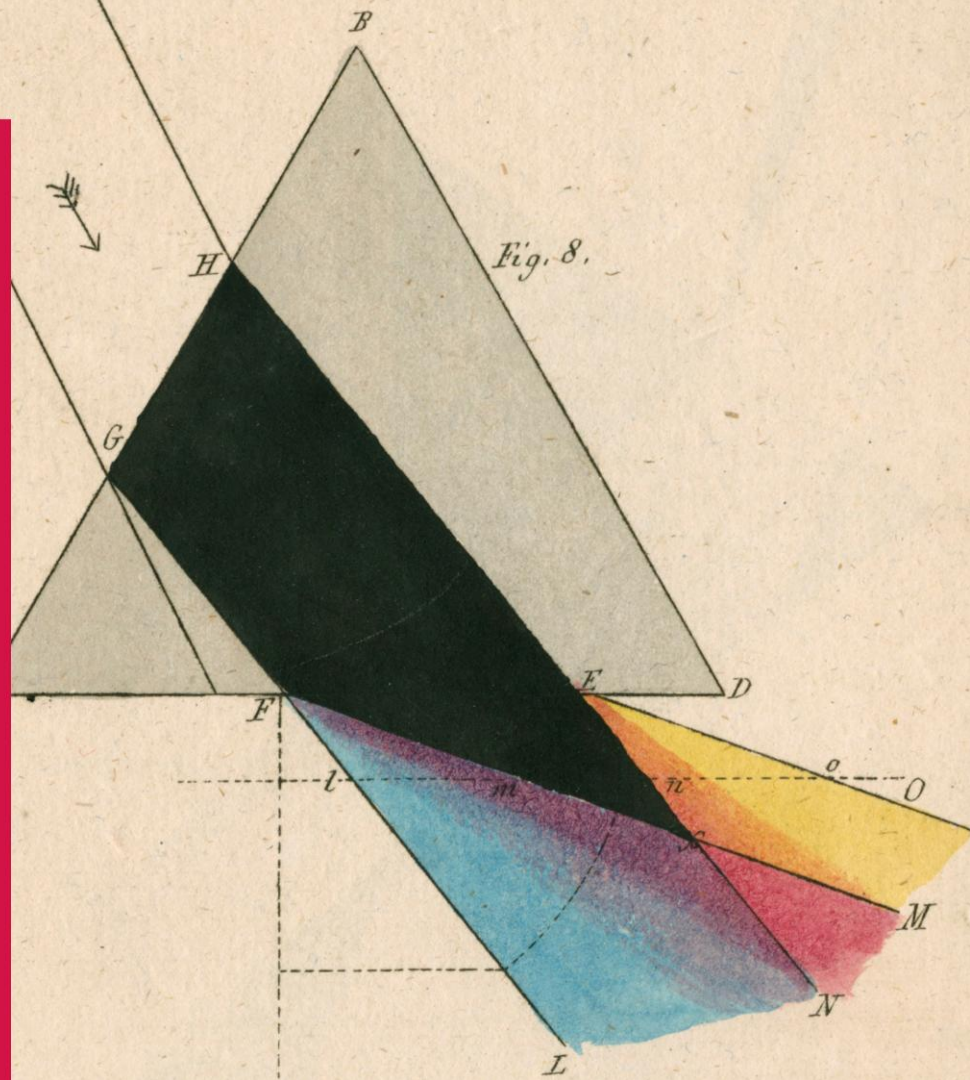


Introducing the Faraday Discovery Fellowships Accelerated International Route (AIR)

A guide for potential applicants

THE
ROYAL
SOCIETY



Outline of presentation

- Introduction to the Royal Society
- Background to the Faraday Discovery Fellowships
- Details of the scheme – who is it for and what does it offer?
- Engagement, Training and Development
- Assessment criteria
- Application and assessment processes
- Key dates

