

Postdoctoral Fellowships – Outline Stage 2026-27: Application Notes

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

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The following Application Guidance Notes set out the application process of the British Academy's Postdoctoral Fellowships Scheme.
 - 1.2 Please read the Application Guidance Notes and the Scheme Guidance Notes carefully.
 - 1.3 Any application which is incorrectly submitted will be ineligible.
 - 1.4 Deadline for application submission and organisational approval: **5pm (BST) 30 September 2026.**
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2 Application guidance

- 2.1 All applicants wishing to apply to British Academy schemes must register with ORCID and give their ID number in the application form. 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](#).
- 2.2 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 see [British Academy Flexi-Grant® Guidance Notes | The British Academy](#)
- 2.3 Please note that Institutions may have internal deadlines for applications. Applicants are responsible to adhere to these, and The Academy is not responsible for any missed deadlines.
- 2.4 You will not be able to submit your application until you have completed each section in full. It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is submitted in sufficient time for it to be approved by your employing institution. Please note, it is your responsibility to ensure that you referee completes their statement before the deadline. You will be unable to apply without this.
- 2.5 Please note that the institutional approver is a person within the host organisation, usually within the central research support office, who has authority for approving all applications submitted to the British Academy. The institutional approver should not be directly involved in the proposal.

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. Unapproved applications are removed from consideration.

3 Completing the application form

3.1 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

Page 2: Research Proposal

Page 3: Proposal Focus

Page 4: Applicant Details

Page 5: Applicant Career Summary

Page 6: Equal Opportunities

Page 7: Applicant Referee Statement

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

3.3 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.

4 Summary

4.1 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.

Please note you are responsible for ensuring your Referee submits the Referee Statement - this must be marked as 'Complete' by the Referee or the Submit button will not appear.

5 Page 1: Eligibility Declaration

- 5.1 Please answer the stated questions in this section to ensure that you are eligible to apply for the British Academy's Postdoctoral 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 posts@thebritishacademy.ac.uk. All exemption requests **must be approved** by The British Academy team prior to the application submission.
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6 Page 2: Research Proposal

- 6.1 **Subject Area***
Please select the subject most relevant to your research.
- 6.2 **Research Proposal Title***
Self-explanatory.
- 6.3 **Abstract ***
Summarise your proposed research for an informed general audience. 150 words.
- 6.4 **Proposed Host Institution ***
Please indicate here your choice of host institution, including the appropriate faculty, department, research institute or college where you propose to work.
- 6.5 **Reason(s) for choice of Host Institution ***
Please explain the reason(s) for your choice of UK host institution (the university/research institute, department). This is expected to be a brief paragraph setting out the main reason(s) for the choice of host institution. 150 words max.
- 6.6 **Proposed Mentor ***
Please provide the name of your proposed mentor and their role at the institution. 100 words max.
- 6.7 **Previous Research ***
Please give a description of research already undertaken, normally referring to the doctoral thesis. 600 words max.

6.8 Proposed Programme *

Please give a detailed description of the research programme, including methodology. Applicants should be aware of the importance that assessors place on the viability, specificity and originality of the research programme and of its achievability within the timescale, which should be specified in the Plan of Action.

If there is a need to include a short bibliography to help a reader understand the context, this should be included here and is counted within the word limit of the field. Applicants should be aware of the importance that the assessors place on the scholarly importance of the project and on its feasibility, especially in terms of the proposed methodology and timescale. The limit on this field is 2000 words.

6.9 Plan of Action *

Try to be as realistic as possible, but keep in mind that research programmes will develop over time and this plan of action is not something that is expected to account for every minute and is not unchangeable. Your chances of award will be affected by the assessors' perception of how viable and realistic this plan is. 800 words max.

6.10 Planned Research Outputs *

Please indicate here what the expected output(s) from your research programme might be. As appropriate, please indicate as follows: monograph, journal article(s), book chapter(s), digital resources, other (please specify). 300 words max.

6.11 Plans for Publication and Dissemination *

Please state in more detail here what plans you have for publication or other dissemination of your research, including potential publishers, journals, conferences etc that are appropriate for your research subject: 500 words max.

6.12 Digital Resource

If the primary product of the research will be a digital resource, have you obtained guidance on appropriate standards and methods?

6.13 Deposit of datasets *

How and where will any electronic or digital data (including datasets) developed during the project will be stored, along with details on the appropriate methods of access.

For projects whose primary purpose, or significant product, is the creation of a digital resource, data created as a result of the research, together with documentation, should be offered for deposit in an appropriately accessible repository within a reasonable time after the completion of the project.

The Academy understands that in some cases, for ethical or privacy reasons, datasets may not be deposited to an accessible repository in full. Where this is the case, we expect that appropriate efforts be made to deposit as much of the dataset as is practicable.

