



# Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

## 1. DISCOVERY FELLOWSHIP TERMS OF AWARD

- 1.1 The terms and conditions applying to the fellowship grant are those applying to UKRI-BBSRC research grants unless otherwise stated: see [BBSRC Guidance for applicants](#).
- 1.2 Successful applicants and their employing institutions will be informed at the outset of the level of the research support grant which UKRI-BBSRC will provide.
- 1.3 Discovery fellowships are awarded for a period of three years subject to satisfactory progress.

### Employment status

- 1.4 Fellows must be employed by the host research organisation for the duration of the fellowship. The employing institution is required to give an undertaking to this effect as part of the proposal.

### Financial arrangements

- 1.5 The funding to support a UKRI-BBSRC fellowship is normally provided to the institution which employs the fellow.

### Starting date

- 1.6 Applicants should ensure that the proposed start date is realistic, taking account of the period required for the office to process the proposal. **Please note**, awarded Fellows will be required to commence their fellowship on, or near to, the start date stipulated in their proposal, therefore applicants must ensure that they are able to do so. Requests to significantly alter the stated start date will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. All fellowships must start by 1<sup>st</sup> July at the latest following notification of an award.

### Use of data

- 1.7 Scientific titles and abstracts, and limited personal data from successful fellowship proposal forms are recorded in UKRI-BBSRC's databases for the purposes of administering the fellowship and the monitoring of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and on databases of research activities which are publicly available via the UKRI-BBSRC website. The information may be used in UKRI-BBSRC publications and for other reporting purposes. Fellows must notify UKRI-BBSRC in writing if they do not wish personal data or information that could affect intellectual property rights to be transferred to publicly available databases or to be used in publications. In these circumstances, fellows must provide alternative summaries of their fellowship which can be made publicly available.

## Simultaneous awards

- 1.8 Discovery fellowships may not be used to supplement, or be supplemented by, any other fellowship. If any other award is received or expected during the tenure of a Discovery fellowship, UKRI-BBSRC must be advised immediately so that an appropriate adjustment to the Discovery fellowship can be considered.

## Applying for research grants

- 1.9 Discovery Fellows are expected to devote the whole of their usual working time to the research programme approved by UKRI-BBSRC and are not permitted to apply for additional funding from other sources, including UKRI-BBSRC grant funding.

## UKRI-BBSRC studentships

- 1.10 Discovery fellows are not eligible to act as the primary supervisor on a UKRI-BBSRC studentship but can co-supervise students

## Reporting progress

- 1.11 Discovery fellows should ensure that their information and research outputs are entered into the researchfish® system ([www.researchfish.net](http://www.researchfish.net)) in a timely manner. Fellows are also required to submit annual updates of their progress throughout the fellowship which are considered by Committee E. As part of this process, comments are also required from Discovery fellows' host group Principal Investigator. Fellows must continue to update researchfish® with their outcomes for five years after the end date of their fellowship.
- 1.12 Discovery fellows are also required to complete a final progress update and an exit survey on completion of the fellowship; the relevant forms will be sent to them at the appropriate time. Details will be considered by Committee E and written advice provided to each fellow.
- 1.13 The exit survey, final progress update and final financial expenditure statement must be submitted **within three months** of completion of the fellowship. Failure to submit this may result in the recovery by UKRI-BBSRC of sums paid to the institution under the Discovery fellowship. UKRI-BBSRC will not consider any further proposals for funding from the fellow if the final update and/or the final financial expenditure statement remains outstanding.

## Extensions

- 1.14 Discovery fellows **must** contact UKRI-BBSRC Office for advice prior to submitting an official to [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org) if they are considering either suspending or extending the duration of their fellowship. All such requests must be approved by UKRI-BBSRC Office.

## Relocation of fellowship

- 1.15 The choice of institution is an important aspect of the proposal and the selection of Discovery fellows. Requests to relocate a fellowship to a different institution during the award are examined very carefully. The scientific and career development case for relocation must be clearly set out demonstrating the benefits of the move, including statements from both institutions involved. UKRI-BBSRC also takes account of any compelling domestic reasons for a move. Fellows wishing to request a move should

submit the case to UKRI-BBSRC several months in advance of the proposed date for relocation to allow time for consideration by Committee E. **Please note: Fellows are required to contact UKRI-BBSRC for advice prior to submitting a formal request to [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org).**

- 1.16 In the event of a fellowship transferring to a different institution, UKRI-BBSRC reserves the right to reduce the final claim from the first institution, on a pro-rata basis, should the claim be deemed excessive in relation to the period spent to date on the fellowship.

### **Termination of awards**

- 1.17 If a Discovery fellow discontinues the research or takes up other or additional paid employment before expiry of the award, UKRI-BBSRC must be informed immediately. The fellowship will then be terminated on the day preceding discontinuation of research or the commencement of such employment. UKRI-BBSRC will recover any monies paid in advance for the period remaining.
- 1.18 UKRI-BBSRC reserves the right to reduce the final claim, on a pro-rata basis, should the claim be deemed excessive in relation to the period spent to date on the fellowship.
- 1.19 An award may be terminated, or its conditions varied, at the discretion of UKRI-BBSRC.

