

Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship FAQs

Find answers relating to our newly launched [Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship](#).

Visit the [Clinical Academic Training and Careers Hub](#) to view career pathways available to clinical academics from funders across the UK.

For any further queries, please contact research.careers@cancer.org.uk

General

Is there a cap on the number of applications that can be submitted from each host institution, as with UKRI's Future Leaders Fellowships?

No, there isn't a cap on the number of applications that can be submitted from each host institution. However, host institutions are required to commit to offering successful applicants a clear path to an open-ended, salaried research position at the end of the fellowship.

How is this fellowship different to the previous Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship?

Recognising the challenges at this transition point in the career path, the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship provides longer-term support for seven years, including tapered salary support with the host institution from the third year, compared to the five years offered by the now closed Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship.

To ensure your successful career development and progression, your host institution is required to provide a clear route to an open-ended UK based salaried research position at the end of the fellowship.

Eligibility & suitability

How much postdoctoral experience do I need to be eligible for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship?

As outlined in [our competency framework](#), the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship is designed to support the transition to research independence and leadership (as per Phase 4 of the [national clinical academic careers framework](#)). Therefore, we would expect you to have postdoctoral research experience commensurate to transitioning to this career stage. You should demonstrate you have made important contributions to your research area and provide evidence of emerging research leadership.

Would a shift in research focus since my PhD and postdoctoral training affect the strength of my application?

Applications will continue to be assessed on scientific quality and alignment with our research strategy, track record relative to your research career stage (including any career breaks),

	<p>potential to reach research leadership and the suitability of the proposed research environment.</p> <p>As part of the scientific assessment, you must provide evidence of feasibility. This may include key collaborators who complement your expertise and are essential to delivering the research plan, details of how you will apply your skills and experience in a new field of research and any available preliminary data.</p>
<i>Can I apply for a Clinician Scientist Fellowship and Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship at the same time?</i>	<p>You can only apply for one of these fellowships at a time. This should be the one that is most appropriate for your career stage and level of independence.</p> <p>Contact our research grant management team to find out which fellowship is most suitable for you.</p>
<i>I currently hold a Cancer Research UK Clinician Scientist Fellowship, can I apply for a Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship?</i>	<p>Yes, you can. The Clinician Scientist Fellowship is aimed at an earlier career stage, known as 'develop independence' in our competency framework and Phase 3 of the national clinical academic careers framework. Holders of other postdoctoral fellowships aligned with Phase 3 of the national clinical academic careers framework are also eligible to apply for this fellowship.</p>
<i>Can I apply for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship if I have already held an Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship?</i>	<p>No, holders of our Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowships and equivalent awards are not eligible for this fellowship as they are aimed at the same career stage as our Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship.</p>
<i>Can I apply for Cancer Research UK's Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship if I also want to apply for the UKRI's Future Leaders Fellowship?</i>	<p>Yes, you can apply for both at the same time, but you will only be able to accept one of the awards if your application is successful. Please let us know if you're submitting parallel applications.</p>
<i>Do I need to have established a research group or led a small team before applying for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship?</i>	<p>We expect most applicants to be transitioning to a group leader position, but you can apply if you've recently acquired this status or have limited experience as a group leader.</p>
<i>Can I apply if I already hold a permanent academic position or long-term/open-ended salaried position?</i>	<p>After careful consideration, informed by consultation with members of our community and the Office for Strategic Coordination of Health Research's report findings, our new Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship is designed to strengthen support at a challenging career stage. It will help talented clinical academics make the transition to research independence and</p>

	<p>leadership by providing a pathway towards a long-term salaried position, in partnership with their host institution.</p> <p>As such, the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship is not open to candidates who already hold a salaried research position equivalent to a tenured post. However, candidates on short term 'bridging - type' fellowships or awards are eligible to apply, and we encourage you to contact the office with queries on suitability for the fellowship.</p> <p>We're expecting that candidates who already hold a tenured post to be competitive for other types of funding to support their research.</p>
<i>Can non-UK nationals apply for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship?</i>	<p>Yes. If you are successful and require a visa to work in the UK, you are eligible to be considered for the fast-track Global Talent Visa. Before applying, you will need to identify a UK-based host institution that will agree to support your application. Additionally, you will need to make sure that you can practice medicine in the UK by obtaining a General Medical Council registration.</p>
Expectations of host institutions	
<i>I am a clinical academic but my employer is the NHS. Does that exclude me from a Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship?</i>	<p>You must demonstrate how the proposed host institution provides a strong and supportive environment for your proposed research and career development. The host institution is expected to have significant critical mass of relevant research expertise and the necessary infrastructure to effectively support you in undertaking your research project.</p> <p>Research that is primarily focussed on clinical or commercial application, or refining/optimising existing technologies, treatments or therapeutics without a discovery element, is not in remit. This includes clinical trials.</p> <p>Your host institution will also be expected to contribute to your salary during the fellowship and provide long-term support to help you reach an independent salaried research/academic position following completion of the fellowship.</p>

