



AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme for academic and research libraries

Application Guidance

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Introduction

AHRC and RLUK are delighted to open applications for the AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship scheme for academic and research libraries. We wish to encourage applications from a wide range of individuals, institutions, and professions. The scheme is open to academic and research libraries, including RLUK and non-RLUK member institutions. This document provides the full application guidance for the scheme including details of its purpose, eligibility and assessment criteria, and application process.

PLEASE NOTE: Guidance for this scheme is not contained within the AHRC Research Funding Guide available on the AHRC website. Applicants should refer to this document when compiling their application under the scheme.

A Glossary of key terms used throughout this document is available in the final section of this guidance.

If you have any questions about the contents of this document, or your eligibility for this scheme, please email: infrastructure@ahrc.ukri.org, inserting RLUK PPF21 in the subject line.

Context

This scheme is a direct response to the findings of a collaborative scoping study, commissioned by RLUK in partnership with the AHRC, and undertaken by research consultancy, Evidence Base, across January-June 2021. The scoping study explored the role, and potential role, of research and academic libraries as partners in, and leaders of, academic and scholarly research. This included colleagues working across a wide variety of professions and disciplines which are often contained within academic and research libraries. The scoping study made a series of far reaching recommendations, including the need for direct investment in the research capacity and capabilities of research and academic libraries. This scheme is a direct response to the findings of the scoping study and this recommendation.

The full report, its findings, and recommendations can be viewed here:

<https://www.rluk.ac.uk/rluk-publishes-report-on-the-role-of-research-libraries-in-the-production-of-scholarly-research/>

A programme of events will be delivered throughout the application period to provide applicants with additional opportunities to ask questions regarding specific elements of the scheme. Further details of these events are available on the RLUK website and below (see: Enquiries and Further Support).

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Scheme criteria

The AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme is designed to develop and promote research capacity, capability, and confidence amongst colleagues working within research and academic libraries. This includes colleagues working within a broad range of disciplines, professions, and institutions (see below: Eligibility).

The scheme is delivered in partnership between AHRC and RLUK, and is open to colleagues working across a wide variety of institutions, including both RLUK and non-RLUK member libraries. Applications are particularly welcome from early career professionals and colleagues from under-represented groups (see below: Inclusivity).

Five fellowships of up to **£20,000 (80% FEC)** are available under this scheme. The fellowships are designed to enable library colleagues to set research agendas, be active participants and leaders of multidisciplinary research, and to provide intellectual leadership in their own disciplines and beyond. They will provide a career development opportunity by enabling colleagues to have a transformative impact on their professional practice, discipline, and institution, and to act as advocates for the value and benefits of arts and humanities research to communities beyond academia. The Scheme offers opportunities for academic and research library staff to strengthen their research capability and confidence across a diverse range of disciplines belonging to the arts and humanities.

The Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme will provide time and support for library staff:

- To develop their capability, capacity, and confidence as research partners and leaders.
- To enable colleagues to place their work within wider professional or disciplinary frameworks which will have a transformative effect on their ability to act as research partners or leaders.
- To equip library colleagues with the research skills, knowledge, and confidence, to transform their professional practice through research.
- To result in a tangible outcome that enables the fellowship to bring discernible and lasting benefit to both the individual, and their institution, beyond the fellowship's duration.

Eligibility

The scheme is open to colleagues working across the academic and research library sector. Applicants **do not need** to work within an RLUK member institution to apply to this scheme, and can work within **any unit or department** that sits within a research or academic library which belongs to a recognised UK Higher Education Institution (HEI), Independent Research Organisation (IRO), or is a member of Research Libraries UK (RLUK).

Applicants **do not need** to have a formal qualification, for example in library or information management, to apply to this scheme. Applicants will, however, need to demonstrate

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professional experience within the field relevant to their fellowship application and the work of academic and research libraries. The scheme is open to colleagues on both full and part-time contracts (see below: Scheme limit, duration and level of commitment).

