

BHF Fellowships Update Webinar

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Are individuals who were unsuccessful under the previous Fellowship schemes eligible to apply for the new Fellowship schemes?

If your previous application was rejected with the option to resubmit:

You may submit a resubmission under the new scheme, provided you meet all eligibility requirements. Resubmissions must follow the guidance outlined on the relevant scheme webpages. The mapping of previous schemes to new schemes is as follows:

- [Immediate Postdoctoral Basic Science Research Fellowship](#) or [Advanced Training Award](#) > [Discovery Research Early Career Fellowship](#)
- [Intermediate Basic Science Research Fellowship](#) > [Discovery Research Future Leaders Fellowship](#)
- [Intermediate Clinical Research Fellowship](#) > [Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship](#)
- [Senior Basic Science Research Fellowship](#) > [Discovery Research Senior Fellowship](#)
- [Senior Clinical Research Fellowship](#) > [Clinical Senior Research Fellowship](#)

If your previous application received a 'do not resubmit' decision:

Please contact the BHF Fellowships Team before applying to any new scheme.

Will individuals recently awarded Fellowships be able to access additional funds associated with the new Fellowship schemes?

The additional funds, including the training fund for Early Career Fellowships and the discretionary fund for Future Leaders and Senior Fellowships, are not available to individuals currently holding BHF Fellowship awards.

Is the review of applications conducted after the deadline or on a rolling basis?

Will there be 2 deadlines per year spaced 6 months apart?

We will endeavour to look at applications once submitted and so advise applicants to not leave submitting until the deadline. Submission in advance of the deadline will

ensure approval by the Head of Department/Administrative Authority and allow for any GMS issues that may occur, prior to 17:00 on the date of the deadline.

There will be 2 deadlines per year for Clinical and Non-medical Healthcare Professional schemes (January and July) and 2 deadlines per year for Discovery Research schemes (April and September/October). Specific deadline dates will be posted to the individual scheme pages, and we recommend early planning to ensure the relevant deadlines are met. Any applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered for that round.

Is there an upper limit for project costs under each Fellowship scheme?

There is no cap for Fellowship schemes, however, we expect all proposed costs to be clearly outlined with a breakdown provided and clearly justified within the application. Please refer to our [Grant Costing Guide](#). Applicants are advised to contact the BHF Fellowships Team with a rough estimate of costs, alongside a full CV and one-page project outline, prior to making an application.

Are additional funds (travel, training, discretionary & caring responsibilities) automatically provided, or must applicants specify amounts and intended use at the application stage?

Applicants can request the following amounts for each fund within the application form:

- Travel fund – Up to £1000 per year
- Caring Responsibility Fund – Up to £200 per year
- Training Fund (Early Career Fellowships only) – Up to £3000 per award
- Discretionary Fund (FLF and Senior Fellowships only) – Up to £1000 per year

At the time of application, the applicant must request these funds but does not need to outline how the funds will be used. Upon award, Fellows will receive specific guidance for use of these funds.

How is part-time work considered for eligibility across Fellowships?

The Fellowship may be taken up on a part-time employment basis (at least 0.5 FTE), where appropriate, following discussion and agreement with the BHF Fellowships Team and the employing institution. For more information read our [flexible working policies page](#).

Is there a cap on the number of Fellowships awarded per round or per scheme?

No, there are currently no restrictions on the number of Fellowship awards that can be made.

What level of scope and ambition is expected for projects under the new BHF research strategy?

In line with the [new research strategy](#), we expect projects to demonstrate ambition and the potential to deliver transformative impact in cardiovascular science and health. Proposals should aim to address major unmet needs, push the boundaries of current knowledge and show clear potential for long-term benefit, whether through fundamental discovery, translational progress, or clinical application.

The strategy places strong emphasis on capacity building, with significant investment in Fellowships to develop the next generation of research leaders. Applicants should therefore consider how their proposed work contributes to this vision, fostering innovation and leadership within the cardiovascular research community.

While ambition is key, the proposals feasibility must still be demonstrated and will form a part of the assessment criteria, with clear objectives and a structured workplan and contingency plan.

Early Career Fellowships

Discovery Research

Is the 4-year post-PhD eligibility window for the Discovery Research Early Career Fellowship strictly enforced? Does it also apply to resubmissions?

Yes, the 4-year post-PhD eligibility limit is strict. Extensions are only permitted for career breaks, periods of leave, or part-time work. Both the original submission and any resubmission must occur while the applicant is still within this 4-year window. For further details, please refer to the [scheme webpage](#) or contact the BHF Fellowships Team to discuss individual circumstances.

For Early Career Fellowships, is it acceptable to apply to the same primary host institution as the PhD institution?

Applicants can apply for the Fellowship with the same primary host institution as their PhD institution, if this is the best suited environment for the applicant to deliver their project. However, as this Fellowship should provide Early Career Researchers a first step toward independence, applicants may wish to expand their network through mechanisms such as new collaborators, visits to secondary institutions or independent mentors. Applicants are welcome to discuss these points with the BHF Fellowships Team prior to submission.

Clinical

Are clinicians who have trained abroad eligible to apply for the scheme?

This scheme is designed for resident doctors in higher specialty training in the UK, as the award is intended to provide protected postdoctoral time alongside clinical training. Clinicians who trained abroad and have entered UK specialty training are eligible to apply. However, international clinicians who have already completed their specialty training are not eligible for this scheme. For full details, please refer to the [scheme webpage](#) or contact the BHF Fellowships Team to discuss individual circumstances.

