

University Research Fellowships 2025 FAQs

This list is not exhaustive. You may be able to find the answer to your question in the Scheme Notes for the round. Please check all round documents before contacting the Grants Team.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Q: Can I contact the Royal Society ahead of the deadline to confirm my eligibility for the scheme?

A: The scheme notes provide guidance regarding eligibility for the scheme based on actual research experience. You should **only** contact the Society where you:

- Are unsure if your work would be considered as actual research experience, for example time spent in Industry.
- Have taken complex career breaks and are unable to calculate the time you have taken out of research since completing your PhD.

2. Q: How is “actual research experience post PhD” calculated when considering eligibility?

A: Gaps between contracts are taken into account when calculating research experience.

Part-time research contracts are also taken into account. So, if you have held a research contract at 0.5 FTE, your research experience will be pro-rated accordingly.

3. If I am slightly outside of the three to eight years of research experience, can I still apply?

A: We do not allow any flexibility in the 3 to 8 years research experience range, unless the applicant has exceptional circumstances. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Requests for researchers of ‘exceptional talent’ who have less than 3 years’ experience, can be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please discuss with your host organisation, as your Head of Department would need to provide a letter of support for our consideration. Please contact the University Research Fellowships team (urf@royalsociety.org) **while the round is open, and before you submit your application.**

Please provide the following:

- Letter of support from your Head of Department
- Details of your career history, including:
 - The date of when your PhD thesis was accepted in its final form.
 - Dates of your employment history and details of any non-research positions, career breaks or periods of leave.
 - Please provide dates in the format of **DD/MM/YYYY** (or MM/YYYY if days are unknown).

Cases are reviewed by the Chair of the relevant Research Appointment Panel:

- [Research Appointment Panel A\(i\)](#)
- [Research Appointment Panel A\(ii\)](#)
- [Research Appointment Panel A\(iii\)](#)
- [Research Appointment Panel B\(i\)](#)
- [Research Appointment Panel B\(ii\)](#)

4. Q: Can I apply for other fellowships at the same time as the University Research Fellowship?

A: We understand that you might apply for other opportunities at the same time as

the University Research Fellowship. Please include any active fellowship applications in the “Applicant Research Funding” question of the application form.

5. Q: Can I apply for a University Research Fellowship if I hold a proleptic position?

A: If you hold a proleptic position at the time of application, you are not eligible to apply.

6. Q: I hold a tenure track position with a guaranteed permanent position at the end of the contract, am I eligible to apply?

A: This would be considered equivalent to a proleptic position, you are therefore not eligible to apply.

7. Q: Can I apply for the University Research Fellowship if I hold a permanent post in industry?

A: Please contact the University Research Fellowships team (urf@royalsociety.org), clarifying the level of the position and outlining whether you can undertake independent research as part of your position.

8. Q: If I accept a permanent position or equivalent fellowship during the URF assessment, how is my application affected?

A: You must remain eligible until the time of the application deadline. If you accept a permanent post or equivalent fellowship after the application deadline, this will not preclude you from staying in the competition. If invited to interview, you can include this as part of your updates since submission. If offered a URF award, please note that you would be required to resign from the position or equivalent fellowship to be able to accept the URF offer.

9. Q: Do you allow resubmissions?

A: Yes, as long as an applicant continues to meet the eligibility criteria.

10. Q: How will the Royal Society consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on my application?

A: The Royal Society appreciates the impact of the coronavirus pandemic is complex and varied. As such, we have a specific question in the application form for applicants to outline the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their research.

APPLICATION FORM

11. Q. How many years should costs be provided for in the application form?

A: Please provide costs for all 8 years of the fellowship. When completing the budget table in Flexi-Grant® please ensure to provide values at cost, including inflation if appropriate. For more information, please see the [Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance](#).

12. Q: Do images and references need to be included within the four-page limit of the research proposal or are they in addition to?

A: All images and references have to fit within the four-page limit of the research proposal document.

13. Q: I cannot fit all of my publications in the application due to the word limit. Which ones should I include?

A: Please include your most relevant publications (up to 20). If you are the first author, you can add ‘et al’ while if you are not the first author, you can include the

initials for all contributing. Reviewers will be able to see the full list of your publications through your ORCID ID, which is a part of the application.

14. Q: I have completed all the sections and the application is at 100% but I cannot see a button to submit my application.

A: All participants on the participants tab must appear as 'complete' in green before the submit button appears. If a participant appears in orange as 'incomplete' they need to login and select 'Save & Submit' on the application form page or 'Submit your contribution' on the summary page – otherwise you will not be able to submit your application to your host institution for approval.

Letters of supports from the Head of Department and Nominated Referee are compulsory, while the Research Support is optional and can be revoked if no longer needed.

15. Q: What is the Head of Department expected to contribute to the application form?

A: The Head of Department section is made of two parts:

1. Statement of Support (PDF upload). Further guidance is provided within the scheme notes for the round.

2. Commitment of Resources (max 250 words text box) - please provide details of the resources that the department will commit to the applicant. This section will be included in the award letter if the application is successful.

FEEDBACK

16. Q: Can I request feedback on my University Research Fellowship application?

A: Due to the high volume of applications received we are unfortunately not able to provide feedback for applications unsuccessful at the first Panel assessment stage. Applicants can request feedback if their application has completed the independent peer review assessment stage. Details of how to request feedback will be provided when applicants are notified about the status of their application.