

South West Doctoral Training Partnership

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships

Guidance for Expression of Interest (EOI) at UWE Bristol

This document is 7 pages long. The Guidance is 3 pages long, the rest of the document includes a screenshot of the EOI application template. All hyperlinks on this document will open in a new window when clicked (or Ctrl+Click) on them.

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) has launched its [Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme](#) for 2025. These Fellowships aim to provide a development opportunity for those at the immediate postdoctoral stage of their career, allowing successful applicants to consolidate their PhD through developing publications and expanding their networks, research and professional skills.

ESRC Fellowships are only available to universities that are part of a Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). The University of the West of England (**UWE Bristol**) is a member of the South West DTP ([SWDTP](#)), which allows us to submit **two applications** for consideration. The SWDTP will assess around 21 applications from its partners and select four candidates for approval by the ESRC.

More information is available from [SWDTP ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships process](#).

This is a great opportunity to undertake an ESRC-funded postdoc fellowship at UWE Bristol, and we will offer full support in the application development process to the two successful candidates at the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage.

Eligibility

The Postdoctoral Fellowship is open to all who:

- have completed their PhD at a UK university or research organisation
- have been awarded a PhD or have passed their viva voce with minor amendments by **25 March 2025** and have been awarded their PhD by the fellowship start date of **01 October 2025**
- have no more than 12 months (full-time equivalent) of active postdoctoral experience since passing their viva voce (allowing for career breaks). This also applies if you have been employed under a fixed-term contract. The experience is calculated from the date you passed your viva to the closing date of the ESRC SWDTP call on **25 March 2025**.
- conduct research that is clearly over 50% based in the social sciences

Activity

ESRC Fellowships start on **01 October 2025** and last for one year if full-time, or two years if part-time. Funding will cover the salary, indirect and estate costs, and up to £10,000 for all other costs.

ESRC Fellowships undertaken at UWE Bristol must be in 1 of the [6 Pathways hosted at UWE Bristol](#):

- Climate Change, Sustainability and Society
- Health, Wellbeing and Society
- Sociotechnical Futures & Digital Methods
- Education
- Management and Business
- Social Policy

Application timeline

20 November 2024	ESRC online information event for prospective applicants (recording available from 25 November 2024)
24 January 2025	UWE Bristol EOI deadline (midday)
10 February 2025	Applicants informed of outcome; 2 selected to Full Stage
18 March 2025	UWE Bristol deadline for Full Stage applications
25 March 2025	SWDTP deadline to receive ESRC Full Stage applications
w/c 15 May 2025	Anticipated outcomes from SWDTP

SWDTP assessors will review all ESRC Full Stage applications sent in by the partners and select four proposals to be funded. These four applications are then sent to ESRC for further processing. The ESRC does not conduct a full review of the applications but will perform checks including verification of eligibility and page length requirements. Once the Full Stage application passes these checks, the ESRC will award the funding to the host institution.

Next steps for EOI applicants

1. Consider if your project compliments the 6 Pathways hosted at UWE Bristol.
2. Identify a mentor. Applicants need to have a mentor as part of the ESRC Fellowship to support them in developing the Full Stage application.

If you do not already have a mentor, please consider who works in the Pathway at [UWE Bristol](#) and may be appropriate to support you. If you need help finding an appropriate mentor, please contact research@uwe.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity so you can discuss your potential project with them.

The SWDTP also provides a [supervisor database](#), if needed.

3. Time is tight, and therefore we suggest that you only apply if you can work on the Full Stage application between mid-February and 18 March 2025.
4. Download the **SWDTP - UWE Bristol EOI Template** to draft your answers. This is available from UWE Bristol's website: <https://blogs.uwe.ac.uk/research-business-innovation/esrc-postdoc-fellowships-eoi-guidance-for-applications-to-uwe-bristol-2025/>

Please note the online EOI application (MSForms) cannot save work in progress.