The Royal Society

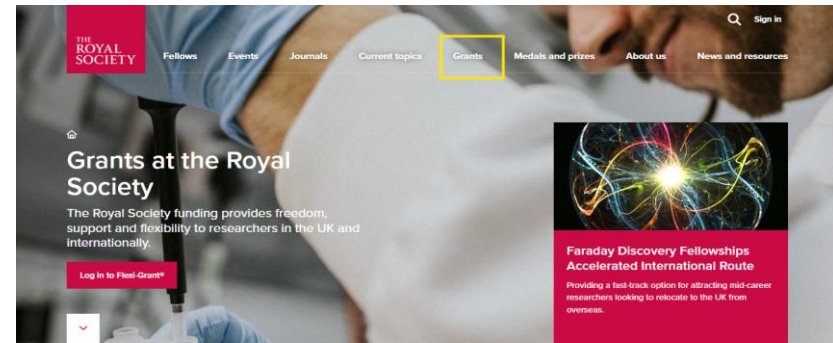
The Royal Society is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world's most distinguished scientists drawn from all areas of science, engineering, and medicine.

The Society's fundamental purpose, as it has been since its foundation in 1660, is to recognise, promote, and support excellence in science and to encourage the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity.

What do we fund?

- UK Early Career Fellowships
- UK Mid-Career Fellowships
- UK Senior Career Fellowships
- International Fellowships and Awards
- UK Industry, Innovation and Research Capacity

Royal Society remit: research in the life and physical sciences, including engineering, excluding clinical medicine.

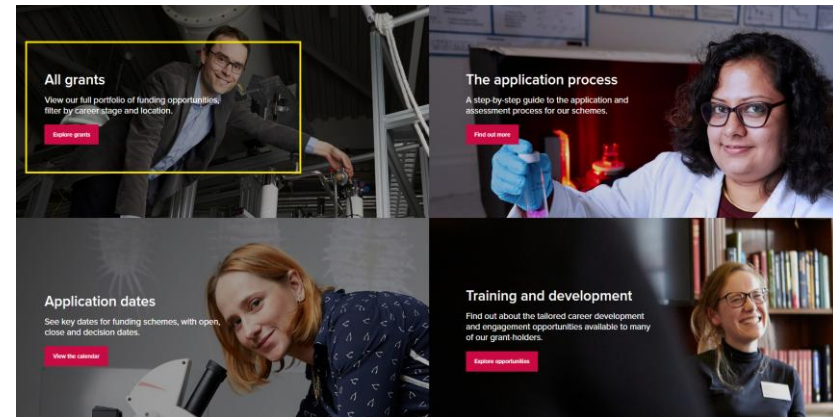


Fellowships and grants for outstanding researchers

We support scientists pursuing discovery-led and applied research through a wide range of schemes and career development opportunities.

The Royal Society recognises that diversity is essential for delivering excellence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and wants to encourage applications from the widest range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences to maximise innovation and creativity in science for the benefit of humanity.

Our work is guided by the principles of Excellence, Inclusivity, Flexibility, and Openness and Fairness.



Background

- **Mid-career gap** – Increasing support for mid-career researchers long standing strategic aim for Royal Society
- **Faraday Fellowships** – first pitched to government in 2019 spending review (unsuccessfully)
- **Pioneer** – Faraday Fellowships proposed as an alternative to ERC consolidator grants
- **Following association** – Government suggested that some elements may still be funded in future
- **New Fund** – DSIT approached the Royal Society about possibility of an alternative funding model in Oct 2023

Faraday Discovery Fellowships Accelerated International Route - AIR

[Home](#) / News from the Royal Society

Royal Society announces £30m fund to attract global talent over next two years

19 May 2025

The Royal Society has announced up to £30 million in funding over the next two years to attract global talent and support the development of world-leading research groups in UK Universities and Research Institutes.

The new Faraday Fellowship accelerated international route will provide up to £4 million per researcher or group over 5-10 years. While up to £4 million will be the normal amount, in exceptional circumstances the Society will be willing to consider larger awards.

Sir Adrian Smith, President of the Royal Society, said:

"International science is in a state of flux with some of the certainties of the post war era now under question.

"With funding streams and academic freedom coming under threat, the best scientific talent will be looking for stability. The UK can be at the front of the queue in attracting that talent.

"Our new opportunity, combined with schemes from UKRI and the Royal Academy of Engineering, are a step in the right direction."