In order to be eligible for the **AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship** scheme, at the point of application, applicants must:

- Be employed by an academic or research library that belongs to a recognised UK Higher Education Institution (HEI), a recognised Independent Research Organisation (IRO)¹, or is a member of Research Libraries UK (RLUK)
- Have at least two years of experience working within a collection-holding, cultural, or information institution or two-years postdoctoral experience
- Have an existing employment contract that lasts at least until the end of the award
- Have identified a named and willing mentor, with a strong academic or professional practice background relevant to their fellowship, who is willing to act as a mentor throughout the duration of their fellowship. This individual can work within their own institution or at an external institution or body
- The research and work undertaken through these fellowships must fall under the funding remit of the AHRC (available here: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/funding/research/subjectcoverage/>).

AHRC and RLUK wish to encourage a variety of applications to this scheme. If you are uncertain whether you are eligible to apply to this scheme, please contact: infrastructure@ahrc.ukri.org including RLUK PPF in the email subject.

AHRC and RLUK reserve the right to reject applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria.

Inclusivity

RLUK and AHRC welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds. We would particularly like to encourage applications from early-career professionals who are seeking to develop their research capability, confidence, and capacity.

RLUK and AHRC would also like to encourage applications from members of ethnic minority communities, who constitute under-represented groups within the library and information sectors.²

¹ A list of recognised IROs can be found at the UKRI website here: <https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligible-independent-research-organisations/#contents-list>).

² CILIP-ARA, Workforce Mapping Survey and Report (2015) <https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/workforcemapping>; Ishaq, Dr M and Hussain, Dr AM (2019). BAME staff experiences of academic and research libraries. London: SCONUL. <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/bame-staff-experiences-of-academic-and-research-libraries>

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RLUK and the AHRC will work together to encourage and support applications to this scheme through:

- The active promotion of the opportunities provided by Professional Practice Fellowships through a wide variety of channels and outlets, to encourage the broadest variety of applications;
- Hold application surgeries during the application period (October-December) to answer questions and support applications (see below: Enquiries and Further Support);
- Sign-post mentoring and advice available to support colleagues in their application, especially those from under-represented groups or from colleagues who feel that they are disadvantaged in making an application (see below: Application Advisors).

Application Advisors

The scheme wishes to offer additional support to colleagues from under-represented groups and those colleagues who feel that they are disadvantaged in making an application (for personal or professional reasons).

Application advisors are members of the academic community who have experience of applying for academic funding. Drawing on their own personal experience, they are willing to offer limited and generic advice to potential applicants, especially those from under-represented groups or from colleagues who consider themselves to be disadvantaged.

Only a limited number of appointments are available with application advisors and we may not be able to fulfill all requests. Application advice sits separately from the assessment process and receiving application advice will not influence the assessment of your application and is no guarantee that your application will be successful.

Application advisors **will**:

- Offer generic and non-tailored advice on how to make a competitive application to a research or academic funder, reflecting their own experience as highly-accomplished and experienced members of the academic community.
- Act as a critical friend to a potential applicant when they are considering their application.

Application advisors **will not**:

- Read or comment on draft applications written by applicants.
- Endorse applications or write statements of support.
- Offer advice specifically in relation to the Professional Practice Fellowship scheme
- Speak on behalf of AHRC or RLUK.

To request an appointment with an application advisor and for further information about application advice please visit the scheme page on the RLUK website.

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Please note: Every application received to this scheme will be assessed on equal terms, regardless of the sex, age, and/or ethnicity of the applicant. Proposals will be assessed and graded on their merits, in accordance with the criteria and the aims and objectives set for this scheme (see below, Assessment Criteria).

Fellowship requirements

Enhancing the fellow's skillset and research capability are core elements of this scheme. In framing your proposal, you will need to clearly articulate a set of activities and demonstrate both how they will enhance your role within your field, and how they significantly develop your research capability and confidence. The activities outlined, which should be commensurate with your current career stage and trajectory, should go beyond the kinds of activities that you generally undertake in your daily practice or in the ordinary course of your duties. In other words, the Fellowship offers the opportunity to be innovative in the types of activity which might be taken forward and allows Fellows to explore new avenues. Fellowship proposals should include a programme of developmental activities and you should be bold in thinking about what is needed to support them.

Each fellowship will be unique and you will want to tailor your application to your professional specialism, professional and personal circumstances, and institutional context. The scheme has been designed to allow applicants a high degree of autonomy and flexibility in the individual and specific focus of their proposed fellowship.

