

University Research Fellowships 2025

The following scheme notes set out the eligibility and application process of the **University Research Fellowships 2025 round**. Please read through the entire document before proceeding with an application.

1. Contents

1. Contents	1
2. Overview	2
2.1. Background	2
2.2. Changes to the scheme	2
2.3. Aims of the Scheme	2
2.4. Subjects Covered	2
2.5. Duration and Start of Fellowship	2
3. Timetable	3
4. Finance	3
4.1. Total Funding Available	3
4.2. Programme Specific Funding Rules	3
5. Eligibility	4
5.1. Applicant Eligibility	4
5.2. Host Organisation Eligibility	6
5.3. Commitments from the Host Organisation	6
6. Assessment Criteria and Review Process	7
6.1. Assessment Criteria	7
6.2. Review Process	7
6.3. Mid-fellowship review	9
7. References and Participants	9
8. Contact information	11
9. Use of Data	11
10. Use of generative AI	12
11. System Guidance Notes	12
11.1. Using Flexi-Grant ®	12
11.2. ORCID Identifier	12
11.3. Completing the application form	12
12. Application Guidance Notes	13
12.1. Application Approvals	13
12.2. Question Guidance	14

2. Overview

2.1. Background

The Royal Society introduced the [University Research Fellowship](#) (URF) scheme in 1983 to support the most promising early career postdoctoral scientists to build independent research careers and give them the freedom to pursue innovative and often transformative scientific research.

2.2. Changes to the scheme

- **Host Organisation Support** – More detailed guidance provided to host organisations regarding expectations of their support for the applicant. From this round onwards, the Head of Department statement of support will be visible to applicants.

2.3. Aims of the Scheme

The University Research Fellowship (URF) programme aims to support the next generation of research leaders to undertake cutting-edge research.

The objectives of the URF programme are to enable outstanding early career scientists with the potential to become leaders in their field to:

- Build an independent research career at a UK university or research institution
- Gain the freedom, time, and long-term flexible support to pursue high-quality and innovative lines of scientific research
- Develop as research leaders by offering tailored high-quality professional development, networking and engagement opportunities

Applicants to the University Research Fellowship should submit a research proposal and costs for eight years. Costs for years six to eight will be subject to satisfactory progress and completion of a mid-fellowship review at the start of year four.

2.4. Subjects Covered

Research must be within the Royal Society's remit of natural sciences, which includes but is not limited to biological research, biomedical sciences, chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics. For a full list, please see the [breakdown of subject groups and areas](#) supported by the Royal Society.

Submissions from clinically qualified scientists may be considered. The Society does not support clinical or interventional research on humans at the individual or group level, social sciences, or humanities, unless otherwise stated.

If there is any doubt about the eligibility of a project, please contact the Grants team via urf@royalsociety.org

2.5. Duration and Start of Fellowship

Up to 35 awards will be offered, with the potential to appoint additional fellowships subject to available funding.

Fellowships are expected to commence between 01 October 2025 and 01 January 2026.

Funding is provided for 8 years. Costs for years 6 to 8 are conditional on the satisfactory progress and completion of a mid-fellowship review at the start of year four.

Flexibility during the Fellowship: The University Research Fellowship is a flexible award. It can be held on either a full-time or on a part-time basis for health reasons or caring responsibilities. There is also provision for maternity, paternity, shared parental leave, adoptive or extended sick leave as well as financial support for childcare costs that arise from attending conferences, etc.

If you would like to hold the fellowship at less than 1.0 FTE due to childcare or personal circumstances, **please provide the costs at 1.0 FTE in the application form**. If successful, you will be able to submit a change in working hours request for consideration and the Office will adjust the payments accordingly.

3. Timetable

Opening date	Thursday, 11 July 2024
Closing Date	Tuesday, 10 September 2024 3:00PM (UK Time)
Interviews for shortlisted applicants	Tuesday, 2 April to Thursday, 24 April 2025
Expected results	May 2025

4. Finance

4.1. Total Funding Available

Core Funding Rules are listed within the [Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance](#). Please note that in instances where Core Funding Rules conflict with the Programme Specific Funding rules, the Programme Specific Funding rules included in this guidance document always take precedence.

4.2. Programme Specific Funding Rules

Applicants are permitted to apply for up to **£1.87M**. This is a maximum value over eight years (i.e. the total contribution requested from the Society may not exceed £1.87M).

An assumed level of inflation should be included for the full duration of the grant. The level of inflation will need to be justified.

Funding can cover:

- **Research Fellow's basic salary and associated on-costs** as set by the host organisation (80% contribution). URFs are expected to establish their independent research career and as such, the basic salary requested should be at a level commensurate with their skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience. For the first year, we would not expect the basic salary to fall below the salary of academic staff at an equivalent career stage such as an early-stage lecturer. Salary costs must be justified and further supporting information will be requested at the point of offer. The Society reserves the right to award a salary different to that requested. Should the host organisation wish to supplement the basic salary provided by the Society it is free to do so at its own discretion.
- **Directly allocated** (including estate costs) and **indirect costs** (80% contribution)
- 100% of **Research expenses**: including consumables, equipment, travel etc.

- **Contribution to Research Assistance – 80%** of the full economic cost (fEC) of a postdoctoral researcher/PDRA (salary costs and associated indirect and directly allocated costs, including estate costs), if held at a UK Higher Education Institute (HEI) or UK Research Council supported Research Institute (RCI). Please refer to Section 4 in the [Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance](#).
 - If you are requesting costs to support a PDRA, we will require a statement from your Head of Department confirming that the host organisation will cover 20% of PDRA costs and clarifying the feasibility of the appointment.
 - **Please note that ‘PDRA Costs’ should include salary costs and associated indirect, estate and other directly allocated costs; separate from the Research Fellow’s associated costs.**
- **Contribution to a 4-year PhD studentship, including PhD stipend and fees (100%).** Please refer to Section 5.3 in the [Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance](#). If you are requesting costs towards a new 4-year PhD studentship, we will require a statement from you and your Head of Department confirming that:
 - 1) In the event of the award-holder (Research Fellow) leaving the host organisation, the PhD student will be permitted to decide whether to remain at the host organisation or move with the supervisor (with advice from the supervisor and other academic staff as appropriate).
 - 2) The host organisation will provide a deputy supervisor who will become lead supervisor in the event that the research fellow leaves the host organisation.