### **Post-fellowship monitoring**

- 1.20 To help assess the value of the UKRI-BBSRC research fellowship schemes and to provide information on the career paths of trained scientists, UKRI-BBSRC maintains statistics on the careers of its fellows after the end of their fellowship. To assist with this monitoring, fellows are requested to provide information about subsequent employment at the end of their fellowship, and all fellows are required to give an address to which further requests for information can be sent from time to time. Fellows are also encouraged to join the UKRI-BBSRC Fellow's LinkedIn group (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8180033/>)

### **Mentor**

- 1.21 Based on information provided by the newly awarded fellow, a mentor will be assigned which will be either a former UKRI-BBSRC Fellowship holder, or a member of Committee E. The mentor will provide general professional and personal support outside the fellow's host institution. Under the Discovery Fellowship Agreement at [Annex 1](#), the host institution will be visited annually by the fellow's designated mentor during the fellowship. The mentor should be available for support throughout.

### **Induction training**

- 1.22 Discovery fellows are required to attend an induction event arranged by UKRI-BBSRC prior to or at the start of the fellowship, as well as attending other mandatory events, conferences, and other meetings. UKRI-BBSRC will meet necessary travel and incidental costs associated with attendance on the courses, however some costs must be budgeted for at the application stage (see [Annex 2](#) for details).

## ANNEX 1

### Fellowship Agreement for UKRI-BBSRC Discovery Fellows

#### 1. Foreword

- 1.1 This Fellowship Agreement is intended to clarify the relationships between UK Research and Innovation Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (UKRI-BBSRC), its Discovery Fellowship (DF) holders, and their host institutions. It sets out the Council's commitments to Discovery Fellowship holders (section 2 below), the responsibility of fellows (section 3) and UKRI-BBSRC's expectations of the institutions which undertake to host them (section 4).
- 1.2 The Fellowship Agreement supplements the award terms and conditions, and the [BBSRC guidance for applicants](#), and should be read in conjunction with these.
- 1.3 When submitting a proposal for a fellowship, both the applicant and their proposed host institution are required to give undertakings that they are prepared to abide by the regulations, terms and conditions set out here, and the additional provisions contained in this agreement. Enquiries about the Fellowship Agreement should be addressed to the relevant contact email identified in section 5 below.

#### 2. Commitments by UKRI-BBSRC

The Council will:

- 2.1 Provide the fellow with named contacts in the UKRI-BBSRC Office for enquiries about the fellowship and deal promptly and efficiently with communications from the fellow or their host institution.
- 2.2 Notify the fellow individually in writing of any changes to the terms and conditions of their fellowship.
- 2.3 Treat personal information held by UKRI-BBSRC about the fellow in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 2.4 Pay promptly to the host institution the funds provided by UKRI-BBSRC in support of the fellowship, in accordance with the Research Councils' profiled payments procedures for research grants.
- 2.5 Match the fellow to a mentor who is a current or past fellowship holder, or a Committee E member who will: provide an additional source of general professional and personal support outside the fellow's host institution and be available to answer questions and provide advice to the fellow regarding their next career step.
- 2.6 Invite the fellow to an induction kick-off event which will provide:
  - (i) Guidance on:
    - a. The Fellowship Agreement
    - b. UKRI-BBSRC's administrative procedures
    - c. General research management issues
    - d. The range of research being carried out by the fellows

- (ii) An opportunity to meet other new fellows and UKRI-BBSRC staff
- 2.7 Provide opportunities for the dissemination of information about the fellow's research to a wider audience through UKRI-BBSRC's publications and other initiatives to promote the public understanding of science.
- 2.8 Offer general advice on best practice for the management of intellectual property arising from the fellow's research.

### **3. Responsibilities of the Fellow**

The fellow will be required to:

- 3.1 Devote the whole of their usual working time to the research programme approved by UKRI-BBSRC. The fellow may also devote reasonable time to activities associated with the protection or exploitation of intellectual property arising from their research (see paragraph 3.8 below).
- 3.2 Carry out the fellowship proposal in accordance with the Council's terms and conditions for research grants to support the programme approved by UKRI-BBSRC.
- 3.3 Seek UKRI-BBSRC's prior approval of any major changes to the objectives of their programme, or of any proposal to move to a different host institution or department.
- 3.4 Attend the mandatory events and training courses listed in [Annex 2](#).
- 3.5 Ensure that their information and research outputs are entered into researchfish® in a timely manner. Fellows are also required to complete entry and exit surveys and to submit brief annual updates of their progress to UKRI-BBSRC.
- 3.6 Participate in the annual visit to the host institution by their mentor.
- 3.7 Inform UKRI-BBSRC promptly if the need arises to put the fellowship in abeyance because of their absence on extended sick leave or maternity/paternity leave or for any other reason.
- 3.8 Seek to identify, protect, and exploit any intellectual property arising from the fellowship programme, in line with the [BBSRC policy for knowledge exchange and commercialisation](#).
- 3.9 Acknowledge the support of UKRI-BBSRC in any publications, posters, presentations, or other outputs arising from their research.
- 3.10 Inform UKRI-BBSRC of any media coverage or other publicity arising from the fellowship programme.
- 3.11 Provide information to UKRI-BBSRC about their research for use in the Council's publications, exhibitions, or other initiatives to promote the public understanding of science, or otherwise required by the Council in carrying out its functions of supporting scientific research and training.
- 3.12 Contribute, when requested, to UKRI-BBSRC's peer review mechanisms by commenting as a reviewer on grant proposals or reports from other researchers.