5. Complete the online application, available from this link:

[ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship EOI – UWE Bristol 2025](#)

Email the required documentation before the deadline (24/01/2024, midday).

EOI required documentation

All applicants are required to submit the following documentation:

- Your CV: 2-page, including a list of your publications, minimum font size 11
- A workplan: a simple GANTT chart or excel spreadsheet outlining the timescale for key activities and milestones
- Reference list for any citations

Email your documents to: Research@uwe.ac.uk.

In the email subject use “ESRC SWDTP Fellowship – Your First Name and Surname”.

Documents and links

Appreciating this is a very tight deadline, we recommend you familiarise yourself with the ESRC Full Stage application form in advance. The following documents are available on the [ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships and How to Apply | SWDTP](#) webpage:

- ESRC PDF Application Form
- ESRC PDF Call Specification
- ESRC PDF FAQs

Administration and advice

The ESRC Fellowship – SWDTP applications at UWE Bristol is administered by Research, Business and Innovation (RBI). If you have any additional questions or need specific reasonable adjustments, or any other support to assist with your application (such as submitting in a different format), please reach out to us. Let us know what adjustments would help you in the application process. Email: research@uwe.ac.uk

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships - SWDTP

UWE Bristol Expression of Interest (EOI) Template

Section 1 – Applicant

1. Full name (free text)
2. Email address (free text)
3. Institution where you completed or are currently completing your PhD (free text)
4. Visa requirements Any visa requirements are the responsibility of the applicant. Please confirm that you understand that it is your responsibility to obtain and pay for an employment visa should this be required (tick box)
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that any visa requirements are my responsibility

Section 2 – Eligibility Check

Please carefully review the Eligibility Criteria in the SWDTP Call Specification (page 3) and the SWDTP FAQs document (page 3). Both documents are available from:

www.swdtp.ac.uk/prospective-students-and-fellows/esrc-postdoctoral-fellowships/

5. Expected or actual date of PhD submission (date box)
dd/mm/yyyy
6. Expected or actual date of the viva voce (date box)
dd/mm/yyyy
7. Please confirm the ESCR eligibility statement (tick box)
<input type="checkbox"/> I confirm that I will have no more than 12 months of active postdoctoral research experience from my viva voce pass date until 25 March 2025, excluding any career breaks.

Section 3 – For a Fellowship to be held at UWE Bristol

The fellowship should align with one of the six SWDTP Pathways held at UWE Bristol. A list of all the SWDTP pathways is available at: <https://www.swdtp.ac.uk/prospective-students-and-fellows-nw/esrc-funded-studentships/>

8. Select the UWE SWDTP Pathway for the fellowship (single choice)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change, Sustainability and Society <input type="checkbox"/> Health, Wellbeing and Society <input type="checkbox"/> Sociotechnical Futures & Digital Methods <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Management and Business <input type="checkbox"/> Social Policy
9. Project Title Up to 150 characters including spaces (free text)

10. Duration. The fellowship will start on 01 October 2025. Please indicate which you are interested in applying for (single choice)
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 months (full-time) <input type="checkbox"/> 24 months (part-time)
11. Please confirm that you are aware that you are expected to spend 100% of your contracted working time (whether full-time or part-time) on the fellowship (tick box)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

Section 4 – Proposed Mentor

Your mentor should be in the UWE Bristol School where the ESRC Fellowship will be held and should be based primarily in the social sciences. Ideally, your mentor should not normally be your PhD Supervisor. However, we recognise that this may not always be possible; if your proposed mentor is your PhD Supervisor this should be fully justified.

