

Vice-Chancellor Independent Research Fellowship (VCIRF)

Job Ref: REQ231263

About the Fellowships

These prestigious Fellowships offer opportunities for outstanding, recently completed doctoral students to receive 24 months of support to begin to develop their independent research careers. Based at Loughborough University (in the Midlands and London), Fellows will be allocated an appropriate academic mentor to support and guide them. Fellows undertake work derived from their own research questions and ideas, which provide the foundation for externally-funded Fellowship applications to be made during the course of the VCIRF. Externally-funded Fellowships will be based at Loughborough University, and commence as soon as is practicable after award. On securing an appropriate externally-funded Fellowship, an open-ended academic contract will be offered.

Eighteen months into the VCIRF, it is possible to agree a 6 months' extension to the Fellowship, taking its total duration to 30 months. This is contingent on a high quality Fellowship application having been made to an agreed scheme aimed at postdoctoral or early career researchers (including but not limited to those offered by UKRI, Leverhulme Trust, Royal Academy of Engineering, or the British Academy). During the extension period, Fellows balance their research activity with teaching activities, following appropriate training, in order to develop their academic profile.

Eligibility

Candidates should be within 3 years of the date of their PhD award on the application closing date. We will extend this eligibility period by the duration of any career break taken since the PhD award and ask applicants to confirm this with us in advance. Part-time working is welcome, at a minimal level of 50% full time equivalent (FTE). In these circumstances, it will be possible to extend the duration of the Fellowship on a pro rata basis, but the further 6 months' extension will be fixed.

Candidates must have had their PhD (or other doctoral qualification) awarded by the closing date for applications. This means any corrections following the viva examination must have been completed to the examiners' satisfaction and the PhD (or other doctoral qualification) awarded (with written confirmation) by 27th November 2023.

The Fellowships are open to applicants from any institution (including but not limited to Loughborough University). International applicants are welcome. Up to 10 positions are available. In light of the ongoing unrest and wars around the globe, we will prioritise one VCIRF for an academic at immediate risk from war or conflict (for example, the war in Ukraine or ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Syria).

We have a number of Fellowships ring-fenced for Fellows whose PhD was funded by EPSRC. Candidates should make it clear in their applications if the case.

VCIRF fellows whose research aligns with the net zero agenda will have the opportunity to be affiliated with the Centre for Postdoctoral Development in Infrastructure, Cities, and Energy (C-DICE). This will include bespoke training and development opportunities as well as other benefits including access to industry/other HEI partners through the C-DICE network, and the chance to disseminate net-zero related research via C-DICE Impact Hub. C-DICE will offer affiliation to appointed Fellows based upon the alignment of their research to the C-DICE research areas.

Job Description

Job Grade Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6

Job Purpose

Vice Chancellor Independent Research Fellows (VCIRF) will be expected to develop their independent research career within Loughborough University's strategic framework for research and innovation, and the university strategy for 2030 ([Creating Better Futures. Together](#)).

Job Duties

- To pursue a personal research programme consistent with the host School's research priorities and one of the university's [Strategic themes](#), as set out in the proposal submitted as part of the application.
- To undertake research activity to form the basis for externally-funded Fellowship applications.
- To apply to agreed schemes for externally-funded Research Fellowships, to be based at Loughborough University.
- Where appropriate, to secure further external funding for their research.
- To publish the outcomes of research in outlets of international standing.
- To attend and contribute to major international conferences.
- To pursue opportunities to deliver impact from their research.
- To collaborate in research initiatives with colleagues within the School and across the University.
- To collaborate in research initiatives with other HEIs, industry and other relevant bodies.
- If an extension period is agreed, to teach and inspire undergraduate and postgraduate students, and to conduct associated assessments.

Related Activities and Functions

- To work effectively with relevant administrative, technical and staff in the School and across the University.
- To undertake such other duties, including teaching activities, as may be reasonably requested and that are commensurate with the nature and grade of the post.
- To undertake training as required to fulfil the requirements of the role.

Other

- All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, others and the environment and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are therefore required to adhere to the University's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy and Procedures.
- All staff should hold a duty and commitment to observing the University's Equality and Diversity policy and procedures at all times. Duties must be carried out in accordance with relevant Equality and Diversity legislation and University policies/procedures.