- 3.13 Provide UKRI-BBSRC with a final progress update, and information about their subsequent employment on completion or resignation of the fellowship, together with a contact address to facilitate the Council's monitoring of career paths.

#### 4. Responsibilities of the Host Institution

The host institution is expected to:

- 4.1 Provide fellows with a statement of their terms and conditions of employment, in accordance with statutory requirements.
- 4.2 Accord the fellow the status and benefits of other academic staff of similar seniority.
- 4.3 Integrate the fellow within the scientific activities of the host department, whilst ensuring that they can maintain the independence and focus of their personal research programme.
- 4.4 Ensure that the fellow is aware of their responsibilities and that the research programme is carried out in compliance with all relevant legislation (including any new regulations which become effective during the tenure of the fellowship), and with the principles set out in the [UKRI-BBSRC Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice](#).
- 4.5 Ensure the fellow receives guidance, without stifling their development as an independent researcher, from their host group Principal Investigator to whom they can turn as a source of personal support and advice.
- 4.6 Fulfil their obligations as an Employer in accordance with the revised "Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers" (2019) (<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat>), ensuring the fellow has a healthy working environment, good employment conditions and is adequately supported to develop their career.
- 4.7 Demonstrate significant support for the fellow. All support should be agreed between the prospective fellow and the host organisation upon application and should be detailed in the Head of Department host support statement, which must be uploaded as part of the application.

At a minimum the host is expected to provide:

- a. The basic facilities and equipment needed to carry out his or her research programme approved by UKRI-BBSRC
- b. The same opportunities as the institution's established staff for access to:
  - Dedicated laboratory and office space
  - Specialised equipment
  - Technical assistance and research support services
  - Funds for travel to attend conferences or for other external scientific interaction
  - Staff training opportunities
  - Formal mentoring programmes
  - Professional advice on the management of intellectual property and

knowledge transfer

It is also expected that the host provide support above and beyond the basics, including for example:

- Financial contribution towards consumables
- Equipment, or a contribution towards equipment
- Additional staff or students, or access to pool staff time
- Additional support for training (for example funding to travel overseas to develop a new technique) or career development
- Other financial support

4.8 Ensure both sound financial management of the funds provided for the fellowship, and ensure the fellow's grant is used in accordance with the Council's terms and conditions for research grants to support the research programme approved by UKRI-BBSRC.

4.9 To host an annual visit from the mentor matched to the fellow during the period of the fellowship.

## 5. UKRI-BBSRC Office Contacts

Enquiries about fellowships – [Aidan.grimsley@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:Aidan.grimsley@bbsrc.ukri.org)

Enquires about policy issues, the Fellowship Agreement, annual updates and monitoring and assessment of progress – [avril.ferris@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:avril.ferris@bbsrc.ukri.org)  
[Darren.pirt@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:Darren.pirt@bbsrc.ukri.org)

Enquiries about the administration and payment of fellowship awards – [gfmt@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:gfmt@bbsrc.ukri.org)

Please cc' [postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:postdoc.fellowships@bbsrc.ukri.org) into any correspondence regarding fellowships.

## ANNEX 2

<b>Event</b>	<b>Organiser</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Costing</b>
<b>Fellowship Induction</b>	Organised by UKRI-BBSRC. Invitations will be circulated prior to event.	2 days at the start of the Fellowship (usually held in February or March)	Mandatory	Travel costs to be included in your proposal. Accommodation will be provided by UKRI-BBSRC.
<b>Fellow's Conference</b>	Organised by UKRI-BBSRC. Invitations will be circulated prior to event.	Held over 2 days, once every two years. Next conference planned for June 2022.	Mandatory during your fellowship. You will also be invited to attend after your fellowship has finished – attendance then is of course optional.	Travel costs to be included in your proposal. Accommodation will be provided by UKRI-BBSRC.
<b>Mock Peer Review Training</b>	Organised by UKRI-BBSRC	Dates and details to be confirmed	Mandatory	Travel costs to be included in your proposal. Accommodation will be provided by UKRI-BBSRC.
<b>Responsive Mode Panel Meeting Observation</b>	Organised by UKRI-BBSRC. Dates and details will be circulated prior to the event.	2 days	Mandatory	Travel costs to be included in your proposal. Accommodation will be provided by UKRI-BBSRC.
<b>Other networking events</b>	You may be invited to additional events as they are organised by UKRI-BBSRC. It is expected that fellows attend and present their work, whenever possible.			Expenses to be claimed after the event as appropriate.