Professional Fellowship Scheme

Top Tips for Fellows – Applying for a professional fellowship

2026-2027

Being a Fellow: Top Tips and Questions When Applying	
	Notes
Can you identify a topic within the scheme's stated themes where there is a professional practice question that you think needs answering? Would the answer be of wider interest, informing practice or fostering new ways of thinking in your institution, the host institution, and the wider sector in which you sit?	
Are there resources/guidance needed by a particular audience or audiences in this area of professional practice? What might be your tangible outcome(s)?	
What would be the significance of this work?	
Does your proposed topic relate to your organisation's wider aims, objectives, and strategy? How?	

What would be the wider sectoral benefits of this project?	
How does your proposed topic relate to your own work and what contribution could it make to your professional development?	
Consider if this topic/theme/question is really 'doable' in the timeframe of the Fellowship. You may like to discuss this with your line manager, scheme representatives, previous Fellows, or, if possible, a potential mentor. If it looks like you may need to refine your scope, don't worry, you may already have the seeds of a legacy project! It's also helpful to bear in mind that the scope of your project may change further once you are doing it.	
What research methods might be necessary to build into your project? For example, carrying out surveys, observing practice, carrying out workshops to gather information, desk-based research, mapping.	
Consider whether you need to refresh any of your research skills and look for resources through your institution or ask your scheme representatives for advice.	
Will you need to learn new research skills, or need to become familiar with new tools?	
Will you be able to access to the tools and spaces you need to do your research?	

Will you need to test anything out? How might you build this testing into the project, and with whom?	
Are there any conferences/talks/workshops it might be useful for you to attend in relation to your topic, and that might help inform your proposal? You may wish to use these as milestones for throughout the Fellowship and beyond!	
Consider the ethics of your chosen approach. How might you mitigate against any ethical issues?	
Will you need to check on how any legislation impacts on your project? For example, do you need to be aware of copyright restrictions for using images, or restrictions around data reuse?	
If your project includes collaboration and/or partnerships, how will you ensure these are equitable?	
Does your proposed topic include sensitive or challenging material, conversations, and/or questions? How will you frame sensitive or challenging discussions and/or materials? What support might others need? What support might you need? Who do you need to discuss this with to make sure these things are in place?	
Find out how your proposed work fits into the wider context of the host institution. Are they planning any work/projects your work can feed into during and after your time as a Fellow? Who do you need to talk to so that they are aware of your proposed work?	

Similarly, how does your proposed work fit into the wider context of your own organisation? What can your work feed into, build on, and/or complement? Who do you need to speak to so that the right people in your own organisation are aware of your work?	
What is the even wider context for this work, and where does it fit into that context? Thinking about this, what might be the best ways to disseminate your outcomes? These could be more traditional (conferences, journals) but also more informal (blog posts, magazine articles, talks).	
How will you evaluate your project? What does success look like?	