£20 million will be funded from the Royal Society's Faraday Discovery Fellowship Fund, providing a fast-track option for attracting mid-career researchers looking to relocate to the UK. A further £10 million from the Royal Society will enable the Society to attract researchers at other career stages.

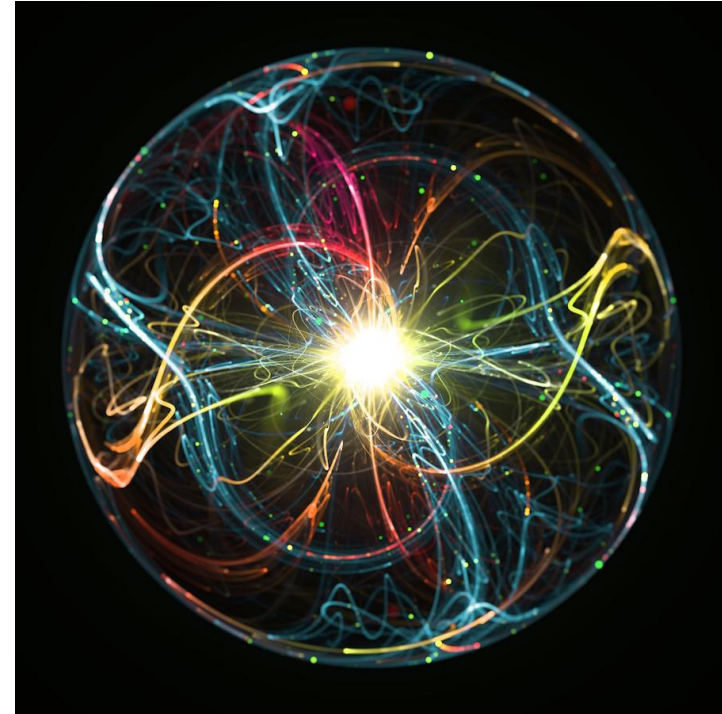
- Total funding available: £20million over 2 years allocated to mid-career researchers
- Fast-track process: 3 decision points in the year, within the standard Faraday scheme

Faraday Discovery Fellowships

- Up to £8 million
- 10 years
- Approximately 7 awards per year for at least 5 years

Faraday Discovery Fellowships Accelerated International Route - AIR

- £4 million
- 5 years
- Approximately 5 awards over the next 2 years, depending on demand and quality of applications



**Faraday Discovery
Fellowships
AIR aims**

- Support the most talented international research leaders to be based in the UK
- Fund high-quality original research
- Develop world leading research groups/teams in the UK
- Train the next generation

More specifically:

- Fast-tracked recruitment would be advantageous to UK research, is time-sensitive, or where exceptional circumstances exist

Who can apply?

- Mid-career research leaders with 10 – 20 years postdoctoral research experience
- All Nationalities – for applicants wishing to conduct research in a UK university/eligible organisation
- Academic researchers – HEI or not-for-profit research host organisations
- Academics in collaboration with industry partners*
- Academics with joint UK-International appointments**

Applicants may not apply to the standard round and the Accelerated International Route simultaneously

Definition of mid-career

- Eligible candidates will have 10*- 20 years research experience post-PhD or equivalent research experience (*exceptional candidates with fewer years' experience will be considered)
- Candidates with more than 20 years of research experience will not be eligible. (Career breaks and non-linear career paths will be taken into consideration when calculating the number of years of research as per our standard policy. **If you have switched discipline and consider yourself mid-career in your current field, please email the Office to confirm eligibility)**
- Nominated researchers do not need to have formally accepted an offer of employment from the UK host organisation at the point of application, but if awarded the candidate will need to accept a formal offer for a full-time, permanent contract at the host organisation before their award can start

Mid-Career research leaders

- Established Research Group Leader
- Established International Networks
- Significant Original Research Contributions
- Wider Contributions to Research

What types of research are eligible?

