



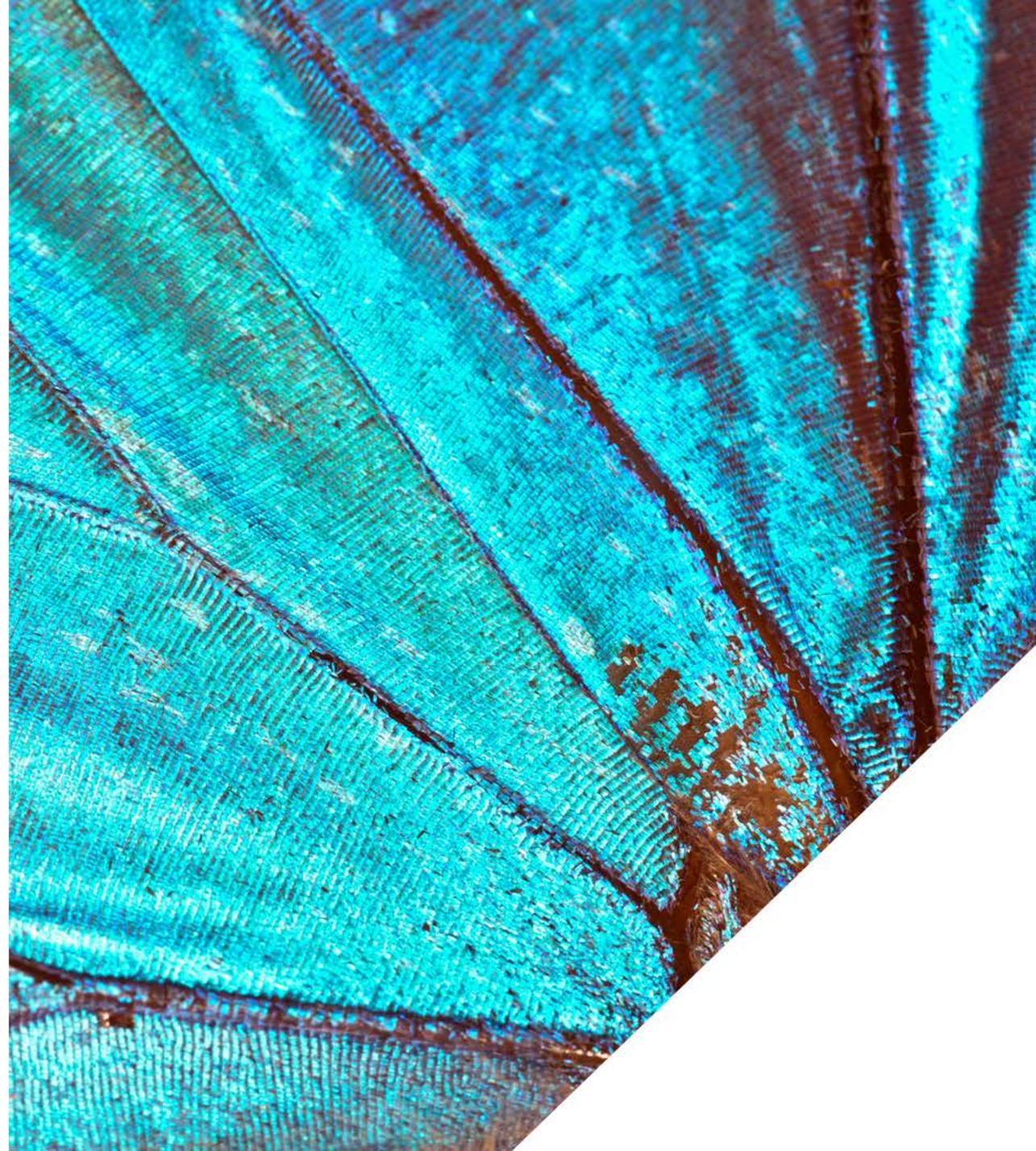
UK Research
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UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships



Agenda

- **UK Research and Innovation**
- **Future Leaders Fellowships:**
 - **Overview**
 - **Key messages to date**
 - **Applying**
 - **Decision making process**
 - **Career development support**
- **Q&A (45 mins)**





