Future Leaders – African Independent Research (FLAIR) Fellowships 2021

The following scheme notes set out the eligibility and application process of the Future Leaders – African Independent Research Fellowships. Please read through the entire document before proceeding with an application.

1. Overview

Background

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a £1.5 billion fund announced by the UK Government to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries. The Fund forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment which is monitored by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). ODA funded activity focuses on outcomes that promote the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list and is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

Science, technology and innovation have long been linked to economic prosperity and societal well-being and today are seen as especially crucial for the health and wealth of developing nations. GCRF offers a real opportunity to make significant progress in many areas of science benefitting Africa. The aims of GCRF are aligned to the United Nations Global Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union Agenda 2063, and the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 that places science, technology and innovation at the heart of the continent's socio-economic development. One of the focuses of GCRF is to build research capacity and capability by forging strong and enduring partnerships between academic communities in the UK and developing countries and by enhancing the research and innovation capacity of both.

The Fellowships

The African Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society have partnered to deliver a postdoctoral fellowship programme supported by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF): **Future Leaders – African Independent Research (FLAIR) Fellowships.**

Aims of the Scheme

The FLAIR Fellowships Programme will produce Africa's next generation of independent research leaders undertaking cutting-edge research that will address global challenges facing Africa. The fellowships are aimed at talented African early career researchers with the potential to become leaders in their field and provide the opportunity to build an independent research career in an African institution.

The objectives of the FLAIR fellowship programme are:

- **Developing Africa's next generation of research leaders** - supporting talented early career African researchers to establish their scientific independence, focus on developing their research and become leaders in their chosen discipline.

- **Supporting excellent research** - enabling African researchers to address areas of global significance across the natural sciences through high-quality research, advancing knowledge and innovation which aims to benefit their country and address aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Enhancing research environments** - working through relevant partners, awards will contribute towards institutional research capacity strengthening and establishing good financial grant practice in African universities and research institutions.
- **Fostering collaboration and impact** – establishing mutually beneficial long-term links between African Fellows and relevant UK researchers to harness the expertise of the UK research base through equitable partnerships and enhancing knowledge exchange and translation into sustainable policy and practical benefits.

The programme will provide two years of funding and support in the first instance; subject to progress during the first two years (and continued funding from the Global Challenges Research Fund) holders may have the opportunity to apply for a renewal for an additional three years. The funding will cover salary and research and travel expenses and will allow holders to focus on developing their research with limited teaching responsibilities. In addition, FLAIR Research Fellows will receive a generous programme of support to develop them as independent research leaders including training, mentoring, opportunities to network both regionally and with the UK and to develop international collaborations.

Global Challenge Areas

Proposals must seek to address the [GCRF research agenda](#) for enabling change and focusing on one or more of the following areas:

Equitable Access to Sustainable Development **-** creating new knowledge and drive innovation that helps to ensure that everyone across the globe has access to:

1. secure and resilient food systems supported by sustainable marine resources and agriculture
2. sustainable health and well being
3. inclusive and equitable quality education
4. clean air, water and sanitation
5. affordable, reliable, sustainable energy

Sustainable Economies and Societies **-** encouraging research that for the longer-term builds:

6. sustainable livelihoods supported by strong foundations for inclusive economic growth and innovation
7. resilience and action on short-term environmental shocks and long-term environmental change
8. sustainable cities and communities
9. sustainable production and consumption of materials and other resources

Human Rights, Good Governance and Social Justice **-** supporting research that enables us to:

10. understand and respond effectively to forced displacement and multiple refugee crises
11. reduce conflict and promote peace, justice and humanitarian action
12. reduce poverty and inequality, including gender inequalities.

The above Global Challenges are illustrative and are not intended to constrain innovative approaches in other areas that address the GCRF's aim of supporting excellent research that directly contributes to the development and welfare of people in developing countries.

Subjects Covered

Research must be within the Royal Society's remit of natural sciences, which includes but is not limited to biological research, chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics. For a full list, please see https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/subject-groups.

Submissions from clinically qualified scientists may be considered but the Royal Society does not support clinical or interventional research on humans at the individual or group level. Additionally, funding from the Royal Society does not cover social sciences or humanities.

If there is any doubt about the eligibility of a project, contact the Royal Society grants team.

Countries covered

The FLAIR Fellowship scheme accepts applications which will be hosted at an organisation of higher education and research in sub-Saharan Africa (please see **Appendix 2** for a list of eligible host countries).

Value of Funding and Support Provided

Each fellowship will be up to £150,000 per year. This will include:
- Funding for research fellow's salary, research expenses, research support (excluding PhD studentships and full-time technician support), equipment, training, travel and subsistence and organisational overhead.
- *For further details, please refer to the 'Eligibility Details' section below on page 7-8.*

In addition, the scheme will provide a wider programme of support to develop fellows as independent research leaders including training and mentoring, and opportunities to network both regionally and with the UK and develop international collaborations.

All grants will be paid in Pound Sterling (GBP) to the African Host Organisation. Currency fluctuations which result in the increases or decreases in the value of the awards are at the Host Organisation and Award Holder's risk.

Duration and Start of Fellowship

Fellowships are expected to commence from 1 April 2021.

The programme will provide two years of funding and support in the first instance; subject to progress during the first two years (and continued funding from the Global Challenges Research Fund) holders may have the opportunity to apply for a renewal for an additional three years.

Fellowships will be held full-time. Should any candidates need to hold the fellowship on a part-time basis because of caring responsibilities this will be considered and discussed on a case-by-case basis at the point of being offered a conditional award.

Number of Fellowships Offered: Approximately 30.

2. Eligibility

Applicant Eligibility

Successful applicants will be talented African early career researchers who are ready to develop their independence and have the potential to become leaders in their field. Underrepresented groups, including women, are particularly encouraged to apply.

- The applicant must:
    - be a national of a sub-Saharan African country and wish to work in a sub-Saharan African country in a research position; or
    - be a national of a sub-Saharan African country in the diaspora and wish to return to a research position in a sub-Saharan African country.

- The applicant must have been awarded a PhD at the time of application.

