

SCHEME OVERVIEW

- The FLF scheme is a cross-council scheme that supports early career researchers, with outstanding potential, to tackle challenging research and develop their own careers. Funding is available for up to 7 years, on a 4+3 basis, allowing long term flexible funding to support adventurous and ambitious programmes. **There are no eligibility rules on years since PhD or whether the applicant currently holds an open-ended academic position.**
- The scheme welcomes bids from applicants from diverse career background, including those returning to research from a career break, or following time in other roles.
- UKRI is expected to open the FLF round 11 call in January/February 2026.
- Until the new call is issued, applicants can refer to the [Round 10 information](#).
- [Slides](#) from a [Sussex webinar](#) in January 2025 are a useful resource. They provide an overview of the FLF scheme and include presentations from Sussex FLF awardees and academics who have been involved in the UKRI FLF Sift and Interview process on what reviewers are looking for and what makes a successful application.

FUNDER LIMIT

- The FLF scheme is highly competitive therefore UKRI has capped the number of applications that can be submitted per institution.
- Sussex can submit a **maximum of four** applications to UKRI, therefore needs to run an internal selection process.

SELECTION PROCESS

- There will be a two-stage selection process:

STAGE 1	Eols will be reviewed by the Faculty in which the applicant would be based. The faculty selection panel will be chaired by the Faculty Associate Dean Research and Innovation and include members from a range of disciplines and career stages. Each faculty panel will select a shortlist of up to 4 Eols to put forward to the cross-faculty panel. Assessment criteria: Vision; Approach; Applicant capability to deliver; Added value & career development.
STAGE 2	The shortlisted Eols from all four Faculties will be considered by a cross-faculty panel, with the following composition: → Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation (chair) → Associate Dean Research and Innovations from each Faculty → 1-2 Sussex academics with FLF scheme expertise. Assessment criteria: Vision; Approach; Applicant capability to deliver; Added value & career development; host organisation support.

- The cross-faculty panel will select the four proposals that will be developed into full applications and submitted to UKRI.
- All applicants from stage 1 will be provided with feedback.
- Shortlisted applicants will have a 3-week period to revise their application based on the Faculty panel feedback before submitting their proposal to the Stage 2 central panel.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST PROCESS & INTERNAL DEADLINE

- Applicants who wish to be considered for the FLF scheme at Sussex must complete the Expression of Interest (Eol) form which is available to download from the [University's internal demand management webpages](#).
- The internal application process is modelled on UKRI's process.
- Please note that Eols will be reviewed by cross disciplinary panels and should be written with non-specialist reviewers in mind.
- Applicants must submit their Eol via [Worktribe](#), the University's Research Management System by **12 noon 23rd January 2026**. See details below for how to do this.
- All Eols will need the endorsement of a host Faculty therefore applicants must consult their prospective host Faculty at the earliest opportunity.
- The Stage one Eol should be a maximum of 6 pages, single spaced, font 11.
- Please note, in order to be fair to all applicants, **anything over the 6-page limit will not be shared with the panel.**
- Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

WORKTRIBE

For internal Sussex applicants:

1. If you do not have a Worktribe account, please follow the instructions at [Worktribe : Research Information, Quality and Impact : Research : Staff : University of Sussex](#) noting that it may take up to a week for your access to be approved.
2. Go to <https://sussex.worktribe.com/> to create a project by completing the following mandatory fields:
 - Project Title
 - Project Description/abstract
 - Estimated project dates
 - Project Type (Fellowship)
 - Project Activity Type (Research)
 - Funder (UK Research and Innovation)
 - Project Activity Type (Future Leaders Fellowships)
 - Project Lead (Your name if you are a Sussex member of staff)
 - Lead Organisation Unit (where you FLF would be based)
 - Project Manager (add Debbie Foy to allow us to monitor bid levels)
3. Once you have completed the steps in (1) above, upload your completed Eol form to the 'Documents' tab by **12 noon 23rd January 2026**.
4. DO NOT PRESS SUBMIT FOR APPROVAL (this stage is only relevant for the final 4 bids selected to go forward to UKRI).

