



Ernest Rutherford Fellowships 2017 Guidance

Closing date: 21 September 2017 at 16:00

This document contains guidance for applicants. The headings below indicate the topics covered in the document. Please click on the links below to be taken straight to that section:

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1. Introduction

STFC offers up to 12 Ernest Rutherford Fellowships annually which provide **five years** of funding to outstanding researchers at an early stage of their career. The aim is to support future scientific leaders to establish a strong, independent research programme.

2. Eligibility

Ernest Rutherford Fellowships are intended for early career researchers who do not have a permanent academic position. You are not eligible if you currently hold a permanent academic position or the equivalent in institutions other than universities.

If you secure a permanent position prior to the offer of a Fellowship you will be ineligible to hold the Fellowship.

Applicants must have a PhD and a minimum of five years' research experience from the start of the postgraduate programme leading to the award of a PhD and 1 September 2018 with, normally,

a minimum of two years' postdoctoral experience.

Fellowships are open to applicants of any nationality. Where applicable, you will need to comply with Department of Employment requirements and hold a work permit prior to taking up the Fellowship. Work permits are a matter for direct negotiation between the institution, the Department of Employment and the Home Office.

Information for Non-European Economic Area Applicants - All successful applicants who require a visa to work in the UK will be eligible to be considered under the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa route (<https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-exceptional-talent>).

In line with the highly prestigious nature of the award, this visa route is designed for people who are internationally recognised as world leaders or potential world-leading talent in the fields of science and the arts and enables the holder to be both adaptable and flexible during their research in the UK.

The grant of any visa is always subject to the standard Home Office general grounds for refusal of a visa. RCUK is able to provide additional guidance regarding the appropriate evidence required to complete the visa application process under the Exceptional Talent visa.

Please contact fellowtier1info@rcuk.ac.uk for further details.

Applications are welcome from candidates who intend to use the Fellowship as a means of re-establishing themselves in the United Kingdom following a period overseas.

Fellowships may be held at any eligible UK research organisation as set out in the STFC [research grants handbook](#).

3. Host Institution

You are advised to contact your proposed host department as early as possible and certainly well ahead of the deadline for submission of applications. Departments may have internal processes to select which candidates to support and the deadlines for these may be several weeks in advance of the STFC closing date. Departments should not expect you to accept an offer to be hosted before 24 August.

STFC sets a strict limit on the number of applications that each department may submit. Therefore, it may not be possible for a host to support all interested applicants. Any departments who exceed their limit will be required to withdraw the excess applications. **It is therefore very important that you seek assurance from your proposed host department that your application can be accommodated within its limit.**

To allow STFC to monitor the equality and diversity of applicants it is requested that all applicants who apply to a prospective host institution, irrespective of whether or not they are accepted by the host institution in taking their application forward, to complete an anonymised [survey](#) with their details and research area.

Two particular points to note are that:

- Fellowship applications associated with the Cockcroft Institute are made through the relevant partner institution but are counted against the Cockcroft Institute limit and should be clearly flagged as such under the “Choice of Host Institution” section of the application;
- Fellowship applications associated with UKATC are counted against the University of Edinburgh School of Physics and Astronomy limit.

4. Career Breaks and Returners

Returner Fellowships are additional fellowships, on top of the normal 12, that are occasionally awarded to outstanding candidates returning from a career break or from working outside academic research.

Applications are welcome from those seeking to resume a research career, following a period of absence from active research of, normally, at least one year. The break may have been due, for example, to long term illness, family or caring responsibilities or working in non-academic employment. The period of absence from research will be calculated from the start of the break until 1 September 2018.

If the break has been less than one year and you do not have the right to return to your previous employer (e.g. due to maternity combined with a fixed term contract) you may still be eligible to apply. Please consult with the STFC Fellowships Office to determine eligibility.

Holders of a Daphne Jackson Fellowship are not eligible to apply for a Returner Fellowship.

The Returner Fellowships may be held for a minimum of one year up to a maximum of 5 years. Returner applicants will be judged on their track record prior to the break from research.

After submitting your proposal as a Returner, you may engage in paid research opportunities between applying and assessment of your application.

5. Subject of Research

Applications must fall within the remit of the STFC core Science Programme (astronomy, solar and planetary science, particle physics, particle astrophysics, cosmology, nuclear physics) and afford scope for original work.