- **Public engagement**

Research fellows may request up to £8,000 over the duration of the fellowship to support their public engagement activities.

- **Training**

In addition, research fellows may use up to £8,000 over the entire duration of their fellowship to support their own technical and non-technical training and career/professional development e.g., professional coaching. As well as training for any staff and students supported on this award.

It is expected that a minimum of £30,000 of research costs per annum will be requested within the total award value of £1.87M. Applicants working in fields that typically require less research expenses can request less than the minimum. Please note that these applicants will not be able to request the maximum grant value without a further justification.

5. Eligibility

5.1. Applicant Eligibility

This scheme is open to:

- Early career, post-doctoral researchers with between **three and eight years of actual research experience since their PhD** (i.e. date on which the degree was approved by the board of graduate studies) by the closing date of the round. Career breaks will be taken into consideration (see below for more details).
- Applicants of **all nationalities**.

Please note, University Research Fellows requiring a visa to work in the UK are eligible to apply for a Global Talent Visa under the fast-track process of endorsement. Other visa categories are available. In line with the

highly prestigious nature of a University Research Fellowship, the Global Talent visa is designed for people who are recognised as leaders and potential leaders in their field. Further details can be found on the Royal Society's website (royalsociety.org/global-talent-visa).

This scheme is **not** for researchers that:

- Hold a permanent post (including a proleptic position) in a university or not for profit research organisation.
- Hold or previously have held an equivalent fellowship within the UK to establish an independent research group and therefore independent researcher status (such as but not limited to being the recipient of a nationally competitive research fellowship of 5 or more years which can be held at any UK host organisation and provides funding for your salary and your research costs/staff costs). For example, UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship, STFC Rutherford Fellowship, NERC Independent Research Fellowship, EPSRC Early Career Fellowship, Sir Henry Dale Fellowship or BBSRC David Phillips Fellowship. (Please note, holders of postdoctoral training fellowships such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions can apply. Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellows who meet the research experience eligibility requirements outlined above can also apply).

Additional information regarding eligibility can be found in the FAQs document for the round, which can be accessed (PDF) on the [URF webpage](#).

The Society appreciates that there are diverse research career paths and understands the challenges of managing a research career alongside other personal commitments. When reviewing applicants' eligibility and research experience, the Society will consider time spent outside the research environment (e.g. time away due to personal reasons such as maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoptive leave or other caring responsibilities; ill-health or working in a non-research environment/role, such as industry).

Furthermore, where applicants have taken formal periods of maternity, paternity, shared parental, and adoptive leave as the primary carer (either the mother, father, partner or adopter), or extended sick leave, the Society will allow an additional amount of time on top of each period of leave when assessing eligibility. Each case will be considered individually as per guidelines below:

Maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and adoptive leave: In addition to the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to 100% of the duration of leave taken will be added on top, up to a maximum of 6 months.

Example 1: If an applicant took 4 months' leave, an additional 4 months would be added, and a total of 8 months would be deducted.

Example 2: If an applicant took 18 months' leave, an additional 6 months would be added (maximum additional time allowed) and a total of 24 months would be deducted.

Extended sick leave (defined as more than four weeks off work, as per the UK Government's definition): In addition to the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to 100% of the duration of leave taken will be added on top, up to a maximum of 6 months. As with parental leave, cases will be considered individually, and the host organisation may need to confirm that the applicant qualifies for this provision. Supporting documents may be requested at the Society's discretion. The Society reserves the right to consider individual requests outside of the outlined policy in exceptional circumstances.

The Royal Society recognises that diversity is essential for delivering excellence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The Society 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. We regularly review and revise processes to help ensure that all talented applicants have an equitable chance to succeed as per the assessment criteria. This includes ensuring all Panel members are briefed on unconscious bias in decision making as part of our assessment process.

Support for disabled applicants: The Royal Society welcomes applications from disabled scientists and provides support and adjustments to ensure that they can participate fully in the selection process. If you require support or an adjustment when accessing the application form, attending interview, or for any other part of the application process, please contact the Grants team at urf@royalsociety.org or call +44 20 7451 2666. All requests for adjustments are made in confidentiality. Any request for an adjustment will not normally be shared with panel members unless it becomes relevant to the selection process itself. If we need to share your request with anyone (for example if panel members are required to implement any adjustments during interviews), we will ask for your permission first.

Adjustments can include but are not limited to:

- Extension of the deadline
- Additional support to complete the application form
- Receiving the application form in a different format, such as on a Word document
- Support during interviews as required, including technical support for candidates requiring accessibility software or services
- Additional costs that candidates may incur on account of their particular disability to attend an interview.

The Grants team will be pleased to answer questions about eligibility and/or points covered in this section.

5.2. Host Organisation Eligibility

Fellowships must be held in a UK Higher Education Institute (HEI), a UK Research Council supported Research Institute (RCI), a not-for-profit research institute (IRO), or a Public Sector Research Establishment (PSRE). For information on eligible UK host organisations, please see our [Organisations Eligible for Royal Society Research Funding webpage](#).

Candidates are not required to move institutions for the proposed fellowship, however those wishing to remain at their current organisation should clearly explain their planned route to independence and reasons for staying.

Successful applicants are expected to be strong candidates for permanent posts in institutions at the end of their fellowships. Therefore, the application period may be an opportunity to begin initial discussions with your proposed host department regarding your future and the resources that they will commit to you, should your application be successful. Due to the complex nature of these conversations, we cannot provide bespoke advice.