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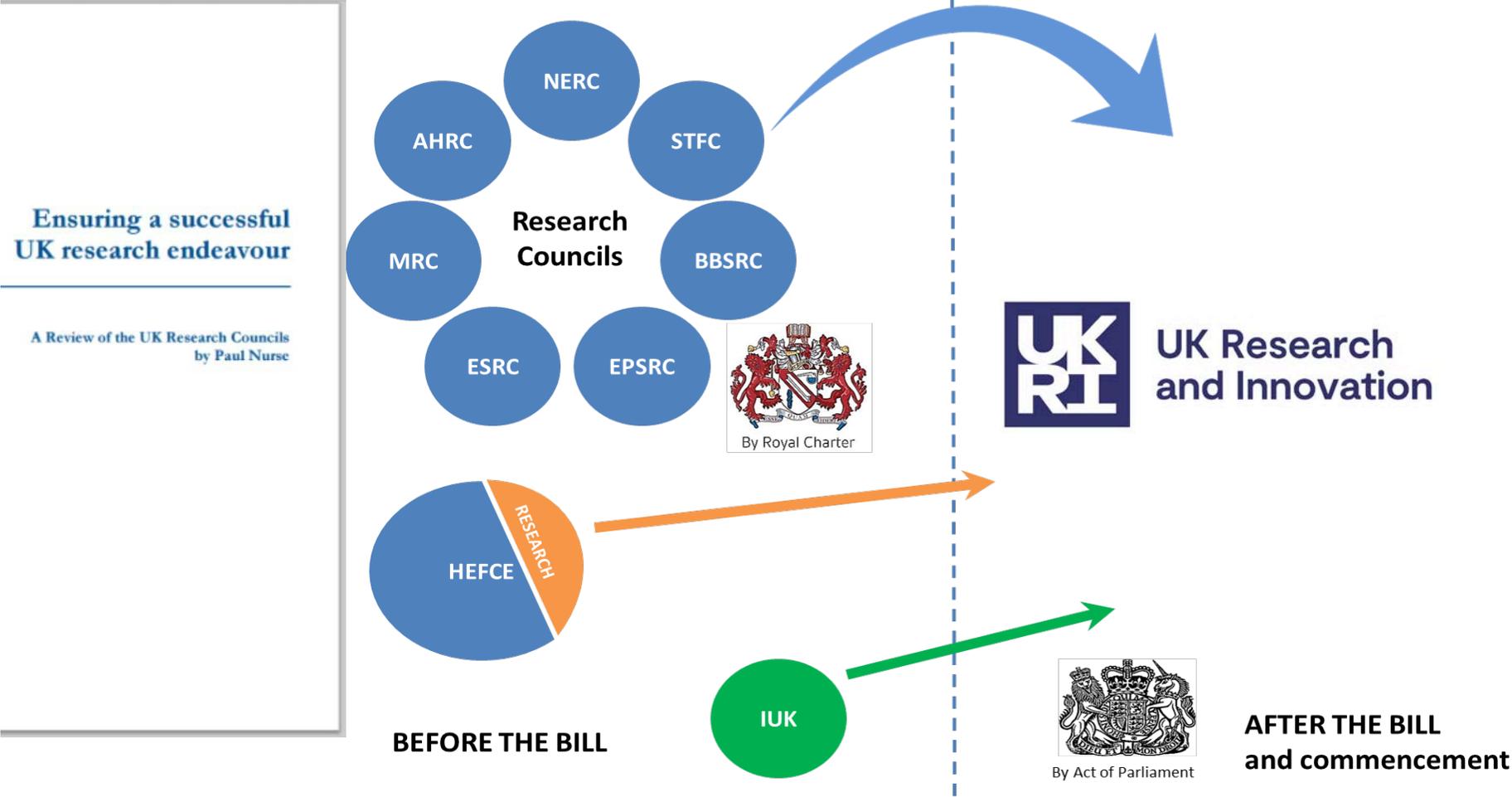
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Kirsty Grainger
Director, Future Leaders Fellowships

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Conception



The Numbers

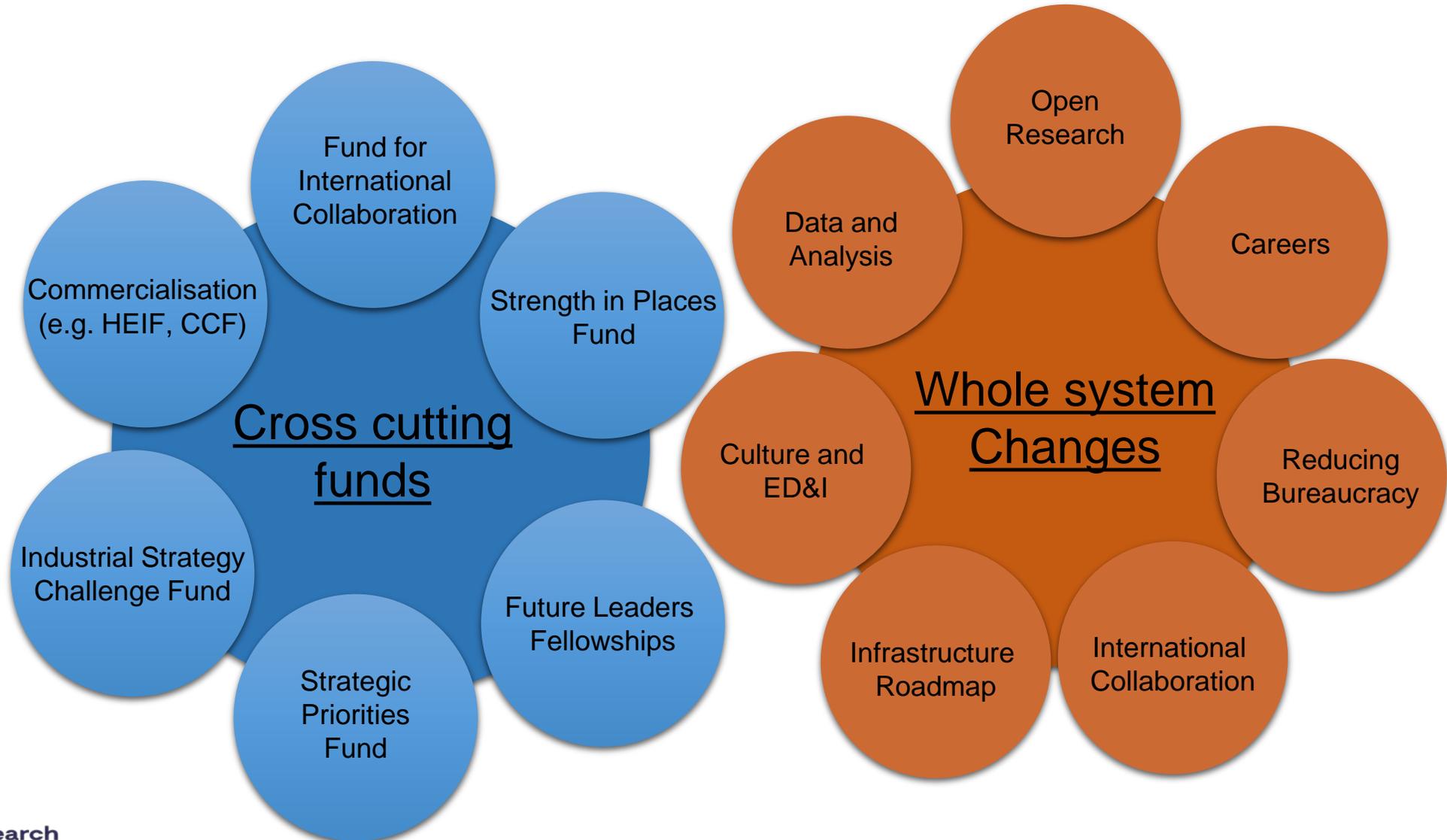
UKRI currently has a **combined budget of more than £7.5bn** and in 2018/19:

