

British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships 2025-26: Application Guidance notes

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Last review date	September 2025
Next review date	September 2026

Please read the scheme notes carefully. Incorrectly submitted applications will not be considered.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The British Academy has been funded by the Leverhulme Trust and the Thank Offering to Britain Fund to continue its support for the Senior Research Fellowships scheme
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2 New British Academy Policy

- 2.1 The British Academy has introduced a new requirement for all applicants wishing to apply to British Academy schemes. All academics must now register with ORCID and give their ID number in the application form (regardless of being the PI or Co-I). This is a free to use service which connects researchers to their outputs and can be used regardless of connection to institutions. If you do not already have an ORCID ID, you can register for the service on their [website](#).
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3 Application guidance

- 3.1 Applications can only be submitted online using the British Academy's online Flexi-Grant® Grant Management System (GMS) system via (<https://britishacademy.flexigrant.com/>). If you have not previously used Flexi-Grant® GMS, please follow the registration process from the Flexi-Grant® homepage. Please view our [Flexi-Grant Guidance Notes](#) for further information about using Flexi-grant.

You should submit your application for approval by a designated approver at your host organisation at least five working days before the closing date to allow for your host organisation's administrative procedures.

4 Completing the application form

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

Page 1: Eligibility Declaration

Page 2: Research Proposal

Page 3: Proposal Focus

Page 4: Lead Applicant Details

Page 5: Lead Applicant Career Summary

Page 6: Financial Details

Page 7: Lead Applicant Referee Statement

Page 8: Equal Opportunities

4.2 A full list of question fields to be completed as part of the application can be found in the following table.

4.3 Each box in the table represents a page of the application form. The left-hand column contains the questions within each of these pages. The right-hand column contains useful guidance on its completion. A red asterisk (*) indicates which questions are mandatory. Please read the table carefully before completing the form.

5 Summary

5.1 Summary table*

When your application form is complete, all sections on this summary table will be marked as 'Complete'. The 'Complete' status will only appear when all the mandatory fields in that section have been completed. All mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk '*'. Only then will a 'Submit' button appear for you to be able to submit your application.

If you are unable to see the submit button but your application appears complete on the Summary page, you will need to check the Contributors tab to ensure that your invited contributors have completed their pages and marked them as complete. Once this has been done, and all the other pages have been completed, the 'submit' button should appear.

6 Page 1. Eligibility Declaration

6.1 Eligibility Declaration

Please answer the following questions to ensure that you are eligible to apply for this Fellowship. Please check the Scheme Guidance Notes for further information on the eligibility and exemption criteria. If any of the exemption criteria apply to you, please contact grants@thebritishacademy.ac.uk

7 Page 2. Research Proposal

7.1 Subject Area*

Please select the subject from the drop-down menu that is most relevant to this proposal

7.2 Title of Research Proposal*

In this field, please avoid using any unnecessary quotation or other punctuation marks (e.g. do not use quotation marks round the full title simply to indicate it is a title). Consider the presentation by checking the 'print application' option to ensure that the title appears as you wish it to.

7.3 Abstract*

Please provide a short abstract summarising your proposed research in terms suitable for an informed general audience, not one specialised in your field. This is a mandatory field and the limit is 150 words.

7.4 Proposed Programme/Plan of Action*

The proposed programme and plan of action should detail, in up to 2500 words (programme) and 800 words (plan of action), the programme of research to be followed if a Fellowship is offered, the methodology to be used and the timetable for its accomplishment. Applicants should keep in mind the timescale of the Fellowship (twelve months only) and propose a plan of action that is achievable.

7.5 Proposed Programme/Plan of Action*

The proposed programme and plan of action should detail, in up to 2500 words (programme) and 800 words (plan of action), the programme of research to be followed if a Fellowship is offered, the methodology to be used and the timetable for its accomplishment. Applicants should keep in mind the timescale of the Fellowship (twelve months only) and propose a plan of action that is achievable.

7.6 Planned research outputs/plans for publication and dissemination*

Please state the type of output expected under 'planned research outputs' and give more detail about potential publishers etc. under 'plans for publication'. The Academy attaches importance to the dissemination of research, and assessors will take into account how far the plans for publication or other dissemination have been developed. With regards to this, please note, however, that the Academy does not undertake to publish or assist with the publication of the results of work accomplished during the tenure of these awards. This is a mandatory field. The limit is 300 words for the planned research outputs and 500 words for publication/dissemination.

7.7 Digital Resource/Deposit of Datasets*

It is a condition of award that digital resources created as a result of research funded by the British Academy are deposited in an appropriately accessible repository. Of course, we do not expect confidential data to be readily available and neither do we expect all research to produce digital resources.

However, if applicable to this application, applicants need to provide details of how and where any electronic or digital data (including datasets) developed during the project will be stored, along with details on the appropriate methods of access.

