

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships at the UCL, Bloomsbury and East London DTP

Application Guide for 2020 entry

This Application Guide should be read in conjunction with the ESRC *Postdoctoral Fellowships Call Specification* and *FAQ* documents. Its purpose is to supplement those documents with information and advice on specific processes within the UCL, Bloomsbury and East London (UBEL) DTP.

1. Identifying a mentor

Intending applicants need to identify a mentor to support their application as a matter of priority.

Although the Postdoctoral Fellowship scheme runs in parallel with the DTP's studentship competition, it draws on the same pathway structure (see <https://ubel-dtp.ac.uk/pathways/> for details), and if necessary, Pathway Leaders will be able to offer you advice on potential mentors within their area. Our Pathway Leaders' names and contact details can be found on the UBEL website.

Please note, though, that primary responsibility for identifying mentors rests with applicants themselves. In many instances, you will already have identified potential mentors by other means – from past contact, awareness of the work of relevant academics within the DTP partners, or searches of our institutional websites. Even where Pathway Leaders do broker connections, it will still remain necessary for you to be proactive in developing these.

Your intended mentor should have experience of and a strong interest in your field of research, along with the skills and experience necessary to support you in achieving your goals. These criteria will be taken into account in considering applications. The mentor role entails a serious commitment to support the activity of successful candidates, and fulfilment of that role will be monitored by the DTP and Pathway Leaders via checks with Fellows on their progress.

Mentors should be different from applicants' doctoral supervisor(s), although supervisors will be allowed to take on this role where a compelling case can be made.

Cross-departmental and cross-institutional joint mentoring is permitted, especially where this will add to interdisciplinary support, but a single host department within which the primary mentor is located must be declared.

2. Developing your application

Once you have identified a suitable mentor, you need to:

a) Discuss with them

- 1) your proposed activity
- 2) start date (NB this should only differ from 1 October 2020 if there is a very specific reason)
- 3) project milestones
- 4) training needs
- 5) probable support costs, including any overseas visits, impact activities, and training (the total for mentor and other support costs must not exceed £10,000 at 100% of full Economic Cost)

- b) Obtain host department support, via your mentor and their Head of Department
- c) Work up the various sections of your application (as detailed in the call specification) with your mentor's input

Please note that some Departments may have an internal competition for selecting which candidates will make an application with their support. Your mentor should be able to advise you on this.

There is no expectation that ESRC's list of possible fellowship activities (cf. the call specification) must all be covered or receive equal priority. The exact emphasis on these is allowed to vary according to the nature of your proposal, and your intended career development path.

However, you **do** need to ensure that you have identified the potential impacts of your proposed programme and thought about how these will be achieved. Your plans in this respect will be taken into account within the review process (see below).

If you are contemplating an academic career you should also consider with your mentor possible teaching opportunities up to the permitted maximum of six hours per week, as long as this is consistent with the overarching need to assemble a practicable and realistic programme of activity.

Budgets (including your salary) **must be** formally costed **for full applications** via the standard processes employed by your host department and institution. Again, your mentor should be able to advise you on how to arrange this.

In order to obviate wasted effort on the preparation and assessment of bids, candidates are asked to make only one PDF application across the DTPs/CDTs participating in the scheme.

3. Submitting your application

Preliminary applications need to be submitted by **23.59** on **20 January 2020** using the [FluidReview online portal](#).

Successful candidates will be invited by the end of January 2020 to submit a **full application**.

All **full applications** (including referee statement) must be submitted through the [FluidReview online portal](#) by **16.00 on Monday 23 March 2020**. This deadline applies across all five DTP partner institutions.

4. What happens next

Applications will be considered by academic colleagues in the UBEL DTP. Reviewers will be asked to comment on and grade each application in terms of the quality and coherence of the proposed programme of work, value for money, impact and output plans, and consideration of ethical issues. They will also be asked to address explicitly the suitability of applicants' development plans and identified mentors' capacity to support these. We will not be interviewing candidates.

The panel will identify and rank order the top ten to 12 applicants, taking into account any conditions regarding eligibility (e.g. completion of the PhD) and the suitability of the proposed mentoring arrangements. The top six will be offered awards, and the remainder will form a reserve list in case any offers are declined or required conditions are not met.

Awards will be announced by the end of June 2020. Details will be passed on to ESRC as offers are accepted (a two-week window for responses will be used). ESRC will then issue contracts to award-holders via the host institution. Candidates on the reserve list will be notified that this is the case, along with the latest date by which they will be told a definitive outcome.

Awardees will need to meet any conditions attached to offers in a timely manner. Should these not be met by the target date, the offer will be withdrawn and made instead to the next candidate on the reserve list who can be offered an unconditional award.

5. Eligibility

Applicants must not be more than one year from having passed their viva (subject to any minor corrections) at the competition closing date (23 March 2020), unless part of the intervening period has been devoted to non-academic activity.

International candidates are allowed to apply, but only very limited flexibility can be allowed in start date to permit visas to be obtained where these are necessary.

You can only apply for a fellowship on a part-time basis if that reflects your usual working hours. You cannot apply for a part-time fellowship if your contract is for full-time employment. These fellowships are intended as full working-time opportunities and cannot be held alongside any other employment.

Those with any doubts regarding their eligibility should contact the DTP for advice at the earliest opportunity at ubel-dtp@ucl.ac.uk

Pathway Leaders' names and contact details are available on the DTP website:

<https://ubel-dtp.ac.uk/eligibility/pathways/>