EARLY CAREER INNOVATION FELLOWSHIPS (ECIF)

This programme is a collaboration between IAS and Warwick Ventures and supports early career researchers (ECRs) from all disciplines at Warwick in:

- the translation of research for societal, cultural or economic benefit;
- pump-priming of new collaborations between Warwick and industrial (particularly SME), public, or third sector organisations; and and/or
- career transitions from academia to employment in the above sectors.

Fellowships are available to doctoral candidates (whose thesis is under examination), those who have completed a PhD at Warwick, and postdoctoral research fellows currently at Warwick.

Warwick doctoral candidates will be supported by a bursary while postdoctoral research fellows will be appointed on a salary. Those already in postdoctoral positions at Warwick will be supported in an arrangement with the existing host department. Fellowships will be awarded for six months, usually on a full-time basis, and may be renewable for up to two further three-month periods conditional on satisfactory progress and the continuing availability of funds beyond July 2019. As part of the award, up to £10k will be available to support travel and other costs of creating these outcomes.

Successful applicants should be able to describe a suitable opportunity for translating their research (or that of their team) into a non-academic sector, and outline what they might do during the fellowship to achieve this. They will also need to describe their motivations for seeking the fellowship, what skills they would look to acquire during it and how the fellowship would support their future career. There will be an opportunity for the applicants ideas and plans to be refined in collaboration with Warwick Ventures prior to application.

Objectives

The Early Career Innovation Fellowship (ECIF) programme supports early career researchers from all disciplines at Warwick. The fellowships will provide training and support the Fellow to deliver:

- translation of research for the economic, societal or cultural benefit of external stakeholders;
- transfer of innovations, expertise and research capabilities to non-academic collaborators, particularly SMEs, in alignment with the UK’s Industrial Strategy;
- exploration of potential career transitions from academia to employment in public, private or third sectors including the formation of new organisations;
- establishment of collaborations with non-academic partners through which they may participate in and benefit from future research projects.
- Identification of commercialisation opportunities for Warwick-derived research

Activities & Support

Fellows will undertake an agreed programme based on their needs and the project objectives, comprising the following activities:
Participation in training developed by Warwick Ventures (Wi2i - innovation to impact) in:

- Evaluation of the research outputs for innovation
- Identification and prioritisation of potential applications
- Networking and how to identify potential partners/collaborators/users
- Validation of the research value with potential beneficiaries
- Pathways by which to transfer innovation

Application of the training, supported throughout by the Warwick Ventures team, with the aim of translating their research through, including:

- Identification and engagement with potential partners and beneficiaries of their research outputs and expertise
- Meeting partners and beneficiaries to validate the benefits offered by their innovation and identify routes for its translation
- Development of research innovations to align with the needs and objectives of potential partners, beneficiaries and users
- Building constructive, ongoing relationships with business mentor(s), the Warwick Ventures team and innovation partners
- Exploration of translational grant funding opportunities;
- Running stakeholder workshop or symposia;
- Participation in other appropriate elements of IAS training programmes and the other activities undertaken by the IAS community;
- Completion of a report at the end of the first five months, other interim reports as needed, and a final report at the end of the award period. These should include descriptions and reflections on their training and experiences.

Fellows will have access to the Warwick Library, IT services and to hot-desking, and seminar room facilities at the IAS and Warwick Ventures. Where the training demands that Fellows travel to meet with potential collaborators, the costs of this (up to £10K) will be met by the University under its standard travel and expenses policy. Similarly, training assignments requiring the development of demonstrations of an application of research will have potential access to University proof-of-concept funds and to necessary University facilities in academic departments.

Eligibility & Funding

The source of funds for ECIF comes from a variety of agencies and fellows will be funded from the most appropriate. The funding sources come with some financial constraints which may for example affect renewal and end dates of the ECIF.

Fellowships will be awarded for six months and may be renewable for up to two further three-month periods conditional on satisfactory progress, to a total of 12 months and depending on availability of funds. The Fellowships are normally available on a full-time basis and fellows should not have any other employment during the Fellowship. The fellow will be expected to participate in a number of training activities relevant to their objectives at Warwick Ventures and IAS.

PhD candidates at the University of Warwick whose thesis is under examination.

Applicants must have submitted their PhD thesis for examination within the six months prior to the start date of the ECIF. Continuation of the Fellowship beyond the doctoral examination is contingent upon successful completion of the viva i.e. a recommendation to award the PhD or other doctoral degree with or without corrections, but not normally a recommendation to resubmit.

This is a training fellowship where the Fellow will gain skills and experience though working closely with experienced professionals and participating in training programmes at Warwick Ventures, IAS and elsewhere. A bursary is provided to support the Fellow’s participation in the programme which is equivalent to the current
Research Council training stipend (pro rata) - see UKRI website for latest figures. Fellows must be eligible for residence and work in the UK during their award.

The fellowship is not intended to provide financial support to students in the completion of their thesis. Applicants offered an award who are subsequently unable to submit their thesis for examination before the start of the ECIF may have the award withdrawn. However, they may re-apply subsequently if still eligible.

Potential applicants are advised to consult with the IAS IAS@warwick.ac.uk if they have any queries regarding their eligibility before the submission of their application.

**Postdoctoral researchers**

Fellowships are available to postdoctoral researchers at Warwick and those who have previously completed a PhD at Warwick and wish to translate Warwick research in line with the aims of the scheme. Successful postdoctoral ECIF applicants will be supported on Warwick salary scales as appropriate and will be employed as arranged with the host department.

**Applications**

All applicants must discuss their application with a member of Warwick Ventures before submission. Details of Warwick Ventures team can be found on their website: https://warwick.ac.uk/services/ventures/about/staff/.

Engagement with your RIS Impact Officer in developing your application is also strongly recommended.

All applicants must use the online submission system www.warwick.ac.uk/ias/funding/ecif/apply. Applications must comprise of the following:

**From the Applicant** - two documents, uploaded together:
- A completed application form: this is designed to help the panel assess eligibility, potential of the applicant for training, and the suitability of the innovation opportunity to be a vehicle for training.
- The CV of the applicant (up to two sides of A4): please tailor this for the application as it will be read alongside the application form.

**From the Referee** - one letter of support, uploaded to the submission system. Referees should be encouraged to address the following, and state evidence where appropriate:
- relationship to applicant, length of time known;
- applicant’s achievements - academic or research, external stakeholder engagement
- suitability of applicant to undertake innovation training and their entrepreneurial potential: personal drive, motivation and commitment to project, enthusiasm, tenacity, self confidence, assertiveness, focus, flexibility, openness to change and criticism.

Applications will not be considered until references reach IAS. IAS reserves the right not to review applications that exceed word or page limits. Applications will be considered by a panel of senior Warwick senior staff, including the Directors of IAS and of Warwick Ventures. We aim for announcements to be made within 4 weeks of receipt of complete applications. Assessment will be made on the basis of:

A. Excellence and suitability of applicant- taking into account:
- outputs from PhD/research (e.g. papers, patents, reports, presentations) or other relevant items;
- grants and fellowships awarded during postgraduate career;
- personal experience or other connections with business, organisations, charity etc. - evidence of engagement with stakeholders beyond academia;
- evidence of ability and willingness to situate his/her research outputs beyond academia;
- references - see guidance above.

B. Suitability of the background research and the proposal.
- alignment of the background research with that of the proposed funder
- draft value proposition for the programme