



Early Career Fellowships: BEAMS School Guide

The following is a list of postdoctoral and early stage research fellowship opportunities. All of them are focussed on support for individuals, particularly on helping to establish the research careers of early-stage researchers (those with around 0-10 years' postdoctoral experience). The fellowships listed include those provided by the Research Councils, Learned Societies, the 7th Framework programme of the European Commission, and a number of Charities.

Where up to date information is not available for a forthcoming round of funding, information about a previous year's call is listed. All effort will be made to keep this document as up to date as possible; however, readers should always check the details contained in this guide against the latest information published by the funder.

Please note that there are a number of related opportunities not covered here, including short-term mobility and travel grants, fellowship and secondment opportunities focussed on knowledge exchange and impact, and schemes such as the Daphne Jackson fellowships and STFC "Return to Research" bursaries aimed at helping people back into scientific careers after careers breaks. Also note that this list is focused on opportunities where UCL would be the primary host and does not cover opportunities aimed at researchers moving outside of the UK.

Matt Davis

BEAMS School Research Facilitator [Last updated: 4 August 2011]



Want to know more?

For further information, please don't hesitate to get in touch (matthew.davis@ucl.ac.uk), or visit our webpage at: www.ucl.ac.uk/research/beamsfunding/. To receive monthly updates about funding news and opportunities relevant to the BEAMS school, sign up to our mailing list here:

<https://www.mailinglists.ucl.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo/beams-research-board>

