



UK Research and Innovation

Dear Higher Education Institutions,

June 2022 - Future Leaders Fellowships, Round 7

Minister Freeman recently announced continued support to the UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships (FLF) programme, which aims to develop the next wave of world-class research and innovation leaders in academia and business. [Round 7](#) of the FLF programme is now announced and it is expected that a Round 8 will follow.

With this exciting news, we want to share information to help prospective host organisations that are supporting applications to Round 7.

Host organisation prioritisation of applications: The FLF programme is highly competitive, with increasing numbers of applications in previous rounds leading to the extension of timelines and an increased peer review burden on our research and innovation community. In order to be able to administrate this funding opportunity in a timely manner, the number of applications which can be submitted by each academic host organisation to Round 7 is capped – see Annex A of the [FLF Guidance for Applicants for more information](#).

We continue to encourage a diversity of applicants applying to the programme and host organisations play a critical role in ensuring that all potential applicants have a fair chance of being supported through a transparent selection process based on ability and potential. Host organisations are therefore asked to provide a statement describing the inclusive process they have used to select their chosen applicants by completing an online survey before the submission of any outline proposals to UKRI. Further guidance is provided within the FLF Guidance for Applicants, published online.

FLF Peer Review and Panel Colleges: The assessment of applications received to the FLF is reliant on our community, and for the past 6 rounds we are very grateful to have been supported by our Peer Review and Panel College members. As we approach Round 7, we will be advertising opportunities for members of the community to join these colleges; we strongly encourage those organisations submitting applications to also support the peer review efforts.

Eligibility of applicants: As per previous rounds, we have deliberately not restricted the definition of 'early career' to ensure that the programme is open to applicants from non-traditional backgrounds and is accessible from a diversity of career paths and experiences within the R&I system. We have always stated that applicants who have already achieved research/innovation independence will not be competitive, and that senior academics and innovators are not eligible for the programme.

Becoming established and independent does not happen at a fixed point. We have noted that applicants who are further towards being established and independent have become less competitive as the programme has progressed.

Disciplinary split of applications: Applications are welcome **from the entirety of the UKRI remit**, and we have not seen a difference in the award rates between applications from different disciplines. We welcome and encourage applicants from **all disciplines** including the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and the [seven technology families](#), as launched in the UK's innovation strategy. We currently support ambitious awards that range in financial magnitude from £300k to over £1.5m.

What a FLF can offer: The scale and flexibility offered by the FLF programme supports adventurous and ambitious research programmes and can facilitate interdisciplinary and cross-sector working. Approximately 45% of awarded fellows are undertaking projects that span the remits of multiple UKRI Councils.

We would like to remind host organisations that these fellowships continue to support applicants from diverse career paths, including those returning from a career break or following time in other roles, and candidates coming from overseas. The fellowships can be held part-time to combine with personal responsibilities or as a job-share.

Host Support: Host support requirements remain unchanged. For full information on these commitments, please see the application guidance. Beyond the minimum requirements on salaries/open-ended roles, there is no 'standard' offering for Fellows and our assessment of the commitment from the host will take this into account.

Deadlines and support: The deadline for Round 7 proposals is 6 December 2022 with a mandatory outline submission deadline of 18 October 2022.

We are holding an online and in-person engagement events for host organisations (not applicants) on 12, 13 and 14 July in London, Cardiff and Edinburgh. Further information, including an opportunity to register your attendance, will be published on our [webpage](#).

Thank you for your ongoing engagement with this programme and the support that you provide to applicants. If you have any questions or feedback, please email fellows@ukri.org.

Best Wishes,
Stephen Meader
Director, Future Leaders Fellowships