- The applicant must be an early career researcher with a minimum of two years' research experience since completing their PhD and no more than 8 years' post-doctoral research experience, by the time of application. This includes time spent teaching, honorary positions and/or visiting researcher positions.

The African Academy of Sciences and Royal Society recognise there are diverse research career paths, as well as the challenges of managing a research career alongside other personal commitments. When reviewing applicants' eligibility and research experience, The Royal Society will take into consideration time spent outside the research environment (e.g. time away due to personal reasons such as maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoptive leave or other caring responsibilities; ill-health or working in a non-research environment/role such as industry). Furthermore, where applicants have taken formal periods of maternity, paternity shared parental and adoptive leave as the primary carer (either the mother, father, partner or adopter), or extended sick leave, the Royal Society will allow on top of each period of leave an additional amount of time when assessing eligibility. Each case will be considered individually as per guidelines below:

- Maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and adoptive leave: On top of the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to the 100% taken will be added on top, for up to 6 months. Example 1: If an applicant took 4 months leave, additional 4 months would be added and a total of 8 months would be deducted. Example 2: If an applicant took 18 months leave, additional 6 months would be added (maximum additional time allowed) and a total of 24 months would be deducted.
- Extended sick leave (defined as more than four weeks off work, as per UK Government's definition): On top of the actual time taken off work, an additional amount of time equivalent to the 100% taken will be added on top, for up to 6 months.

    Each case will be considered individually and the employing institution may need to confirm that the applicant qualifies for this provision. Supporting documents may be requested for individual cases at the Royal Society's discretion. The Royal Society reserves the right to consider individual requests outside of the outlined policy in exceptional circumstances.

- Applicants are not permitted to submit more than one application per round.

- Applicants who are not currently employed are eligible to apply.

- Applicants must have a clearly defined scientific research proposal focusing on one or more of the Global Challenge areas outlined above.

The Fellowship scheme is designed to support applicants towards an independent research career. Attracting other grant funding in addition to the Fellowship strengthens your career. Subject to agreement, it may be permissible for applicants to hold additional research grants alongside the Fellowship. Any additional grants must meet the following conditions:

- **It is expected that the Fellow's salary will be paid from the FLAIR award, and research costs from other grants will directly support research activities.** In instances where applicants have existing research grants from which they draw a salary, it may be possible to request a partial salary contribution from the FLAIR Fellowship for a minimum of 80% of the applicant's working hours upon a clear and reasonable justification provided in their application.
- The majority of the applicant's time (at least 80%) must be spent on the FLAIR programme and acceptance of the additional grants should not compromise the ability to deliver on the aims of the FLAIR Fellowship.

Should any candidates need to hold the fellowship on a part-time basis because of caring responsibilities this will be considered and discussed on a case-by-case basis at the point of being offered a conditional award, with the expectation that you work at least 60% full time equivalent.

Host Organisation Eligibility

- Eligible host organisations in sub-Saharan Africa include:
  - African Public/State Controlled Institutions of Higher Education and Research
  - African Private Institutions of Higher Education and Research

- For profit organisations are not eligible to host FLAIR Fellows.

- Candidates can apply to hold the fellowship at their current organisation in sub-Saharan Africa or to move to a new employing organisation in sub-Saharan Africa.

- Underrepresented organisations are particularly encouraged to apply, including smaller or younger organisations and those based in Francophone and Lusophone countries.

- Host organisations must:
  - Provide the required laboratory and office space for the Research Fellow to meet the aims of their research programme and ensure they have access to equipment in the department.
  - Limit the teaching responsibilities of the research fellow (including lecturing, tutorials, supervision and examining of students and other student contact time) to a maximum of 6 hours per week. The Research Fellow should have no administrative load.
  - Ensure that the Research Fellow receives the same level of support as other permanent members of the department including access to postgraduate students and other resources and will be invited to departmental meetings along with other faculty staff.
  - Provide the Research Fellow with support within the department from an experienced member of the faculty who can advise them on the development of their career.
  - Ensure that the Research Fellow has timely access to the funding provided by the FLAIR Fellowship as required by the Research Fellow and will not unduly delay access to funding.

○ Demonstrate a good level of financial grants management and have the necessary processes, procedures and policies in place for both good research practice and compliance with UK legislation and guidance on the use of public funds for research.
○ Provide information on how the organisation/department supports the development of early career researchers transitioning to independence including relevant policies on supporting early career researchers (post-PhD).

Eligible Costs

Applicants must consult with the appropriate financial administrators at the host organisation before completing the financial sections of their application. Applicants can request up to £150,000 per year on the following costs:

Directly Incurred Costs – these costs are explicitly identifiable as arising from the research fellowship:

Salary
- FLAIR Fellowships are an early research career fellowship and, as such, the basic salary requested should be at a level commensurate with your skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience. It is expected that requested basic salary in the first year will be comparable to academic staff at an equivalent career stage such as an early career lecturer. The salary may reflect any reasonable enhancements approved by the employing host organisation and should be based on an approved salary scale provided by the organisation. **The total salary (basic salary and on costs combined) requested should not exceed up to £45,000 per year.**
- An annual inflationary increase may be applied if appropriate to the basic salary and on costs, although the annual award total (including both direct and indirect costs) cannot exceed £150,000. Should the university wish to supplement the basic salary provided by the Fellowship it is free to do so using its own resources. The funders reserve the right to provide support at a different level if it is considered appropriate.

Research Expenses
- Costs for consumables, training, travel, and other research expenses should be defined and justified by the applicant.
- Costs for attendance to conferences may be included in travel where attendance will be of direct benefit to the research.
- Costs associated with research capacity building activities can be included and should justified in relation to the capacity building and added value section of the application form.
- Other research expenses may include field trip expenses, access charges of external facilities, animal costs, software licences, general computer and non-specialised equipment for the FLAIR Fellow's use, scientific society membership charges and subscription costs for the Fellow, and research support for Masters Degree students or part-time technical staff involved in the research. Funding for costs related to public communication can also be requested.
- Applicants may request relocation costs if they will be relocating from abroad to a new organisation. Relocation costs may include one-way air fares for the research fellow, their spouse and children, together with either an additional 50% of each-way fare as a contribution for excess baggage, or up to £1200 towards removal expenses.