5.3. Commitments from the Host Organisation

Through a statement of support, the Head of Department will need to confirm, on behalf of the Host Organisation, their ability to comply with the Conditions of Award and associated [Policies and Positions](#), should the application be successful as well as meet any obligations specific to the fellowship. Most notably, these include:

- **Concordat for Research Careers** – Research staff should be appointed on terms that are no less favourable than those of comparable posts in the Host Organisation. The Host Organisation must adopt the principles, standards and good practice for the management of research staff set out in the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) (2019) and subsequent amendments. This includes providing appropriate training and development opportunities for the award holder.
- **Diversity & Inclusion** – The Society is committed to increasing diversity in the scientific workforce, recognising this is a key part of ensuring scientific excellence. The Host Organisation will be expected to actively promote a supportive and inclusive research environment, and make sure equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is supported at all stages and activities of the award, in line with the Society's position statement on diversity. This includes selection of applicants through a transparent and effective process in line with institutional EDI policies and good practice.
- **Facilities and office/laboratory space** – The Host Organisation is expected to provide the award holder with the necessary departmental and institutional support for the duration of the award to complete their fellowship successfully, including adequate office and laboratory space and access to essential equipment, software, and facilities from the start of the award.
- **Protected fellowship time** – The Host Organisation will ensure the award holder's time is protected to fully concentrate on fellowship activities (included but not limited to research, training, and development).
 - The fellowship provides funding for 100% of the research fellows' time. The Society will support the research fellow in taking on teaching and/or administrative duties for no more than six hours on average per teaching week in term time (pro-rated as appropriate). Teaching in this context includes related support of undergraduates and Master's students, lecture and practical preparation time and any associated marking responsibilities; it is for the research fellow to determine the spread of activities they undertake so that they most support their research and career development.

6. Assessment Criteria and Review Process

6.1. Assessment Criteria

- The scientific track record of the applicant commensurate with research experience: past achievements, research career to date, publication record, likely contribution to research field, future potential to become a research leader.
- The scientific merit, originality, significance and quality of proposed research project and likelihood of achieving goals.
- The suitability of host organisation including appropriate expertise/equipment and research environment. Support for career development.

6.2. Review Process

Applications are assessed by the Research Appointments Panels, which are split by subject group into two Biological Sciences Panels and three Physical Sciences Panels. The Panel membership is likely to include Fellows of the Royal Society and Members of the Royal Irish Academy.

Applications are assigned to a Panel by the Office based on the subject group/areas and keywords you select, with oversight from the Panel Chairs. All proposals submitted are initially reviewed and assessed by at least two members of the selection Panel(s) who have the most appropriate scientific expertise. Following initial assessment, a longlist is drawn up, with longlisted proposals subject to high quality independent peer review. Following completion of independent peer review, proposals are re-assessed by the Panel members assigned to the proposal, and a shortlist for interview is drawn up with oversight from the Panel Chair. If successful at this stage, you will be notified about your interview at the end of February. Interviews are held in April. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in May.

Please find a schematic for the Review Process below:

1	URF 2025 round open to applications	11th July 2024 – 10th September 2024 3pm UK time
	During this period, the application form should be completed and submitted on Flexi-Grant. Contributions by the Head of Department, Nominated Referee and Research Office must also be completed before the closing of the round, as they are required for the successful submission of the application. Any queries regarding the scheme notes, application form, Flexi-Grant, etc, should be sent to University Research Fellowship team (urf@royalsociety.org) while the round is open.	
2	Eligibility checks	September – October 2024
	Applications are checked for eligibility.	
3	Assessment: Panel Review 1	November 2024
	Applications assessed by at least two members of the Research Appointment Panel(s).	
4	Longlisting	December 2024
	Each Research Appointment Panel draws up a longlist for independent peer review, with oversight from the Panel Chair. Applicants will be notified by January 2025 .	
5	Assessment: Peer Review	January – February 2025
	Longlisted applications are sent out to Independent Peer Reviewers.	
6	Assessment: Panel Review 2	February 2025
	Panel members reassess applications based on the Peer Review reports.	
7	Shortlisting	February 2025
	Each Research Appointment Panel draws up a shortlist for interview, with oversight from the Panel Chair. Applicants will be notified at the end of February 2025 .	
8	Assessment: Interview	April 2025
	In this final assessment stage, the Research Appointment Panels decide on the outcome of the applications: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successful 2. Reserve 3. Unsuccessful 	
9	Notification outcome: Applicants will be notified in May 2025 .	
10	Offer letters sent to successful applicants	End of June 2025

The subject tags you select on your application play an essential role in matching your application with appropriate reviewers, so **it is extremely important to select only the most relevant subject tags on your application**.

Please be assured that the Royal Society specifically requests anyone involved in reviewing applications to consider them in confidence. More information on the Review Process can be found in Appendix 1.

All applicants will be notified of outcomes via email.

6.3. Mid-fellowship review

University Research Fellows awarded a fellowship in the 2025 round will be asked to complete a mid-fellowship review at the start of year four of their fellowship. This will provide an opportunity for research fellows to update on their progress since starting the fellowship and future plans. Funding for years six to eight of the fellowship will be subject to successful completion of this stage. The assessment criteria for the mid-fellowship review are:

- **The updated research fellows’ track record since the start of their award:** including past achievements, research career to date, publication record (i.e. evidence of first or senior, if appropriate to field, authored papers). Evidence of effective research and publication management that will ensure dissemination of research outputs and recognition of contribution from team members.
- **Evidence of independent research and efforts to build an independent research career:** including any additional grants secured, new collaborations and plans to obtain further funding, as well as plans for the next career step and beyond (i.e. offer of a proleptic position).
- **The proposed research project:** quality and originality of proposed project, contribution to the field as a research leader, definition of a research plan, likelihood of achieving goals.
- **The host institution:** suitability, appropriate expertise/equipment, research environment, support for career development.

Mid-fellowship reviews will be assessed by a member of the Research Appointment Panel through which your URF application was originally assessed and final decisions will be ratified by the Panel Chair. Research Fellows will be informed of the outcome of the mid-fellowship review within two months of submission of their progress. Further information regarding the mid-fellowship review will be provided closer to the date.