<p><i>What is expected from my host institution at the outline application stage?</i></p>	<p>The host institution must provide a letter of support from the head of department, clearly outlining their intention to provide long-term career support to help you reach an independent, salaried research position following completion of the fellowship. This should align with the organisation's standard business/operational planning processes and employment policies and practices. The letter of support from the head of department must also confirm the host institutions commitment to contribute to your salary from the third year of the fellowship.</p> <p>Before you can submit your application, the head of department will need to be invited as a grant participant on our applications portal, Flexi-Grant, so that the letter can be uploaded directly. Please note that this requirement differs from our other fellowships.</p>
<p><i>Can I hold a Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship at one of Cancer Research UK's core-funded institutes?</i></p>	<p>Yes, you may apply to hold a fellowship at one of our core-funded institutes if you don't already hold a core-funded group leader position and the institute is willing to make a long-term commitment following completion of your Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship. Fellows hosted by a university may, if justified within their proposal, conduct part or all of their research at a core-funded institute.</p>
<p>Remit</p>	
<p><i>Are there specific priority areas for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowships?</i></p>	<p>Your research may focus on any area within the scientific remit as described in the scheme's application guidelines. Strategic priorities are outlined in our research strategy and include early detection, prevention, children and young people's cancer and research in cancers of unmet need such as brain, lung, oesophageal, pancreatic, liver and stomach cancer.</p>
<p><i>Will focussing on rare cancer types that do not fall within Cancer Research UK's prioritised cancers of unmet need affect my chances of success?</i></p>	<p>The proposed research may focus on any area within the scientific remit as described in the scheme's application guidelines, including those identified as strategic priorities in our research strategy.</p>
<p><i>Do you fund translational research?</i></p>	<p>We fund both basic and translational research. Fellowship research programmes are normally expected to have a strong discovery element. Research areas not in remit include projects focused only on commercial or clinical applications,</p>

	or refining/optimising existing technologies, treatments or therapeutics.
Application process	
<i>How many years should costs be provided for in the application? Am I expected to have a clearly defined plan for the project's later years?</i>	Your application should include costing for your proposed research for the entire seven-year period. We acknowledge that plans for later years may be less defined and subject to change. The mid-term review in your fourth year will provide you an opportunity to update us on the progress of your fellowship and refine upcoming plans.
<i>How does the review process differ from other Cancer Research UK fellowships?</i>	All of our fellowships are assessed on scientific quality and alignment with our research strategy, track record relative to your research career stage (including any career breaks), potential to reach research leadership and the suitability of the proposed research environment. For the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship, there is a strong expectation that your host institution will commit to supporting your career progression. This commitment will be assessed as part of the review process.
<i>Do you allow resubmissions?</i>	You may reapply, but we restrict resubmissions to two per applicant per career stage, as defined by our competency framework. If you've previously applied for an Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship or Career Establishment Award and were unsuccessful, you may only apply once for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship. However, if you have had two unsuccessful applications to either of these schemes, you are not eligible to apply for the Clinical Future Leaders Fellowship.
Funding	
<i>Is there a maximum amount of funding I can apply for? What costs can the fellowship cover?</i>	Yes, this fellowship awards up to £2.5M. Costs can include 50% of your salary, equipment, research consumables and research staff, but must always be fully justified.
<i>Do I have to apply for the full seven years?</i>	Yes, you will need to submit a research proposal and costing for the full seven years of the fellowship.
<i>Does it matter whether the salary support is provided by the university or by the NHS?</i>	The fellowship is intended to provide protected research time (>60–80%) and flexibility for the fellow to drive their research programme forward. As such, we would expect a salary contribution from the host institution.