sup> The information provided in response to this question helps UKRI in assessing how effective our policies and procedures are in promoting equal opportunities. This information may be used anonymously for statistical purposes and any publication would be on aggregate level. The information is treated in confidence and in line with the UKRI's data protection procedures.

\*Lists are not exhaustive