7. References and Participants

To complete and submit the application form, the lead applicant is required to provide supporting statements or references from two individuals. The following individuals must be included:

- Head of Department at the Host Organisation
- One nominated Referee

The Head of Department is expected to detail your suitability for the department as well as agree to meet the commitments outlined in the [“Commitments from the Host Organisation”](#) section of these scheme notes.

The primary consideration for a nominated referee is that they are able to comment independently and authoritatively on your application. The referee should be someone who has worked closely with you and is familiar with your research (for example, a PhD or postdoctoral supervisor, mentor, prior collaborator). You should make sure they are able to provide a reference before adding them to your application.

Nominated referees **must not** be:

- A named collaborator in your application
- A member on the assessment Panel for this scheme
- A member of the Royal Society’s Council

References must be submitted in English. If a reference is not submitted in English, it will not be accepted and may render the application ineligible. The Head of Department supporting statement and reference cannot be

from the same person. If two references from the same person are submitted, it may make the application ineligible.

The supporting statements must be submitted through Flexi-Grant. Please follow the steps below.

Step 1 | Ensure all participants have a Flexi-Grant account

- All referees and other participants must set up a Flexi-Grant account in order to contribute to an application.
- If a participant already has a Flexi-Grant account they should use that, if not then a new account should be set up.

Step 2 | Invite participants to contribute to an application

- Applicants should invite referees and other individuals to submit their supporting statements through the 'participants' tab.
- The participants tab can be found on the application form summary page and contains details of each participant required to contribute to the application.
- Applicants should select 'invite' and enter the e-mail address of the person they wish to invite to provide the relevant reference or statement and send the invitation.

Step 3 | Monitor participants responses

- The recipient will need to accept your invitation before they can participate in the application.
- You can monitor the progress of your participants' activity through this section of the application form and issue reminders as required.
- Once the participant has accepted your invitation, their status will be displayed as 'active'.
- Once participants have completed all their sections of the application form they should select '**Save & Submit**' on the application form page or select '**Submit your contribution**' on the summary page.
- Upon completion of their section of the application form their status will be displayed as 'complete'.

Please note that you will not be able to submit your application form until the status of all participants shows 'complete'.

Please note that once an applicant submits an application on Flexi-Grant®, it is then directed to the designated Approver for the employing organisation at which the applicant has applied to host an award (see Application Approvals in the 'Application Guidance Notes' Section). It is recommended that referring and supporting participants fulfil their requirements **at least 5 working days** before the submission deadline (**Tuesday, 10 September 2024 – 3:00PM UK time**) to ensure there is sufficient time for organisational approval. The Host Organisation approver must approve the completed application by the submission deadline.

It is the applicant's responsibility to liaise with the Host Organisation's Approver, Head of Department and Nominated Referee to ensure that the required tasks are completed by the deadline. Please contact the Grants team before the deadline if there is any issue. Alternatively, the UK Host Organisation's Approver, Nominated Referee and Head of Department can contact us directly. The Royal Society will not be held responsible for emails that are not received due to address errors or spam filters and no provision is made for non-receipt of emails sent by the Royal Society.

Once participants have completed all their sections of the application form, please remind them to select **'Save & Submit'** on the application form page or select **'Submit your contribution'** on the summary page.

Re-opening the Application form to Participants

On the occasion that an invited participant accidentally submits their section of the application form prematurely, the Lead Applicant has the ability to re-open the application form for the participant. To do this, the Lead Applicant should return to the Participant tab on the application form summary page. You will find a 're-open' button alongside the name of any participant who has completed their section of the form. Once you click this button, the form is reactivated and available for participants to amend.

Research Support Role

The Research Support role displayed under the participants tab is an optional role, which allows you to invite an individual from the relevant UK Host Organisation research support team to review and amend the application prior to submission. **The primary purpose is to ensure that the requested finances have been recorded correctly for this specific grant programme; this is strongly advised for this scheme.**

As the Research Support Role is **optional**, applicants can revoke this participant request in order to submit their application if the section has not been completed. Please navigate to the participants tab and revoke the request for the Research Support Role.

Additional system guidance can be found in the 'Systems Guidance Notes' Section.

8. Contact information

Enquires about this scheme can be made using the contact details below. **Before contacting us, please check whether your question is answered by these scheme notes and/or the FAQs available on our [website](#).** If not, please email the Grants team via urf@royalsociety.org or call +44 20 7451 2666.

Please quote your application reference number in all correspondence with the Grants team.

9. Use of Data

All applicant data, including personal data, is governed by the [Royal Society's Privacy Policy](#). This Policy sets out how and why the Royal Society uses your personal data, and how we protect your privacy when doing so. Please refer to the section entitled "Grant Applicants and Holders" for details of how the Privacy Policy determines the use of applicant data.

In addition to the usage set out in the Royal Society's privacy policy, please note that information regarding your application for the University Research Fellowship may be shared with the Department of Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and Science Foundation Ireland for reporting and evaluation purposes. You may also be contacted by selected third parties such as independent evaluators, consultancy groups, and career development organisations. If successful, the Royal Society will contact you regarding the administration of your award throughout the course of your funding and after its completion. You may also be contacted by the Royal Society, DSIT, Science Foundation Ireland or an agent acting on their behalf, for reporting and evaluation purposes throughout the course of your funding and after its completion.

10. Use of generative AI

Generative AI tools offer potential benefits for research but also challenges and risks. The Royal Society has joined with other funders to set our expectations around the use of generative AI tools in funding applications. [Funders joint statement: use of generative AI tools in funding applications and assessment.](#)

When developing funding proposals, researchers must ensure generative AI tools are used responsibly and in accordance with relevant legal and ethical standards where these exist or as they develop. Funding proposals for Royal Society grants should adhere to our existing commitments to policies on [Research Integrity and Trusted Research](#). Applicants are responsible for ensuring the originality, validity, reliability, and integrity of any outputs created or modified by generative AI tools. Where generative AI tools are used in funding proposals their use should be acknowledged in the application by naming the AI source and specifying how the content was generated (for example by listing the prompt used).

11. System Guidance Notes

Please read these guidance notes carefully as you complete the application form.