Points to Note

The purpose of this job description is to indicate the general level of duties and responsibility of the post. The detailed duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character or level of responsibility entailed.

To Apply

Candidates should submit a combined PDF file comprising a research proposal (please complete this [form](#)) and a CV (maximum 2 pages). For the formatting a minimum Arial 11 font with margins of at least 2cm should be used.

Your research proposal should detail the proposed work plan for the Fellowship, including aims and objectives, methodology, outputs, and outcomes. It should also include:

- i) A brief description of the resources required for the successful completion of your 2-year VCIRF, which may include access to research facilities, and funds for travel and consumables. You will receive support to conduct your programme of research, subject to negotiation upon appointment.
- ii) The name of a preferred mentor within the school you are applying for, providing the rationale for the choice.
 - a. Candidates are strongly encouraged to approach the intended mentor and get their (verbal) agreement to supporting your application. A good match between mentor and mentee will be considered as part of the shortlisting process.
- iii) the Fellowship schemes you intend to apply for, and a suggested timetable for the applications.

A supporting statement (maximum 1000 words) indicating how you meet the person specification (details below) will also form part of your online application.

Person Specification

Your application will be reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria listed below. Applicants are strongly advised to provide clear evidence of how they meet each of the essential (and desirable) criteria in their CV and supporting statement. Stages of assessment are as follows:

- 1 – Application
- 2 – Presentation
- 3 – Interview

	Essential	Desirable
Values	Commitment to the University's values: teamwork, excellence, professionalism, EDI, respect, and community (1,3)	
Education	PhD (or equivalent) awarded between 27th November 2020 and 27th November 2023 (1)	
Academic expertise	Currently active in research in an area aligned to the research priorities of the chosen School and one of LU's Strategic themes (1,2,3)	Experience of work or collaboration with business, including private, public sector and charitable organisations (1,3)
	Experience of authoring original work of the highest quality in refereed academic journals (or equivalent) (1)	Experience of open research methods (1,3)
	Experience of presenting research work at international conferences or meetings (1,2)	
General skills, abilities, and knowledge	Ability to develop an original research programme on your own initiative and to persuade others of its importance orally and on paper (1,2,3)	Ability to secure research / project funds from external / company sources (1,3)
	Knowledge of research funding opportunities in UK HE and understanding of how to secure research funding (3)	
	Ability and background necessary to contribute to taught programmes in the chosen School (1,2,3)	
	Ability to work independently and as part of a team (3)	
	Excellent verbal and written communication skills (1,2,3)	
	Excellent basic IT skills (e.g. Office suites and presentation software) (1,2)	

	Essential	Desirable
Training	Evidence of having undertaken appropriate training (1)	Participation in a recognised training programme for research students / staff (1)

Conditions of Service

The appointment will be on a fixed term, 2-year contract on Specialist and Supporting Academic Grade 6 at a commencing salary of £33,966 per annum.

The appointment will be subject to the University's normal Terms and Conditions of Employment for Academic and Related staff, details of which can be found [here](#).

The University is committed to enabling staff to maintain a healthy work-home balance and has a number of family-friendly policies which are available at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/family-leave-policy-and-procedure---page.html>.

We also offer an on-campus nursery with subsidised places, subsidised places at local holiday clubs and a childcare voucher scheme (further details are available at: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/a-z/childcare-information---page.html>)

In addition, the University is supportive, wherever possible, of flexible working arrangements. We also strive to create a culture that supports equality and celebrates diversity throughout the campus. The University holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award which recognises the importance of support for women at all stages of their academic career. For further information on Athena SWAN see <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/athena-swan/>

Application Deadline

The closing date for receipt of applications is **27th November 2023 at midnight UK time**.

Applications will be initially assessed and shortlisted by schools **between 28th November and 19th December**, in which candidates might be invited for a online interview (including short presentation).

The final assessment will comprise of a in person interview at Loughborough University Midlands campus. Candidates will be assessed by a specialist panel aligned to the Strategic theme they have indicated in their applications.

Interviews are expected to take place during the week commencing **15th January 2024**.

Any queries about the scheme should be directed to rd.fellowships@mailbox.lboro.ac.uk