



Frequently asked questions:

How many times can I apply?

You can only apply once. Only those who are invited to the second stage of the competition can re-apply.

I am a biochemist / physicist / engineer, can I apply?

No. The British Academy is the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences. We therefore only fund research proposals from within humanities and social science subject areas.

Can I apply at multiple institutions?

You can only apply via one institution.

I got my PhD in 2014, but I decided to work in a non-academic job for a few years. Does this count as an exemption?

No, unfortunately the only exemptions we consider are breaks taken due to care commitments or for personal health reasons.

I will not have my viva voce examination until early 2021/ My viva voce examination has not been scheduled yet! Can I still apply?

If you are reasonably confident that your viva voce examination will be held before 1st April 2021, then you may apply. However, if there are any changes last minute that push your viva voce date beyond the 1st April 2021, you will have to withdraw your application.

What is the Second Stage? Can I apply at the Second Stage instead?

The Postdoctoral Fellowship competition is a two-stage process. Only those who are successful at the Outline Stage can apply for the Second Stage. The Second Stage is invitation only.

What does the referee have to do?

Your nominated referee will be asked to fill in a questionnaire on our Flexi-Grant system. They will be asked to comment on your abilities, academic record, and research proposal. The reference must be completed and submitted for the application prior to the closing date.

How much will I get paid?

You will be paid your host institution's standard rate for an equivalent position.

Can PERSON X be my referee?

Your supporting statements from your referee will be reviewed by the assessors and their relationship to you will be taken into consideration. The general rule is that they must be as

external to you as possible, but still have a good knowledge of your academic abilities and output. We recommend the External Examiner for your PhD.

Can my proposed mentor be my referee?

This is strongly inadvisable. The mentorship role is paid. This creates an obvious conflict of interest between being a proposed mentor and the reference provider.

Does a master's degree in the UK count as 'prior association'?

No. You will need to have worked as an academic researcher in the UK: For example, taking on a Research Fellowship position, or working as a Research Assistant at a UK academic institution. Please note if you worked in a permanent position you are ineligible to apply.

Can I take the award on at part time, so that I can work on a different project part time?

No. The Postdoctoral Fellowship buys you out for 100% of your time. However, it is possible for you to change part time working hours – but not for the purposes of working on a different project.

Can I have more than one mentor?

No – the mentor position is a paid role and can only be taken up by one person.

Can my mentor be based at a different organisation?

No. Our expectation is that the mentor is from someone within the department you are applying to. This mentor is there to help you settle into the department, ensure your participation as a full member of the staff, and to support you with any departmental issues.

Can I apply if I do not intend to work in a University setting after the award?

Yes. This award is intended to help researchers to develop their careers and an acceptable outcome is to prepare you for a research career in a range of research organisation settings, not exclusively limited to universities.