- Supported more than **24,000** researchers across more than 4,100 research organisations.
- Directly supported over **3,500** businesses and partnered with 2,700.
- Funded **1,500** research fellows.
- Supported over **27,000** active students.



Priorities

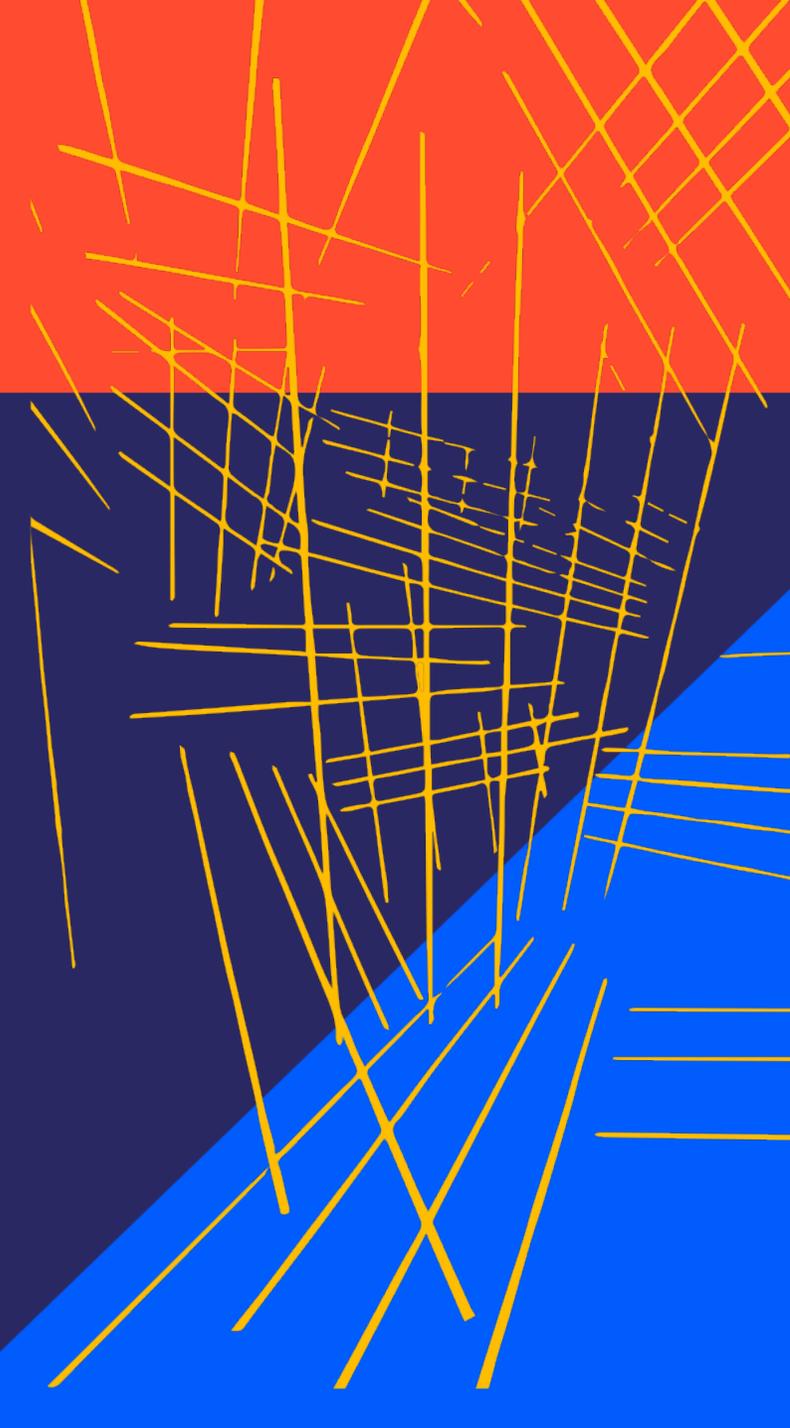
Delivering UKRI's vision and the Government target of 2.4% of GDP spend





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UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships – an overview

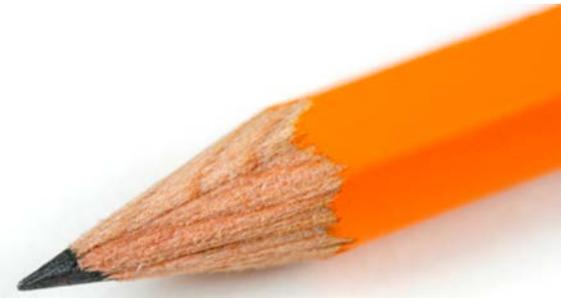




Future Leaders Fellowships – What are they?