Equipment
- Applicants may request funds for the purchase of specialised equipment required for the research outlined in the fellowship. This can include the cost of installation, spares or software procurement

and the annual cost of maintenance or relocation charges specifically related to the newly purchased equipment. Funds may be requested for highly specialised computer hardware.

- Costs should be defined and justified. The purchase of any piece of equipment costing more than £10,000 (inc. VAT) would require prior authorization/approval from the Royal Society.

Directly Allocated Costs – the costs of resources that will be used by the research fellow that are shared by other research activities:

- The employing host organisation may claim 10% of the grant (up to £15,000 per year) as an organisational overhead subject to the employing organisation's acceptance of the conditions of the award. This can cover estate costs, other directly allocated costs and indirect costs. Estate costs may include building and premises costs, provision of laboratory and office space, basic services and utilities, clerical staff and equipment maintenance or operational costs that may not have been included under other cost headings. Other directly allocated costs can be requested, calculated on the basis of estimates, with the exception of research and technical staff time, depreciation costs and charge out costs for major facilities. Indirect costs are non-specific university costs e.g. costs of administration, such as personnel, finance, audit, library and some departmental services, charged across all research activities, based on estimates.

Ineligible costs: open access publication fees; costs for family members to travel or for childcare (please see the Royal Society Childcare Travel Policy); and costs for PhD studentships and full-time technicians.

3. References and Participants

To complete and submit the application form, the lead applicant is required to provide supporting statements or references from two individuals (including one Nominated Referee and one Head of Department support). The following individuals must be included:

- One Nominated Referee
  This must be someone familiar with the work of the applicant who can provide a statement of support. The nominated referee must not be a named collaborator to the project proposed in your application, as this would constitute a conflict of interest.

- The applicant's Head of Department

- Optional role: Research Support
  Please note applicants may invite research support to assist with the completion of their application. This is an optional role, however if invited, they will need to submit their contribution prior to the deadline or be removed from the applicant's participants list in order to submit the application.

Once an applicant submits an application on Flexi-Grant®, it is then directed to the designated approver for the employing host organisation at which the applicant has applied to host an award. For further details of the Approver role, please refer to our Guidance for Approvers.

It is the applicant's responsibility to liaise with the Host Organisation's Approver, the Heads of Department, and the nominated referees to ensure that the required tasks are completed by the deadline. Please contact the Royal Society before the deadline if there is any issue. Alternatively, the Host Organisation's Approver, the Heads of Department, and the nominated referees can contact us directly. The Royal Society will not be held responsible for emails that are not received due to

address errors or spam filters and no provision is made for non-receipt of emails sent by the Royal Society.

It is recommended that referring and supporting participants fulfil their requirements **at least 5 working days** before the submission deadline (Wednesday, 27 May 2020) to ensure there is sufficient time for organisational approval. The Host Organisation approver must approve the completed application by the submission deadline.

These individuals can be invited through the 'participants' tab displayed on the application form summary page, where you will find each of the required participants as described above.

Please select 'invite' and enter the e-mail address of the person you wish to invite to provide the relevant statements and send the invitation.

The recipient will need to accept your invitation before they can participate in the application.

You can monitor the progress of your participants' activity through this section of the application form, and issue reminders as required. Once the recipient has accepted your invitation, their status will be displayed as 'active'. Upon completion of their section of the application form, their status will be displayed as 'complete'.

You will not be able to submit your application form until the status of all participants' shows 'complete'.

Once participants have completed all their sections of the application form, please remind them to select 'Save & Submit' on the application form page or select 'Submit your contribution' on the summary page.

Re-opening the Application form to Participants
On the occasion that an invited participant accidentally submits their section of the application form prematurely, the Lead Applicant has the ability to re-open the application form for the participant. To do this, the Lead Applicant should return to the Participant tab on the application form summary page. You will find a 're-open' button alongside the name of any participant who has completed their section of the form. Once you click this button, the form is reactivated and available for participants to amend.

Research Support Role
The Research Support role displayed under the participants tab is an optional role, which allows you to invite an individual from the relevant Host Organisation research support team to review and amend the application prior to submission. The primary purpose is to ensure that the requested finances have been recorded correctly for this specific grant programme. As this is an optional role, it will not affect your ability to submit your application for approval.

Additional system guidance can be found in Section 8.

4. Timetable

Opening date	Tuesday, 14 April 2020
Closing Date	Wednesday, 27 May 2020, 3:00 PM (UK Time)
Interviews for shortlisted applicants	Week commencing Monday, 23 November 2020
Expected results	December 2020

5. Assessment Criteria and Review Process

Assessment Criteria

The primary considerations are listed below. Successful applications should be strong in all respects:

- **The scientific merit of the individual**: past achievements, research career to date, publication record, likely contribution to research field, degree of independence and / or potential, and how the fellowship will further the individual's independent career.
- **The proposed research project**: importance and scientific merit of the proposed research and clarity, quality and originality of the proposed project, feasibility and definition of research plan, likely contribution to the research field.
- **The GCRF research agenda**: how the proposed research will address the global challenge(s) directly relevant to Africa and other developing countries.
- **The case for capacity building**: how the fellowship will strengthen the individual's capacity and contribute to building capacity in the host organisation and country; and what value it will add to strengthening the capacity of the field of research in Africa.
- **The employing (host) organisation**: Suitability of the host department and/or organisation for the proposed research, i.e. access to appropriate expertise/equipment/facilities/resources and space to be able to conduct the research project during the award period. Suitability of the host organisation for career development (e.g. commitment to providing appropriate level of support to enable the applicant to lead independent research).

Review Process

- All applications to the FLAIR Fellowship will be assessed by the FLAIR Appointments Panels; which are split by subject group into one Biological Sciences Panel and one Physical Sciences Panel. The panel membership includes Fellows of the African Academy of Sciences and Fellows of the Royal Society.