11.1. Using Flexi-Grant®

Applications can only be submitted online using the Royal Society's Grants management system (Flexi-Grant®) via <https://grants.royalsociety.org>. Further information about the Grants management system can be found at <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/flexi-grant/>. If you have not previously used Flexi-Grant®, please follow the registration process from the Flexi-Grant® homepage. **Paper-based applications will not be accepted.**

Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements and ensure all necessary information is presented in the application. These requirements are strictly adhered to and applications without all the necessary information, or evidence to show the assessment criteria are met, will be rejected.

All applications must be approved by the UK Host Organisation and the Participants sections must be completed before you can submit via Flexi-Grant®. Late applications will not be accepted.

Further guidance and support can be found through the [applicant and approver knowledge base](#).

11.2. ORCID Identifier

All applicants should submit an ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) identifier if they have one before their application is submitted. ORCID maintains a registry of unique researcher identifiers and a transparent method of linking research funding, research publications, research data and any other research outputs to these unique identifiers. This is a mandatory requirement at the application submission stage only. You can register for an ORCID identifier via <https://orcid.org/register>.

11.3. Completing the application form

The application can be completed by using the navigation tabs on the application summary page, with each page categorised as follows:

Summary
Understanding our Promotion
Eligibility Criteria
Applicant Personal Details
Applicant Career Summary
Research Proposal
Use of Animals in Research
Use of Human Patients and Tissue
Financial Details
Applicant Declaration
Head of Department Support
Nominated Reference Support

Please note that questions with * are mandatory fields, which is typically the majority of questions. You will only be able to submit your application for approval by the Host Organisation once all sections of the application form have been marked as complete, and your participants have marked their work as complete (please check the status of participants under the participants tab on the application form summary page). Late applications will not be accepted.

A full list of question fields to be completed as part of the application can be found in the Question Guidance in the 'Application Guidance Notes' Section.

12. Application Guidance Notes

12.1. Application Approvals

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that approval of the application by the UK Host Organisation is completed before the closing date.

The person responsible for approving your application will be the delegated authority at the UK Host Organisation where you are applying to hold your award. This may be someone within the research office, Faculty administration, Vice-Chancellor, or other administrative or management role.

The approver must be someone with the authority to confirm that the potential award can be hosted within their organisation, confirm that there is the capacity to deliver the proposed research and assure the proposed budget is appropriate and eligible for the scheme.

You will only be able to submit your application for approval by the UK Host Organisation's Approver once all sections of the application form have been marked as complete and all participants have marked their work as complete AND have submitted their section. The Lead applicant must check the status of the participants under the 'Participants' tab on the summary page of the application form. **Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.**

Please bear in mind it is the responsibility of the applicant to:

- Inform the Head of Department and Referee of the deadline.

- Liaise with the Head of Department and Referee to ensure that they have received their invitation with instructions to participate in completion of your application, as no provision is made for non-receipt of these automatic emails.
- Keep track of the progress of Head of Department and Referee completion status on your application summary page. You can issue a reminder email through the participants tab on your application summary page.

If the instruction email from the Royal Society has not been received, please:

- a) double check the accuracy of the email address supplied on the application form
- b) advise the intended recipient to check their spam filters/junk folders
- c) contact the Royal Society with an alternative email address for the recipient

The Royal Society will not be held responsible for automated emails that are not received due to address errors or spam filters.

12.2. Question Guidance

Please read the following guidance notes carefully as you complete the form. In the table below, each box represents a page of the application form; the left-hand column contains the questions within each of these pages as set out in the form; the right-hand column contains useful guidance on its completion.

Please note that questions marked * are mandatory fields.

Summary	
Summary page	<p>The summary page of the application form provides instructions for submission of your application for approval from the UK Host Organisation. In addition, you are provided with an overview for each section of your application form, including the approximate length of time it will take to complete each section.</p> <p>The summary page also allows applicants to manage and invite participants (e.g. Head of Department and Nominated Referee) who are required to contribute to the application form. Instructions for inviting participants can be found under the 'participants' tab on the application summary page.</p> <p>Note: you will only be able to submit your application for approval by the Host Organisation once all sections of the form have been completed.</p>

Understanding our Promotion	
Understanding our Promotion *	Please select how you heard about the scheme.

Eligibility Criteria	
Eligibility Criteria *	<p>Please provide confirmation that you meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Details of the eligibility criteria can be found in the 'Eligibility' Section of these Scheme Notes.</p>

Contact Details	
Title, Names, address, organisation and country *	<p>Please review and complete your personal details accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in processing your application. Errors will not be corrected after submission.</p> <p>Under this section, you should edit the contact type of the participants who will partake in your application form. The system default contact type is set as 'collaborator'. To amend the contact type of your Head of Department, click 'edit', and under the contact type field, select the 'Head of Department'.</p> <p>Organisation: this table will automatically display details of the intended Host Organisation (marked by a tick) which you selected previously and your current organisation, if different from the organisation where the award will be held and administered.</p>
Email address *	This field defaults to the account in which the application has commenced and is where all correspondence pertaining to the application throughout the application process will be sent. The applicant must therefore commence the application using the login email address used to register a user account on Flexi-Grant®.

Applicant Career Summary	
Title of Current Position *	Please state the title of your current position.
Current Employer *	Please enter the official organisation name of your current employer (e.g. University of Bath).
Current Department *	Please enter details of your current department (e.g. Department of Chemistry).
Country/Territory *	Please select the country/territory where your current employer (or last employer if currently unemployed or on leave) is based.
Current Position Start Date *	Please enter the date when your current position started.
Current Position End Date *	Please enter the date when your current position is expected to finish. If you are on an open-ended contract, please enter 31 December 2050.
Field of Specialisation *	Enter details of your field(s) of specialisation. (Maximum 20 words)
Summary of Your Current Research *	Provide an outline summary of your current research. Please also include a brief comment on the strength of your current host organisation. (Maximum 200 words)
Date of First Post-Doctoral Research Position *	Please enter the date that you started your first Post-Doctoral Research Position.
PhD Award Date *	Please enter the date that you were awarded your PhD. (i.e. the date when you received formal notification of your PhD thesis being accepted in its final form and approved by the Board of Graduate Studies).