- Monetary award to conduct a specific programme of research or innovation **and** significantly enhance an individual's early career
- Dedicated time to focus on research and/or innovation, receiving mentoring and enhanced training and development opportunities
- Awards for someone who has already done some supervised research and gained their doctorate (PhD) *or equivalent experience* but is still early in their career.

UKRI FLF Overview



- Will grow the strong supply of talented individuals needed to ensure that UK research and innovation continues to be world class
- Provide seamless support across UKRI remit
- Funding to be committed over 3 years (6 rounds), supporting ~200 individuals per year for up to 7 years (4+3 year model)
- New funds from the National Productivity Investment Fund (~£857M)



Future Leaders Fellowships – Why?

Supporting early career researchers and innovators with outstanding potential across the whole of UKRI remit.

To facilitate and encourage

- **interdisciplinary** research & innovation
- **international** mobility
- part-time and **flexible** working (job shares possible)
- **cross-sector** working
- research and innovation with and in **businesses**
- enhanced **host support**
- **diversity**

What is Early Career?

No 'standard' answer. Encouraging applications from the broadest spectrum of backgrounds, career pathways, and disciplines e.g. business and academia, changing disciplines, career breaks, time in other roles. There is no tick box set of rules. Must justify in application.

Applicants who have already achieved research/innovation independence will not be competitive.

Senior academics and innovators are not eligible for the scheme.

Person Specification provided on FLF webpage:

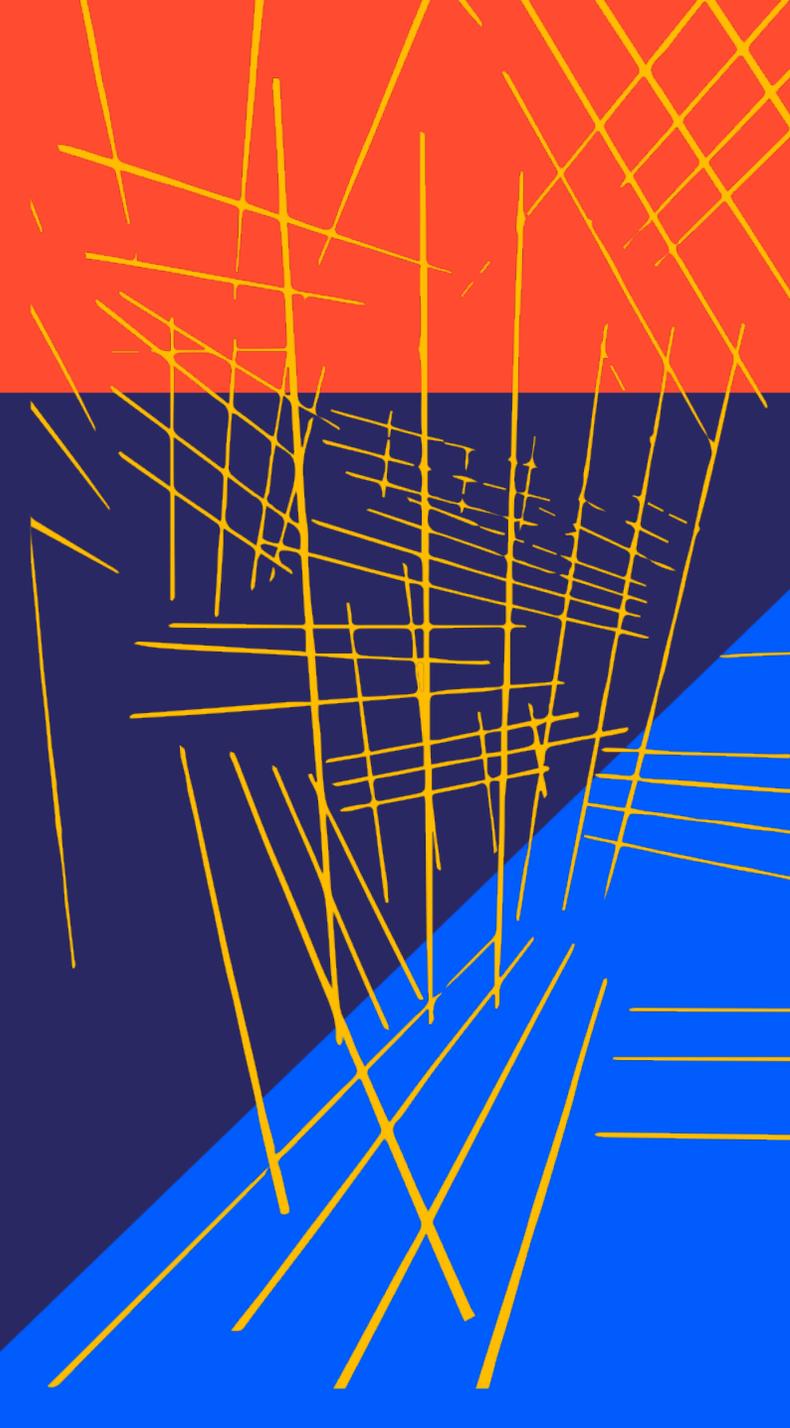
<https://www.ukri.org/files/funding/flf-person-specification-pdf/>





