Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851
Research Fellowships in Science or Engineering

2020 Terms and Conditions

Background

1. 1851 Research Fellowships are intended to give early career scientists or engineers of exceptional promise the opportunity to conduct a research project of their own instigation; an ultimate objective is to contribute to the knowledge base required for a healthy and innovative national culture. Around eight awards are made each year.

2. The 1851 Commissioners seek to widen the pool of candidates by encouraging researchers in the core subjects of Civil, Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering to submit applications in these disciplines which address the primary infrastructure needs of modern society: the buildings we live and work in, transportation of many forms and the machinery and plant which supply our energy needs. Successful applications in these areas will be designated ‘1851 Brunel Fellowships’ and applications will be assessed separately from those in the Science subjects to reflect the different demands and expectations of core Engineering subjects, particularly in respect of the possible complexity of the final outcomes.

3. The awards are normally for a duration of up to three years, subject to annual review, but there are opportunities to extend this on a pro rata basis to facilitate part time working where appropriate, subject to prior approval.

4. Fellowships are held from 1 October or such date in the year of award as agreed with the Fellow, with Fellows being required to devote their whole time at work to their research project for the duration of the Fellowship. A limited amount of time may be spent on teaching or lecturing with the written agreement of the Commission.

5. Candidates proposing projects in applied science and engineering are particularly encouraged to apply.

Eligibility

6. The Fellowships are open to candidates intending to conduct research in any of the physical or biological sciences, in mathematics, in applied science, or in any branch of engineering. However, repeat applications for the same project from previously unsuccessful applicants will not be accepted.

7. For the Brunel Fellowships it is likely, although not essential, that some projects may involve collaboration with industry, and this is encouraged. Postdoctoral research fellows can play a vital role in engineering by ensuring that advanced academic research is successfully transferred into industry.

8. Candidates must be in possession of a recent PhD, or equivalent qualification (normally with no more than 3 years postdoctoral experience) or be in the final stages of their PhD studies, which must be successfully completed before the award of a Fellowship can be confirmed.

9. A Fellowship will normally be held at a UK Institution approved by the Commissioners; the research should be carried out at a different Institution from the one where the candidate’s PhD research was undertaken. In exceptional circumstances the Commissioners may consider an application from a candidate not fulfilling the above criteria; requests for such exemptions should be in the form of a personal letter addressed to The Secretary to accompany the submission for consideration. The Commissioners’ decision, which is made after the closing date for submissions, will be final.

10. A Fellow will not be debarred from holding another award or receiving other contributions towards support, but the Commissioners must be informed and may, at their discretion, modify the value of the Fellowship.

Status and benefits

There are two possible arrangements for taking on a Fellowship:

11. In the first, Fellows holding their Fellowship in the UK may, where it is mutually agreeable to the Fellow and their host institution, become employed by that institution. In such cases the Commission will make a grant to the host institution sufficient to cover full payroll cost (i.e. salary, employer’s national insurance, USS contribution, apprenticeship levy) throughout the tenure of the Fellowship. All overhead costs are to be met by the host institution. It is expected that Fellows will be appointed at a point on the postdoc pay scale appropriate to their experience and (subject to satisfactory progress) will receive an annual increment equivalent to one
Fellows are entitled to maternity, paternity, adoption and sick leave in line with the standard policies of their host institutions. Fellows are in addition entitled to an expense allowance of £6,000 pa that can be put towards other costs not related to the fellowship research project or are otherwise unreasonable. Where a Fellow is to be appointed an employee of the host institution, the host institution must additionally confirm its understanding that the Commission’s contribution is strictly limited in accordance with paragraph 11 above and that the host institution accepts responsibility for any balance of costs arising. The host institution must also confirm that the Fellow will be admitted as a full time member and normal employee of the institution. Such confirmations must be provided as part of the application process and must comply with the host institution’s formal institutional approval process. Where a Fellow is to be appointed an employee of the host institution, the host institution must also confirm that the Fellow will be admitted as a full time member and normal employee of the host institution. Such confirmations must be provided as part of the application process and must comply with the host institution’s formal institutional approval process. Fellowships will be automatically extended to account for these. The maximum extension allowed is two years in aggregate after which the Fellowship will automatically terminate.