Each fellowship, should, however have the following key features:

1. *Professional practice or research question:* fellowship proposals should be built around a professional practice or research question which relates closely to your area of expertise and the addressing of which will enable you to develop your research capacity, capability, and confidence.
2. *Transformative effect:* undertaking the fellowship should have a demonstrable effect on your research capacity, capability and confidence. As a result, you should consider the skills and capabilities that you will develop across the fellowship and the cumulative benefits it will offer you beyond its duration. You should also be able to articulate the positive impact the fellowships will have on your institution and wider library community.
3. *Wider professional practice or research context:* You should consider how a fellowship would enable you to place your existing skills and experience within a wider professional practice or research context. In addition to having a designated and named mentor, within or beyond your institution, who is willing to advise and support you during your fellowship, this might be achieved via:
 - Shadowing, placements or visiting roles

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- Supervising staff
 - Building new research or professional practice networks
 - Building academic and non-academic relationships
 - Working with international academic and non-academic partners and audiences
4. *Advocacy*: applicants should consider how their fellowship can demonstrate and advocate for the role of libraries as research partners and leaders. They should actively consider how they can champion this role, and how this might be done within and beyond their institution during their fellowship.
5. *Wider institutional and sectoral impact*: applicants should consider how the benefit of their fellowship, and the skills, learning and expertise they derive from it, can be shared with the widest constituency. This can be both within their institution and the wider sector. This can be via research papers, workshops, blogs, conference presentations, or contribution to staff training events/schemes.
6. *Discernible impact or outcome*: fellowships should lead to a discernible impact or outcome for the fellow. Outcomes might include the submission of a highly-competitive research application to a major research funder at the end of their fellowship, in which the fellow were a key and named partner (co-investigator) or leader (principal investigator). Where this isn't possible, applicants should envisage a discernible impact or outcome for themselves and their institution which tangibly and demonstrably enhances their research capacity and might help to build future institutional eligibility for research funding. Fellowship outcomes might also include:
- Further funding applications in which the fellow is named as Co-Investigator or Principal Investigator
 - Published outcomes, including journal articles, blogs, and thought pieces.
 - Conference papers and presentations.

It is around these key features that the fellowship's assessment criteria have been constructed and applicants should ensure that their application includes reference to these.

Scheme limit, duration, and level of commitment

Scheme limit

The Professional Practice Fellowship scheme accepts proposals with a **80% Full Economic Costing** of up to **£20,000**. This means that the total costs of the fellowship cannot exceed £25,000 (100% FEC), with the remaining 20% FEC being met by your home institution. This will be important when considering how much time to allocate to the fellowship.

Duration

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The duration of a fellowship will vary depending on the research or professional practice question being addressed by the fellow, and the professional, personal, and institutional circumstances of the applicant.

Fellowships should last a **minimum of 6 months** and **up to 12 months**. In certain circumstances, for example, for applicants on a part-time contract, fellowships of a longer duration will be considered and decisions will be made on a case by case basis. If you believe that you will require longer than 12 months for your fellowship, this should be clearly stated within your application and not exceed 24 months.

It is not expected or required that fellowships represent 100% of a fellow's time, although this is permitted. Applicants must clearly state the proposed duration of their fellowship within their application, the rationale for this duration, and how they will ensure that they will dedicate sufficient time and capacity to realise the fellowship's ambitions across this period.

The scheme envisages that fellowships will commence in summer 2022 and that the fellowship's completion date will be calculated from this point.

Please note: these requirements supersede those initially stated within the pre-call and applicants should follow the guidance above when submitting their application.

Individual commitment

The undertaking of a Professional Practice Fellowship should enhance your ability to undertake your substantive role or enhance your professional practice through placing it within a research framework. Due to this, **it is not** a requirement that fellows commit 100 percent of their normal contracted working time to a Fellowship (although this is permitted and the Fellowship could represent 100% for all or a portion of the Fellow's time).

The apportionment of time to the fellowship will vary per individual applicant, professional practice and research question, and institution. Applicants will need to demonstrate that a significant portion of their FTE will be allocated to the fellowship for its duration. This will vary depending on the nature of the fellow's substantive role, their seniority, and the scope of the Fellowship and its proposed activities. Home institutions will need to be explicit in their institutional case for support that they will release fellows from their substantive role for the period specified in the application, to enable the fellow to derive the greatest benefit from the fellowship.