6. Assessment Process

Fellowship applications will be sent to independent reviewers for assessment. Reviewer comments on your application will be made available to you and you will have an opportunity to respond to any factual inaccuracies. You should address your response to the Fellowship Panel

and not the reviewers. Your response should be in A4 format with a maximum of half a side per reviewer. As for all attachments, the response should be written as per [STFC Specific Requirements](#).

Your application, reviewers' comments and any response by you will be considered by the Fellowships Panel, operating as five sub-panels: extragalactic, near universe, particle physics, particle astrophysics and cosmology, and nuclear physics. Your application will be ranked against the others in that area and the top-ranked candidates in each sub-panel area will be invited for interview. Typically, a minimum of 24 candidates are invited for interview. It is desirable for candidates to attend the interview in person. Unsuccessful candidates will be informed which tercile their application was ranked in. Apart from the reviewer comments, no other feedback will be available. Host departments will be notified of the reviewer comments and which tercile the applicant was ranked in.

The highest ranked candidates from the interviews will be offered Ernest Rutherford Fellowships. If any of these candidates withdraw, Fellowships will be offered to the ranked list of reserve candidates.

7. Timetable

Closing date for Fellowship applications

Deadline 16:00 21 September 2017

Call activity	Indicative Timetable
Responses to independent reviewer comments	December 2017
Decision on who to invite to interview	Mid/late January 2018
Interview	13 – 15 February 2018
Awards announced	End February 2018
Fellowships start	1 June 2018 – 31 March 2019

Fellowships normally begin on 1 October of the year of award unless you indicate a different start date on your application. The earliest a Fellowship may start is 1 June. The offer of a Fellowship will not be held open for more than six months from the announced start date of the award. All Fellowships must be taken up by the following 31 March.

8. Assessment Criteria

In considering your Fellowship application, the Fellowship Panel will use the following criteria:

- the excellence of the applicant, including the volume and significance of research outputs, their standing in their field and ability to communicate their science effectively;

- the timeliness and quality of the research proposal;
- the potential of the individual, including the capability to fulfil the wider responsibilities of an academic career (teaching, service on committees, public engagement etc) and evidence of leadership ability;
- the appropriateness of the group with whom the individual intends to work;
- alignment with STFC strategic priorities;
- a clearly thought through and project-specific Pathways to Impact statement.

Ranking of applications will normally be strictly in order of merit as judged against the assessment criteria. However, in exceptional circumstances the Panel may take account of other factors. If you are not a returner applicant but your application has been affected by an earlier career break or other extenuating circumstances please indicate this so that it can be taken into account in the assessment of your application.

9. How to Apply

Applications for Ernest Rutherford Fellowships are submitted through the [Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission \(Je-S\) system](#). If you have not used the Je-S system to submit an application before, please ensure, well in advance of the closing date, that you have set up an account. Guidance for completion of the application is provided through the Je-S help text, available from the Je-S system front page, and context sensitive help throughout the system.

You are advised to contact your host organisation's Research Administration **as soon as possible** as departments may have their own deadlines for candidate selection which may be several weeks before the closing date. They will advise you about costing your proposal and internal procedures relating to submitting a research proposal through Je-S. Your Fellowship application must be costed and submitted by the host organisation.

Applicants may submit only one application to one institution. The page limits outlined below will be strictly enforced by STFC. If any of the supporting documents exceed the specified limits, only the pages within the limits will be considered. The documents must be submitted as pdf attachments and written as per [STFC Requirements](#). Of the fonts available stated in the requirements, Standard Arial 11pt is the preferred font for STFC. STFC will be carrying out more rigorous checks and any documents not submitted as per STFC requirements may not be considered.

You must ensure your application is submitted to your host institution well before the deadline as some institutions have a submitter pool which may delay your application being submitted to council (STFC).

Together with your application proforma, you will need to include the following mandatory pdf attachments:

- **Curriculum vitae** of a maximum of two sides of A4 using our [template](#). Applicants who complete the section on Career Breaks may extend this limit of two sides of A4 to accommodate the additional information. Applicants should include any periods of part-time working, maternity, paternity or adoption leave, parental leave, disability, ill-health,

childcare or other caring responsibilities.