For external applicants:

1. Your Sussex mentor needs to set up your project on Worktribe. The application will be recorded on Worktribe in their name as this is an internal system.
2. If your Sussex mentor does not have a Worktribe account, please ask them to follow the instructions at [Worktribe : Research Information, Quality and Impact : Research : Staff : University of Sussex](#) noting that it may take up to a week for access to be approved.
3. Your Sussex mentor should go to <https://sussex.worktribe.com/> to create a project by completing the following mandatory fields:
 - Project Title (After the title, add [EXTERNAL])
 - Project Description/abstract (Include the Fellow's name)
 - Estimated project dates
 - Project Type (Fellowship)
 - Project Activity Type (Research)
 - Funder (UK Research and Innovation)
 - Project Activity Type (Future Leaders Fellowships)
 - Project Lead (Your mentor's name)
 - Lead Organisation Unit (where the FLF would be based)
 - Project Manager (add Debbie Foy to allow us to monitor bid levels)
4. Once your Sussex mentor has completed the steps in (2) above, they should upload your completed Eol form to the 'Documents' tab by **12 noon 23rd January 2026**.
5. DO NOT PRESS SUBMIT FOR APPROVAL (this stage is only relevant for the final 4 bids selected to go forward to UKRI).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Queries about the FLF scheme and the suitability of your application can be discussed with your Sussex mentor or the relevant [Research Development Manager](#) in Research and Innovation Services. Faculty Associate Deans Research and Innovation can also provide advice:

Associate Dean Research and Innovation	Faculty
Sarah Sawyer	Media, Arts and Humanities
Seb Oliver	Science, Engineering and Medicine
Gurminder Bhambra	Social Sciences
Adrian Smith	University of Sussex Business School

Please contact Debbie Foy at D.Foy@sussex.ac.uk if you have queries about the internal application and selection process.

INCLUSIVE SELECTION PROCESSES AND DIVERSITY MONITORING DATA

- Sussex is required by UKRI to collect certain EDI data for candidates who express interest in applying to the FLF scheme.
- UKRI commissioned the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) to undertake a review of the selection processes used by host organisations to select their FLF candidates in order to understand the level of inclusivity. Following the [report's recommendations](#), UKRI has introduced a mandatory diversity monitoring template which host institutions

must complete before any FLF applications can be submitted. UKRI would like to collect this data on all candidates who expressed an interest in applying and not just those selected by their Faculty or the University.

- Please ensure that before the **you complete the [EDI data survey](#) before the 12-noon 23rd January 2026.**
- The information contained in this internal form will be used by the Research and Innovation Services Division to complete the anonymised institutional level diversity monitoring template. This information will be treated in the strictest of confidence and will only be used for the purpose of completing the FLF round 11 monitoring form – the information will not be used by the University or UKRI in the assessment of proposals.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICANTS

1. Identify a Sussex mentor.
2. Create a project record on Worktribe (the Sussex mentor will need to do this for external applicants).
3. Discuss your application with the Head of School or Head of Department where the FLF would be hosted and obtain their electronic signature in section 5. Please note it is Head of School for applications from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine, and the Head of Department for bids from the Faculty of Social Sciences; Faculty of Media, Art and Humanities; and the Business School.
4. Upload your completed EoI form to Worktribe by **12 noon 23rd January 2026.**
5. Complete the [EDI data survey](#) before the **12 noon 23rd January 2026.**

TIMELINE

STAGE	DATE
Internal call opens	10 November 2025
UKRI call opens	Expected Jan-Feb 2026
Internal deadline for Stage 1	12 Noon, 23 Jan 2026
Faculty Panels meet	By 13 Feb 2026
Feedback to all applicants	By 18 Feb 2026
Internal deadline for Stage 2	12 noon, 11 March 2026
Central Panel meets	23 March 2026
Outcome and feedback to candidates	23 March 2026
UKRI deadline	Expected June-July 2026