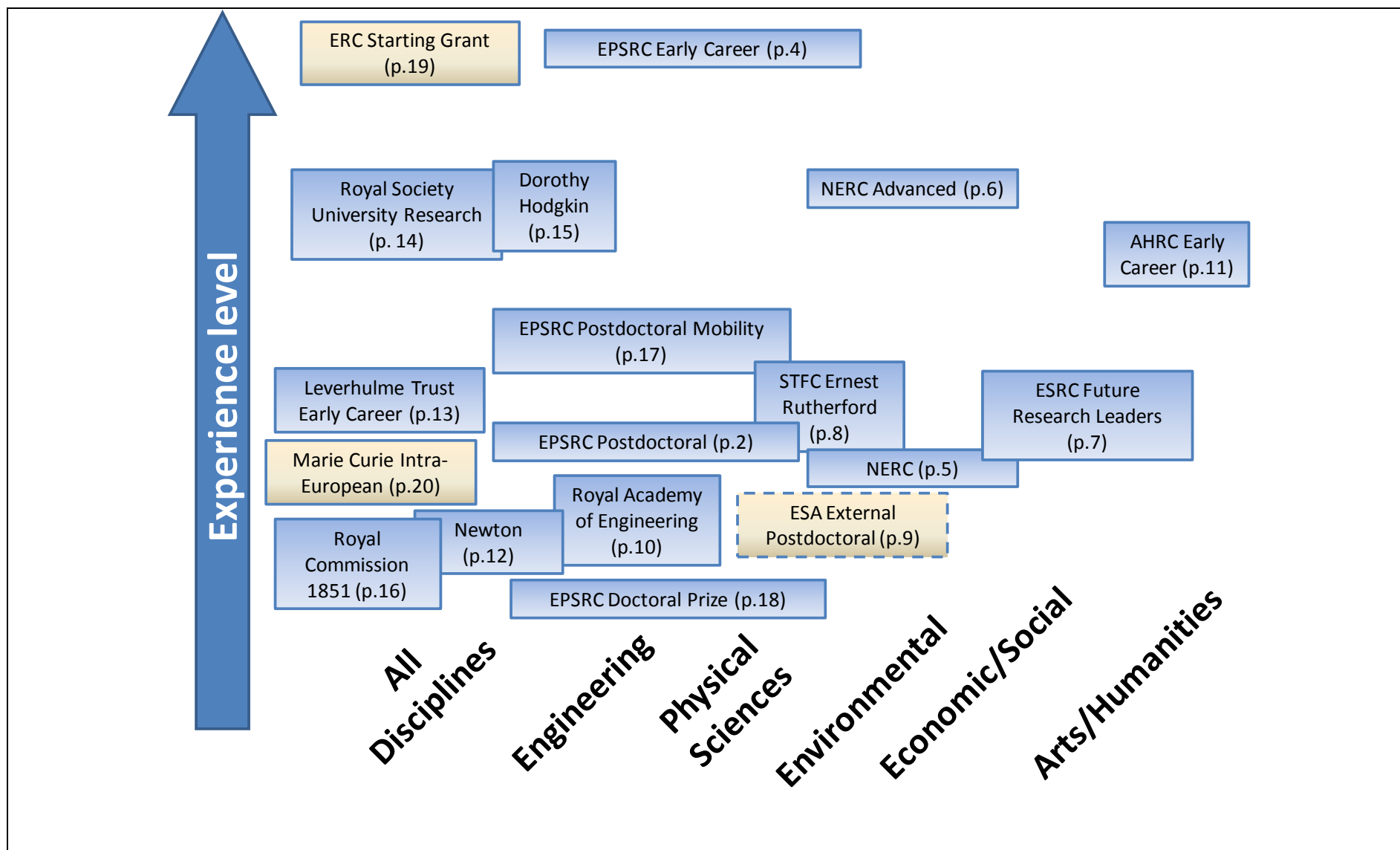


Figure 1. Map of early stage career fellowship opportunities against experience level and discipline

Scheme	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep
EPSRC Postdoctoral				P		I (D)				P		I (D)
EPSRC Early Career				P		I (D)				P		I (D)
NERC Postdoctoral		D								C		
NERC Advanced		D								C		
ESRC Future Research Leaders									C			D
STFC Ernest Rutherford	D					I			C			
ESA External Postdoctoral						D						D
Royal Academy of Engineering	D								I			
AHRC Early Career												
BA/RS Newton International	P			C			D					
Leverhulme Trust Early Career						D						P
Royal Society University							I					D
Dorothy Hodgkin				D					P			
Royal Commission 1851					D							
EPSRC Postdoctoral Mobility												
EPSRC Doctoral Prize												
ERC Starting Grants	D									C		
Marie Curie Intra-European						C					D	

Key:		Shortlisting process
	D	Call deadline
	C	Call announced
	P	Peer review panel
	I	Interviews
	(D)	Target date for submissions

Figure 2. Outline submission and evaluation timeline for each fellowship opportunity (indicative timescales shown)

EPSRC Postdoctoral Fellowships

(Note: In July 2011, EPSRC announced a major change to its fellowships schemes with Career Acceleration and Leadership Fellowships replaced with a more flexible scheme aimed at “Postdoctoral”, “Early Career”, and “Established Career” levels. There is no age range for any of these awards: candidature for each one is based on fit to a published “person specification”.)

Links

Info:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/other/EPsrcFellowships%E2%80%93ANewApproach.pdf>

The basics

Flexible fellowships for up to 3 years (36 months at 100% full time equivalent) only in certain priority research areas dictated by EPSRC. While there is a maximum duration, shorter fellowships are also encouraged and applicants can spend any amount of time on their fellowship between 50 and 100%. Applicants can be of any nationality. They are expected to hold a PhD or equivalent but there are no eligibility rules based on years of experience or academic position. Applicants may only apply for one EPSRC fellowship in any 12 month period.

Process

(Full) applications submitted at any time (no deadlines) and processed on a rolling basis. Applications sent for external peer review and then prioritised twice a year in January/February and July at standard-grant panel meetings. Shortlisted candidates are then taken to interview.

Timeline

No closing dates. Submit full proposal at any time (allow at least 3 month before prioritisation panel). Proposals prioritised at panels in Jan/Feb and July. Shortlisted candidates invited to interview 6 weeks later. Results announced (and fellowships start) in April or October.

What’s covered

Fellow’s salary; travel funds (e.g. for overseas visits and placements); consumables (equipment <£10k only); estates and indirect costs (full economic costing).

What they say

“EPSRC’s Strategic Plan committed us to providing greater support to the world-leading individuals who are delivering the highest quality research to meet UK and global priorities. We will develop the next generation of researchers with the greatest potential across the postdoctoral, early and established career stages.”

Research areas included

Only research areas specified by EPSRC. Applicants should check with EPSRC whether their proposal fits within a given area before submitting.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Very flexible• Family friendly• No closing dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success rates unknown but will be competitive• Only applications in certain areas allowed

EPSRC Early Career Fellowships

(Note: In July 2011, EPSRC announced a major change to its fellowships schemes with Career Acceleration and Leadership Fellowships replaced with a more flexible scheme aimed at “Postdoctoral”, “Early Career”, and “Established Career” levels. There is no age range for any of these awards: candidature for each one is based on fit to a published “person specification”.)