- STEM – As with all Royal Society funding the programme will fund research across the whole of STEM
- Interdisciplinary – including collaborations outside of STEM. Lead Applicant must have a track record in STEM
- Priority areas – The programme will not operate thematic priorities

**Faraday
Discovery
Fellowships
will provide**



Time and freedom to focus on research without distractions



Long-term, stable funding to allow researchers to tackle the most challenging research questions



Resources to establish an outstanding team of researchers



More focus on long-term outputs and impact



Fast-track endorsement on Global Talent Visa application

Eligible Costs

- Start-up costs
- Research costs
- Staff costs and research students
- Training costs
- Equipment costs
- Knowledge transfer costs
- Inter-disciplinary costs
- **Relocation and visa costs (including NHS surcharge costs, for applicant and dependents)**
- Public and schools engagement

Flexibility is built in



Awards are portable



Policies for Maternity, Paternity, Shared parental leave, adoptive and extended sick leave



Award holders who require flexibility may hold the award on a part-time basis and buy in additional resources to meet the research objectives



Reasonable adjustments to support disabled researchers are an eligible cost

Career development opportunities



Programme for Faraday Fellows

- Networking
- Training
- Mentoring



Opportunities for your teams

- Networking
- Training

Assessment criteria



Lead Applicant - Outstanding track record of candidate and international standing in their field



Research Proposal - the quality, ambition and originality of the proposed research vision and programme, and how it will advance research and innovation