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Key messages from the latest rounds



Progress to date

41 FLFs awarded in Round 1

78 FLFs awarded in Round 2

88 FLFs awarded in Round 3

~101 FLFs offered in Round 4

Meet our Future Leaders Fellows

<https://www.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/future-leaders-fellowships/meet-our-future-leaders-fellows/>



Messages from Round Four



- Success rate c. 25%; around 100 awards offered to date.
- Strong applicants fully consider leadership and career development.
- Candidates who are further towards being established and independent have become less competitive as the scheme has progressed.
- Applicants should articulate the clear added value of the fellowship mechanism of support.

Messages from Round Four, cont..



- EDI and Research Culture not well understood by interviewees.
- Lower than anticipated diversity of candidates at point of application; hosts play critical role to ensure that all potential applicants have fair chance and are encouraged and supported through transparent selection process, based on ability and potential
- Encourage an increase in number of applicants from arts and humanities and social science communities; no difference in award rate. The scheme funds a range of award sizes: from £300k – over £1.5m.

Updates to Round Six

- Business-based applicants must submit outline proposals via Je-S
- Encourage applicants to suggest applicant-nominated reviewers
- Likely to remain with online interview panels for Round Five and Round Six.
- Not looking for an increase in applications for Round Six (success rate likely to be 15% for Round Five). Please **do not increase** the numbers of applications that you putting in to Round Six.
- If routinely putting forward many applications please carefully consider the potential competitiveness of the applications that you support (average success rate is 25% - what's yours?).

Recognising the impacts of COVID-19

Pre award

- Base application on information available at point of submission; if applicable, known impacts should be accounted for.
- Do NOT include contingency plans for potential impacts of COVID-19. Reviewers will be briefed.
- Still include requests for travel
- Any changes in circumstances that affect the proposal will be managed post-award.

Post award

- Flexibility with start dates up to mandatory start date indicated on website.
- No cost extensions permitted for fellows whose work has been halted or delayed due to COVID-19-related disruptions, subject to UKRI approval.
- Seeking feedback from active fellows to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on the FLFs.

Future rounds

	Round 5	Round 6
Outline proposal deadline	-	10th Dec 2020
Full proposal deadline	-	19th Jan 2021
Sift panels	Feb 2021	July 2021
Interview panels	March 2021	Sep 2021
Outcomes	April 2021	Oct / Nov 2021
Mandatory latest start date	1st July 2021	1st Feb 2022

Future Leaders Fellowships has established itself as an important part of the talent funding landscape. We will continue with our commitment to support early career researchers and innovators through schemes like the Future Leaders Fellowships and will share further information following the Spending Review.

Future rounds

- The FLF programme operates as a '4 + 3' funding model
- Have had discussion with members of the community, including fellows on the application and assessment process for awarding an up to 3-year continuation of support, after the initial funded period
- We will communicate this shortly and will be inviting feedback, via the new UKRI Engagement Hub



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Applying



Applying - Is this the best outlet?

- Is the applicant one of outstanding potential?
- Is the award of this fellowship going to offer a step change in the career of the applicant?
- Is the host organisation willing to provide significant support in terms of the opportunities and training?
- Is the proposed program addressing a multifaceted, significant and difficult research or innovation problem?

Applying - Scheme criteria (not weighted)

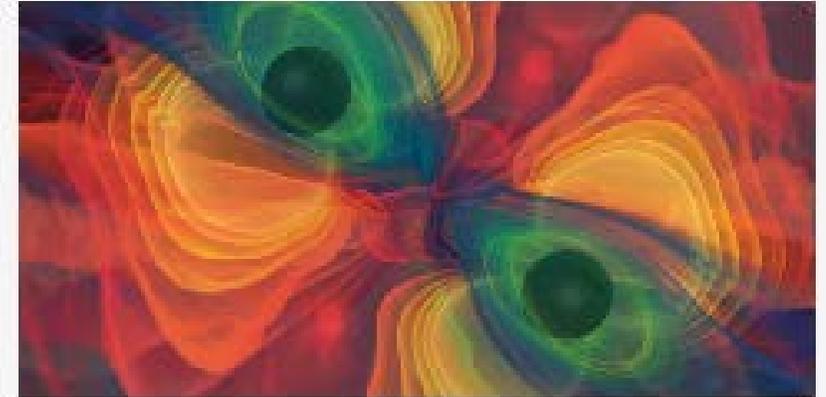
- Research and innovation excellence
- Applicant and their development
- Impact and strategic relevance
- Research and innovation environment and cost

Applying - Where to find information

<https://www.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/future-leaders-fellowships/>

Key Documents

- Overview of the scheme
- Introduction for businesses
- Guidance for applicants
- FAQs
- Assessment criteria



For applicants

Applying - The application process

Five stages to the application process:

1. Outline proposal
2. Full proposal
3. Peer review
4. Sift panels
5. Interview panels



Applying - Outline proposals

- Mandatory; submitted via Je-S.
- Non-competitive; allows UKRI to prepare for peer review.