Links

Info:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/other/EPsrcFellowships%E2%80%93ANewApproach.pdf>

The basics

Flexible fellowships for up to 5 years (60 months at 100% full time) only in certain priority research areas dictated by EPSRC. While there is a maximum duration, shorter fellowships are also encouraged and applicants can spend any amount of time on their fellowship between 50 and 100% (with the rest spent on teaching, administration, consulting etc. as necessary). Applicants can be of any nationality. Applicants may apply for one EPSRC fellowship in any 12 month period.

Process

(Full) applications submitted at any time (no deadlines) and processed on a rolling basis. Applications sent for external peer review and then prioritised twice a year in January/February and July at standard-grant panel meetings. Shortlisted candidates are then taken to interview.

Timeline

No closing dates. Submit full proposal at any time (at least 3 month before prioritisation panel). Proposals prioritised at panels in Jan/Feb and July. Shortlisted candidates invited to interview 6 weeks later. Results announced (and fellowships start) in April or October.

What’s covered

Fellow’s salary; travel and networking funding (for example for overseas visits); consumables; major equipment; research staff; co-applicants; technician costs; estates and indirect costs (full economic costing).

What they say

“EPSRC’s Strategic Plan committed us to providing greater support to the world-leading individuals who are delivering the highest quality research to meet UK and global priorities. We will develop the next generation of researchers with the greatest potential across the postdoctoral, early and established career stages.”

Research areas included

Only research areas specified by EPSRC. Applicants should check whether their proposal fits within a given area before submitting.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Very flexible• Family friendly• No institutional quotas on submissions• Support for research team available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success rates unknown but will be highly competitive• Only applications in certain areas allowed

NERC Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

Links

Info: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/fellowships/>

Call Document: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/fellowships/>

List of previous awards: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/fellowships/awards/>

The basics

Early career development awards of up to three years, to provide further post-doctoral experience and to support outstanding environmental scientists as they become independent investigators. Up to 1 year can be spent at a collaborative institution in the UK or overseas. Candidates should have up to 5 years of postdoctoral experience, and applications are accepted from final year PhD students. Applicants should not have a permanent academic position. Applicants may reapply to this call once. Around 25 fellowships are available.

Process

Full proposals submitted. Short listing process, then interviews.

Timeline

Call announcement in June 2011. Closing date for applications: 1 November 2011. Fellowships start around October 2012.

What's covered

Fellow's salary; travel and subsistence (including for fieldwork); consumables (equipment <£10k only); estates and indirect costs (full economic costing).

What they say

"The Natural Environment Research Council Fellowship scheme provides opportunities for outstanding environmental scientists to devote their time to: research; develop their research careers; produce work of international importance."

Research areas included

All research areas within NERC's remit (environmental science research, including: freshwater; Earth; atmospheric; marine; terrestrial; Earth observation; polar). Applicants working across the boundaries of environmental science and engineering and social and/or economic research are encouraged to apply, as are scientists in areas of applied mathematics, physics or strongly quantitative disciplines wishing to develop a career in environmental science.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Family friendly (can be held part-time)• Subject to normal conditions (requiring permanent academic position) fellows can subsequently apply for NERC grants• No age limits; returns to scientific careers welcomed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive• No funding for large equipment (> £10k)• No funding for a research team• Annual reporting requirement

NERC Advanced Research Fellowships

Links

Info: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/fellowships/>

Call Document: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/fellowships/>

List of previous awards: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/fellowships/awards/>

The basics

Fellowships awarded for up to five years, to enable outstanding early/mid career researchers to develop into team leaders of international standing and devote themselves to personal research. Up to 2 years can be spent at a collaborative institution in the UK or overseas. Applicants should have at least two years of postdoctoral experience. Applicants should not have a permanent academic position. Applicants may only reapply once. Around 5 fellowships are available per year.

Process

Full proposals submitted. Short listing process, and interviews.

Timeline

Call announced in June 2011. Closing date: 1 November 2011. Fellowships start around October 2012.

What's covered

Full Economic Costing: Fellow's salary; travel funding (including for fieldwork); consumables (equipment < £10k); estates and indirect costs.

What they say

"The Natural Environment Research Council Fellowship scheme provides opportunities for outstanding environmental scientists to devote their time to: research; develop their research careers; produce work of international importance."

Research areas included

Research within NERC's remit: environmental science research (including freshwater, Earth science, atmospheric science, marine, terrestrial, Earth observation, and polar). NERC particularly encourage applicants working across the boundaries of environmental science and engineering and social and/or economic research, and scientists in areas of applied mathematics, physics or strongly quantitative disciplines wishing to develop a career in environmental science.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Family friendly (can be held part-time)• Subject to normal conditions (permanent academic position) fellows can apply for NERC grants• No age limits; returns to scientific careers welcomed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive; very few awards available• No funding for large equipment (> £10k)• No funding for your team

ESRC Future Research Leaders

(Note: For the 2011/12 call, ESRC announced they would only be funding up to 60% of fellows' salaries.)