Each fellowship will be different and your time commitment may vary over the duration of the Fellowship. You and your home institution should ensure that the flexibility afforded by the Fellowship scheme is used innovatively and appropriately, and it is your responsibility to justify the value and appropriateness of the proposed development activities in the Case for Support. This process is likely to require considerable engagement with your institution's research office, who will usually support applicants in the calculation of Full Economic Costing, and we would

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encourage all applicants to contact appropriate colleagues within their institution at an early stage.

Institutional commitment

The provision of strong, active, institutional support is an essential criterion under the scheme. Your home institution should outline the specific support that it will provide you during your fellowship and what further developmental support will be offered after the end of the fellowship. The **award of a fellowship is conditional** upon your home institution agreeing to use the awarded funds to release you from a significant portion of your substantive role or to provide you with significant additional capacity in addition to your substantive role (see below). This will ensure that you have sufficient time and space to fully realise the developmental benefits of the fellowship.

Applicants on 1 FTE

For applicants on a full-time contract (1.0 FTE), institutions **will need to commit** to releasing a fellow from a significant portion of their substantive role in order to enable them to undertake the fellowship.

Applicants below 1 FTE

For applicants on part-time contracts, institutions **will need to commit to EITHER:**

- Releasing a fellow from a significant portion of their substantive role in order to enable them to undertake the fellowship.
- Make provision to ensure that the necessary time and capacity for the fellow to complete the fellowship *in addition to* their substantive role and existing contract.

The institution's commitment to, and responsibility for, one of these options must be clearly stated within the application. This must include a clear commitment to affording the fellow sufficient time with a clear commitment to affording the fellow sufficient time and capacity to undertake their fellowship in addition to their substantive role.

Please note: these requirements supersede those initially stated within the pre-call and applicants should follow the guidance above when submitting their application.

This information should be provided in the Head of Department/Director statement attached to your application and should distinguish between generic support available in the institution, and specific support that will be provided to you, during your Fellowship.

Your home institution will need to provide evidence of commitment to your career and research development before, during and after the proposed Fellowship. In the event that you move institution, transfer of the award would be subject to provision of an institutional support

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statement by the new home institution outlining at least equivalent support for the Fellowship and your subsequent career and professional development.

Please note:

- Institutions **need to ensure** that applications submitted to this scheme meet the assessment criteria and are sufficiently rigorous to be highly competitive. If multiple applications from a single institution are proposed, the institution may wish to hold an internal selection and assessment process to ensure only the most competitive applications are submitted.

Role of a mentor

A key aim of this fellowship is to enable you to place your work within wider professional practice and research frameworks. An important way in which this will be supported and achieved is through the identification of a mentor who will support you during your fellowship. The mentor can be within your institution or based in another institution.

Your mentor should be an individual with recognised expertise and skills in an area pertinent to your fellowship, with a strong research or professional practice record, and who is established in their field. Your mentor should:

- Meet with you regularly throughout your fellowship to provide advice and guidance on how best you can meet your fellowship's goals
- Enable you to place your fellowship within a wider professional or research context, including through signposting relevant networks or groups that you might join, and literature and resources relevant to your fellowship
- Provide advice and guidance over the course of the fellowship, including critical comment on draft outputs
- Help to identify your training and development needs throughout the fellowship
- Act as a critical friend in enabling you to develop your research capabilities and confidence

A statement of support from your mentor is required within your application and further details of what this should contain are included below (See, Required documentation: Mentor statement of support).

This scheme requires fellows to have a mentor to support them during their Fellowship. The scheme will make a contribution to the cost of mentoring (See below, Costs).

Costs

The AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship scheme will award **80% (Full Economic Costings)** up to **£20,000** for the costs of the fellowship. The home institution of the fellow will be

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responsible for the remaining 20% FEC, up to a total of £5,000. The maximum value of the fellowship cannot exceed £25,000 (100% FEC).