500 words max

6.14 Start date / end date *

Self-explanatory.

6.15 Language Competence

Self-explanatory.

6.16 Endangered or emerging subject area

Applicants 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. The primary factor in assessing applications will remain the excellence of the proposal. The Academy will, however, where appropriate, take into account the aim of providing particular support for certain important fields, either emerging areas of scholarship or areas of research that are endangered or under threat. 300 words max.

6.17 Ethical issues *

Are there any special ethical issues arising from your proposal that are not covered by the relevant professional Code of Practice? Have you obtained, or will you obtain ethical approval from your employing institution or other relevant authority? If the answers are yes to special ethical issues and no to having obtained prior approval, please describe here the non-standard ethical issues arising from your research and how you will address them.

7 Page 3: Proposal Focus

7.1 Primary subject *, secondary subject

Suitable subjects for the Fellowship include any field of study within the Humanities or Social Sciences. If you are unsure about eligibility criteria, please email us.

7.2 Time period *

Please indicate if your application is relevant to a specific time period.

7.3 Audiences *

Please indicate if your application is relevant to any particular audience.

7.4 Regional Interests *

Please indicate if your application is relevant to a specific region of the world.

7.5 Employing Organisation

Please select the organisation at which you wish to be based for the British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship (if successful).

8 Page 4: Applicant Details

8.1 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.

Please use the search bar to find your home institution and add the organisation to your application. If your organisation is not available, then it may not be registered in our system. Before requesting the addition of a new organisation, please check that it is not affiliated with any organisations that is already registered. If it needs to be added please email us.

Please also provide an alternative email address where you can be contacted if we are unable to reach you via your primary email. Where possible, this should be a non-institutional email address (e.g. a personal account), as institutional access may change. This field is not required; however, providing a personal email is recommended for continuity of contact.

8.2 PhD Awarding University *

Please state the university from which your doctorate was awarded.

8.3 Nationality *

You must select at least one Nationality, and up to three if applicable.

9 Page 5: Applicant Career Summary

9.1 Statement of Qualifications and Career *

Please give dates of your academic qualifications and career, in reverse chronological order.

9.2 Present Appointment, Employing Institution, and Department *

Please give requested details regarding your current appointment.

9.3 Permanent academic post *

Have you ever held a permanent academic post?

9.4 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, particularly in relation to exemption criteria. For example, details of a career break, or family care responsibilities. This is an optional field. Please note you can use up to 500 words, but you are not required to do so.

9.5 Viva Voce Examination *

To be eligible, you must expect to have had the viva voce examination **between 1 April 2024 and 1 April 2027**.

9.6 Name of Doctoral Supervisor *

Self-explanatory.

9.7 Name of Internal and External Examiner *

Self-explanatory.

9.8 Name and Institution of Referee *

Self-explanatory.

9.9 Other Academic Experience *

Please provide details of all academic posts held prior to your present position (with dates), including any teaching experience gained during doctoral registration.

Please include details of any experience in organizing conferences, workshops and wiki-based discussions. If none, please state none. 500 words max.

9.10 Please insert your ORCID ID here *

The British Academy now requires all academics to be registered with ORCID when applying for grants. 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](#).

9.11 Publications

Please list your principal and/or relevant publications in reverse chronological order, to a maximum of six.

9.12 Unpublished Research

Please list any extant unpublished projects funded by the Academy or any other agency, and their expected publication date (or other explanation).

9.13 Previous Support Dates

Please give details of any research application submitted to the British Academy within the last five years: Please note that only one British Academy research grant may be held, at any one time.

9.14 Where did you hear of this scheme?

Self-explanatory.

10 Page 6: Equal Opportunities

- 10.1 This page is not mandatory; however, the Academy is committed to supporting diversity in our funding and would appreciate applicants completing the following details to enable us to monitor and analyse how inclusive our processes are.

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.

11 Page 7: Applicant Referee Statement

Applicants are required to nominate one referee. The nominated referee will have to answer several questions about the applicant and their research proposal. This is all completed online on Flexi-Grant.

Please note that the Referee's contribution must be completed (and marked as complete) on the Flexi-Grant system **before the applicant can submit the application for approval**. Please note that applicants and/or Research Offices are responsible for ensuring referees adhere to the deadlines.

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 is 17:00 (BST) 30 September 2026.

Please note this deadline is the final deadline: organisation approval must be recorded before the 17:00 deadline on 30 September 2026.

Your referee should be familiar with your project and able to comment on its significance, feasibility, and on your abilities. We recommend the External Examiner for your PhD. The reference may be supplied by a scholar based outside the UK if you wish. **Please note your referee cannot be your mentor, a supervisor, an internal examiner or someone based at the same institution that you propose as your host organisation.**

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 Flexi-Grant.

The Academy will only process complete, submitted applications.