Would holding other postdoctoral fellowship posts via the IAT pathway (e.g., NIHR Clinical Lectureship) affect eligibility?

Candidates cannot hold this Fellowship alongside another postdoctoral fellowship at the same time. Candidates who have held other short term postdoctoral fellowships may be eligible to apply, if they still meet all of the eligibility criteria, including that they are still in speciality training and have sufficient time remaining before their CCT. We recommend that candidates get in touch with the BHF Fellowships Team to check their eligibility if they hold/have held previous postdoctoral funding.

Can awardees continue beyond CCT, and are these posts supernumerary given NHS England/Deanery requirements?

As the Fellowship is intended to be held alongside clinical training, we expect that candidates will plan the duration and time commitment requested to align with their expected CCT date. Awards are not intended to be held post CCT. If an awardee obtains their CCT earlier than planned and wishes to retain the Fellowship to completion (for example as a post CCT clinical research fellow), this may be possible, and we will assess on a case-by-case basis.

It will not be possible to continue to hold an award if the awardee obtains their CCT and commences a Consultant position, or alongside another postdoctoral Fellowship.

The Clinical Early Career Research Fellowship is not supernumerary and is intended for those who want to complete their clinical training on a less than full-time basis.

For Clinical Early Career Fellowships, must research and training occur within the same deanery or institution, or can they be split?

From a BHF perspective, we do not require that your research and clinical training occur within the same deanery or institution. However, candidates should discuss their specific plans with the relevant deanery and academic institution at an early stage and get their agreement prior to submitting an application. The academic

organisation will be the host institution and will administer the Fellowship. Letters of support are required in the application from the candidates clinical training programme director and head of department at the relevant academic institution.

Future Leaders Fellowships

For Future Leaders Fellowships, does the host institution's commitment to a tenured position need to be explicitly stated in the support letter, and can the host institution be changed later if tenure is not provided?

The commitment to tenure does not need to be stated explicitly within the host institution's letter of support at the initial application state. However, a formal commitment to a tenured position or equivalent from the host institution will be required at the progress review and will be a condition for the continuation of the award. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to initiate these conversations at the time of application.

Fellows are permitted to move institution during the Fellowship on the basis that there is a benefit for professional development, or scientific advancement. If the host institution is changed before the progress review, then the new host institution will still be required to commit to a tenured position at this point. If the change of host institution occurs after the progress review, commitment to a tenured position will still be required.

What level of detail is expected for years 6 and 7 in the Case for Support?

We recognise that planning for years 6 and 7 can be challenging. Applicants should provide a detailed plan for the first 5 years and include a high-level overview for years 6 and 7. This overview should outline the anticipated direction and objectives for the later years, even if full experimental detail is not possible.

How should applicants forecast budget costs for years 6 and 7 in the application?

For years 6 and 7, applicants will need to enter a total budget figure for each year, for each of the cost types (e.g., Consumables Year 6, Consumables Year 7, Animals Year 6, Animals Year 7, Equipment Year 6, Equipment Year 7).

Applicants will not be required to provide an itemised breakdown for these years, as we understand requirements may change and flexibility is needed. In the justification section, include a brief description of the anticipated types of costs for these later years.

Following the progress review, Fellows will be able to reallocate funds between these categories for years 6 and 7 if needs evolve. However, please note that additional funding beyond the original budget will not be available.

For current holders of Intermediate Fellowships, will a 2-year extension be available to extend the current 5-year funding?

Yes, for current Intermediate Fellows, the opportunity to extend will still be available. We will write to these grant holders to provide further information on this, however Fellows are encouraged to contact the BHF Fellowships team before they enter the last year of their Fellowships if they wish to extend, to discuss when the extension application should be submitted.

Clinical

Are clinicians with a CCT eligible only for Clinical Future Leaders Fellowships, and what is the position for those without a well-established cardiovascular research portfolio?

Yes, clinicians who are within 2 years of their CCT are eligible for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship. Applicants who have obtained their PhD after their CCT or have had time away from medicine and science (for example due to parental or sick leave), may still be eligible, and we will assess on a case-by-case basis. Please get in touch with the BHF Fellowships Team if this applies to you.

[BHF Project Grants](#) may be a suitable option for those who do not yet have a well-developed research track record. We advise that candidates get in touch with the BHF Fellowships Team if they have any questions about the eligibility or suitability of their CV for Clinical Fellowships schemes.

Senior Fellowships

For Senior Fellowships, are applicants that hold an open-ended post eligible?

At the time of application submission, applicants must not have held a permanent, salaried position at their host institution for more than 2 years. If an applicant has previously held a permanent, salaried position for over 2 years at a different institution but is moving to a new host institution where this has not been in place, they remain eligible to apply with the new host institution. For full details, please refer to the [Discovery Research](#) and [Clinical](#) Senior Fellowship webpages.

If a university commits 50% salary to a BHF Fellow, how will teaching obligations be managed, and will this affect research time?

It is anticipated that at Senior level, applicants are embedded within their department and therefore will already have commitments including teaching and University administration, which will be vital for their professional development toward a tenured role. However, BHF expects a reasonable balance between academic activities and scientific contribution. To support this, the new Senior Fellowships will provide funds for 2 supporting posts to help deliver the project, with the Fellow maintaining the key position in delivering the Fellowship project.