The scheme requires institutions to demonstrate that they will use some of the awarded monies to provide the applicant with sufficient capacity to undertake the fellowship, either through backfilling a significant portion of their substantive role or by providing additional capacity (for part time applicants, see above: Institutional commitment). This will enable the fellow to take full advantage of the opportunities that the fellowship provides. In addition to these costs, additional costs eligible under this scheme for the fellow include:

- Travel and subsistence costs
- Attending events and conferences (virtual or physical)
- Undertake training
- Small item/equipment costs to enable the individual to undertake their fellowship³
- Other reasonable costs that can be justified as directly supporting or enabling the aims of the fellowship.

In addition to these costs incurred by the fellow, the scheme will make a contribution to the cost of mentoring. An hour per month of the mentor's time should be built into the budget as a Directly Allocated cost. However, institutions may provide additional mentoring support alongside other forms of leadership and/or career development support for early career applicants, as a part of their additional support for the Fellowship.

If a mentor is chosen from outside of the Fellow's institution, the latter will be responsible for ensuring the correct payment and transfer of necessary funds (as stated within the application) to support the mentor in this role.⁴

A breakdown of the allocation of fellowship monies should be given within the fellowship application. Applicants should demonstrate within their application the nature of these costs and why they are required to undertake the fellowship.

Application process and deadline

The Application process will open on **Monday 4th October 2021** and will close at **Midday on Friday 3rd December 2021**. Results of the application process will be announced to applicants in early February 2022.

Applications should be submitted through Smart Survey. A link to the Smart Survey is available on the scheme website: <https://www.rluk.ac.uk/prof-practice-fellowships/>

³ The costs associated with these should only represent a small portion of the total fellowship cost. We will not cover costs which should reasonably be met by the institution.

⁴ These should be clearly attributable to their role as mentor and not represent a significant portion of the total cost of the fellowship.

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In preparing your application, you will need to collate a number of documents and pieces of information, including:

- Summary of your fellowship proposal
- Case for support (up to 2,000 words)
- Justification of resources (up to 1,000 words)
- Applicant's CV (as an attachment, no more than two A4 pages)
- Mentor statement of support (as an attachment, no more than one A4 page)
- Institutional statement of support (as an attachment, no more than one A4 page)

All of these documents will be assessed as part of the peer review process, so please do ensure that they are all included with your application. You should refer to the 'fellowship requirements' section of this specification, including the key features, and assessment criteria (below) in developing and presenting your application. Your application will be assessed under these criteria and it is crucial you keep these in mind throughout the process and, in your written proposal, you ensure that all the points have been addressed.

Please note:

- Applications for Professional Practice Fellowships **will not be submitted, or accepted, via J-es.**
- This scheme **is not listed** within the AHRC's Guide to Research Funding. You should refer to the guidance contained within this document when making your application.
- Institutions **need to ensure** that applications submitted to this scheme meet the assessment criteria and are sufficiently rigorous to be highly competitive. If multiple applications from a single institution are proposed, the institution may wish to hold an internal selection and assessment process to ensure only the most competitive applications are submitted.

Applications submitted to this scheme will be assessed by an independent panel of peer reviewers. The peer review process will be managed by the AHRC in line with their usual procedures.

Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The extent to which the fellowship proposal builds on the applicant's existing expertise and knowledge in their professional area, and the benefit it will bring to their personal and professional development.

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- The transformative effect that holding the fellowship would have on the applicant's professional practice and future ability to initiate, develop, and lead, high-impact research applications to a variety of academic funders.
- The demonstrable impact that the applicant's fellowship would have on their research capacity, capability, or confidence, and the impact it would have on their wider institution, discipline, or community of practice.
- The applicant's ability to act as an advocate for the value and benefit of research and academic libraries acting as research partners and leaders, and their potential contribution across the arts and humanities to academia and publics beyond academia.
- The commitment of the applicant's home institution to support the undertaking of a fellowship, including the provision that the fellow will be released from a significant portion of their substantive role and showing a clear commitment to the continued professional and career progression of the fellow beyond the period of the fellowship.
- The applicant's potential to carry out high-quality individual research which has the potential to generate a significant impact on their own discipline, institution, and wider community of practice.