Links

Info: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/funding-opportunities/15938/latest-opportunity-11.aspx>

The basics

Fellowships awarded for up to three years to candidates that can demonstrate plans for a high quality research project as well as a clear professional development programme. Open to candidates from anywhere in the world with a maximum of 4 years' postdoctoral experience. Note: ESRC expect to see a "limited number of applications" from any individual organisation (only candidates with "potential to become the 4* researchers of the future"). ESRC will only fund up to 60% of the grant holder's time; the host organisation has to meet the remainder. Around 70 awards funded per year.

Process

Two-stage peer-review process: Outline proposal submitted, and shortlisted following assessment by a pool of external reviewers. Full proposals submitted by shortlisted applicants. External peer review. Final funding panel.

Timeline

Call announced in June 2011. Closing date for outline applications: 15 September 2011. Shortlisted applicants submit full proposals by 1 February 2012. Fellowships start summer/autumn 2012.

What's covered

Up to 60% of fellow's salary (host institution covers the remainder); travel, networking and mobility funding; impact activities; technical support; skills and training (but not mentoring time); indirect and estates costs (full economic costing).

What they say

"This scheme will support outstanding early career researchers to carry out excellent research and to develop all aspects of their research and knowledge exchange skills. The host organisation will be required to demonstrate a high level of commitment to the applicant's career development."

Research areas included

Any topic within the remit of ESRC. Inter/multidisciplinary working is strongly encouraged both within and beyond the social sciences, as long as at least 50% of the proposed programme of research is within ESRC remit. 2011/12 call signposts secondary analysis of existing datasets and the application of innovative research methods.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally Prestigious• Open to any nationality• Open to applicants with or without an academic post• 70 available• Focus on personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive• Not open to former RC grant holders• No funding for research team or linked studentships

STFC Ernest Rutherford Fellowships

(Note: The “Ernest Rutherford” Fellowship scheme was announced on 29 March 2011, replacing STFC’s Advanced Fellowship programme.)

Links

Info: <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/509.aspx>

List of current grant holders: <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/549.aspx>

The basics

STFC offer fellowships lasting 5 years to researchers wishing to establish a strong, independent research career. Applicants should not have a permanent academic position and should have a minimum of 2 years’ postdoctoral experience at time of application. Notably, STFC Fellows will be able to bid annually for significant additional funds to support their research. 12 awards are made per year. There is a strict departmental quota for numbers of applications annually.

Process

Full fellowship proposal. External peer review, after which proposals will be seen at one of four short listing sub-panels (astronomy; particle physics; particle astrophysics and cosmology; or nuclear physics). Final selection by interview (typically 21 candidates are invited to this stage).

Timeline

Call announced in June 2011. Closing date: 12 October 2011. Decisions made in March 2012.

What’s covered

Fellow’s salary; personal travel (collaborative visits and field work; one conference per year); minor equipment costs (<£5k); relocation costs from overseas; funds for public engagement; estates costs; indirect costs (full economic costing).

What they say

“The Fellowships will enable early career researchers with clear leadership potential to establish a strong, independent research programme. They will encourage talented researchers in UK universities to remain in the country and at the same time attract outstanding overseas researchers to the UK.”

Research areas included

Fellowship must fall within the remit of STFC core Science Programme (Astronomy, Solar and Planetary Science, Particle Physics, Particle Astrophysics, Cosmology, and Nuclear Physics). Note “alignment with STFC strategic priorities” is one of 5 criteria: refer to STFC’s recent prioritisation activity (<http://www.stfc.ac.uk/About+STFC/11621.aspx>).

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Additional grant funding available for successful fellows from the “Ernest Rutherford fund”• Open to all nationalities• Family friendly/part-time arrangements can be made	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strict limits on number of applications host departments can submit (STFC work out limit based on algorithm based on numbers of members of staff)• Competitive

European Space Agency (ESA) External Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

(Note: This scheme is temporarily suspended.)

Links

Info: http://www.esa.int/esaMI/Careers_at_ESA/SEM19DXO4HD_0.html

Brochure: <http://www.esa.int/hr/educational/doc/Brochurefellows.pdf>

The basics

External fellowship programme supporting fellows for 1 year (includes the chance to apply for renewal for a second year) in their chosen host organisation to work on a topic related to the research activities of the Agency. Applicants must have recently attained their doctorate or be close to successfully completing and must come from an ESA member state (host organisation must be outside the applicant's home country). ESA supports approximately 20 external fellowships at any given time.