Requirements

16. The Head of Department of the Institution at which the Fellowship is to be held must furnish the Commission with a letter of acceptance as a part of the application process. The letter will confirm that in the event of the applicant being awarded a Fellowship:

   he/she will be admitted into the Institution to pursue the proposed research project, that the Institution has in place all resources, space, funding and equipment, to enable the success of the research project, that the Institution approves of the proposed project, and that the Institution undertakes to inform the Commission of any departures from the basis on which the Fellowship has been awarded. It will further explain why the Institute chosen is a good fit for the candidate and the proposed research project.

17. Where a Fellow is to be appointed an employee of the host institution, the host institution must additionally confirm its understanding that the Commission’s contribution is strictly limited in accordance with paragraph 11 above and that the host institution accepts responsibility for any balance of costs arising. The host institution must also confirm that the Fellow will be admitted as a full time member and normal employee of the institution. Such confirmations must be provided as part of the application process and must comply with the host institution’s formal institutional approval process.

18. At the end of the first and second years of the Fellowship, Fellows are to report to the Commissioners on the progress of their work, including comments from their supervisors. These reports will inform the Commission’s decision on renewal of the Fellowship.

19. At the end of the Fellowship, a Fellow shall provide a report of the progress made in their research.
20. The Commission lays no claim to intellectual property arising from the research conducted during the holding of a Fellowship.

**Application**

21. Application is through website online submission [https://1851awards.flexigrant.com](https://1851awards.flexigrant.com)

22. Each application must include two references; neither of these should be from the Institution at which the Fellowship will be held, and it is normal that one will be from the candidate’s PhD supervisor. Normally at least one will be from a UK institution. The application will not be deemed complete until the references have been submitted using the secure online reference process.

23. Confidential login instructions are sent to referees by automatic email generated by the candidate during the application process. Referees are asked to submit their references online before the closing date for the application to be valid. References should be written in plain text and should not exceed 450 words. Referees are particularly asked to comment on the candidate’s ability to undertake original research.

24. The letter from the Institution at which the Fellowship is to be held, which must cover the points detailed in 16 above in all cases and include the institutional approvals detailed in 17 above where the applicant intends to hold the Fellowship as an employee of the host institution, should be uploaded as a PDF document in the online submission process where indicated.

25. Great importance is attached to the ability to communicate clearly with the general public. The **Summary Statement will therefore merit particular attention.** It should be written in terms that will be understood by a reader with a science or engineering background, but one lying outside the immediate specialism, and should provide an overview of the proposed research, of its objectives and of its originality.

26. The Details of the Proposed Research should be uploaded as a PDF document, approximately 750 words in length and no more than 2 pages, including diagrams and literature references. In particular the outline should emphasise the way in which the proposed project is different from previous research. It should explain the research reasons for the selection of the Institution at which the Fellowship is to be held. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the referees’ references and the acceptance certificate have been received / uploaded before final submission, as the Commission will be unable to accept partially completed applications. **Completed applications must be submitted by 6 February 2020 by 12 noon GMT.**

27. During the assessment process, and prior to the final selections, all candidates will be informed by e-mail whether or not they have been shortlisted. References will be authenticated and appointments to the Fellowship will be made during June 2020.

**Data Protection**

28. The 1851 Royal Commission is a data controller under the General Data Protection Regulation. The Commission is registered with the UK Information Commissioner's Office with registration number Z8305954. The Commission may collect and process personal data about you, your referees, your proposed supervisor and members of the academic department at which you wish to hold your Fellowship as part of your Fellowship application. Full details of the types of data collected, the ways in which the data are processed and the legal basis for the processing are included in the [Privacy Notice](#).

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