- Your application will automatically be allocated to a panel based on the subject group you select. All proposals submitted are reviewed and assessed initially by two members of the selection panel who have the most appropriate scientific expertise. Following initial assessment, a shortlist is drawn up, with shortlisted proposals subject to high quality independent peer review. Following completion of independent peer review, a final shortlist for interview is drawn up. Successful applicants at this stage will be invited for interview, where the selection panel considers each candidate at a meeting to be held in November 2020. It is expected that applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email by the end of December 2020.

There will be a routine process of due diligence undertaken with all successful applicants and host organisations. Due diligence will begin after successful applicants have been notified in December 2020 and must be completed before the award start date in April 2021.

Please be assured that the Royal Society specifically requests anyone involved in reviewing applications to consider them in confidence. More information on the Review Process can be found in Appendix 1.

6. Contact information

Enquires about this scheme can be made using the contact details below. Before contacting us, please check whether your question is answered by these scheme notes. If not, please email flair@royalsociety.org or call any of the following numbers: +44 (0)20 7451 2666.

Please quote your application reference number in all correspondence to the Royal Society.

7. Use of Data

Please note that information regarding your application for the Future Leaders – African Independent Research (FLAIR) Fellowships will be shared between the Royal Society and The African Academy of Sciences for programme management, data monitoring and scheme evaluation purposes. You may also be contacted by the UK Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and selected third parties such as independent evaluators, consultancy groups, and career development organisations (some of whom may be based outside of the EEA) as part of their GCRF analysis and evaluation activities. If successful, the Royal Society and The African Academy of Sciences will contact you regarding the administration of your award throughout the course of your funding and after its completion. You will also be contacted by the Royal Society, BEIS, The African Academy of Sciences or an agent acting on their behalf, for reporting and evaluation purposes throughout the course of your funding and after its completion.

8. System Guidance Notes

Please read these guidance notes carefully as your complete the application form.

Using Flexi-Grant ®

Applications can only be submitted online using the Royal Society's Grants management system (Flexi-Grant®) via https://grants.royalsociety.org. Further information about the Grants management system can be found via https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/flexi-grant/. If you have not previously used Flexi-Grant®, please follow the registration process from the Flexi-Grant®, homepage. ***Paper-based applications will not be accepted.***

Before completing the online form, all applicants should check that they comply with the eligibility requirements and ensure all necessary information is presented in the application. These requirements are strictly adhered to and applications without all the necessary information, or evidence to show the assessment criteria are met, will be rejected.

All applications must be approved by the Host Organisation and the applicant's departmental support must be completed before you can submit via Flexi-Grant®. Late applications will not be accepted.

Further guidance and support can be found through the applicant and approver knowledge base.

ORCID Identifier

All applicants applying to the Future Leaders – African Independent Research (FLAIR) Fellowships should submit an ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) identifier if they have one before their application is submitted. ORCID maintains a registry of unique researcher identifiers and a transparent method of linking research funding, research publications, research data and any other research outputs to these unique identifiers. This is a mandatory requirement at the application submission stage only. You can register for an ORCID identifier via https://orcid.org/register.

Completing the application form

The application can be completed by using the navigation tabs on the application summary page, with each page categorised as follows:

> **Summary**
> **Eligibility Criteria**
> **Contact Details**
> **Applicant Career Summary**
> **Research Proposal**
> **ODA Compliance**
> **Use of Animals in Research**
> **Financial Details**
> **Applicant Declaration**
> **Nominated Referee**
> **Head of Department Support**

A full list of question fields to be completed as part of the application can be found in the Question Guidance in Section 9.

9. Application Guidance Notes

We recommend that you ask a mentor or academic advisor to review your application before you submit it. They may be able to advise on ways to make your application stronger.

Application Approvals

Once an applicant submits an application on Flexi-Grant®, it is then directed to the designated approver for the employing host organisation at which the applicant has applied to host an award.

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that approval of the application by the Host Organisation is completed before the closing date.

The person responsible for approving your application will be the delegated authority at the Host Organisation where you are applying to hold your Fellowship. This may be someone within the research office, Faculty administration, Vice-Chancellor, or other administrative or management role. For further details of the Approver role, please refer to our Guidance for Approvers.

The approver must be someone with the authority to confirm that the potential Future Leaders – African Independent Research (FLAIR) Fellowships 2021 can be hosted within their organisation, confirm that there is

the capacity to deliver the proposed research and assure the proposed budget is appropriate and eligible for the FLAIR Fellowships 2021.

You will only be able to submit your application for approval by the Sub-Saharan Africa Host Organisational Approver once all sections of the application form have been marked as complete and all participants have marked their work as complete <u>AND have submitted</u> their section. The Lead applicant must check the status of the Nominated Referee and Head of Department under the 'Participants' tab on the summary page of the application form. **Applications submitted after the deadline will <u>not</u> be accepted**

Head of Department Role

The Head of Department is required to provide a statement confirming support of the project, as part of the application form, this can be uploaded as a PDF. In the support statement the Head of Department should agree to:

- Provide the required laboratory and office space for the Research Fellow to meet the aims of their research programme and ensure they have access to equipment in the department.
- Limit the teaching responsibilities of the research fellow (including lecturing, tutorials, supervision and examining of students and other student contact time) to a maximum of 6 hours per week. The Research Fellow should have no administrative load.
- Ensure that the Research Fellow receives the same level of support as other permanent members of the department including access to postgraduate students and other resources and will be invited to departmental meetings along with other faculty staff.
- Provide the Research Fellow with support within the department from an experienced member of the faculty who can advise them on the development of their career.
- Ensure that the Research Fellow has timely access to the funding provided by the FLAIR Fellowship as required by the Research Fellow and will not unduly delay access to funding.

Research Support Role

The Research Support role displayed under the 'participants' tab is an optional role, which allows you to invite an individual from the relevant Employing Organisation research support team to review and amend the application prior to submission. The primary purpose is to ensure that the requested finances have been recorded correctly for this specific grant programme. As this is an optional role, it will not affect your ability to submit your application for approval.

