Talent Development Awards 2025-26

Frequently Asked Questions

In this document you will find the answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) relating to the Talent Development Awards, 2025-26 competition. Please read this document, the Scheme Guidance Notes and the Application Guidance Notes carefully.

Contents

Applicant Eligibility

I have just completed my PhD Can I apply for a Talent Development Award?

The Academy welcomes applications from recent postdoctoral scholars. In order to be eligible, you must have successfully passed your viva voce examination and completed any corrections. You must be ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom with a current long-term appointment at a UK-based Higher Education Institution (HEI) or Independent Research Organisation (IRO), which will continue for the full duration of the proposed award.

I do not have a PhD Can I apply for a Talent Development Award?

We do accept applications from those who have equivalent experience, for example an individual in an established post, and/or who has teaching experience, and/or who has a track record of publications in their relevant field is eligible to apply.

The only restriction to this would be if you are currently registered as a PhD student whilst in your academic post, as PhD students are not eligible to apply.

I am on a fixed-term employment contract, can I apply through my institution?

If your employment contract lasts the duration of your research project, or is likely to be extended, then you may apply via your institution if you wish to do so. If your employment contract will end before or during your research period, we would recommend contacting your Research Office to find out if your institution is happy to support your application and administer any potential award.

I am currently a Principal or Co-applicant on another British Academy grant. Am I eligible to apply?

There must be no duplication of funding for the same purpose. Applicants may not hold more than one British Academy award of a comparable nature at any one time. For example, it would not be possible to hold two British Academy grant awards at the same time; but it may be possible to hold a British Academy grant (i.e. Talent Development Award or BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grant) and a British Academy Fellowship at the same time, depending on the amount time required for the Fellowship.

Please note that an application cannot be accepted if there is a report outstanding on any previous research grant awarded by the Academy to the Lead Applicant or Co-applicant named in the current proposal. Failure to follow this guidance will result in your application being withdrawn from this round of competition. Duplicate applications for the same purpose to more than one Academy scheme will not be accepted.

I am unsure whether my work would be considered to fall within the Humanities and Social Sciences. Am I eligible to apply?

It is for you to determine if your work is within the Humanities and/or Social Sciences. If your methodology is relevant to the Humanities and/or Social Sciences then this will be eligible. You should clearly define and justify the relevance of your research within the application form.

Co-applicant(s)

How do I find a Co-applicant/does the BA help me find one?

The British Academy does not help researchers find a Co-applicant. It is up to the Lead Applicant to find them. We suggest that you find people with relevant skills whose research or work clearly aligns with your own interest and to then reach out to them to see if they will support your application.

Does my Co-applicant(s) have to be based in the UK?

No, a Co-applicant can be based overseas, provided there is a UK-based Lead Applicant.

I am not sure whether to list someone as a Co-applicant or other participant. What is the difference?

The Co-applicant(s) will be directly involved in the delivery of the activity that is proposed by the Lead Applicant. Lead Applicants may specify other participants who do not equate to being a Co-applicant. Other participants will be engaged in the activity proposed by the Lead Applicant, but will not be directly involved with the organisation of activity.

Nominated Referee

Does my referee have to be based in the UK?

No, references written in English from appropriate overseas referees are welcomed by the Academy. The nominated referee must **not** be based at the same employing institution as the Lead Applicant or Co-applicant(s), if any. The reference must be submitted in English. If a reference is not submitted in English, it will not be accepted and may render the application ineligible. Nominated references from the Lead Applicant's former/current supervisor (including PhD supervisor) will not be accepted. The referee must not be a member of the British Academy's Council.

What information will my referee have to provide?

Your referee is asked to respond to a series of short statements, commenting upon the potential of the award-holder to benefit from this scheme and the value that this award will bring to the award-holder's current and future research direction and ambition.

Development Proposal

What is meant by a 'Development Proposal'?

As the Talent Development Awards are designed to fund researchers to build their skills and capacities, not to fund skills and methods they already possess, applicants are required to submit a Development Proposal instead of a Research Proposal. The Development Proposal should outline the ways in which the applicant intends to develop their own skills or capacities, as well as how they plan to share these skills with wider groups within, and beyond, academia.