- **List of publications** by year and should not include presentations.
- **Letter of support** (personal reference) from your nominated reviewer who must not be from the host institution, of a maximum length of two sides of A4. This must be uploaded at the submitter stage and will be confidential i.e. not visible to the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their nominated reviewer knows who to supply their reference to (at their host institution) in order that it can be uploaded and submitted with the proposal.
- **Case for Support for Fellowship**, of a maximum length of three sides of A4 including diagrams and illustrations. See below for further guidance.
- Up to two hundred words on **Public Engagement** This should briefly outline any track record in public engagement and give the plans you have for engaging selected public audiences with your research and evaluating the outcomes of that engagement. STFC's [public engagement strategy](#) and [resources to help applicants plan](#) their proposed engagement programmes are available on the STFC website.
- **Pathways to Impact** of a maximum length of two sides of A4. See below for further guidance.
- **Data Management Plan**, of a maximum length of two sides of A4. See below for further guidance.

No other documents will be considered.

9.1 Case for Support

This should be a clear and concise description of your research track record and the vision, aims and context of your research (maximum length of three A4 sides).

The description of your track record may refer to but should not duplicate material given in your CV or publication list. You should focus on your achievements that have the most relevance to your application and the assessment criteria, including your most significant results and their impact, and mention any past or present collaborations. The description of your Fellowship research should describe the context and aims, indicate the approach you intend to take and the timetable for the work, highlight what is novel and explain why it is timely. You should set your programme of research in the wider international context and explain why you are the right person to do the work.

9.2 Pathways to Impact

This should describe how the potential impacts of your research will be realised by users and beneficiaries of the research who are outside of your immediate academic research community, for example the public sector, commercial private sector, third sector (voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, cooperatives and mutuals) or the wider public in general. This is a mandatory requirement; therefore if a Pathways to Impact document is not relevant to your proposal then an attachment explaining this should be uploaded to pass the Je-S validation requirement. Further information on completing your Pathways to Impact document can be found in the [Research Grants Handbook](#)

9.3 Data Management Plan

If your proposal is for a project that would result in the production or collection of scientific data, then

a Data Management Plan (DMP) should be added as an attachment. The data management plan should explain how the data will be managed over the lifetime of the project and, where appropriate, preserved for future re-use. This is a mandatory requirement; therefore if a DMP is not relevant to your proposal then an attachment explaining this should be uploaded to pass the Je-S validation requirement. Further information on completing your DMP can be found on the following web page [Data management plan - Science and Technology Facilities Council](#)

9.3 Choice of Host Institution

When selecting an Institution at which to hold the proposed Fellowship you should consider where it would be most appropriate to further your research career. You must provide a clear statement in your application as to your choice of institution. In many cases the Fellowship offers an ideal opportunity to change institution in order to gain wider experience, while in some scientific areas it may be appropriate and, indeed, necessary for you to remain at the Institution where you are currently based. If you are applying to hold a Fellowship at an institution in order to co-locate with your spouse or partner, you should make this clear in your application. Applying to hold a Fellowship at a particular institution because of family constraints will not disadvantage a candidate. If your choice of institution is for personal reasons, please indicate this in the appropriate section on the cv template.

It is your responsibility and not your host institution's, to complete the section 'Choice of Host institution' on your proposal.

9.4 Ernest Rutherford Fellowship Funding

Fellowship applications are costed on the basis of full economic costs (fEC). If a Fellowship is awarded, STFC will provide funding at 80% of the fEC requested. The host institution must agree to find the balance of fEC for the proposal from other resources. Universities and other higher education organisations use the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology to calculate fEC. Please refer to the [Research Grants Handbook](#) for further information.

For non-university organisations, Research Councils require a validation process to ensure that their costing methodologies are robust. Standard default rates should be used where Research organisations have not developed their own rates. Please refer to the [Research Grants Handbook](#) for further information.

9.5 Directly Incurred Costs

Costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an auditable record. Ernest Rutherford Fellowships provide funds to cover your salary, the costs of personal travel and some minor equipment costs. These should be requested under the Directly Incurred Costs heading. Returner applicants may also apply for funds for retraining and updating their skills where this can be justified in the context of the proposed research project.

9.6 Salary

You are advised to discuss and agree your starting salary with your proposed host institution, before your application is submitted. The agreed salary should be in accordance with the institution's standard recruitment and employment practices. The appointment level on the institution's salary scale should be justified in the application. The salary costs requested should include employer's national insurance and superannuation contributions. Salary increments over the period of the Fellowship should be taken into account, but not anticipated future pay awards.

STFC will award funds on the basis of the agreed salary scales at the time of announcement, with provision for future years increase on the basis of standard RCUK indexation rates. Once announced the grant will not normally be increased to take account of different indexation rates.