Process

Application form submitted. Applications first examined by relevant ESA scientists and engineers, then submitted to the ESA Selection Board. Applicants are normally informed within four weeks of the Board's decision, and successful candidates normally start their fellowship within three months. The selection process takes place twice yearly in June and December.

Timeline

Closing dates: End of March (for June competition) and end of September (for December competition) each year.

What's covered

Salary stipend as a lump-sum grant (c. £1800 per month for UK-based fellows); expatriation allowance in certain circumstances; travel costs (one journey for scientific purposes per year); social security contribution.

What they say

"ESA's postdoctoral research fellowship programmes aim to offer young scientists and engineers the possibility of carrying out research in a variety of disciplines related to space science, space applications or space technology."

Research areas included

Projects related to the work of the agency. Selected areas (see brochure) in: space science, earth observatory and environment; science under microgravity condition; space technology research; applied mathematics and data processing; information systems development.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two closing dates per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short awards• Not full economically costed (no overhead recovery for the host institution)• Subject areas limited to the remit of ESA

Royal Academy of Engineering Research Fellowships

(Note: This is information about the 2010/11 call. The Academy's Delivery Plan states that for calls from 2011/12 onwards, specific subject areas will be signposted, for example from cross-Council themes.)

Links

Info: <http://www.raeng.org.uk/research/researcher/postdoc/default.htm>

List of current fellows: <http://www.raeng.org.uk/research/researcher/postdoc/current.htm>

FAQs: <http://www.raeng.org.uk/research/researcher/postdoc/faqs.htm>

The basics

For applicants who are about to finish their PhD or have up to 3 years Post-Doctoral research experience. The scheme provides funding for 5 years to concentrate on basic research in any field of engineering and establish a track record. No age limits but applicants should have a substantial academic career ahead of them. RAEng Research Fellows are expected to devote 100% of their working time to research related to their Fellowship, although up to 4 hours a week may be spent on teaching.

Process

Two stage process. Essentially, half of a full application is submitted and considered by an expert sift panel; around 40 are taken forward to stage 2. Adjuncts to the first half of the full applications are then submitted and both halves are sent for external peer review. Roughly 20 applicants are taken forward to interview. Roughly 10 new fellows supported per year.

Timeline

Call announced in summer 2010. Closing date: 8 October 2010. Interviews in May/June. Fellowships start in summer 2011.

What's covered

Fellow's salary for up to 5 years; T&S for networking and conference attendance; consumables and equipment (<£3k); estates and indirect costs (full economic costing).

What they say

"The RAEng Research Fellowships are designed to promote excellence in engineering. They provide support for high-quality engineers and encourage them to develop successful academic research careers."

Research areas included

All branches of engineering: mechanical (including materials, medical, aerodynamics, acoustics and biomedical); chemical; civil; electronic and electrical; ICT (including telecommunications; networks and systems; computing and information; photonics and computer vision).

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Open to all nationalities• Family friendly: can be held part-time if necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited to 2 or 3 applications from each host institution (3 for UCL)• No funds for research team• Limited funds for equipment

AHRC Early Career Fellowships

Link

Info: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Pages/Fellowshipserc.aspx>

The basics

This scheme provides salary and associated costs (<£120k) for periods of 3-9 months, to enable an individual researcher to work on a specified project. Fellowships can be used to support a wide range of activities provided that these lead to significant research and other outputs by the end of the fellowship (including the preparation of publications and other outputs from research conducted prior to the start of the fellowship). Applicants must be within 8 years of a PhD, or 6 years of first academic appointment, and have at least 1 year of postdoctoral research experience. Applicants don't need to have an academic position but have a contract which covers the duration of the award.

Process

Full proposal. External peer review (usually by two members of college) followed by peer review panel. Resubmissions allowed for high scoring unsuccessful proposals.

Timeline

This is a rolling call with no closing dates.

What's covered

Salary (can be taken full time or part time 50-100%); T&S; equipment; impact costs; estates and indirect costs (full economic costing); contribution to mentor's time.

What they say

"The early career route aims to enable the AHRC to work in partnership with institutions to support the career development of researchers at the start of their careers and to provide them with focused research time and appropriate support and mentoring so that they can broaden their research experience and enhance their research outputs profile. The AHRC will aim to ensure that the success rate for proposals to this route is slightly higher than proposals to the standard route."

