

British Academy Mid-Career Fellowships 2026-27 - Frequently Asked Questions

I am a Mid-Career researcher but notice that applicants should ‘usually be within no more than 15 years from the award of their doctorate’. I received my doctorate more than 15 years ago - would I still be eligible for consideration?

You are not directly eligible within the terms we have set, but a case could certainly be considered by the assessors. If your doctorate was awarded more than 15 years ago and your career has been interrupted, for example for illness or maternity/paternity leave, we will consider your case sympathetically. If you want to apply, please do so - in the personal statement you will need to set out the case for being considered to be Mid-Career, referring, for example, not only to the periods of interruption, such as for maternity/paternity leave, but to the subsequent impact of having young children to care for as well.

For an applicant to the Mid-Career Fellowships scheme who has no other claims for career breaks, maternity/paternity leave etc. is the 15 years postdoc experience an ‘absolute’ or an ‘approximately’ and does the 15 years period apply at the application date or the start of the Fellowship?

We don't propose to count dates very strictly, so someone whose doctorate was awarded up to or around 15 years would be eligible. The 15 years limit is counted from the closing date of the scheme (**5pm (BST) 26 August 2026**). If applicants are very clearly outside the target range that we have used to define Mid-Career and have no good reason to be considered mid-career, they would not be considered a high priority and therefore would be unlikely to be supported. We would suggest they look at the British Academy/Leverhulme Senior Research Fellowship scheme (**opening on 30 September 2026**). This scheme has no limitation on when the doctorate was awarded and is a fixed 12-month replacement teaching Fellowship, with limited research costs available.

I am a Mid-Career researcher in an established post at a UK institution, but I do not have a doctorate. Am I eligible to apply for a Mid-Career Fellowship?

If you are able to make a case that your career experience is equivalent to that of PhD level (i.e. publication record etc.), you are in an established position at a UK institution, and you are within fifteen years of your first research-related appointment then you will be eligible to apply. However, we recommend that you make reference to this under the ‘Personal Statement’ part of application form so that the assessors are fully informed.

I am employed in an established post at an Independent Research Organisation. I do not have teaching commitments, but my time to focus on research is constrained by my other duties. Am I eligible to apply for a Mid-Career Fellowship?

Yes, we expect that curators based in IROs who are research-active but whose time to focus on their own research is limited by their day-to-day duties will be eligible to apply to have time freed from those normal duties to concentrate on their own research project. They will be eligible to apply and will be considered by the assessors as equally relevant to this scheme as university-based staff.

I am employed at my university on a part-time contract – am I eligible to apply for a Mid-Career Fellowship or are only full-time researchers eligible?

Applications are accepted from researchers currently employed on both full and part-time contracts (i.e. anything less than 1.0 FTE). As the scheme is designed to buy out the whole of the Fellowship holder's research time, any award will cover the entirety of the salary costs of any part-time contract. In other words, if you are employed for 20 hours a week then the Fellowship would buy out the 20 hours a week. However, we strongly recommend that applicants on part-time contracts make a case in the personal statement section as to why their need to be freed from their commitments is as great as someone who is on a full-time contract as it would be helpful to the assessors to know how the remainder of their time is spent.

I am on a full-time contract but only wish to dedicate and charge part of my time to the Fellowship. Can the overall cost of the award be shared with funding from another body on a part-time basis?

As above, we would not consider it a high priority to support a candidate whose time is not wholly devoted to the Fellowship. Only exceptionally could a case be made for an applicant on a full-time contract to choose to work part time and have time shared with funding from another body. In this instance, a very strong argument would need to be made to outline the feasibility of completing the research proposed in the related timescale. In these circumstances, an applicant would also need to be careful in costing the award in order not to count their time twice – funding cannot be provided for this on an FEC basis when it is already covered by another FEC award.

However, applicants working part-time due to caring responsibilities or other relevant personal circumstances would not be disadvantaged in the assessment process, and such circumstances would be considered appropriately alongside full-time applications.

If a member of staff is on a fixed term contract which covers the proposed period of the Fellowship, would such a person be eligible to apply for the scheme?

Yes. It is essential, however, that the period of the contract covers the whole proposed period of the Fellowship. The purpose of the scheme is to allow successful applicants to obtain time freed from their normal teaching and administrative commitments. If the member of staff's current contract ends during the proposed Fellowship period, or before it starts, but there is a commitment from the University to renew the contract, then also, yes, the applicant would be eligible.

Is the salary element of the Mid-Career Fellowship funding intended for the award holder or for teaching replacement?

