

Career Development Fellowships 2024 – FAQs

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

Applicant Eligibility

1. Q: Why is the scheme only open to researchers from Black heritage?

A: The scheme has been developed following cross-sector roundtables and [Royal Society-commissioned reports](#) which looked at trends across 11 years of Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) data and [benchmarked the Society's early career fellowships](#) against the eligible applicant pool. This process identified a need for interventions across the academic pipeline to support researchers from Black or Mixed Black African, Black Caribbean or other Black heritage backgrounds, particularly researchers making the transition from postgraduate to early postdoctoral stages. The scheme will initially run as a pilot to support researchers from Black heritage; evaluation of this pilot will inform potential extension of the scheme to include additional demographic groups that are also under-represented in STEM.

2. Q: I come from a mixed Black heritage background, am I still eligible for the Career Development Fellowship?

A: The pilot scheme is open to people who self-identify as being from Black heritage, including a mixed heritage background. For example, Black African; Black Caribbean; Black Other; Mixed background (to include Black African, Black Caribbean or Black Other backgrounds).

3. Q: If I have slightly more than 2 years of research experience, can I still apply?

A: We are happy to review your career history. Please contact the CDF team to provide the following information:

- date of your successful PhD examination/viva
- details of any research and non-research positions.
- details of career breaks/periods of leave and any additional circumstances that may have affected your research career.

Please provide dates in the format of **DD/MM/YYYY** (days may be omitted if unknown).

4. Q: What is the implication of UCU marking and assessment boycotting to my eligibility?

A: Applicants must have a PhD or will have a PhD by the time the funding starts. Applicants who have not yet completed their PhD when applying will require a letter of support from their supervisor. Applicants in the final year of their PhD studies will be eligible to apply but must have completed their PhD examination with minor corrections prior to starting the fellowship. The Society reserves the right to request a confirmation of the successful completion of the PhD examination/viva at the point of offer. If there has been a delay to your viva due to the UCU marking and assessment boycott, please contact the office who will be able to advise you.

5. Q: How is 'actual research experience post-PhD' calculated when considering eligibility?

A: Career breaks and gaps between employment contracts are taken into account when calculating research experience. Part-time contracts are also considered, e.g. if you hold/have held a research contract at 0.5 FTE, your research experience will be pro-rated accordingly.

6. Q: Can I apply for other fellowships at the same time as the Career Development Fellowship?

A: We understand that you might apply for other opportunities at the same time as the CDF. Please include any active fellowship applications in the 'Applicant Research Funding' section of the application form. If your applications are successful, you will be required to choose one fellowship as you will not be able to hold a CDF in conjunction with another fellowship.

7. Q: If I accept a permanent position or equivalent fellowship during the Career Development Fellowship 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 offered a CDF award, please note that you would be required to resign from the position or equivalent fellowship to be able to accept the CDF offer. We would not object to your offer of a permanent post being converted by your host organisation into a proleptic offer, any such offer should be discussed with the Royal Society.

8. Q: Do you allow resubmissions?

A: Yes, as long as you satisfy the eligibility requirements for the research experience. Please note that confirmation of a second round of the pilot will be confirmed in due course.

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

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

10. Q: Is the scheme open to international researchers?

A: The scheme is open to both UK and non-UK domiciled researchers who wish to conduct their research in the UK.

11. Q: Can the Royal Society put me in touch with a suitable Sponsor?

A: All applicants must have identified a Sponsor at the point of application. The Sponsor will be required to complete some sections of the application form before submission can be completed. The Society is unable to help applicants identify a Sponsor for their application.

Completing the application form

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

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

13. 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 support from the Head of Department and Nominated Referees are compulsory, while the Research Support is optional and can be revoked if no longer needed.

14. Q: Can I include my PhD supervisor as my nominated referee in the application form?

A: The primary consideration for a referee is that they are able to comment independently and authoritatively on your application. Your referee should be someone who has worked closely with you and is familiar with your research (for example, a PhD supervisor or mentor). Please note that you cannot choose your PhD Supervisor if they are also acting as Sponsor for your application.

FAQs for Research administrators

15. Q: Will award holders be expected to conduct teaching?

A: We appreciate Early Career Researchers need to conduct a moderate level of teaching as this is part of their training to establish an independent career, however all our early career research fellowships, including the CDFs, require a primary focus on research activities.

FAQs for Host Organisations

16. Will the Society want to review how candidates are recruited?

A: No, candidates should be recruited through the standard university process.

17. Q: Is there an expectation that candidates will be offered a permanent position at the end of the 4 years?

A: No, there is no expectation or requirement for a permanent post at the end of the fellowship.