Applications will be scored against these criteria by an independent peer panel of assessors using the established AHRC assessment grading system:

Grade	Description	Definition
6	Exceptional Should be funded as a matter of the very highest priority	An outstanding proposal that is exceptional in all the following: contribution to research and professional practice; originality; quality; and transformative impact. It fully meets all the assessment criteria for the scheme, and excels in many or all of these.
5	Excellent Should be funded as a matter of priority, but does not merit the very highest priority ranking	A proposal that is excellent in the following: contribution to research and professional practice; originality; quality; and transformative impact. It fully meets or surpasses all the assessment criteria for the scheme.
4	Very good Worthy of consideration for funding	A very good proposal demonstrating high standards of contribution to research and professional practice, originality, quality, and transformative impact. It meets all the assessment criteria for the scheme.
3	Satisfactory In a competitive context, the proposal is not considered of sufficient priority to recommend for funding	A satisfactory proposal in terms of the overall standard of contribution to research and professional practice and quality, but which is not competitive and/or does not make a fully convincing case for transformational impact.

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2	Not competitive Not recommended for funding	A proposal of inconsistent quality which has some strengths, innovative ideas and/or good components, but also has significant weaknesses or flaws in one or more of the following: conceptualisation; design; methodology; management; enhancement of the fellow's capability or potential; collaborative activities; and/or institutional support. As a result of the flaws or weaknesses identified in the proposal, it is not considered to be of fundable quality. A proposal should also be graded 2 if it does not meet all the assessment criteria for the scheme.
1	Unfundable Not suitable for funding	A proposal which falls into one of more of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has unsatisfactory levels of originality, quality, and/or potential for impact;• Falls significantly short of meeting the assessment criteria for the scheme;• Contains insufficient evidence and justification for the proposal.

Enquiries and further support

We recognise that, for many applicants, this might be their first time applying for research funding. AHRC and RLUK wish to support and enable the widest variety of applicants to apply to this scheme.

Application Surgeries

A number of application surgeries will be held throughout the application period to support applicants. These include:

- General application surgeries for all applicants
- An application surgery for under-represented groups
- Advice session for prospective mentors

Applicants can register to attend an application surgery via the scheme webpages on the RLUK website.

Application Advisors

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Applicants, especially those from under-represented groups or who feel that they are particularly disadvantaged in making an application, might also consider talking with an application advisor.

Details of how to make contact with an advisor are available on the Scheme webpages on the RLUK website.

Enquiries

General scheme enquiries including regarding the eligibility criteria and application process: infrastructure@ahrc.ukri.org, inserting RLUK PPF21 in the subject line.

For specific questions regarding how the scheme can support the work of libraries: matthew.greenhall@rluk.ac.uk, inserting RLUK PPF21 in the subject line.

Required application documentation

Applications to this scheme are to be submitted by Smart Survey. Applications **should not be** made, and will not be accepted via, J-es.

Description of your fellowship proposal

You should provide brief details of your fellowship including its title, proposed start date, duration, and total amount applied for (80% FEC).

Case for support (max 2,000 words)

You should explain how your proposal meets the six scheme requirements (see above: Fellowship requirements). This should include details of the question/issue your fellowship seeks to address, how you intend to do this, and the transformative effect this will have on your research capability, capacity, and confidence. It should also include details of your fellowship outcomes.

Justification of resources (max 1,000 words)

The justification of costs should provide headline figures and justification for key aspects of the proposed work including, but not limited to:

- Salary costs for the Fellow
- Scoping activities
- Engagement and coordination activities
- One hour a month of the mentor's time.

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Justification does not need to be provided for the level of the Fellow's salary, but rather for the amount of time they will dedicate to the project, and how this will be distributed throughout the Fellowship period.

Applicant's CV (max two sides of A4)

A summary curriculum vitae should be attached for the applicant consisting of no more than two sides of A4. CVs should include basic information about education, employment history, and professional responsibilities of the individual.

Mentor statement of support (max two sides of A4)

A Mentor Statement must be provided as part of your application. An appropriate mentor is regarded as a key component in the development of a fellow's research capabilities and confidence, helping them to understand the dynamics and sensitivities of research leadership.

This single attachment should include both:

- Details of the named mentor, a specified time commitment to mentoring, a clear programme of meetings, and a statement of contact time with the Fellow. It should also include details of any agreed training or development activities that the mentor might provide to the fellow.
- A summary curriculum vitae for the proposed mentor. The CV should include basic information about education, employment history and academic responsibilities.