Vice Chancellor, pro-Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellor or Director of Research Role

The Vice Chancellor, pro-Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellor or Director of Research is required to provide a letter outlining the research environment at the employing host organisation as part of the application form. This letter should provide information on how the organisation/department supports the development of early career researchers transitioning to independence including relevant policies on supporting early career researchers (post-PhD). This letter should also demonstrate that the organisation has a good level of financial grants management and has the necessary processes, procedures and policies in place for both good research practice and compliance with UK legislation and guidance on the use of public funds for research. The statement should be provided on headed paper and signed. **You should upload a PDF of the letter to the research proposal section of the application form on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, pro-Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellor or Director of Research.**

<u>Question Guidance</u>

Please read the following guidance notes carefully as you complete the form. In the table below, each box represents a page of the application form; the left-hand column contains the questions within each of these pages as set out in the form; the right-hand column contains useful guidance on its completion.

Note that questions with * are mandatory fields.

Summary	
Summary page	The summary page of the application form provides instructions for submission of your application for approval from the Host Organisation. In addition, you are provided with an overview for each section of your application form, including the approximate length of time it will take to complete each section. The summary page also allows applicants to manage and invite participants (e.g. Head of Department, Nominated Referee, and Research Support (optional)) who are required to contribute to the application form. Instructions for inviting participants can be found under the 'participants' tab on the application summary page. **Note: you will only be able to submit your application for approval by the Host Organisation once all sections of the form have been completed.**

Eligibility Criteria	
Eligibility Criteria *	Please provide confirmation that you meet the eligibility criteria. Details of the eligibility criteria can be found in Section 4 of these Scheme Notes.

Contact Details	
Title, Names, address, organisation and country *	Review and complete your *personal details* accurately. Errors in this section can cause difficulties in processing your application. Errors will not be corrected after submission. Under this section, you should edit the *contact type* of the participants who will partake in your application form. The system default contact type is set as 'collaborator'. To amend the contact type of your Head of Department, click 'edit', and under the contact type field, select the 'Head of Department'. **Organisation**: this table will automatically display details of the intended Host Organisation (marked by a tick) which you selected previously and your current organisation, if different from the organisation where the award will be held and administered.
Email address *	This field defaults to the account in which the application has commenced and is where all correspondence pertaining to the application throughout the application process will be sent. The applicant must therefore commence the application using the login email address used to register a user account on Flexi-Grant®.

Applicant Career Summary	

Title of Current Position *	Please state the title of your current position.
Current Employer *	Please enter the official organisation name of your current employer (e.g. University of Bath).
Contract Type *	Select contract type from drop-down menu. The options are: Fixed- term, Permanent, Rolling basis, Other
Current Department *	Please enter details of your current department (e.g. Department of Astrophysics).
Country/Territory *	Please select the country/territory where your current employer (or last employer if currently unemployed or on leave) is based.
Current Position Start Date *	Please enter the date when your current position started.
Current Position End Date *	Please enter the date when your current position is expected to finish. If you are on a permanent contract, please enter 31 December 2050.
Field of Specialisation *	Enter details of your field(s) of specialisation. (Maximum 20 words)
Summary of Your Current Research *	Provide an outline summary of your current research. Please also include a brief comment on the strength of your organisation. (Maximum 200 words)
PhD Award Date *	Please enter the date that you were awarded your PhD. If you have not received your PhD, please enter your expected completion date.
PhD Institution *	State the name of the institution where you were awarded your PhD.
PhD Country/Territory*	State the country/territory in which you were awarded your PhD
Personal Statement *	Please provide a personal statement about your research career to date including prizes and previous achievements, and your career and research aspirations in the long term. Your statement should comment on where you consider you currently are in your career, level of research experience and how you would like your career to develop in the future. You should include as part of your statement any training needs and/or networks/collaborations you have identified. You should address why this fellowship will be beneficial to you at this stage, how it will develop your research career and how it will help you to reach independence. *(Maximum 500 words)*
Applicant Career History *	Please provide a full list of your appointments since your PhD in reverse chronological order stating if part-time (and percentage part-time) when necessary. The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible. If you have any non-academic appointments which may coincide with a FLAIR fellowship, should you receive this fellowship, please list them here. **Please provide full details of any periods of part-time working, career breaks, extended sick leave or maternity/paternity/adoptive leave as your eligibility may depend on the accuracy of this information.** **Note**: You can retrieve your career history information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.

Applicant Qualifications *	Please list all your qualifications in reverse chronological order. The depth of information you provide is up to you, but this will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible. **Note**: You can retrieve your qualification information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.
List your Key and/or Relevant Publications *	Please provide details of authors, titles and references of no more than **ten** of your best publications in refereed journals, in reverse chronological order. You should choose not only the best but also those most relevant to the application to support your case. Please note that publications will be reviewed on the basis of scientific content, rather than publication metrics or the identity of the journal. If appropriate, give the publisher or URL, including any password, where each publication may be obtained. Your list should have two sections: (i) refereed papers in primary journals, (ii) contributions to symposia and compiled volumes (refereed only). For publications arising from large collaborative programmes clearly specify the exact role and contribution made towards large collaborative research programmes that have resulted in multi-authored publications. If your field of research differs in any way from normal conventions, e.g. lead author, first author, and publications in journals being the main gauge of success, please provide a brief explanation at the top of your publication list. **Most significant publications**: Please also identify with asterisks (*) up to **three** publications which you consider to be most significant. **Note**: You can retrieve your publications from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.
Applicant Research Funding *	Please list all your current and previous research funding in reverse chronological order. Please give particulars (type of award, value and title of research) and confirm if these would continue if you receive this fellowship. If you have other sources of research support which would continue if you receive this fellowship, please specify the percentage of your time which you would commit to each. Kindly note this information will represent you under assessment and so it is worth including as much good evidence for your academic merit as possible. **Note**: You can retrieve your information from your profile to complete this section of the application form using your ORCID identifier.