PhD Institution *	Please state the name of the institution where you were awarded or are completing your PhD.
PhD Country/Territory *	Please state the country/territory in which you were awarded or will be awarded your PhD.
Personal Statement *	<p>Please provide a personal statement about your research career to date including research-related contributions, prizes and achievements and your career and research aspirations in the long term. You should state why the aims of this fellowship will be beneficial to you at this stage in your career, how do you intend to build your independent research career providing a clear pathway to independence, and how the fellowship will help you to reach your goals.</p> <p>Please note that you may use the personal statement to provide details of additional activities you have undertaken to demonstrate your contribution to the wider scientific endeavour (e.g. conferences, patents, workshops, invited talks, public engagement activities, etc).</p> <p>Plain text only (Maximum 500 words)</p>
Applicant Career History *	<p>Please provide a full list of your appointments since your PhD <u>in a clear and concise reverse chronological order</u> stating if part-time (and percentage part-time) when necessary.</p> <p>The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible.</p> <p>Please provide full details of any periods of part-time working, career breaks, extended sick leave or maternity/paternity/adoptive leave as your eligibility may depend on the accuracy of this information.</p> <p>Please provide dates in the format of DD/MM/YYYY (days may be omitted if unknown).</p> <p>You are not required to include prizes and achievements in this section; this can be included in the Personal Statement field.</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your career history information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
Impact of Covid -19	<p>The Society recognises that the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on early career researchers and their work will be varied. Please provide a summary of how the pandemic has affected your research activities. (Maximum 500 words).</p> <p>This can include but is not limited to: delays in publishing/submitting a key paper(s) (please note preprints can be included in your publications list), pause on experiments/research plans, reduced ability to work due to additional caring responsibilities.</p>

	<p>Plain text only (Maximum 500 words).</p>
<p>Applicant Qualifications *</p>	<p>Please list all your qualifications in reverse chronological order.</p> <p>The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence of your academic merit as possible and as appropriate for the funding for which you are applying.</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your qualification information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
<p>List your Key and/or Relevant Publications *</p>	<p>Please provide details of authors, titles and references of up to 20 of your key preprints and publications in refereed journals, in reverse chronological order. You should include those outputs most relevant to the application to support your case.</p> <p>Please note that publications will be reviewed on the basis of scientific content, rather than publication metrics or the identity of the journal.</p> <p>Most significant publications - Please identify with asterisks (*) up to five publications which you consider to be most significant.</p> <p>Your list should have three sections: (i) refereed papers in primary journals, (ii) contributions to symposia and compiled volumes (refereed only); and (iii) preprints.</p> <p>For publications arising from large collaborative programmes clearly specify the exact role and contribution made towards large collaborative research programmes that have resulted in multi-authored publications.</p> <p>If your field of research differs in any way from normal conventions, e.g. lead author, first author, and publications in journals being the main gauge of success, please provide a brief explanation at the top of your publication list.</p> <p>If appropriate, give the publisher or where each publication may be obtained, providing a URL if available. Citations for preprints must state "Preprint", the repository name and the articles persistent identifier (e.g. DOI).</p> <p>Plain text only (Maximum 1000 words)</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your publications to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
<p>Applicant Research Funding *</p>	<p>Please list all your current and previous research funding in reverse chronological order.</p> <p>The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible and as appropriate for the funding for which you are applying.</p>

	<p>Please give particulars (type of award, value and title of research) and if relevant confirm if these would continue if you were successful in securing this fellowship.</p> <p>Please note here pending parallel fellowship applications and when you expect to be given a decision.</p> <p>Plain text only</p> <p>Note: You can retrieve your information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.</p>
Research Proposal	
Start Date*	Please enter the proposed start date of the project. Fellowships must commence between 1 October 2025 and 1 January 2026.
End Date*	This must be exactly 8 years from the proposed start date.
Project Title*	<p>Please give the full title of your proposed project.</p> <p>(Maximum 20 words).</p>
Keywords*	<p>Provide 5-10 keywords which could be used to identify your research. These will aid with allocating your application to the most appropriate Research Appointment Panel(s).and identifying the most appropriate peer reviewers.</p> <p>More information about the Research Appointment Panels can be found on the Royal Society webpages below:</p> <p>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)</p>
Subject Group*	Please select the group that most closely reflects your area of research. This will aid with allocating your application to the most appropriate Research Appointment Panel(s).
Subject Area*	Please select the subjects that most closely reflect your area of research. These will aid with allocating your application to the most appropriate Research Appointment Panel(s).
Abstract*	<p>Provide a scientific summary of your proposed project. This should be a summary of your research proposal, briefly outlining the background and summarising the aims of your project.</p> <p>Plain text only (Maximum 400 words).</p>
Lay Summary*	Please provide a lay summary of your proposed project. This should be understandable by a lay person. You should explain why you have chosen to work in this subject area and what it is about your proposed research that you find

