# Associate webinar Q&A and useful links

## Useful links

This section includes a contact email address and links to web pages that applicants to the MRC board and panel associate scheme may find useful.

For all enquiries related to the MRC board and panel associates scheme, please email RFPD@mrc.ukri.org

To understand the skills typically required at different career stages relevant to MRC funding, visit the [Interactive Career Framework](https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20191213133630/https%3A/mrc.ukri.org/skills-careers/interactive-career-framework/#?careerstage=6) at

For details on how to observe MRC funding panels see the [MRC board and panel observer scheme webpage](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/developing-people-and-skills/mrc/board-observers/).

To read personal insights and reflections from current associates and scheme mentors, visit the [associate scheme blog](https://www.ukri.org/blog/insights-from-our-board-and-panel-associate-scheme/).

To explore current opportunities to join MRC boards and panels as a regular member, view UKRI’s page on [advising council and member vacancies](https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/work-for-us/join-an-advisory-committee-panel-or-network/mrc-board-and-panel-associates-scheme-associate-vacancies/).

## Questions from the webinar

### Would current external examiner positions count as a current organisation/affiliation?

Yes — in the context of identifying potential conflicts of interest, UKRI expects panellists and associates to declare any current professional affiliations, including external examiner roles, as these may present a perceived conflict. However, for the purposes of your application, you should apply under your primary employer or host institution.

### Can a CDA-completing applicant recently promoted to professor apply?

Yes, if they meet the other eligibility criteria. You would need to be in the last 12 months of your CDA at the time of applying to the associates scheme.

### In section 10, “describe current role” — how much detail is expected?

Please aim to include:

* Key responsibilities and areas of oversight
* Any leadership, strategic, or decision-making roles
* How does your current role contribute to your professional development and future career trajectory?
* Examples of projects or initiatives you’ve led or contributed to
* Other relevant experience, for example, experience as a peer reviewer, on an ad hoc panels, industry or clinical expertise

You don’t need to list every task, but enough detail should be included to give a strong sense of your professional standing, expertise, and relevance to establish that you are at the right career stage for this role.

### Does participating in the scheme make you ineligible to apply for research funding you are involved in assessing?

No, serving on the board or panel as an associate or regular member does not prevent you from submitting your own funding applications. Conflicts of interests would be managed appropriately.

### Does participating in the scheme make you ineligible to apply for other new investigator grants with UKRI?

No, participation in the scheme does not affect your eligibility to apply for other UKRI funding, including New Investigator grants, although to be eligible for the scheme we would expect you already to have secured an award at this level, or equivalent.

### Should free text sections (for example, current role, leadership transition) be written in UKRI narrative CV style?

We don’t specify this and it’s down to your preference, but using a narrative CV approach (for example, describing contributions to research, leadership, and wider society) is encouraged and may help us to better understand your trajectory.

### Would someone who has reviewed MRC grants and sat on a learned society committee be considered to have substantial experience?

Not necessarily. Occasional reviewing or committee work does not disqualify you. The scheme is for those without substantial experience as an assessor. Examples of substantial experience might include, serving as a standing panel member for the MRC or other funders, or regular participation in funding panels over several years.

Please email us with further details of your role on the committee for advice.

### Is someone who was on the observer scheme last year eligible?

Yes. This does not disqualify you from applying to the associates scheme, but you would need to ensure you meet all other eligibility criteria.

### Do institutional affiliations have to be UK-based?

Applicants based outside the UK may be eligible if they can fully engage with the programme, including attending meetings in person or virtually during UK business hours. We would want international applicants to demonstrate a justified interest in future involvement in UK research funding.

### If I have a UKRI studentship as PI starting this year, can I apply?

It is unlikely that you meet the eligibility criteria for the scheme if you are currently undertaking a studentship. The scheme is designed for researchers who have established research independence and are transitioning into leadership roles.