Research Proposal	
Project Title *	Give the full title of your proposed project. (Maximum 20 words)

Start Date *	**This must be 1 April 2021.** Use dd/mm/yyyy format.
End Date *	**This must be 31 March 2023.** The duration of the award is two years in the first instance. You should not apply for a shorter or longer duration. Use dd/mm/yyyy format.
Subject Group/Area *	Select the subject group/area(s) that most closely defines the research area of the research proposal from the drop-down menu and tick box options. This will enable us to allocate the application to the most appropriate assessment panel.
Global Challenge Area(s) *	Select the primary Global Challenge Area that your research proposal will address. A secondary Global Challenge Area can be selected if your proposal will address more than one of these themes.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) *	Select the primary Sustainable Development Goal that your research proposal will address. A secondary Sustainable Development Goal can be selected if your proposal will address more than one of these areas.
Research Aims *	State your scientific aims. (Maximum 250 words)
Lay Summary *	Provide a lay summary of your proposed project. This should be understandable by a layperson. Explain why you have chosen to work in this subject area and what it is about your proposed research that you find particularly exciting, interesting or important. Please also briefly explain the potential impact or wider benefits to society of your research, including a statement on how your research will benefit Africa. Please explain the potential impact of your research on addressing the global challenges facing developing countries avoiding specialist terminology (Maximum 250 words).
Research Proposal *	You can either detail your research proposal within this application form (Maximum 1500 words), or alternatively upload it as a PDF file. PDF files must be no longer than 3 sides of A4, portrait orientation, be titled and the text size cannot be smaller than Arial size 10. Your research proposal should provide a general description of the proposed research to be carried out. This should include, but is not limited to, the following: • clear specification of the context, realistic research objectives and expected outputs of the proposed study; • description of the methodology to be used, including data analysis; • an indication of milestones/timescales; • any relevant collaborations or mentorship that will facilitate or support the research project
Proportion of Time Spent	Please state what percentage of your time you will dedicate to this research during the two-year fellowship?
Field Research *	Will you be conducting field research?
Field Research **(Upload only)**	Please upload documents related to the following (if applicable): 1. Permission Any mandatory documents that show local support has been assured by way of permission from the government concerned to travel to and work in the country.

	2. Collection of specimens
	Any mandatory documents that show: - Specific permission has been obtained from the host country to collect and to export specimens and material. - The director of the museum or other decision makers where these specimens will be deposited has indicated his/her desire or willingness to have such specimens and material
Host Organisation*	Please select the organisation where the award will be held from the drop down list.
Host Department*	Please provide the name of the proposed department at your host organisation where you will hold the fellowship. Please enter the official name (e.g. School of Chemistry rather than Chemistry)
Justification for Choice of Host Organisation*	Please provide a short statement justifying your choice of host organisation (i.e. why is it best suited for your research and career?).
Vice Chancellor Letter of Support*	You must upload a supporting letter (PDF) from the Vice Chancellor of your Host Organisation on headed paper, that includes their name and title, and contact details. Supporting letters will be accepted from the Vice Chancellor, pro-Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellor or Director of Research.

Data Management and Data Sharing

The Royal Society supports science as an open enterprise and is committed to ensuring that data outputs from research supported by the Society are made publicly available in a managed and responsible manner, with as few restrictions as possible. Data outputs should be deposited in an appropriate, recognised, publicly available repository, so that others can verify and build upon the data, which is of public interest. To fully realise the benefits of publicly available data they should be made intelligently open by fulfilling the requirements of being discoverable, accessible, intelligible, assessable and reusable.

The Royal Society does not dictate a set format for data management and sharing plans. Where they are required, applicants should structure their plan in a manner most appropriate to the proposed research. The information submitted in plans should focus specifically on how the data outputs will be managed and shared, detailing the repositories where data will be deposited. In considering your approach for data management and sharing, applicants should consider the following:

- What data outputs will be generated by the research that are of value to the public?

- Where and when will you make the data available?

- How will others be able to access the data?

- If the data is of high public interest, how will it be made accessible not only for those in the same or linked field, but also to a wider public audience?

- Specify whether any limits will be placed on the data to be shared, for example, for the purposes of safeguarding commercial interests, personal information, safety or security of the data.

- How will datasets be preserved to ensure they are of long-term benefit?

Outline of data management and data sharing plan *	If the proposed research will generate data that is of significant value to the research community, then please provide details of your data management and sharing plan. (Maximum 200 words)

Use of Animals in Research*
The Royal Society is committed to supporting the development of alternative methods to reduce and/or replace the use of animals in research. Applicants proposing to use animals in their research must ensure that the use of animals falls within the regulations stipulated in the Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 and subsequent amendments. Additionally, applicants should continually be aware of developments in best practice, and adopt the principles of the 3Rs when designing and conducting experiments on animals. As a funder of research, the Society takes its responsibilities towards the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures Act) 1986 seriously and requires applicants to consider the questions below when preparing grant applications that include the use of animals.

Does your proposal involve the use of animals or animal tissue? *	Select 'Yes' or 'No'. If you have selected 'Yes' it is mandatory to complete all of the relevant questions on the Use of Animals in Research page.
Experimental Design Assistant The Royal Society recommends that applicants use the Experimental Design Assistant (EDA), which is a free resource from the NC3Rs to support researchers in the planning of animal experiments. This will help to facilitate robust study design and reliable and reproducible findings. The EDA helps applicants build a machine-readable diagram representing their experimental plan, following capture of their methodology, and allows the applicant to then generate a PDF report which provides a transparent description of the experimental design in a standardised format, which can be uploaded to the application form. **Please note:** Applicants who choose to use the EDA, and subsequently uploads the EDA report to the application form, are advised to enter **see report** or **n/a** into any question fields within this section of the application form that have already been captured in the EDA report, to avoid any duplication.	

Use of Human Participants, Patients and Tissue
Any application for a research proposal involving human participants, patients or tissue and therefore requiring local ethical committee approval will be considered only when accompanied by the necessary permission certificate or proof that ethical permission will be sought, which must be provided in English.

Does your proposal involve the use of human participants, patients or tissue? *	Select 'Yes' or 'No'. If you have selected 'Yes' it is mandatory to provide either a certificate or letter, as proof that ethical permission has been, or will be, obtained. Please upload the file as a PDF in portrait orientation.

ODA Compliance	
ODA Compliance Statement *	As this funding call is being supported as part of the GCRF all applications must include a statement demonstrating how they are ODA compliant and will promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the primary objective. Further information on ODA compliance under the GCRF is available here.