	<p>particularly exciting, interesting or important. If relevant, please also explain the potential impact or wider benefits to society of your research.</p> <p>Please be aware the Panel is experienced and composed of a broad range of experts who will not all be specialists in your specific area. Please bear this in mind when writing your summary for a non-specialist audience. Panel members place importance on this part of the application.</p> <p>Plain text only (Maximum 250 words)</p>
Research Proposal*	<p>Your research proposal should provide a detailed five-year project plan alongside a broader eight-year vision and strategy.</p> <p>Your research proposal should include, but is not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear research objectives • description of the experimental method and techniques used, including data analysis if applicable • an indication of milestones/timescales • broad long-term vision and strategy <p>Please also bear in mind that, although it is intended that your application will be viewed mostly on screen, there may be occasions when your application has to be photocopied in black and white. Consequently, illustrations and photographs with fine detail or in colour are best avoided.</p> <p>PDF file upload: <u>Four sides of A4 only</u>, in portrait orientation. If the page length is exceeded the text will be truncated by the Society. Please do not use a text size smaller than Arial 10 and make sure the document is titled.</p> <p>When uploading PDFs, add your name and a heading to the top of every page. Please ensure that there are no security settings activated on uploaded PDFs and avoid uploading documents containing illustrations with fine details or colour, as this can cause problems when creating a PDF of the application. Please note we will only print applications in black and white.</p> <p>If using the Text Field option rather than the PDF upload, this requires plain text only (Maximum 2000 words)</p> <p>Please note: When entering plain text, avoid using symbols as some may not be accepted by Flexi-Grant®. You should generate a PDF of your application (by choosing 'print' on the form) to check that the application appears as you want it to.</p>
Named collaborators*	<p>If you have named collaborators in your research proposal, please provide letters of support.</p> <p>Please ensure the letters from your collaborators are only confirming their commitment to collaborate on this project. The letters should provide information about their role in the project and their commitment to this.</p>
Host Organisation*	<p>Please select the organisation where the award will be held from the drop-down list.</p>
Host Department*	<p>Please provide the name of the proposed department at your host organisation where you will hold the fellowship. Please enter the official name (e.g. <i>School of Chemistry</i> rather than <i>Chemistry</i>)</p>

Justification for Choice of Host Organisation*	<p>Please provide a short statement justifying your choice of host organisation (i.e. why is it best suited for your research and career?).</p> <p>Please ensure that you clarify how the fellowship will help you to achieve independence at your chosen host organisation.</p> <p>Plain text only.</p>
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Data Management and Data Sharing	
<p>The Royal Society supports science as an open enterprise and is committed to ensuring that data outputs from research supported by the Society are made publicly available in a managed and responsible manner, with as few restrictions as possible. Data outputs should be deposited in an appropriate, recognised, publicly available repository, so that others can verify and build upon the data, which is of public interest. To fully realise the benefits of publicly available data they should be made intelligently open by fulfilling the requirements of being discoverable, accessible, intelligible, assessable, and reusable.</p>	
<p>The Royal Society does not dictate a set format for data management and sharing plans. Where they are required, applicants should structure their plan in a manner most appropriate to the proposed research. The information submitted in plans should focus specifically on how the data outputs will be managed and shared, detailing the repositories where data will be deposited. In considering your approach for data management and sharing, applicants should consider the following:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data outputs will be generated by the research that are of value to the public? • Where and when will you make the data available? • How will others be able to access the data? • If the data is of high public interest, how will it be made accessible not only for those in the same or linked field, but also to a wider public audience? • Specify whether any limits will be placed on the data to be shared, for example, for the purposes of safeguarding commercial interests, personal information, safety or security of the data. • How will datasets be preserved to ensure they are of long-term benefit? 	
Outline of data management and data sharing plan *	<p>If the proposed research will generate data that is of significant value to the research community, then please provide details of your data management and sharing plan. (Maximum 200 words).</p>
Fieldwork *	<p>Will you be conducting fieldwork as part of your research? Yes/No *</p>
Fieldwork	<p>Please provide all details of any proposed fieldwork to be carried out. Please ensure you provide details of location, duration and justification for the fieldwork.</p>
Fieldwork (Upload only)	<p>Please upload documents related to the following (if applicable):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Permission</u> Any mandatory documents that show local support has been assured by way of permission from the government concerned to travel to and work in the country. 2. <u>Collection of specimens</u> Any mandatory documents that show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific permission has been obtained from the host country to collect and to export specimens and material.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The director of the museum or other decision makers where these specimens will be deposited has indicated his/her desire or willingness to have such specimens and material.
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Use of Animals in Research *

The Royal Society is committed to supporting the development of alternative methods to reduce and/or replace the use of animals in research. Applicants proposing to use animals in their research must ensure that the use of animals falls within the regulations stipulated in the Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 and subsequent amendments. Additionally, applicants should continually be aware of developments in best practice and adopt the principles of the [3Rs](#) when designing and conducting experiments on animals.

As a funder of research, the Society takes its responsibilities towards the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 seriously and requires applicants to consider the questions below when preparing grant applications that include the use of animals.

Does your proposal involve the use of animals or animal tissue? *	Select 'Yes' or 'No'. If you have selected 'Yes' it is mandatory to complete all of the relevant questions on the Use of Animals in Research page.
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Experimental Design Assistant

The Royal Society recommends that applicants use the [Experimental Design Assistant](#) (EDA), which is a free resource from the NC3Rs to support researchers in the planning of animal experiments. This will help to facilitate robust study design and reliable and reproducible findings.

The EDA helps applicants build a machine-readable diagram representing their experimental plan, following capture of their methodology, and allows the applicant to then generate a PDF report which provides a transparent description of the experimental design in a standardised format, which can be uploaded to the application form.

Please note: Applicants who choose to use the EDA, and subsequently uploads the EDA report to the application form, are advised to enter **see report** or **n/a** into any question fields within this section of the application form that have already been captured in the EDA report, to avoid any duplication.

Use of Human Participants and Tissue

Any application for a research proposal involving human participants, patients or tissue and therefore requiring local ethical committee approval will be considered only when accompanied by the necessary permission certificate or proof that ethical permission will be sought, which must be provided in English.

