THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Royal Society Research Grants Frequently Asked Questions

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1 The Applicant

1.1 I have held an independent research position at 0.5 FTE for 1 year, I then paused my fellowship to take up a non-independent research position for 3 years before resuming my current role, again on a 0.5 FTE and so have not had 5 consecutive years in an independent position. Am I eligible?

Yes, you are eligible as you are within the first 5 years of your first independent academic position calculated at 1.0 FTE. The time in a non-independent position is considered as a career break and as such is deducted from our calculation of time in an independent position. Please include all details in the Applicant Career History section of the application form of your previous positions and whether or not they were independent.

1.2 After obtaining my PhD, I have worked as a lecturer for 5 years and have had an extensive career break (5 years) due to personal circumstances. I have now returned to academia and secured my first 5-year independent fellowship. I have just started my second fellowship year; can I please double check that I can apply?

Applications from researchers returning from a career break will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In this instance, your career history will be calculated from the time you have returned to academia and have secured an independent research fellowship. I can confirm that you are eligible to apply for a Research Grant.

1.3 I am currently a post-doc, but I will be starting a new position as a lecturer after the round has closed to applications. This will be my first permanent academic post and first time building my own lab. Am I eligible?

Eligibility is calculated by the round's deadline. As your position will start later within the year you will be eligible to apply to the next round.

1.4 I am holding an independent 3-year fellowship, but I have already secured a proleptic position. Am I eligible?

Normally applicants holding a 3-year fellowship cannot apply. Your case falls within the exceptional cases that can be considered. As you have already secured a proleptic position and are already working as an independent research fellow you can be considered for the current round. Please note that as part of your application you will be required to provide a letter of support from your Head of Department confirming the arrangements for the proleptic position.

2 Application Form

2.1 I can't find the submit for approval button on the form.

Check if you have added your Research Office as a participant. If so they will need to save and submit all relevant sections in order for the submit button to appear. Alternatively, as this is an optional role to the form, you are able to revoke the invitation in the participants tab which will also make the submit button appear.

2.2 I wish to upload a PDF for my research proposal in section 4. Do I still have to limit my word count to 1000 words?

Not in the PDF form, you can include more than 1000 words so long as it does not exceed two pages of A4 and is size 10 font including images and references. However, if you opt to submit your proposal in a text form you will need to limit to 500 words.

2.3 Can I add a co-applicant?

Unfortunately, you won't be able to invite co-applicants to your application on the Research Grant scheme as this is not an option for this scheme. You can name collaborators in your application, but they would not be required to contribute to the application form. You do have the option of inviting your Research Support to contribute to the form.

2.4 It is important that applicants provide as much detail as possible when providing their career history as this will be used to determine your eligibility. Please provide dates of previous positions/fellowships and include a brief description of the level of independence obtained through the positions/fellowships (i.e. access to your own lab space, ability to apply for independent funding as well as supervise and recruit PhD students etc). Please see below for an example:

Career History

Please state clearly your current position

Lecturer in XXXX (Independent research position, permanent position)
University of XXXX
1/4/2023 - current

Teaching Fellow in XXXX (Independent research position)
Lectureship Research and Teaching
University of XXXX
01/10/2018 - 31/03/2023

Although this position was formally research and teaching the actual time available for research was minimal, impacting my ability to generate outputs
Career breaks from 01/01/2019 to 31/10/2019 due to parental leave

Currently I have been holding an independent research position since October 2018, which as of March 2024 exceeds the five-year limit for this grant application (5 years 6 Months). However, due to the length of my career break I think I should be eligible for the scheme as I should have an additional 10 months deducted from my career history.

Post-doctoral research associate (post-doctoral researcher)
XXXX University
02/02/2016 - 30/09/2018

Post-doctoral research associate (post-doctoral researcher)

University of XXXX
20/06/2013 - 31/12/2015

3 Host Organisation

3.1 My host organisation is not available to select from the list on the Flexi-Grant application form.

If your organisation is not listed, then it is likely that it is not an eligible host. The host organisation must be a university or Independent Research Organisation and it cannot be in industry. Please see the list List of Eligible Independent Research Organisations | Royal Society. If you do need further clarity or if you believe that your host organisation should be on the list, please email researchgrants@royalsociety.org.

4 Costs

4.1 I cannot purchase off the shelf items; can I build it myself?

Yes, you can request costs to build pieces of equipment, but you would need to fully justify as to why you must build it yourself in your application.

4.2 Can staff costs be requested?

Any staff costs, whether personal payments (including salary or subsistence allowance except for conference attendance and essential field work, see below) to the applicant or to other individuals including overseas collaborators, postgraduate, doctoral students and for other members of staff **are not eligible**.

Travel and subsistence for conference and essential field work costs for other individuals are limited to one individual, besides the applicant.

Staff costs can be requested for the installation of the equipment but not for the maintenance and use of the equipment.

4.3 Can I request consumables for two people per year?

No, consumables should be for the applicant only.

4.4 Can I use costs to host workshops?

Workshop costs are not eligible as per the scheme notes. You can use costs to travel to training/workshops, but this should be for the applicant only.

4.5 Are software costs eligible?

Software costs are only eligible for specific requested equipment and when they are essential for your research. Full justification of the necessity/benefits of the software are required in your application form.

4.7 Is there a cap for the amount we could use to support summer students?

There is no capped amount for these costs, however all summer studentship costs should be fully justified within the application form.

4.8 Can I include costs to pay participants for experiments?

Yes, please make sure these costs are fully justified and essential to the project proposed. If you are using human participants, please ensure you provide the necessary ethical approval. The Royal Society does not fund clinical trials.

5 Additional Questions

5. 1 Do I require match funding for equipment over £10,000 from my host organisation?

No, Research Grants are funded at 100% FEC.