Which country/countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal? *	Tick the relevant country/countries.
How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development problems of these countries? *	Please provide a statement. (Maximum 200 words) Applications should describe the nature and scale of the problem or challenge they are seeking to address through this research. For example, how many people would be affected by progress in this area?
How do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list? *	Please provide a statement. (Maximum 300 words) Applicants should explain how any stakeholder collaboration and knowledge exchange activities strengthen the pathways to impact and likelihood or scale of beneficial outcomes. This should include any specific commitments from institutions or enterprises from developing countries to adopt or apply outcomes of the research, and where appropriate it is helpful to outline how this enhances local innovation and research capacity at an individual, institutional or whole system level.
How will this fellowship build your capacity as an individual and contribute to building research capacity in your host organisation and country; and what value will it add to strengthening the capacity of your field of research in Africa? *	Please provide a statement. (Maximum 300 words) Research capacity building could include, for example: increasing the research skills base through training, supporting students, or providing summer schools; supporting groups at, or collaborating with, other less advantaged universities or research institutes; giving other research groups access to key equipment or facilities; establishing new collaborations across Africa; supporting community groups to engage with your research field; or assisting students and early career researchers with grant applicants and management. These are only examples provided as an indicator of the type of information to include in this section and it is not an exclusive list.

Financial Details	
Justification	Please fully justify all claims by referring to each budget heading – **please include a summary breakdown of costs**. Note any relevant scheme restrictions. Funding will not be awarded without justification. Plain text only.
General information	**Maximum Grant** – applicants can request up to £150,000 per year for two years (maximum total award value of £300,000) The FLAIR Fellowship will fund 100% of the salary, directly allocated costs and research expenses (subject to restriction outlined below). The employing host organisation may claim 10% of the grant as an organisational overhead subject to the employing host organisation's acceptance of the conditions of award. Applicants must consult with the appropriate organisational financial administrators before completing these details.

	Please provide details of the funding required for each year of the research fellowship under the relevant headings. Note that year 1 = first year of fellowship from 1 April 2021. Please ensure that no indexation is added to these costs. Categories are explained in detail below.
Directly incurred costs	These are costs that can be explicitly identifiable as arising from the research fellowship. The university or research centre must have an auditable record for these costs.
Basic salary	State your required basic salary for each year of the research fellowship. The salary may reflect any reasonable enhancements approved by the employing host organisation and should be based on an approved salary scale provided by the organisation. The aim of the Fellowship is to support researchers at an early stage of their research career. It is therefore expected that starting salaries requested by applicants should be at a level commensurate with your skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience. It is expected that the requested basic salary in the first year will be comparable to academic staff at an equivalent career stage such as an early career lecturer. If appropriate, please include an annual inflationary increase to the basic salary and on costs only, although please note that the overall annual total requested for the award (including salary, direct and indirect costs) must not exceed £150,000. The funding partners reserve the right to provide support at a different level if it is considered appropriate.
On costs	Please indicate the funding required for employer's on costs, for example, employer's insurance contributions, tax deductions, or employer's pension contributions. Note: You may request up to £15,000 in on costs, however your combined basic salary and on costs requested may not exceed £45,000.
Justification for Salary *	Please provide justification for the total amount requested for basic salary and on costs. Include a justification for any annual inflationary increase added to the basic salary and on costs. If 100% of your salary is not requested in this fellowship, please explain why this is the case.
Research expenses	Please provide an indicative total required for each research expense heading below for the 2-year duration of the Award.
Justification for Consumables *	Funding for essential consumables may be requested. Fully justify your request for consumables.
Justification for Other Expenses *	Other expenses may include field trip expenses (including fieldwork fees/subjects/informants), training, access charges of external facilities, plant licence fees, software licenses, general computer and non-specialised equipment for the FLAIR Fellow's use, scientific society membership charges and subscription costs for the Fellow, etc. Costs for research support including Masters student(s) and post-doctoral research assistant(s) can be requested. Please specify how many Masters student(s) and post-doctoral research assistant(s) you are requesting and the cost for each salary or stipend. Please note that full-time technicians or PhD studentships should not be requested.

| | Funds can be allocated to buying out time for technical staff involvement in the research, however please note that full-time technicians should not be requested.

Please note that costs associated with open access publications cannot be requested. FLAIR Research Fellows submitting manuscripts to the Royal Society journals will currently not need to pay article processing charges.

Funding for costs related to public communication can also be requested. The funding partners are keen to encourage activity in this area.

Any request for other expenses must be fully justified. |
|---|---|
| Justification for Animals | Please fully justify your request for the purchase of animals and/or animal maintenance.

Animal costs may include purchase of animals, animal licence fees, and any costs associated with animal maintenance including housing and feed, veterinary and medicinal fees, or breeding and husbandry fees.

A full breakdown of animal costs must be provided. |
| Justification for Travel (inc subsistence) * | Provide justification for the amount requested for travel to be undertaken and the estimated cost of individual travel expenses.

Travel costs should be based on the most suitable and economical form of travel. Costs for attendance at conferences may be included, where attendance will be of direct benefit to the research.

Applicants may request relocation costs if they will be relocating from abroad to a new organisation. Relocation costs may include one-way air fares for the research fellow, their spouse and children, together with either an additional 50% of each-way fare as a contribution for excess baggage, or up to £1200 towards removal expenses. |
| **Equipment** | Funding may be requested for the purchase of specialised equipment (including the cost of installation, spares or software procurement and the annual cost of maintenance or relocation charges specifically related to the newly purchased equipment). Funding may be requested for highly specialised computer hardware. |
| Justification for Equipment * | Please fully justify your request for equipment.
The purchase of any equipment costing more than £10,000 will require additional justification and prior authorisation/approval of the Royal Society. |
| **Indirect / Directly Allocated costs (Organisational Overheads)** | The costs of resources that will be used by you that are shared by other research activities, including estate costs, other directly allocated costs and indirect costs.

Estate costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, clerical staff and equipment maintenance or operational costs that may not have been included under other cost headings.