Details required –

- Applicant, host organisation, project partners
- Summary of proposed research/innovation program and objectives
- Whether large capital equipment is required, whether proposal includes funds for instrument development, whether the estimated costs of the proposal will be greater than £1.5m
- Whether business-hosted fellows applying for reduced hours fellowship
- Whether proposal intended to be held on job-share basis
- Clearly identify which parts of UKRI the proposal has most relevance

Applying - Full proposal

Outline vision for full period (eg 4+3 years), providing detailed plans and costings for first four years (as applied for) and broader plans for the second period, if applicable.

Proposal Form

Case for Support

Justification for Resources

Host Organisation Statement

Letters of Support (Project Partner, Mentor statement and others actively involved in grant)

CV and Outputs List – note, this should include all outputs / indicators of track record and not solely publications

Workplan

Applying - Writing a proposal

Example questions to think about:

- What activities can be carried out to ensure that the award allows the fellow to maximise their potential?
- What can fellows do to ensure the fellowship has the greatest impact?
- What should be planned to ensure the programme of research or innovation is performed to the highest standard?
- Who should be involved to realise the questions above?

Applying - working across multiple organisations

- Hosted by a single organisation, but can include any number of associated partners or co-hosting organisations
- Opportunities to access additional expertise, facilities and networks of related research and development
- Innovation within remit of scheme, allowing novel partnerships between businesses and academia within a single program.

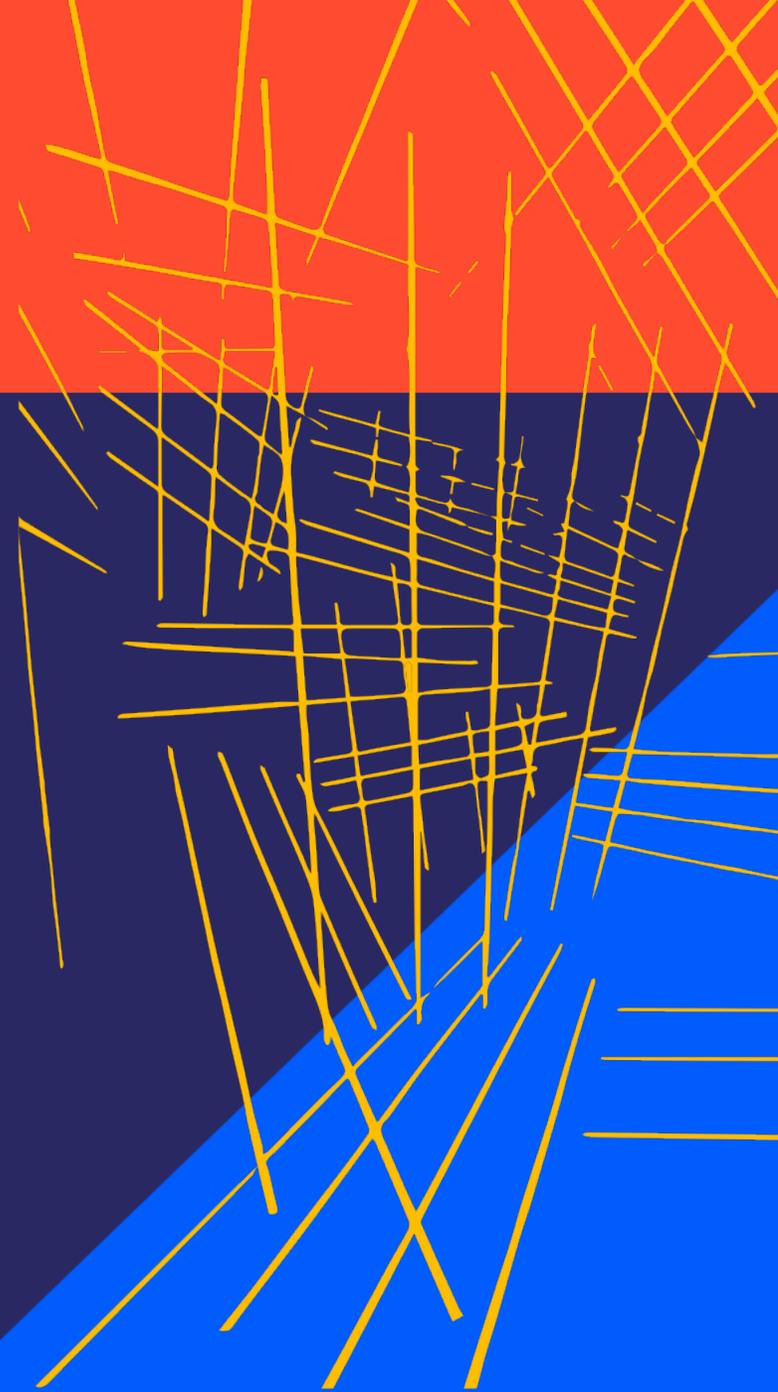
Applying - Final thoughts

- Read guidance carefully!
- UKRI scheme which may not be identical to individual councils you may have applied to before
- Guidance revised prior to each round opening
- Important to address all criteria for the scheme and clearly identify why this applicant is the best possible fit
- What is the career boost offered by this fellowship at this stage of the individuals' career?