12. Have you identified an appropriate mentor? Further details will be required below (single choice)
<input type="checkbox"/> No, I have not yet found an appropriate mentor <input type="checkbox"/> I have an identified mentor but have yet to discuss my project with them <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I have selected my mentor and am in communication with them about this application
13. If you have identified a mentor, please state whether they are/were your PhD Supervisor or not (single choice)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, they are/were my PhD Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> No, they are/were not my PhD Supervisor
14. Mentor’s full name (free text)
15. UWE Bristol School (free text)
16. Position (free text)
17. Explain why the proposed mentor is well-placed to support you in achieving the main objectives of your proposal. If you have indicated that the proposed mentor is/was your PhD Supervisor, please clearly outline a justification for this. If you do not yet have a confirmed mentor, explain how you anticipate this person will support your fellowship. Up to 150 words (free text)

Section 5 – Case for Support

18. Abstract or summary of your in-progress or completed PhD. This should be no more than one page and should include its main claims to originality and excellence, the methodology used and significant findings. Up to 200 words (free text)

19. Summary of proposal. Outline your project, and how this work follows on from your PhD. Up to 200 words (free text)

20. Aims and Objectives. Specify and detail the aims and objectives that should be achieved by the end of the fellowship. Below is a list of general examples:

- Produce publications to help establish a track record
- Engage with a range of different audiences to communicate research findings
- Build networks to develop impact opportunities and inform and support your further development
- Collaborate with users through an internship or placement to help develop your professional and transferrable skills and understanding of users' organisations
- Further training to improve your research and related skills
- Developing funding proposals
- Carry out further limited research (up to 25%) based on your PhD
- Teaching, if in alignment with the wider purposes of the fellowship (up to a maximum of 6 hrs p/week)
- Internships or placements, provided they are an integral part of the fellowship
- Research visits to internationally leading research organisations – either in the UK or abroad – for research collaboration, training, and/or access to data or other resources not available at the applicant's host organisation.

Up to 400 words (free text)

21. Planned programme of activities, including key milestones

Consider that:

- The focus of the programme of activities is for fellows to consolidate their PhD. The fellowship does not have to be directly building on the work of the PhD; however, it does need to follow on or be related to it.
- Fellows should not undertake major new research during a grant. However, limited additional research (up to 25% of the programme of work) directly linked to the PhD can be undertaken. In this case, the time commitment for new research should be clearly shown in the Work Plan (see required documentation).
- It is vital that the economic and social impact of all projects funded by the ESRC is maximised. This section should describe the impacts your research has had or that you expect it to have. Explain what steps you will take to provide opportunities for users to benefit from your research, and to ensure that your research has maximum societal impact.
- Impacts include: impact of completed research and any planned further limited research; dissemination of its results and the building up of a publication track record; development of the research field; behaviour or understanding of users and/or policy-makers.

Up to 400 words (free text)

22. Context and fit. Consider how this activity aligns with the chosen ESRC Pathway and explain why UWE Bristol is the best place to carry out this work. Up to 200 words (free text)

23. Track record. Summarise your academic career journey to date; we are particularly interested in the impact any training to date has had on your skills development, and on your prospects for a successful academic career.
Up to 200 words (free text)

24. Career development. This section requires a well-structured summary of 'where you are now' in your training and personal development. This will help reviewers decide whether an applicant is at a stage in their career development where a fellowship will have an important and lasting impact on their ability to work as a professional researcher. Please describe how the ESRC fellowship will support your longer-term career aspirations, whether you are aiming for a career in academia or a research career in the broader economy.
Up to 300 words (free text)

Section 6 – Required documentation

To complete this EOI application, the following documents must be emailed to research@uwe.ac.uk with the subject: "ESRC SWDTP Fellowship – Your First Name and Surname"

- Your CV: This should be a 2-page document, minimum font size 11.
We suggest using the following subheadings:
 - Education
 - Appointments and Experience
 - Grants, awards and esteem indicators
 - Publications, including academic, non-academic and pre-prints
- Workplan: a GANTT chart or excel spreadsheet outlining the timescale for key activities and milestones
- Reference list for any citations in the Case for Support

The deadline to submit the EOI application online and all required documentation is Friday 24 January 2025, midday.