Applicants should ensure that any necessary technical advice is obtained before commencing work that involves the creation of digital resources.

Please confirm whether the primary product of the research will be a digital resource, and if so how and where it will be deposited. The limit is 500 words.

7.8 Project Start date/End date*

To select a date in the future using the calendar feature, click on the month and year in between the two arrows at the top of the box. To change the year keep clicking on the box. Use the arrows to move back or forward in time. To change the month, a second box will appear where you can select the month you wish and then you can type the year you require in the box provided. Click on the date and the calendar will take you to the month and year you have selected where you can select the relevant date for display.

Fellowships must be taken up between 1 September 2026 and 1 January 2027.

7.9 Overseas travel – Country, Institution*

If your proposal will involve travel abroad, please indicate up to 3 countries to be visited during the Fellowship, and any specific institution(s) to be visited or with which you will be collaborating

7.10 Support of British International Research Institute Required/Granted

This field refers not only to support that might be sought from British International Research Institutes, but to all appropriate links with them.

The British Academy provides Government funding for the British Institute at Ankara, British Institute in Eastern Africa, British Institute of Persian Studies, British Institute for Libyan and Northern African Studies, British Institute for the Study of Iraq, British School at Athens, British School at Rome, Council for British Research in the Levant and the Egypt Exploration Society. The British International Research Institutes (BIRI) are global research partners in the arts, humanities and social sciences – discovering new knowledge, promoting cultural heritage and supporting international engagement. More information can be found on the Academy's website at:

<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/international/research-institutes>

Please describe any ongoing research collaborations or plans for research collaborations with the relevant BIRI that will enhance the proposed project. The limit is 500 words.

7.11 Endangered or Emerging Subject*

Applicants for the Senior Research Fellowship should be intending to pursue original, independent research in any field of study within the humanities or social sciences. There are no quotas for individual subject areas and no thematic priorities.

All applicants are invited to state how they see their particular programme, whether directly meeting current challenges or not, contributing to the identification of future priorities and challenges. To amplify this final point, the Academy does not set thematic priorities to which all applicants are expected to relate their proposal. Rather the onus is on the individual to indicate if, and how, their research will contribute to meeting national challenges. The primary factor in assessing applications will remain the excellence of the proposal.

This is an optional field and the limit is 300 words.

7.12 Language Competence

The Academy expects that applicants will have any language skills necessary to conduct the programme. If relevant, please state the level of language competence of the applicant and other participants, or otherwise explain how the objectives of the programme will be met.

7.13 Ethical Issues*

It is expected that most ethical issues will be covered by standard codes of practice. It is only necessary to indicate here in detail any non-standard issues. Please note the Academy's ethics policy described in the Code of Practice. Approval to undertake the research must be granted by the relevant authority before any work requiring approval begins.

8 Page 3. Proposal Focus

8.1 Primary and Secondary Subjects*

Your application must be relevant to the Humanities and/or Social Sciences and you will need to select the most relevant subject areas and fields from the drop-down list

8.2 Interdisciplinary Proposal

If your proposal is especially interdisciplinary, please use this field to explain the nature of the relevance to different fields of research. This field is optional and if used, we recommend no more than 500 words..

8.3 Time Period/Audiences/Regional Interests*

These fields provide the opportunity to give further indications of the relevance of your subject area. They are mandatory fields.

8.4 Employing Organisation*

Please enter the organisation at which you are employed.

Most appropriate establishments are registered in the system. If your organisation is not there, please contact the institution's research support services, or equivalent, and ask them to provide the British Academy's Research Funding Office (grants@thebritishacademy.ac.uk) with the contact details of an appropriate person in the organisation to act as an approver.

All applications must be approved by the employing organisation authorities e.g. research office, finance department, etc. The approving department will receive email notification once you have completed your application and submitted it. They will be asked to provide approval and then submit the application to the British Academy. It is strongly recommended that the applicant maintains an open dialogue with the approving department at their institution as the British Academy cannot be held responsible for emails being caught in spam filters or not being received.

It is recommended that you allow at least five working days for this process. Once they have checked your application, they will contact you if any changes are required. Please note, if changes need to be made these must be done before the deadline otherwise you will not be able to 'resubmit' your application.

9 Page 4. Lead Applicant Details

9.1 Lead Applicant Contact Details*

Please take care to review and complete your personal details accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in the processing of your application.

You can update your personal details by checking 'my account' and selecting the link to 'my contact details' and 'my organisation' and ensuring the relevant details are up to date.

9.2 Nationality*

Please state your nationality. Up to 3 choices may be selected.

10 Page 5. Lead Applicant Career Summary

10.1 Statement of qualifications and career*

Please give details of up to four relevant qualifications, in particular the award of PhD (if you hold one), which must be entered in the first box. A brief CV must be uploaded as a PDF document in the later field 'curriculum vitae'.