Can I include publications that are under submission?

You may include publications that are under submission, but you should make this clear in the application form.

When I apply for funding through any of the schemes offered by the British Academy, can I include in the application the cost of APCs (Article Processing Charges) to enable any articles that may arise from the research to be published in learned journals that offer a 'Gold' open access option?

No. Currently the Academy's position is that costs of publication are not eligible costs.

Does the Academy require the outputs of the research it funds to be made available in any open access format?

No, this is not currently a stipulation of any Academy award.

What do you mean by endangered or emerging subjects?

The definition around this is broad and typically endangered or emerging subject areas are those that are newly formed, becoming more prominent or those that are in danger of becoming lost.

Can I include a bibliography/reference list and, if so, where should I place this?

It is not a mandatory requirement that you include a reference list. If you choose to include this as part of your application, then it should be placed as part of the main text in your research proposal – you cannot upload this as an additional document.

I am unable to obtain ethical approval for this project until funding for this award is guaranteed, is this an issue?

No, this not an issue. The Academy will be in touch with you in due course to follow-up. Appropriate ethical approval will need be obtained before the award can proceed.

Use of Funding

Can I use the funds to pay for my salary or time?

No. Talent Development Award funds cannot be used to pay for the salary or the time of the Lead Applicant.

Can I use the funds to pay for my Co-I's salary or time?

The following is eligible: a salary contribution or payment of professional fees for the Co-applicant(s), only if they are providing consultancy for/guidance to the activity being proposed.

Can I use the funds to make honorarium payments to guest speakers?

Yes, this could be considered an eligible cost. We assume that those involved with the award would benefit from the expertise of guest speakers. The cost should be fully justified in the application form.

Can I use the funds to attend a conference?

It is possible to use Talent Development Award funds to attend a conference, however within the application, you must fully justify how attending a conference will contribute to the development of the skills and capacities that are the focus of your development proposal. Conference attendance costs that are not fully justified in terms of the development proposal will not be funded.

What is meant by 'tuition fees for accredited short courses?'

Tuition fees for accredited short courses to develop new skills are eligible costs for the scheme. You may not however use the funds to undertake a course which would result in a postgraduate qualification. Applicants seeking funding to cover the cost of training

courses are recommended to identify alternative options should their preferred course no longer be available if their application is successful.

Flexi-Grant

How do I invite a Co-applicant/referee?

To invite a Co-applicant/referee, go to the summary page of your application, click into the 'Contributors' tab (next to the 'Application' tab). In this section you then need to click 'Invite' next to Co-applicant/referee. You will then be prompted to add the Co-applicant's/referee's details and they will be sent an automatic invitation email. **N.B.** The contributors will need to register for an account on the British Academy's Flexi-Grant® Grant Management System (GMS) or have an account on Flexi-Grant, prior to being invited to contribute to the application.

My referee has not received their invitation, what should I do?

Please make sure that your referee is logging into the email address to which you have sent the invitation. The email may have gone into their spam folder. If these steps do not work, please log back in and send another reminder to your referee.

I am unable to see the submit button on the application form, what should I do?

You will not be able to submit your application until you have completed each section in full. All of your contributors will need to complete and submit their sections. You will be able to see whether they have submitted their sections by looking at the "Contributors" tab; if they have submitted their sections, it will say "Complete" next to their name. Once all sections have been completed, a "Submit for Organisation Approval" button will appear on your application form.

Another issue can be that the research support is not completed and can be revoked in order to submit an application as research support is not necessary for this application form.

You should submit your application for approval by your employing organisation at least five working days before the closing date to allow for your employing organisation's administrative procedures. You should also check whether your institution has its own internal deadlines. We strongly advise that you contact your referee as early as possible to avoid any last-minute issues before the submission deadline.

Who can offer institutional authorisation for my application?

Institutional authorisation must be given by the registered approver in the British Academy Flexi-Grant® Grant Management System (GMS). This is variable at each institution and will often be the Research Grants or Contracts Office or equivalent. You should seek advice at your employing organisation.