Research areas included

All areas within the AHRC remit, with certain areas "highlighted". A highlight notice is currently in place under the Fellowship (Standard and Early Career routes) scheme for the four themes that emerged from the Future Directions consultation: Digital Transformations in Arts and Humanities; Care for the Future; Translating Cultures; Science in Culture; and, Connected Communities.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No closing dates: apply any time• Full economic costing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not a full fellowship in the usual sense• Short awards

British Academy/Royal Society Newton International Fellowships

(Note: RAEng withdrew from this scheme in 2011 but engineering subjects are still covered.)

Links

Info: <http://www.newtonfellowships.org/>

Info: <http://royalsociety.org/grants/schemes/newton-international/>

The basics

Support for early-stage postdoctoral researchers from all over the world (excluding UK), to work at a UK institution for up to 2 years. The fellowships provide salary and subsistence costs, some research expenses, and a one-off relocation allowance. In addition, Newton Fellows may be eligible for follow-up funding for up to 10 years following the completion of the Fellowship. Applicants should have, or be about to complete, a PhD and have held no more than 2 postdoctoral positions. 40 Newton International Fellowships are offered each year. The success rate is around 5-10%.

Process

Application form and references submitted by the applicant through the Royal Society's online "e-GAP" system and approved by host HEI research office. Short-listing process.

Timeline

Call open 31 January 2011. Closing date: 4 April 2011. Results announced in October 2011. Fellowships start in January 2012.

What's covered

£24k per year subsistence and up to £8k for research expenses; one-off payment of £2k for relocation expenses; contribution departmental overheads.

What they say

"Are you at the beginning of your research career - with the potential to be world-class? Is your research in the physical, natural or social sciences or humanities? Do you want to build and maintain links with leading researchers in the UK? Then apply for a Newton International Fellowship."

Research areas included

The Fellowships cover the broad range of physical, natural and social sciences and the humanities. Engineering also covered.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open to all nationalities, except those from UK.• Focus on networking between current and former Newton Fellows• Opportunity for fellows to apply for networking funding (up to £6k) after award has ended	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short awards• Very competitive• Applicants from outside of the EU will require visa to work in UK

The Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowships

Links

Info: <http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/ECF/ECF.cfm>

Assessment criteria: <http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/funding/criteria.cfm>

The basics

Support for those who are at a relatively early stage of their academic career but with a proven record of research. All candidates must hold a doctorate and have less than 5 years' postdoctoral research experience. Those with academic positions cannot apply but it is anticipated that a Fellowship will lead to a more permanent academic position. Fellowships are tenable for 2-3 years on a full-time basis (but requests on a part-time basis considered). Approximately 70 Fellowships available in 2011.

Process

Applications submitted online. Short-listing process not stated.

Timeline

Deadline for applications: 10 March 2011. Fellowships to start between September 2011 and May 2012.

What's covered

50% of Fellow's total salary costs (up to a maximum of £23k per annum). Fellows may request annual research expenses <£6k (conference attendance, consumables etc.).

What they say

"With annual funding of some £50 million, the Trust is amongst the largest all-subject providers of research funding in the UK. The Trust places special weight on; the originality of the projects put to them; the significance of the proposed work; the ability to judge and take appropriate risk in the project; the removal of barriers between traditional disciplines."

Research areas included

Applications are welcomed in any discipline. Leverhulme encourage applications to do research which does not tend to fit into mainstream funding streams (e.g. Research Councils). Applicants should state why they are applying to the Leverhulme over other routes.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationally prestigious• Open to all disciplines• Particularly good for research areas that don't fit within usual Research Council Programme areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No support for institutional overheads• Only 50% of salary costs paid: host institution pays the rest• No support for research team• Little support for research expenses

Royal Society University Research Fellowship

Links

Info: <http://royalsociety.org/grants/schemes/university-research/>

Examples of grant holders: <http://royalsociety.org/grants/case-studies/>

The basics

Funding up to 5 years (with possibility of extension) for outstanding scientists with the potential to become leaders to build an independent research career. Those appointed are expected to be strong candidates for permanent academic posts at the end of their fellowships. The applicant must: have a PhD; be at an early to mid-stage of their career (e.g. 1-3 post-doc positions); not hold a permanent post; be a European citizen. About 30 University Research Fellowships are offered each year. The success rate is around 6%.

Process

Applications shortlisted by a Selection Panel. Shortlisted proposals are reviewed by three independent referees. Interviews.

Timeline

Closing date: 15 September 2010. Interviews take place in late March/April. Successful applicants notified in early May.