Other directly allocated costs can be requested, calculated on the basis of estimates, with the exception of research and technical staff time, depreciation costs and charge out costs for major facilities. |

	Indirect costs are non-specific university costs e,g, costs of administration and estates, such as personnel, finance, organisational audit, laboratory and office space, facilities, library and some departmental services charged across all research activities, based on estimates. This cannot include the purchasing and maintenance of animal costs which should be details in the Justification of Animals section above.
Justification for Indirect Costs (Directly Allocated Costs / Overheads) *	Please detail all costs associated with resources that will be used by you that are shared by other research activities, including estate, other directly allocated and indirect costs. A maximum of 10% of the annual award total (up to £15,000 per year) can be spent on directly allocated costs. Please ensure that no indexation is added to these costs.

Applicant Declaration*
Please declare that: You have read the Terms and Conditions of Award under which Royal Society grants are awarded and, if a grant offer is made, you agree to abide by them. **The Terms and Conditions for Royal Society applications can be found at** https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/flair/ **.** • You have access to the necessary facilities to enable you to deliver the research proposed and will continue to have access to the facilities for the duration of the project. • You have agreed with your Head(s) of Department that you will be afforded sufficient time and resources to deliver the research project as described in this application.

Nominated Referee Support *
You should invite one referee who can provide a confidential reference for your application, by following the instructions under the 'Participants' tab on the application form summary page. Please check with them that they are happy to provide the reference, and inform them that they will be contacted by email and asked to provide the reference via the Flexi-Grant® system by Wednesday, 27 May 2020. The referee should be someone who has worked closely with you and is familiar with your research. Your named Head of Department or Vice Chancellor, pro-Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellor or Director of Research cannot be listed as a referee. To add the referee, click 'Add Participant' and enter their email address. Check if they are already registered on Flexi-Grant® by clicking 'Check Email', and if not, enter their details. You must select 'Contact Now' to inform them you have added them as a referee before you can continue. You must click 'Save' after making your selection to ensure that you have added your referee correctly.

Organisational and Departmental Support *
Confirmation of support of the project is required by the Head of Department. In the support statement the Head of Department should agree to:

- Provide the required laboratory and office space for the Research Fellow to meet the aims of their research programme and ensure they have access to equipment in the department.
- Limit the teaching responsibilities of the research fellow (including lecturing, tutorials, supervision and examining of students and other student contact time) to a maximum of 6 hours per week. The Research Fellow should have no administrative load.
- Ensure that the Research Fellow receives the same level of support as other permanent members of the department including access to postgraduate students and other resources and will be invited to departmental meetings along with other faculty staff.
- Provide the Research Fellow with support within the department from an experienced member of the faculty who can advise them on the development of their career.
- Ensure that the Research Fellow has timely access to the funding provided by the FLAIR Fellowship as required by the Research Fellow and will not unduly delay access to funding.

Please provide details of the Head of Department at your employing organisation, they will be contacted automatically by email. Please check that they are able to supply their statement through the Flexi-Grant® system by **27 May 2020**.

Appendix 1: Application and Review Process

Call for applications
Timeline: April 14 – May 27, 2020

Read: Global Challenges Research Fund research agenda

Step 1: Eligibility checks after which applications are separated into two 'Panels' - A (Physical sciences) and B (Biological sciences)

Step 2: Initial panel assessment from which the top 120 applicants are selected. List is confirmed by Panels and Chairs of A and B Panels.

Step 3: Independent reviews (as recommended by Panels) of the top 120 shortlisted applications.

Step 4: Panel assessment done following independent reviews. The top 60 candidates are nominated.

Step 5: 60 shortlisted candidates list finalized and confirmed by Panels and Chairs of both criteria. These candidates are officially invited for face to face interviews
Unsuccessful candidates will be notified via email at this point.
Timeline: October 2020

Step 6: Interviews are conducted according to criteria A and B. 15 interviewers sit in each panel and each interview has two lead interviewers. 20 interviews are done per day for 3 days.
Timeline: November 24 – 26 2020

Step 7: The Panel select 30 for award

A complete application (in English) consists of:

1. A fully filled application form submitted online via Flexi-Grant®
2. One (1) nominated reference
3. Two (2) host institution letters of support

Physical sciences

- Applied Chemistry
- Applied Physics
- Astronomy & Physics
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Earth Sciences
- Engineering
- Environmental Physical Sciences
- Materials Science
- Mathematical Physics
- Pure and Applied Mathematics
- Technology

Biological sciences

- Biochemistry
- Developmental Biology
- Earth Sciences
- Ecological Sciences
- Epidemiology
- Evolutionary Science
- Genetics (excluding population genetics)
- Health and Human Sciences
- Immunology
- Infectious Diseases
- Microbiology (except medical microbiology)
- Molecular Cell Biology
- Neurosciences
- Organismal Biology
- Physiology
- Plant Genetics
- Structural Biology
- Technology
- Other General Interests

* The African Academy of Sciences and The Royal Society both nominate members for the Panel. Consideration is given to the number and breadth of applications received in the current round. The Panel is made up of Fellows of the AAS and the RS as well as non-Fellows.

Step 8: The successful candidates receive communication on their conditional award pending routine due diligence.
Timeline: December 2020

The unsuccessful shortlisted candidates receive communication in December 2020. Summarized feedback on shortlisted candidates will be provided by March 2021

Step 9: Award letters are sent to all candidates that receive clean due diligence reports.

Step 10: Beginning of fellowship marked by an Induction Meeting bringing together all newly-awarded FLAIR Fellows and relevant stakeholders.
Timeline: April 2021

Appendix 2: List of Eligible Host Countries

Angola
Benin
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cameroon
Cape Verde
Central African Republic
Chad
Comoros
Republic of the Congo
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Cote d'Ivoire
Djibouti
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Eswatini
Ethiopia
Gabon
The Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Kenya
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mozambique
Namibia
Niger
Nigeria
Rwanda
Sao Tome and Principe
Senegal
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Somalia
South Africa
South Sudan
Sudan
Tanzania
Togo
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

FLAIR 2021 Scheme Notes