Public Engagement Fellowships. Notes for Guidance.

General

Introduction

This section provides details of the Science in Society (SiS) Fellowships Scheme and the rules and regulations under which the awards are governed. It is important that you read this section carefully before making an application. It should be read in conjunction with the 'Science in Society Fellowships' webpage at http://www.stfc.ac.uk/Grants/Fells/SandS/contents.aspx

Eligibility

Applications are open to those employed by approved research organisations (including Higher Education Institutions). Other potential applicants should approach an appropriate research organisation to host the fellowship – please contact Neville Hollingworth (Tel: 01793 442175) to discuss this.

Applicants should have a strong record of research in a STFC-funded area of science or technology and should also have a successful record of participation in public engagement activities.

Please note that there other schemes and programmes available for those who wish to *develop* experience in this area of work. These include: STFC Small Awards, BA Media Fellowships, short training courses, and MSc courses in Science Communication. See http://www.stfc.ac.uk/Public+and+Schools/1342.aspx

Time Commitment, Starting Dates and Period of Award

The time commitment and duration of fellowships are flexible. Typically, we expect fellowships to take at least 20% of a Fellow's time and to last for a period of between three months and three years.

Fellowships can start at any time.

Science in Society Award Schemes

As a STFC Science in Society Fellow, you are eligible to apply for STFC Small or Large Awards, for example, to further develop resources for a particular project.

Reporting and Monitoring

Fellows will be required to submit quarterly progress reports to the STFC scheme manager. These will be expected at the end of December, March and June. The report at the end of September will be a summative annual report.

Fellows will be required to submit a final report within three months of the termination date. The final report should include an evaluation of the Fellow's work and the impact on its target audiences of any project to which the Fellow contributed.

Termination of awards

An award may be terminated, or its conditions varied, at any time at the absolute discretion of STFC. Should the Fellow leave their institution for another research organisation or an alternative type of employment, they should notify the Science in Society Unit immediately. If it is not possible to transfer the grant then the Unit will terminate payments from the day immediately after the Fellow leaves the host institution.

Liability

It is a condition of every award that STFC accepts no liability for the manner in which the work in connection with the award is undertaken, and the organisation and Fellow will be responsible in all respects for the work and the consequences of it.

Scheme flexibility

STFC intends its schemes to be flexible, and reserves the right to deal, at its own discretion, with applications of unusual character.

Organisational support

Awards are made on the understanding that the Fellow's work and progress are subject to the same monitoring and appraisal procedures as those of other academic staff within the host research organisation. Furthermore, awards are made on the presumption that there are adequate facilities at the host organisation to support the proposed programme of work.

Note for users of STFC facilities

Users are encouraged to apply. Projects should be linked to work at STFC-funded facilities in the UK or overseas and might, for example, include energy research, how neutron, muon or light sources are used to study materials, high performance computing, e-science, etc.

The idea is to champion generic facility programmes to the public, media or schools. For example, a researcher in protein crystallography might champion generic facility use with an STFC grant. However, funding for public engagement featuring *only* the medical or health aspects of the protein research might be a matter for the researcher's grant-funding organisation (Research Council, Wellcome Trust etc).

Employment and Conditions

Employment and Value of Award

Fellows will continue to be employed by their existing organisation.

Science in Society Fellowships provide funding to enable fellows to carry out appropriate activities, free of some or all of the restrictions imposed by their normal employment.

The maximum value of funding that may be sought for a Science in Society Fellowship is up to a total of £125k (thus the maximum payable by STFC under the Full Economic Costs framework is £100k), inclusive of all costs and VAT. The employing organisation will be responsible for ensuring that you are freed, as required, from some or all of your normal duties in order to undertake appropriate activities.

Fellowship applications will be costed on the basis of full economic costs (FEC).

Under FEC, costs on Science in Society Fellowships should be entered under the following summary fund headings:

Directly Incurred Costs: costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project, are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an auditable record.

i) Fellow salary costs: applicants for a Science in Society Fellowship may seek salary costs for the time to be spent on fellowship activities, up to the proportion of their time that is not already covered by Research Council grants.

ii) Travel and subsistence: applicants may seek the costs of personal travel and subsistence required to carry out the project during the lifetime of the fellowship. Rates should be based on the normal rates for the host organisation.

iii) 'Seedcorn' funding: applicants may seek up to £5k of funding to cover the costs of setting up the project, which must be fully justified in the case for support.

iv) From 1 May 2011, single capital items of equipment costing less than £10,000 should be included in Other Directly Incurred costs. If VAT and/or Import Duty do not apply, a value of zero should be entered in these fields.

Directly Allocated Costs: estates costs include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities. Estates will be calculated by the research organisation and a single figure will be required on the application.