The statement should also demonstrate how the mentor activity fits in with the institutional support outlined in the Institutional statement of support.

The Mentor Statement, including the summary CV, should be a maximum of two sides of A4. All letters should be signed, dated and on headed paper.

Institutional statement of support (max two sides of A4)

A statement is required from your Library Director or other relevant Senior Manager demonstrating your employer's support for your fellowship. The provision of institutional support is an **important assessment criterion** under this scheme. Poorly supported applications may not be accepted and any that are assessed as merely meeting minimum requirements are unlikely to be funded.

Your Director/Manager should clearly outline how your institution will release you from a significant portion of your substantive role or provide you with significant additional capacity (if part time) in order to allow you to dedicate sufficient time to your fellowship. This should include their commitment to releasing you from your substantive duties such as via backfilling portions

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of your role for the duration of the fellowship, or by providing significant additional capacity (see above: Institutional commitment). Fellows must be released from duties for the time specified and must not be expected to take on additional work within the institution once an award has started.

The Institutional Statement of Support should briefly outline why your institution believes you to be suitable to apply for a Fellowship. It should outline previous institutional support for you and detail the programme of career enhancing support that will be undertaken during and after the Fellowship period. The support should be appropriate to your career stage and nature of your research but could include, **for example**, various combinations of:

- Allocation of a place on a career enhancing programme or other training and development support aimed at developing capabilities as research specialists;
- Additional support for research time/sabbaticals to enable the Fellow to enhance their research career;
- Awarding of institutional research development funding to support development of the applicant's research profile;
- Creation of research groups or development of departmental/institutional research strategies in relation to the applicant's research area;
- Supporting knowledge exchange or partnership activities involving the applicant, or providing a platform for the Fellow to take part in research engagement activities;
- Support for networking activities;
- Provision of specialist technical support for the Fellow's research and/or to sustain its legacy
- Nominations for research prizes or awards.

The statement should indicate how the individual's needs have been identified and supported, and should distinguish between generic support available for development available in the institution, and specific support for you that has been, and will be provided. The Head of Department Statement should be a maximum of two sides of A4. All letters should be signed, dated and on headed paper.

Glossary of key terms

Early career professional: The scheme broadly adopts the definition of an early-career professional as an individual who is within eight years of their first appointment within the library of information sector. The scheme will apply this definition loosely to reflect that colleagues enter the library and information sector from a variety of different routes, often following a series of temporary roles, with and without professional qualification, and at different stages of life (with career breaks). If an applicant is more than eight years from their first appointment, but believes themselves to be an early career professional, note should be made within the application.

Under-represented group: this scheme recognises that there are a number of under-represented groups within the academic and research library sector, including in

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leadership positions. Recent research has highlighted that this situation is particularly acute for members of ethnic minority communities.⁵ This scheme encourages applications from applicants of all backgrounds, but makes an explicit statement regarding its wish to encourage applications from members of under-represented groups and ethnic minorities in particular.

Full Economic Costings (FEC): UKRI states in their Grant Terms and Conditions that FEC aims to capture the full economic cost of a project, including cost of staff time and the Research Organisation's facilities, estates and indirect costs. For more information visit – [UKRI-170821-FullEconomicCostingGrantTermsConditionsGuidance-Aug2021.pdf](#)

These are generally calculated by research offices and a number of FEC calculation tools are available on a number of university websites.

Research and Academic Library: the scheme takes a broad definition of the term research and academic library, which can contain a wide variety of professions and disciplines. The scheme is open to colleagues working within any unit or department that belongs to an academic or research library. This can include colleagues working within archives, special, and heritage collections, and responsible for a wide variety of library functions. If you are unsure of whether you are eligible for this scheme, please contact the AHRC using the email address given above.

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⁵ CILIP-ARA, Workforce Mapping Survey and Report (2015) found that 96.7% of the information profession identified as white: exec summary <https://www.napier.ac.uk/~media/worktribe/output-1291589/a-study-of-the-uk-information-workforce-executive-summary-nov-2015-5-a4web-0.pdf>; Ishaq, Dr M and Hussain, Dr AM (2019). BAME staff experiences of academic and research libraries. London: SCONUL. <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/bame-staff-experiences-of-academic-and-research-libraries>.