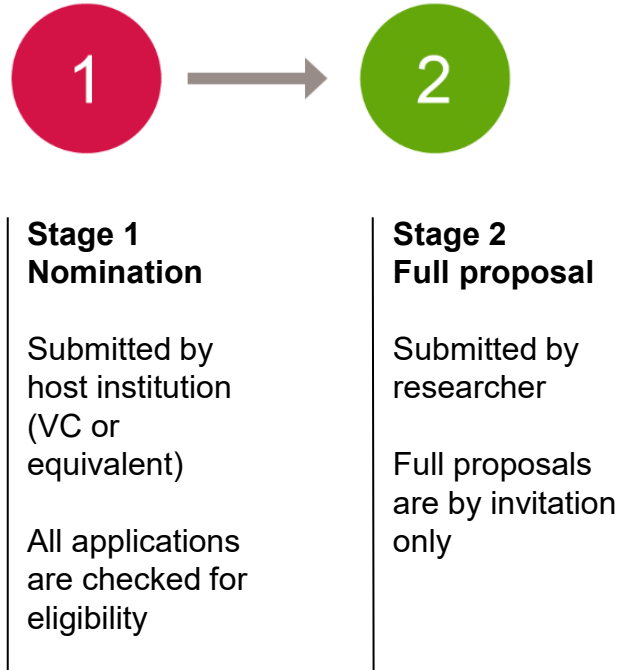
Suitability of the research environment



Justification of resources/ good value for money - Stage 2

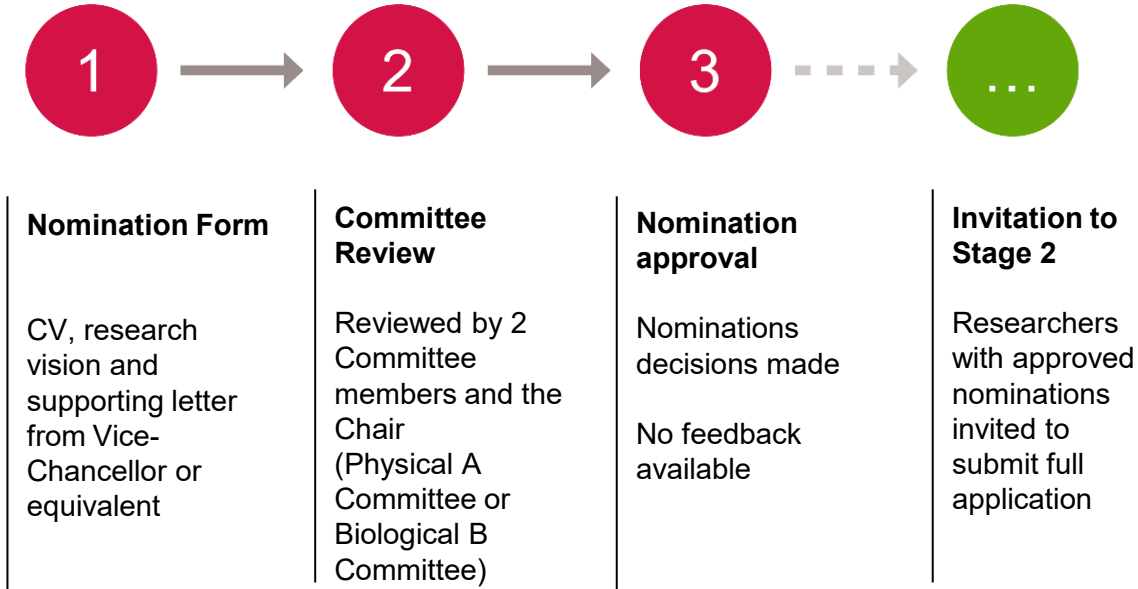
The application and assessment process

2 stage process



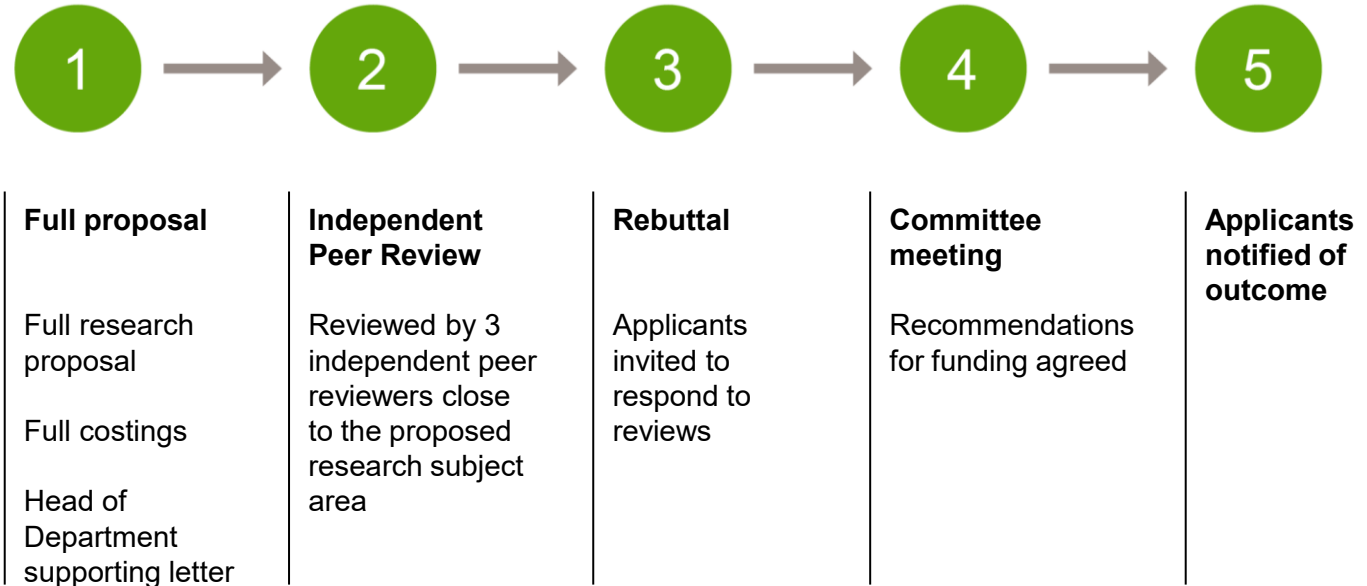
How your outline proposal is assessed

Stage 1



How your invited full proposal is assessed

Stage 2



**Faraday
Fellowships AIR
key
dates**

Action	Dates
Scheme Documents Published	15 July 2025
Nomination forms collected for assessment	15 August 2025 25 November 2025 25 February 2026
Applicants notified of Stage 1/nomination decision	Late August 2025 Early December 2025 Mid March 2026
Close dates for Stage 2 (full) applications	Late September 2025 Late January 2026 Early April 2026
Applicant rebuttal deadline	Early November 2025 Early March 2026 Late May 2026
Applicants notified of funding decision	Early December 2025 Late March 2026 Mid-June 2026

Contact details



<https://royalsociety.org/grants/faraday-discovery-fellowships/accelerated-international-route/>



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