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Decision making process



Decision making process - Overview

Four stage review:

1. Written peer review by sector / discipline experts
2. Applicant response to reviews
3. Shortlisting panel
4. Interview Panel

Roles of the panel (memberships from different disciplines and sectors)

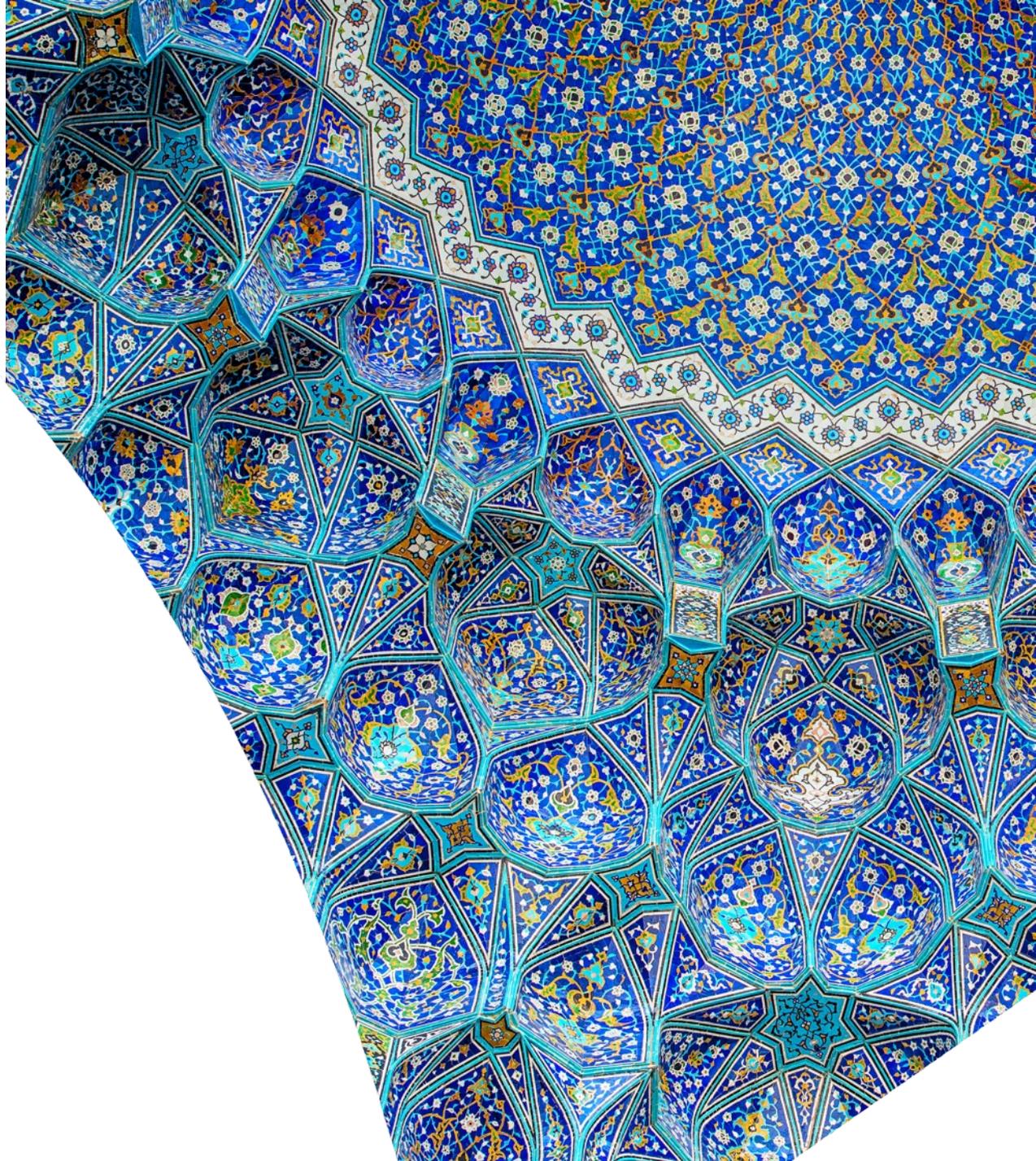
- Shortlisting panel: moderate reviewer comments and PI response
- Interview: ask questions across the published assessment criteria

Decision making process – written peer review

- Conducted by sector and discipline experts:
 - Experts chosen by UKRI (Research Councils and Innovate UK) to ensure all reviewers are experts within their field
- We expect each grant to receive 3 or more reviews depending on the breadth of research within each grant put forward
- Once all reviews have been received, the proposal will undergo coverage check by Research Councils and Innovate UK to ensure all elements of grants reviewed.

Applicant response

- Be positive and keep your cool
- Appeal to your audience
- Back up your claims
- Be clear and be concise
- Keep to the guidelines



Decision making process - Shortlisting panels

- Made up of a variety of experts from across the research and innovation system to consider all four assessment criteria
- Moderate peer review comments, considering proposal, peer review comments and applicant response, against published assessment criteria
- Proposals discussed, ranked and banded
- Roving panel members ensure consistency between panels
- Tensioning across panels to produce final banded lists
- No further feedback provided at this stage

Decision making process - Interview panels

- Made up of a variety of experts from across the research and innovation system to assess all four assessment criteria
- All candidates successful at sift interviewed and discussed against published criteria
 - Example interview questions available online.
 - Topic areas include:
 - Research / innovation focus – proposed programme of work
 - Leadership focus – how will applicants develop their potential?
 - Career development focus – how will the fellowship benefit the holder?
- Proposals ranked and banded
- Roving panel members ensure consistency between panels
- Tensioning across panels to produce final banded lists
- All provided feedback



