

Visiting Professorships Guidance for Applicants

Aim

The Trust Board offers a limited number of Visiting Professorships each year to enable outstandingly distinguished academics based in overseas universities to spend an extended period of time at a UK higher education institution. In special circumstances, the Trust Board is prepared to consider candidates who do not hold a university post. The key objective of the scheme is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the researchers, academic staff and student body within the host institution. It is recognised that Visiting Professors may also wish to use the occasion to further their own academic interests and visit more than one UK institution.

Eligible visitors

The over-riding criteria for selection are:

- the academic standing and achievements of the visitors in terms of their research and/or teaching,
- their potential for making a substantial contribution to skills in the host institution,
- the specific and systematic nature of the proposed programme while in the UK.

Collaborative research alone will not be a sufficient justification for a grant. The emphasis should be on the diffusion of skills and expertise. Priority will be given to new or recent collaborative ventures. Where a visit builds on an existing collaboration, the host should explain what the visit(s) will achieve over and above past outcomes. It is the intention that the visitor will provide a degree of expertise that is not otherwise available within the UK research base. Visiting Professors will be expected to offer a short course of “Leverhulme Lectures” to mark their residence in a UK institution.

Visitors who have previously held a Leverhulme Visiting Professorship can only apply if at least seven years have elapsed since the last one.

Eligible fields

Applications will be considered in all subject areas with the following exceptions:

- studies of disease, illness and disabilities in humans and animals
- research that is intended to inform clinical practice or the development of medical applications

There are two reasons for this: substantial funding is available from other sources for applied medical research; the Trust's priority is to support investigations of a fundamental nature.

- The Trust will not fund applications for research of which advocacy forms an explicit component.
- The Trust does not support research which is aimed principally at an immediate commercial application.
- The Trust will not fund applications in which the balance between assembling a data bank or database and the related subsequent research is heavily inclined to the former.

Place of tenure

Visiting Professorships are tenable in any UK university or institution of higher education in the UK. These awards are non-transferable.

Duration and timing

- Visits should be for no less than 3 and no more than 12 months, although a Professorship may be spread over a number of visits and over a period of up to two years if such an arrangement is justified by the nature of the programme.
- Tenures of 6 months or more total duration are eligible to be spread over two or more visits. Tenures of less than 6 months must be completed within one visit.
- If more than one visit is planned the applicant should explain explicitly how the programme will benefit from this.
- The award should commence within 15 months of receipt of the offer letter.

Support offered

- The minimum award value is £10,000 and the maximum award value is £150,000. Applications for less than £10,000 or more than £150,000 are not eligible.
- Depending on the individual circumstances of candidates, the Trust will award a maintenance grant up to a level commensurate with the salary of a professor in the comparable field in the UK. However, account must be taken of existing income from the proposed visitor's own university, i.e. whether they will be on paid or unpaid leave during their visit. The maintenance grant is only payable for the period of the visit to the UK.
- As an alternative to a maintenance grant/salary, the Trust will consider funding replacement salary costs for the visitor in their home institution, on the condition that the UK host institution is willing and able to administer these funds in an appropriate manner. Please note that, if approved, these funds can only be used for the visitor's replacement costs, and not as a general contribution towards the home department/institution's staff costs; it is the UK host institution's responsibility to ensure that the funds are used correctly. The replacement salary costs are only payable for the period of the visit to the UK.
- Visitors may apply for funds for accommodation and utilities in the UK in cases where such costs are also payable in their home country during tenure of the award or where the UK costs are significantly higher than in their home country.
- Travel costs to and from the UK will be met for the visitor and dependant partner, and should be based on the lowest reasonable tariff for economy travel.

- If two or more visits are made the Trust will pay for a maximum of two return fares for the visitor and accompanying partner.
- Requests for associated costs, if justified by the programme, will also be considered. These may include travel within the UK (for the visitor only), laboratory consumables, technical assistance etc.
- Items of equipment, non-UK conference attendance and travel, departmental costs, overheads and bench fees are not allowable items.
- Personal expenditures on items such as visa costs, car hire and health insurance are not eligible.
- The host institution should provide general support costs, e.g. photocopying, inter-library loans, routine administrative assistance for help with making travel arrangements and arranging publicity for lectures etc. Please note that the Trust does not make awards on a full economic costing basis.

Institutional commitments

The host institution must undertake the following:

- to meet all overhead and departmental costs,
- to provide facilities (including departmental membership, office consumables and other usual privileges) at a level commensurate with the conditions enjoyed by existing staff of the same level,
- to manage all necessary arrangements relating to the visitor's visa and tax requirements,
- to administer the funding in accordance with the approved budget.

Reporting requirements

The host institution is required to submit a final statement of expenditure within one month of the end of the Professorship. The visitor and UK host academic are required to submit a brief report within one month of the end of each visit of the award's tenure. The Trust's support should be acknowledged in any publications arising directly from the visit and these publications should be listed in the reports.

Application procedure

Applications can only be made via the Trust's Grants Management System.

Applications must be completed by the responsible academic in the UK host institution - the visiting academic cannot make an application.

The UK host applicant is expected to organise, direct and take academic and organisational responsibility of the Professorship.

As part of the application process both the proposed Visiting Professor and the UK host institution must give approval by the closing date.

The Trust will report results to applicants within five to six months of each closing date.

There are two closing dates a year, in May and October. Please see the website for the next deadline.