What's covered

Salary costs; estates costs and indirect costs (full economic costing); research expenses (<£13k for the first year and <£11k thereafter) also provided.

What they say

“For outstanding scientists in the UK at an early to mid-stage of their career who have the potential to become leaders in their field.”

Research areas included

The scheme covers all areas of the life and physical sciences, including engineering, but excluding clinical medicine.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly prestigious• Flexible (part time arrangements, sabbaticals etc.)• All research areas included	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No funding for team• Highly competitive

Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowships

Links

Info: <http://royalsociety.org/grants/schemes/dorothy-hodgkin/>

Example award holders: <http://royalsociety.org/grants/case-studies/>

The basics

Support for 4 years (maximum) for excellent scientists in the UK at an early stage of their career who require a flexible working pattern due to personal circumstances such as parenting, caring or health issues (note that eligibility is checked on a case by case basis). Female candidates are particularly invited to apply. The scheme offers holders the opportunity to, e.g., hold appointments on a part-time basis or convert from full-time to part-time and back again. Applicants must: be at an early career stage (1-2 postdoctoral positions); not hold a permanent academic post; be a European citizen. About 10 Fellowships are offered each year. The success rate is 6%.

Process

Applications shortlisted by a Selection Panel. Shortlisted proposals are reviewed by two independent referees. Final selection panel.

Timeline

Closing date: 19 January 2011. Successful applicants notified by end of June.

What's covered

Salary costs; estates and indirect costs (full economic costing); research expenses (<£13k for the first year and <£11k thereafter) also provided.

What they say

“For excellent scientists in the UK at an early stage of their career who require a flexible working pattern due to personal circumstances such as parenting or caring responsibilities or health issues.”

Research areas included

The scheme covers all areas of the life and physical sciences, including engineering, but excluding clinical medicine.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible• All research areas covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive

Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 Fellowships

Links

Info: http://www.royalcommission1851.org.uk/res_fellow.html

The basics

3 year postdoctoral research fellowships intended to give young scientists or engineers of exceptional promise the opportunity to conduct a research project of their own instigation. Applicants must hold a PhD and be a citizen of the UK or the Commonwealth. The host HEI should be different to the one in which the candidate did their PhD. Approximately 8 awards are made each year.

Process

Apply online. Not stated.

Timeline

Closing date: Thursday 17 February 2011. Notification made to applicants in June 2011. Fellowships commence in October 2011.

What's covered

Stipend (c. £30k); limited research expenses (<£1k).

What they say

"Giving fellowships and grants to pure research in science and engineering, applied research in industry, industrial design and other projects, the Commission supports the development of science and technology, and its profitable exploitation by British Industry... 1851 Research Fellowships are intended to give young scientists or engineers of exceptional promise the opportunity to conduct a research project of their own instigation."

Research areas included

The Fellowships are open to candidates in any of the physical or biological sciences, in mathematics, in applied science, or in any branch of engineering. Applications from qualified engineering researchers are particularly encouraged.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generous stipend• 3 year awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Few awards made per year

EPSRC Postdoctoral Mobility Award

Links

Info: <http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/grants/newac/Pages/postdocmobility.aspx>

The basics

12-month awards held jointly between departments (working in distinct disciplines) to encourage the effective transfer of knowledge gained by PDRA's working on existing EPSRC grants, and enhance the competencies and career opportunities of these researchers. Proposals are typically sought during the final year of an EPSRC grant, for a 12-month follow-on grant.

Process

Academic supervisor submits full application (usually during the final year of the grant support). Postal peer review. Decisions usually made by EPSRC outside of funding panel. Decisions take around 10-12 weeks.

Timeline

Apply anytime (no closing dates). Decisions within 10-12 weeks.

What's covered

PDRA salary; estates and indirect costs (full economic costing). Where justifiable, can include: travel costs. No funding for equipment.

What they say

"The following are examples of possible proposals: To transfer a PDRA supported by the Mathematical Sciences or Physical Sciences Programmes into a more applied discipline/department.; To transfer a PDRA supported by any EPSRC programme into a life science department; To transfer a PDRA to another discipline/department to follow up an unexpected discovery outside the objectives of the initial project."

Research areas included

All areas within EPSRC remit and those that overlap with the remits of other Councils (though proposals falling largely within the remit of another research council will be rejected).

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short peer-review turnaround• Apply anytime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short awards (max 12 months)• No funding for equipment• Only available if currently employed on an EPSRC grant

EPSRC Doctoral Prize

(Previously known as the PhD Plus, launched in 2009, EPSRC plans to continue the scheme under the banner of the “EPSRC Doctoral Prize”, details not yet announced.)