The basis of the Mid-Career Fellowship is that the Fellowship is offered on the Full Economic Costing model, under which costs are calculated on the basis of the salary of the Mid-Career Fellows themselves. In agreeing to support the award, the institution is agreeing to enable the Mid-Career Fellow to have the time to concentrate on the programme of research and communication set out in the original application, save for those commitments declared on the form, from which it is not possible to be relieved (usually PhD supervision). How the institution uses the money awarded for the Fellowship is up to it – we are not paying specifically for a replacement so cannot insist on a full-time teaching replacement being appointed, but it would be good if an opportunity, albeit a short-term one, was opened up for an early career appointment as a result. All the Academy needs to be assured about at the end of the Fellowship is that the programme of research and communication has been carried out as planned, and that teaching and other commitments did not get in the way.

The notes for this scheme mention that there is a budget of £8000 for research expenses – can this funding also be used for public engagement activities?

Yes, research costs can include public engagement and dissemination activities including organising events, talks, conferences, workshops and presentations.

Are there any avenues of support available to applicants who require additional assistance completing their application form?

The British Academy has set aside specific funding to support any additional needs that applicants and award holders may require. This funding pot is available for both current award holders and applicants who would like to apply for an award but need support with submitting their application. [Further information is available on our website.](#)

I understand that the research expenses can cover a wide range of possible types of expenditure, but since this is capped at £8000 it will be difficult to finance all these costs under that heading. Is there perhaps another heading for research expenses? Are there separate categories for travel and accommodation?

The main purpose of the Mid-Career Fellowship is to buy out the time of the applicant from their normal university commitments – it is not designed to provide more general financial support for a research project – it is, after all, a Fellowship and not a Research Grant. It is correct that some research expenses fall under the Fellowship, but this is capped at a maximum of £8000 (at 80% FEC), and there is no other capacity for increasing this as part of this award. The funds are designed to help support the Fellowship-holder and can include research assistance costs if necessary.

Can the Fellowship be used primarily to support the writing up and analysis of existing research or fieldwork, rather than undertaking substantial new research activity?

This focus is fine - but we would also stress that the scheme places a strong emphasis on a programme of communication activity. In order for a good application to be presented to our assessors this factor should be taken into consideration.

I have applied for a Mid-Career Fellowship, but I will be taking up a new post at another institution shortly. Are these Fellowships transferrable, and if I was offered a Fellowship could I take it with me?

Yes, these Fellowships are transferrable and if your application is successful then we will advise you on what you need to do in order to take the Fellowship with you to your new institution.

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

As the Mid-Career Fellowship buys out 100% of the Fellowship-holder's time, any existing award must be completed, and a final report submitted, before the Mid-Career Fellowship can be taken up. As the Fellowship demands 100% of the time of the Fellowship-holder, there is no possibility of undertaking or continuing a separate research project alongside.

I was unsuccessful in applying to the Academy in a previous round. Are resubmissions accepted?

Yes, resubmission of the same proposal may be made **once** in the Mid-Career Fellowship scheme. An applicant is eligible to re-apply with a revised or different proposal so long as they still meet the eligibility criteria.

I received a Mid-Career Fellowship from the Academy previously – can I apply again as I’m still within 15 years of my doctorate?

No, previous Mid-Career Fellowship holders are not permitted to submit another application to this scheme.

The Scheme Guidance state that the Fellowship is to begin in the ‘autumn of 2027’. Is there a specific date when the Fellowship must start - or can the start date be delayed?

The earliest date that the Fellowship can be taken up is 1 September 2027, and the last start date permitted is 1 January 2028. If the Fellowship cannot be taken up on a date within this timeframe, then regrettably the offer would have to be declined.

I see from the Scheme Guidance that I would not be eligible to be considered for a Mid-Career Fellowship if I haven’t submitted my report and financial statement on the British Academy award I am currently holding. What is the deadline for receiving the report and financial statement on my current award so that my Mid-Career Fellowship application can proceed?

As a Mid-Career Fellowship buys out 100% of the award holder’s time, any existing award must be completed, and a final report submitted, before the Mid-Career Fellowship can be taken up. The deadline for this would be at least a month prior to the prospective start date of a fellowship, as long as there is no overlapping duplication of funding for the same purpose.

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.

Is Apprenticeship Levy an eligible cost?

No, this is currently not an eligible cost and should not be included in the application.

I would like to include a substantial public engagement or creative output (e.g. documentary film, exhibition, podcast series, artistic collaboration) within my Fellowship. Can these costs be included?

The Academy strongly encourages public engagement and communication activity as part of the Mid-Career Fellowship scheme. However, there is no separate budget heading for public engagement costs. Any such costs must fall within the Research Costs element of the Fellowship, which is capped at £8,000 at 80% FEC. The Fellowship is primarily intended to buy out the time of the Fellow rather than to fund large-scale production or dissemination activity. Applicants are welcome to describe broader public engagement ambitions within the written proposal, but any costs beyond the permitted research expenses limit would need to be supported from other sources.