10.2 Curriculum Vitae*

The curriculum vitae must be uploaded as a PDF file. It should be kept brief and it will not be necessary to include details of research grants held, prizes/awards won, conferences attended or external examining.

10.3 ORCID ID*

Please enter your ORCID ID number. The British Academy now **requires** all academics to be registered with ORCID when applying for funding. This is a free to use service which connects researchers to their outputs in place of traditional publication lists.

If you do not already have an ORCID ID, you can [register for the service on their website](#).

10.4 Publications/Unpublished Research

Please list principal publications to date in reverse chronological order under publications. In the case of planned, unpublished research, please give details of planned publication dates, or explain why the research has not yet been published. Assessors may take backlogs of publication into account.

10.5 Present Appointment/Employing Institution/Present Department*

Please give details of your current appointment.

Applicants must be employed in an established academic post (in which they have teaching or related commitments) from which they need to be relieved in order to concentrate on research.

10.6 Personal Statement*

Applicants are invited to include any information relating to their professional career, which they may wish to be taken into account in assessing this application. This field can also be used to explain eligibility for applicants who do not hold a PhD or for providing information regarding interruptions to an academic career. This is an optional field and the limit is 500 words.

10.7 Research leave/Research leave in the last five years/Standard sabbatical arrangements/Current commitments*

These fields call for details of the next period of research leave already granted, research leave already enjoyed in the recent past (sabbatical leave, unpaid leave and leave resulting from other research awards) as well as the normal leave entitlement offered by the applicant's employing institution; and information about current teaching, administrative and publication commitments, giving a clear indication of those from which the applicant would not be able to be released in order to work on the proposed programme. Details of current teaching and administrative load should specify undergraduate and postgraduate courses taught, numbers of MA (or equivalent) and doctoral students supervised, and specific offices giving rise to administrative and other duties.

10.8 Previous Support Dates

An application may not be eligible for consideration if there is a report outstanding on any previous award from the Academy to the applicant. Failure to follow this guidance may result in your application being withdrawn from this round of competition.

Please give details of any applications submitted to the British Academy within the last five years.

Please note that a full report and statement of expenditure for any previous grant must be submitted, before further funding can be considered.

11 Page 6. Financial Details

11.1 Financial Details/Justification*

The only permitted costs that can be applied for is the directly incurred salary (including NI and superannuation) of the replacement lecturer and up to a maximum of £5,000 in directly incurred research expenses. It is not necessary to know the name of the replacement lecturer and their specific salary point when first applying for the Fellowship, but the employing organisation should take particular note of our recommendation that the request for funding should reflect the expectation that an early career opportunity is expected to be created by appointment as a replacement for a BA/Leverhulme Senior Research Fellow, and that the starting salary should therefore be at a level commensurate with a new lecturer appointment. The total salary requested should represent the upper limit on expected funding – the actual value of the award may be reduced once the real costs are known at a later stage, but the total value of the award, once agreed, cannot be supplemented.

Please do not use '£' signs in the amount box.

12 Page 7. Referee Statement

12.1 Referee*

Applicants are required to nominate one referee and ensure that the supporting statement from their chosen referee is submitted on the British Academy Flexi-Grant Grants Management System in good time before the deadline. Please note that the reference must be received before you can formally submit the application for approval, and you are strongly advised to ensure that your referee submits the reference well in advance of the final deadline for this round of competition, which will be 5pm (GMT) on 12 November 2025. Please note this deadline is the final approving deadline.

Your referee should be familiar with your project and able to comment on its significance and feasibility, and on your abilities, and be as independent from you as possible. The referee is not intended to be an advocate for the applicant – rather their role is expected to help provide a rounded assessment of the proposal indicating both strengths and weaknesses.

The reference may be supplied by a scholar based outside the UK if you wish. Your referee **MUST** be drawn from outside your own employing institution.

Before listing your referee on your application form, you should seek permission from them that they are happy to provide this before the deadline. It is essential that you enter the correct email address for your referee (especially if they are using more than one email address) otherwise your referee will not receive the automated messages delivered from the British Academy Grants Management System.

We strongly advise that you submit your application as early as possible to allow your referee enough time to provide their reference in the system before the deadline for submission.

An application cannot be considered unless the reference has been submitted on time. Please note that the reference must be provided through the British Academy Grants Management System, it cannot be provided as an email attachment nor sent by post in hard copy.

13 Page 8. Equal Opportunities

13.1 Equal Opportunities*

This section is optional; however, the Academy would greatly appreciate it if you can complete the details to assist us in our diversity monitoring.

The British Academy is committed to its policy of Equal Opportunity in the provision of its grants and awards. Please help us to monitor the effectiveness of this policy by providing the following information concerning your age, gender, ethnic origin and disabilities (if any).

This information will be kept separately from the rest of your application and will not be seen by those involved in making decisions in the selection process, including referees and assessors.

The information provided will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by those involved in the selection process and no information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.