# Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowships 2026

[Early Career Fellowships | The Leverhulme Trust](https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/early-career-fellowships)

**General information**

This scheme is for early career researchers, with a research record but who have not yet held a full-time permanent academic post, to undertake a significant piece of publishable work.

Fellowships can be held at UK universities with research degree awarding powers.

The Fellowships are intended to assist those at a relatively early stage of their academic careers, and it is hoped that the appointment would lead to a more permanent position for the individual, either within the same or another university.

Applications will be considered in all subject areas **except**:

* Studies of disease, illness and disabilities in humans and animals
* Research that is intended to inform clinical practice or the development of medical applications

The Trust excludes these areas because substantial funding is available from other sources for applied medical research, and the Trust’s priority is to support investigations of a fundamental nature.

**The School of Biological Sciences (SBS) has approved the submission of up to three applications for this funding round (details of internal selection below).**

### Duration

Fellowships are tenable for 3 years on a full-time basis. The Trust will support requests to hold the award part-time over a proportionately longer period for health-related reasons, disability or childcare commitments.

Before beginning your application, please read the information below or download it as a PDF [Guidance for Applicants](https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Help_notes/2026_ECF_guidance.pdf).

### Eligibility

* All candidates must hold a doctorate by the time they take up the Fellowship. **Those who are or have been registered for a doctorate at any time may apply only if they have submitted their doctoral thesis for viva voce examination by 4pm on the closing date of 19 February 2026**. Candidates must not be registered for degrees, professional or vocational qualifications at the time of commencing the Fellowship.
* All candidates must have submitted their doctoral thesis for viva voce examination not more than four years prior to the application closing date. Hence **those who formally submitted their doctoral thesis for viva voce examination before 19 February 2022 are not eligible unless they have since had a career break**. Those wishing to make a case for a career break should present the case for interruption by a period of paternal leave, family commitments, illness, or other exceptional circumstances. Please note that time spent working outside academia does not qualify as a career break. Applicants with a disability who wish to make a case for the extension of the four-year eligibility window may do so using the career break section of the application form.
* **Candidates who have held or currently hold postdoctoral positions to pursue their own independent research totalling 3 or more years are not eligible to apply.**
* Applicants must **either** hold a degree (any degree) from a UK higher education institution at the time of taking up the Fellowship or at the time of the application deadline must hold an academic position in the UK (e.g. fixed-term lectureship, fellowship) which commenced no less than 4 months prior to the closing date. Hence, **those who do not hold a UK degree and whose UK academic position commenced after October 2025 are not eligible**. The Trust will consider candidates without a UK degree whose UK academic post commenced after October 2025 if they have been in continuous UK academic employment for more than 4 months prior to the deadline. The intention is to support the career development of those building an academic career within the UK.

### Funding

The Leverhulme Trust will contribute 100% of the Fellow’s total salary costs up to a maximum of £56,000 in year one of the award. The Trust will then contribute 50% of the Fellow’s total salary costs up to a maximum of £28,000 in years two and three, and the balance is to be paid by the host university. The Fellow may request up to £6,000 per annum in research expenses to further their research activities.

### Funder deadline

The 2026 round opens on 1 January 2026 and the closing date for applications is the 19 February 2026, 4pm.

[Guidance for Applicants 2026](https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2026_ECF_guidance.pdf)

### School of Biological Sciences Internal Application process

The School of Biological Sciences has approved the submission of **up to three applications** for this funding round.

Interested candidates should identify a potential academic host/mentor in their chosen Division within SBS and are advised to work closely with them to develop their Expression of Interest. Approval is also needed from a Head of Division within SBS.

Expressions of Interest should be sent to the Researcher Development Manager for Biosciences and Biotechnology Jen Adams (jennefer.adams@manchester.ac.uk) by **Friday 10th October 2025**, consisting of the following:

* A completed pro-forma: Leverhulme ECF proforma [[EoI proforma](https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=76641)]
* A brief CV (max 2 pages)
* A list of publications (1 page max – please use the following headings: ‘In preparation’, ‘Submitted’ and ‘Published’)

Selected applicants will be informed week commencing **24th November 2025**. All shortlisted candidates will then receive support from their Research Development Manager and the FBMH Fellowship Academy, to further develop and enhance their application before submission.