Decision making process - Interview process

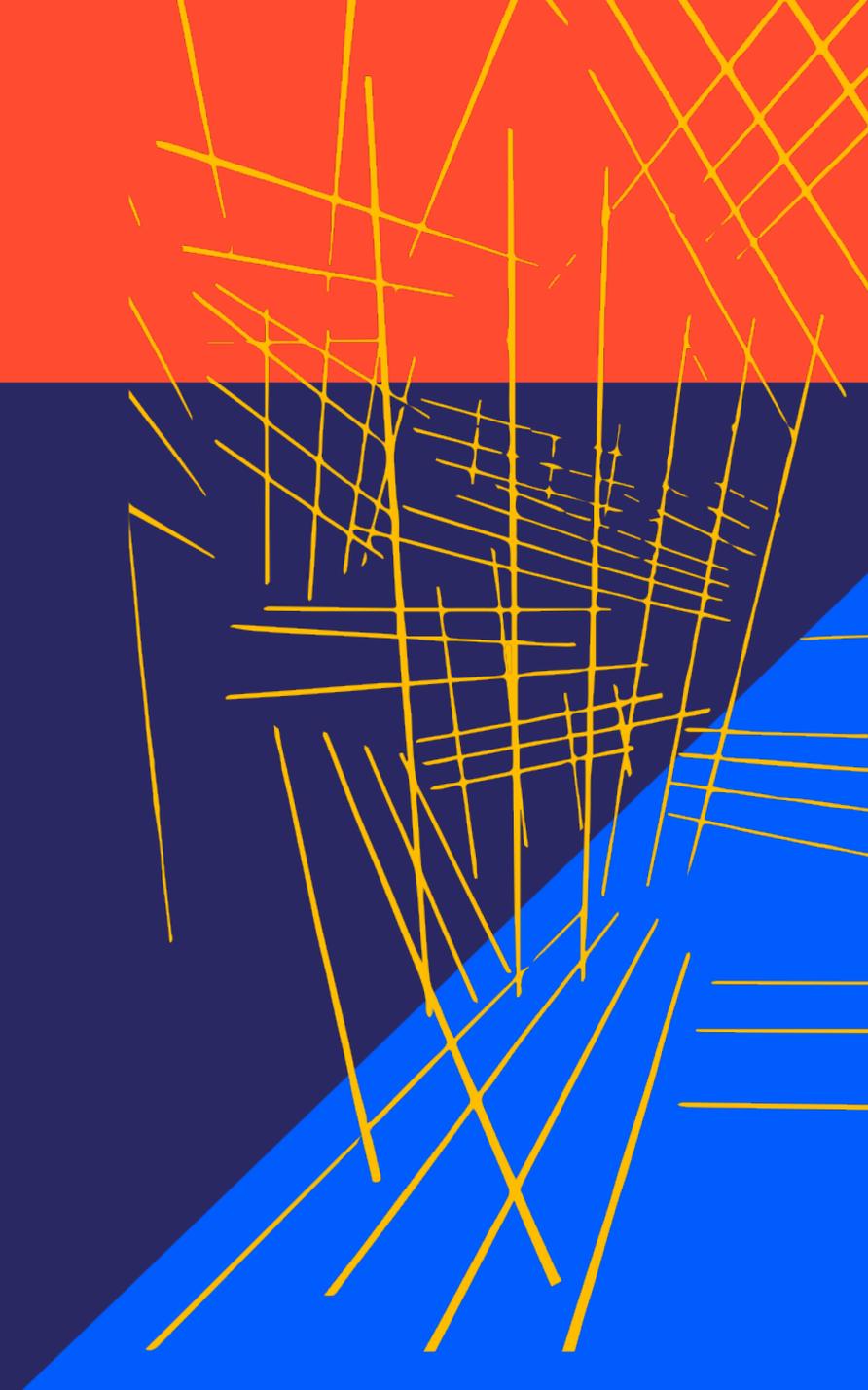
Example interview timings:

Time permitted	
7 minutes	Applicant presentation: <i>"The vision for my Future Leaders Fellowship"</i>
10 minutes	Interview questions: Research and Innovation focus
10 minutes	Interview questions: Leadership focus
10 minutes	Interview questions: Career development focus
3 minutes	Interview questions: Other
5 mins	Reflection time
10 mins	Discussion and consensus Panel score agreed



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Career development support



Host support

- Host organisation to support the fellow to establish themselves as a leader and provide a step change in their career
- Assessed as part of criteria: “Research and Innovation Environment & Costs”



Host support

- Support for the programme of work: Space, access to facilities / equipment / resources, additional research costs, additional support for staff etc.
- Training: Research / innovation skills, leadership training
- Mentoring: Access to formal mentoring programmes
- Integrate: Include the fellow within the activities of the host department
- Commitment to cost of fellowship including salary.
- Commitment to pathway to an open-ended research / innovation focused position:

Support from UK Research and Innovation

- UKRI establishing network to deliver programme of support for FLFs, to include:
 - Training and development opportunities
 - Networking and collaboration opportunities
 - Externally administered mentoring programme
- Interim mentoring programme for R1 Fellows, plus additional costs to support mentoring visits
- Cohort events:
 - Starting meetings per cohort
 - Annual events for all
- UKRI wide activities
 - Networking meetings etc run by UKRI councils

Contact us

- Listening scheme – please feedback/engage with UKRI, we are listening and do make changes!
- Where to find more information:
<https://www.ukri.org/funding/funding-opportunities/future-leaders-fellowships/>
- Contact us:
fellows@ukri.org





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Questions?





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Thank you



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