Links

Announcement of scheme:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/plans/implementingdeliveryplan/goals/developingleaders/Pages/encouraging.aspx>

UCL call page (call not currently live): <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/beams/phd/funding/>

The basics

The PhD Plus programme provides up to 12 months’ follow-on support for an organisation’s best final year PhD students, or to bring the best students from other institutions in the UK to UCL, enabling them to develop their PhD ideas and help launch a successful career in research. Only open to EPSRC-funded PhD students in their final year.

Process

UCL internal process. PhD students apply directly to the College.

Timeline

Internal call held annually in May.

What’s covered

Stipend

What they say

“Universities will also be allowed to use up to 10 per cent of their DTGs to launch prizes for the best PhD students beyond the end of the PhD to encourage breadth of experience and impact. The Doctoral Prize has evolved from our successful pilot of PhD Plus.”

Research areas included

All areas within EPSRC remit.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good route for very early stage researchers (post PhD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short awards (max 12 months)

European Research Council Starting (Independent Research) Grant

Links

Link to 2011/12 Call: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/ideas&state=open>

UKRO guide: <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/stg.htm>

List of previously funded grants:

<http://erc.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&topicID=581>

Scheme Booklet: http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/policy_docs/080929_erc_stg_case_studies.pdf

The basics

ERC “Starting” Grants provide up to 5 years’ support (<€2 million) to the independent careers of excellent, early-stage researchers, who are at the stage of establishing or consolidating their own independent research team or programme. Focussed on the individual investigator, with support also available for their research team. Applicants can be any age and nationality with 2-12 years postdoctoral experience. Note, applicants are evaluated either as a “starter” (2-7 years) or a “consolidator” (>7 years). Scientific excellence of the investigator and project is the sole criterion for selection. Success rates are typically around 15% on average, although significantly higher for proposals from UCL.

Process

Full application. Peer review by one of many panels covering the breadth of the ERC’s remit. Final interview stage. Only high scoring unsuccessful candidates can reapply.

Timeline

Call launched in July 2011. Closing date: 12 October 2011 (for EPS disciplines). Fellowships start in summer 2012.

What’s covered

Salary costs. Research expenses (<€500,000) can be requested for equipment, travel, relocation and so on. (Institutions are reimbursed at 100% of the direct eligible costs of the project, with an additional flat rate of 20% as a contribution to the overheads).

What they say

“ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grants (ERC Starting Grants) aim to support up-and-coming research leaders who are about to establish or consolidate a proper research team and to start conducting independent research in Europe.”

Research areas included

“Frontier research” in any area apart from nuclear fission and fusion. Projects can be interdisciplinary.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prestigious• Well funded• Funds available for a research team• Funding for equipment• Lengthy awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly competitive

Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship (IEF) for Career Development

(See also the related International “Incoming” and “Outgoing” Fellowships, for researchers moving into and out of the EU: http://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie/individual_schemes/calls.htm)

Links

Info: http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/understanding/marie-curieinbrief/research-development_en.html

UKRO guidance: <http://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie/index.htm>

The basics

1-2 year (full time equivalent) fellowships to enable the experienced (postdoctoral) researchers to progress in the development of his/her career, in an EU country different to their own. As well as a research project, the activities of the fellowship should include training and outreach activities. Host institution must be an EU Member State or associate. Applicants should already be in possession of a PhD. In 2010, 60 researchers applied for these fellowships at UCL; of these, 17 were funded.

Process

Full proposal submitted. Expert peer review. Panel “consensus meeting”.

Timeline

Call opens in 16 March 2011. Closing date: 11 August 2011. Results announced in December.

What’s covered

Salary and monthly living allowance; monthly mobility allowance; contribution to training and research expenses; management costs and contribution to overheads at host institution.

What they say

“To support the career development, or restart, of experienced researchers at different stages of their careers, and seeks to enhance their individual competence diversification in terms of skill acquisition at multi- or interdisciplinary level and/or by undertaking inter-sectoral experiences. The fellowship is expected to be part of a structured, long-term professional development plan that is coherent with past achievements and clearly defines the future aims of the researcher.”

Research areas included

All areas. Proposals will be classified into Evaluation Panels under eight major areas of research: Chemistry; Social and Human Sciences; Economic Sciences, Information Science and Engineering; Environmental and Geo-Sciences; Life Sciences; Mathematics; and Physics.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internationally prestigious• UCL have good success rates among applicants to for these awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lengthy application form