Does your proposal involve the use of human participants, patients or tissue? *	Select 'Yes' or 'No'. If you have selected 'Yes' it is mandatory to provide either a certificate or letter, as proof that ethical permission has been, or will be, obtained. Please upload the file as a PDF in portrait orientation.
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Financial Details	
Host Organisation Type*	Different funding rates are applicable to Higher Education Institutions, Research Council Institutes and Independent Research Organisations. Please select your organisation type from the drop-down list.
General information	When completing the budget table in Flexi-Grant® please ensure to provide values at the appropriate FEC level (80% or 100%), as indicated in the Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance.
Budget Table*	<p>Please enter the values applied for under the budget table headings. This should be done in collaboration with your Host Organisation's Research/Finance Office. The maximum value of the award is £1.87M. Within this maximum value, a reasonable level of inflation to all grant costings should be applied, except for PhD studentships and fees.</p> <p>The full duration of the award is 8 years, with years 6-8 subject to a mid-fellowship review. The values should be inputted in the appropriate fellowship year. Note that year 1 = first year of fellowship from 1 October 2025.</p> <p>The total grant cap may be exceeded in order to cover visa costs if this is well justified in the application. Please refer to the Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance.</p> <p>There is not a limit to the amount of Research Expenses (Other Directly Incurred Costs), that you can apply for in each fellowship year, provided that the maximum value of the award does not exceed £1.87M. However, the funds should be distributed between fellowship years as evenly as possible. If there is any underspend at the end of a fellowship year, funds can be carried over to the following year.</p>
Justification for Salary *	Please include grade and salary point as per the host organisation salary structure. A justification of annual increment should be included.
Justification for Relocation and Visa Expenses*	<p>Please include the number of dependants (partner and children only allowed), which visa type you are applying for, its cost, and an estimation of other relocation expenses.</p> <p>Please note that relocation and visa costs for members of your research group are not eligible.</p>
Justification for Research Expenses*	<p>Please fully justify all requested costs (Other Directly Incurred Costs) by referring to each budget heading. Funding will not be awarded without justification.</p> <p>Please justify costs for equipment items over £10,000.</p> <p>Please make sure to include a justification for 'PDRA Costs' and any other staff costs as outlined within the Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance.</p> <p>If requesting costs towards a workshop, please provide a breakdown and justification of the costs. Please confirm that you and your host organisation have fully considered the environmental impact of these costs, in line with the Royal</p>

	Society Grant Funding Guidance (see paragraph 5.4.1 of the Funding Guidance). Please justify why the meeting could not be hosted by alternative means, for example online.
Justification for Inflation rate applied *	<p>Please include the percentage inflation rate applied across all budget categories and the reasoning behind the percentage used.</p> <p>While there is not a minimum or maximum limit for the inflation rate that can be added to each budget heading, candidates should include a reasonable rate. The Royal Society reserves the right to reduce the levels of inflation applied if it does not consider the rate applied to be reasonable.</p>
Justification for PhD Studentship	<p>If you are requesting funds to support a PhD Studentship please refer to the yearly rates for stipend and fees listed in the Royal Society Grant Funding Guidance to confirm the total amount requested for the studentship.</p> <p>Please provide a full justification for the PhD studentship explaining how the proposal is suitable and outlining any training that will be offered.</p> <p>The total length of a PhD studentship must be 4 years.</p>

Applicant Declaration *
<p>Please declare that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have read the Terms and Conditions of Award under which Royal Society grants are awarded and, if a grant offer is made, you agree to abide by them. The Terms and Conditions for Royal Society applications can be found at https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/university-research/ • You have access to the necessary facilities to enable you to deliver the research proposed and will continue to have access to the facilities for the duration of the project. • You have agreed with your Head(s) of Department that you will be afforded sufficient time and resources to deliver the research project as described in this application.

Nominated Referee *

You should invite one referee who can provide a confidential reference for your application, by following the instructions under the 'Participants' tab on the application form summary page. Please check with them that they are happy to provide the reference and inform them that they will be contacted by email and asked to provide their reference via the Flexi-Grant® system by **Tuesday, 10 September 2024 at 3:00PM UK Time**.

You will not be able to submit your application for approval from your institution until the reference has been completed.

The primary consideration for a referee is that they are able to comment independently and authoritatively on your application. The referee should be someone who has worked closely with you and is familiar with your research (for example, a PhD or postdoctoral supervisor, mentor). You should make sure they are able to provide a reference before adding them to your application.

Nominated referees **must not** be:

- A named collaborator in your application.
- A member on the assessment Panel for this scheme; or
- A member of the Royal Society's Council

References must be submitted in English. If a reference is not submitted in English, it will not be accepted and may render the application ineligible.

Institutional and Departmental Support *

Head of department *

You should invite the Head of Department at your host organisation to provide a statement of support by following the instructions under the 'Participants' tab on the application form summary page. Please check that they are able to supply their statement in advance of **Tuesday, 10 September 2024 at 3:00PM UK Time**. You will not be able to submit your application for approval from your institution until the references have been completed.

Please check which email address your Head of Department would like to use, as they may already be registered on Flexi-Grant® and mistakes may lead to a delay in processing your application.

The Head of Department is required to summarise as part of their statement and organisation's commitment to the candidate:

- the suitability of the candidate for the fellowship and the department.
- the level of support offered to the successful candidate as outlined in the '[Commitments from the Host Organisation](#)' Section of the scheme notes.
- The effective and transparent arrangements that led to the applicant being supported to apply for the Royal Society fellowship.

For the avoidance of doubt, the following details should be included in the statement of support:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current activities undertaken by the Host Organisation to create a supportive research environment where early career researchers can thrive; • Provide assurance that the fellow will be provided with the necessary departmental and institutional support to complete their fellowship successfully by outlining the office and laboratory space and access to equipment, software and facilities that will be made available to the fellow from the start of the award; • Provide assurance that the fellow will have the same status and benefits as other academic staff of similar seniority; • Set out how the host department/organisation will provide any additional support including but not limited to additional funding, mentoring, further training and networking opportunities and guidance to enable the candidate to thrive in their career and research; • Details of how fellowship time will be protected; • If the applicant is requesting research expenses towards a PhD student or PDRA, outline any further support covered by the Host Organisation and clarify the feasibility of the appointment <p>Please note the Head of Department statement of support is visible to the applicant.</p>
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Diversity Monitoring	
Diversity Monitoring	<p>The Royal Society is committed to promoting diversity in UK science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by seeking to increase participation from under-represented groups. Please help us to monitor how effectively we are doing this by providing the requested information. All questions are mandatory. The information provided will form a confidential statistical record in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and will not be used for any purpose other than analysis of the Society's activities.</p> <p>This information will be kept separately from the rest of your application and will not be seen by those involved in the selection process, including referees etc.</p> <p>You must either complete the form or tick the boxes stating that you 'prefer not to say'. If you do not select a box for each question, the system will regard your application as incomplete and will not allow you to submit it.</p>

Appendix 1: Application and Review Process