9.7 Travel

Personal travel is taken to include necessary collaborative visits and fieldwork, and attendance at one conference workshop or symposium during each year of the Fellowship, but excluding fieldwork and visits which form part of the work of a research group with which you may be associated.

If you are associated with an STFC research grant you must ensure that any travel connected with the research project for which the grant was given is claimed from that source.

You should estimate in your application all personal travel and subsistence funds required during the lifetime of the Fellowship. Travel and subsistence costs are expected to be around £2k per annum. If there are exceptional circumstances for applying for additional funding in excess of the guidance levels justification will need to be made in your Case for Support.

9.8 Other Costs

Applicants may request minor equipment and consumables up to a total of £5k for the duration of the fellowship under Directly Incurred other costs. At the end of the Fellowship any resources purchased will belong to the Institution. If there are exceptional reasons for applying for more than the guideline level then justification of these costs should be included in your Case for Support.

9.9 Relocation and Visas

Applicants moving to the UK from overseas to take up an award may request relocation and visa costs. These costs should be applied for under the Directly Incurred "Other Costs" heading on the proforma. STFC will award a maximum of £1.2k if moving from within Europe or £3k if moving from outside of Europe.

9.10 Publication Costs

STFC will no longer provide funding in research grants for any publication costs associated with peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers. Publication costs associated with research

outputs other than journal articles and conference papers, such as books, monographs, critical editions, catalogues etc. may, however, continue to be included in grants as a Directly Incurred Other Cost. Any request for such costs will of course need to be fully justified in the case for support/justification of resources.

9.11 Directly Allocated Costs

Estates costs include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities and appear under the Directly Allocated Costs heading. Estates costs are calculated by the research organisation and a single figure will appear on the application.

9.12 Indirect Costs

Indirect costs include the costs of administration, such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services. Like estate costs, indirect costs will be calculated by the research organisation and a single figure will be entered on the application.

10. Terms and Conditions

STFC Fellowships are governed by the grant conditions as set out in the [Research Grants Handbook](#) unless otherwise stated. Applications are accepted and awards are made on the understanding that Research Organisations and Fellows agree to observe the terms and conditions and the scheme requirements set out in this document and any amendments issued during the currency of the award. STFC intends its scheme to be flexible and reserves the right to deal as it thinks fit with applications of unusual character and to waive any rule at its absolute discretion.

Research Organisations must appoint Research Fellow employees for the full duration of the award and integrate the Research Fellow within the research activities of the host department, whilst ensuring that he or she is able to maintain independence and focus on their personal research programme. Awards are made on the understanding that the Fellow's work and progress are subject to the same monitoring and appraisal procedures as those of other academic staff within the host institution, and that there are adequate facilities at the host institution for the research proposed.

11. Other Scheme Conditions and Features

11.1 Part Time Working

Fellowships can be held either on a full-time or may be sought on a part-time basis by applicants wishing to combine their Fellowship with caring responsibilities. A part-time award can be held at 50% or above of full-time equivalent. A part-time Fellow may not hold another part-time position in conjunction with the Fellowship. The period of award for Fellowships held on a part-time basis will be extended on a pro rata basis.

11.2 Extensions

After a fellowship grant has started, the duration may be extended to cover maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave, extended jury service or paid sick leave for a Research Fellow in line with the terms and conditions of the fellow's employment. Otherwise, the conditions for extending Fellowship grants are the same as apply to research grants.

Any request for an extension should be made via the Grant Maintenance facility in Je-S once the required duration is known. All requests for extensions must be made before the grant ends.

11.3 Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental leave

Fellows are entitled to take maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave in accordance with the terms and conditions of the fellow's employment. If requested, consideration will be given to allowing a fellowship grant to be placed in abeyance during the absence of the Research Fellow for maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave, and the period of the fellowship extended by the period of leave. Consideration will be given to requests to continue the fellowship on a flexible or part-time basis to allow the Research Fellow to meet caring responsibilities.

11.4 Contribution to child-care costs associated with conference attendance or collaborative visits

STFC will consider funding childcare expenses for ER Fellows, in the event that they incur substantial additional childcare costs as a result of an activity directly associated with their fellowship. The funds may be used to cover, or partially cover, childcare costs that are additional to those that would be incurred anyway, without the conference attendance or collaborative visit. This could include the cost of additional care at home or the cost of items such as flights and accommodation for the child(ren) and a carer if necessary. The maximum value of a claim is £500. Up to three claims may be made during the Fellowship. Payment will be made on receipt of a claim following the conference attendance or collaborative visit. Further details and claim forms will be available to successful applicants or available from fellowships@stfc.ac.uk

11.5 Sick Leave

Fellows are entitled to take sick leave in accordance with the research organisation's terms and conditions. If requested, consideration will be given to allowing a fellowship grant to be placed in abeyance during the absence of the Research Fellow due to sick leave, and the period of the fellowship extended by the period of sick leave. The additional salary costs for the fellow (pro rata to their percentage FTE on the fellowship) should be claimed, as necessary, at the end of the extended period.

11.6 Break in Service

You will be allowed a break in service not more than twice during the period of the award, for periods amounting together to not more than two years, to enable time to be spent on another

related activity not supported by STFC.

Breaks in service will not normally be permitted during the first or final years of the Fellowship, unless this is on maternity or sick leave, and must be endorsed by your Head of Department. Where STFC agrees to a break in service, the duration of the Fellowship will not be extended and payments to the institution will cease for the period of the break (i.e. a Fellow taking a maximum break in service of two years would receive only three years of Fellowship funding).

Where the Fellow requesting a break in service holds an Ernest Rutherford Grant, STFC will discuss with the Fellow and host Research Organisation to establish whether the research grant should be suspended, terminated or transferred to an alternative Principal Investigator.

11.7 Movement between Institutions

Applicants must take up the award at the host institution identified in the application. STFC will not allow a Fellow to change their host institution prior to taking up an award. Consideration will be given to requests during the course of an award to relocate the Fellowship, together with any Ernest Rutherford Grant held by the Fellow, to a different institution for scientific or domestic reasons. The agreement of the institutions concerned will be required before seeking approval from STFC. Movement between institutions will not normally be allowed during the first year of a Fellowship.

11.8 Teaching

Fellows may undertake up to a maximum of six hours teaching, including preparation, each working week (total 260 hours per annum, pro rata for part-time awards) if the Head of Department considers it desirable and provided it does not hinder progress on research work. Apart from this, managing research and normal holidays, Fellows must devote themselves to research and no other work may be undertaken within usual working hours, although exceptions are made for time spent on public engagement and other STFC-approved business.

11.9 Committee Membership

A Fellowship is awarded to enable the individual to undertake research full-time. Fellows are not, therefore, normally considered for STFC Committee membership, particularly in the initial years of a Fellowship award.

11.10 Progress Reports

Your Head of Department is required to submit a report confirming your progresses during the first half of your award.

11.11 Reporting and Post-Fellowship Destinations

STFC has the responsibility to demonstrate the value and impact of research supported through public funding. STFC Fellows are required to provide an annual update of information relating to the

outputs, outcomes and impacts (referred to as research outcomes) that arise from their STFC funded research. Researchfish is an online system which is used to collect this information. You would be required to have a Researchfish account and to use the Researchfish system to provide these updates annually during the period of your award and usually for five years after your award has finished. Sanctions will apply to fellows who do not make a submission each year during the data submission period. More information can be found on our [webpage](#).

STFC requires Fellows to complete a short questionnaire giving details of the post taken up on completion of the Fellowship.

11.12 Career Path Tracking

STFC is keen to track the careers of its former Fellows and may undertake detailed studies of the career paths followed by fellows several years after their fellowship has been completed. Such studies inform policy decisions affecting STFC's fellowship programme. Fellows should be aware that STFC will maintain their details on a database for the purpose of contacting them to seek their assistance with future career path studies.

Institutions are encouraged to register their fellowship data with the Information Commissioner in a way that will allow it to be released for career path tracking exercises, as this will provide additional help to STFC in tracing former fellows.

11.13 Public Engagement

Applicants who wish to undertake public engagement during their Fellowship should outline their plans for delivering and evaluating their engagement in their proposal. Necessary costs for such activities should be requested and justified as normal. Fellowship holders must report the outcomes of their engagement using ResearchFish and the final report required by the conditions of the award.

11.14 Mentoring

Departments must provide mentoring opportunities for Fellows. This should include contact with a named individual who can draw on their experience to help you in your professional or personal development. They should also help you rapidly access resources at your Research Organisation through knowledge of appropriate processes and systems.

12. Contacts

Fellowships enquiries: Tel: +44 (0)1793 413 195
 Email: [Fellowships team](#)

27 June 2017