Indirect Costs: indirect costs include the costs of administration, such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services. Like estates costs, indirect costs will be calculated by the research organisation and a single figure will be required on the application.

For a fuller explanation of the FEC framework, please see the Research Fellowships Handbook

When a fellowship is approved it will be announced in the form of a Science in Society Fellowship grant to the host organisation, giving details of the fellowship and the conditions governing it. Copies will also be provided for the organisation to pass on to you.

Fellowships will be funded at 80% of the costs requested. The organisation must agree to find the balance of FEC for the proposal from other resources.

Once announced, the funds awarded will not be increased for any reason.

Applications are accepted and awards are made on the understanding that organisations and Fellows agree to observe the regulations set out in this document, the terms and conditions as laid down in the Research Fellowships Handbook and any amendments issued during the currency of the award.

Maternity Leave and Sick Leave

Provision of paid maternity leave and sick pay to STFC Fellows who fulfil the relevant qualifying conditions of the employing organisation is an allowable use of the salaries element of fellowship research grants.

STFC may provide additional funding (which should be claimed, as necessary, at the end of the grant under the absence fund heading on the final expenditure statement) to provide for any additional final cost on the grant duration for a period equivalent to the maternity leave taken by the Fellow, so that the project may be completed.

Where a period of sick leave in excess of three months is likely to affect the completion of the research, the Fellow may apply to STFC to discuss the possibility of extending the grant duration. Any additional payment will be made at the end of the grant.

Paternity Leave

It is an allowable use of the salaries element of fellowships for a STFC Fellow to take up to a maximum of ten days paid paternity leave during a partner's pregnancy or within three months of the birth. This is subject to the Fellow fulfilling the relevant qualifying conditions of the employing organisation.

How to Apply and Closing Date

Applications are made via the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system. Please click on the link above for guidance.

There is one round per year. The closing date for applications for the 2011 round is Thursday 1st March 2012 at 16:00.

Before submitting your application you are encouraged to telephone the Science in Society team to discuss your ideas. Please contact either Neville Hollingworth on 01793 442175 or Robin Clegg on 01793 442010.

Your application should be accompanied by:

1. a full Curriculum Vitae (Note that a comprehensive list of publications is not required.)
2. a case for support which shows how your personal track record of research and communication demonstrates your suitability for a Science in Society Fellowship. This should not exceed six A4 sides in length and should address the following headings:
    - **Programme of Activities.** This should give a description of your proposed programme of activities.
    - **Rationale.** This should make clear the overall aims of your activities, the anticipated outcomes and how your activities will contribute to meeting the aims of the STFC Science in Society Programme (see STFC Science in Society Strategy at http://www.scitech.ac.uk/PandS/SinS/AimObj/aims.aspx) It should also show why there is a need for them.
    - **Track Record.** This should outline your record in research and public engagement with science and technology *as it is relevant to this application*. It should show how this qualifies you for a STFC Science in Society Fellowship. Please include details of any STFC Science in Society awards held (currently or previously) and any similar public engagement awards.
    - **Justification of Costs**. Please justify your costs (with the exception of estates costs, indirect costs and your salary costs).
    - **Evaluation**. Please describe how you intend to evaluate your programme against your initial aims and outcomes. STFC will provide guidance on the sort of quantitative data you should endeavour to collect during the course of the fellowship. In addition you should consider what opportunities exist for gathering more qualitative data and measuring impacts, especially in the medium and long term.
    - **Dissemination**. Please explain how you might share lessons learned with the wider research community and involve them.
3. A statement from your Head of Department that they support your application and would accept you as a Science in Society Fellow.

References

In addition, you are requested to nominate two independent referees in support of your application.

In assessing your application, references will be taken from one referee nominated by you and also from one referee nominated by the judges

Consideration of your Application

Applications will be assessed by a group of judges. The group members will have a range of expertise in communicating science, education and related fields. The group will include expertise in use of STFC-funded facilities such as neutron and light sources, etc; and in STFC grant-funded research areas such as astronomy, particle physics, etc.

Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by the judges. Should you attend an interview, STFC will reimburse your travelling expenses.

Selection Criteria

In considering your application the judges will use the following criteria:

- your track record in public engagement activities, particularly where these are relevant to your proposed activity.
- your credibility as a user of STFC facilities or as a researcher in a STFC-funded area of science or technology.
- the ability to represent a wider subject area than your specialist area of research (e.g. to represent much of the field of Particle Physics rather than just a particular experiment, or represent wide use of neutron or light sources to study materials).
- quality of proposed work plan and 'fit' to STFC Science in Society objectives and target audiences, as listed at http://www.stfc.ac.uk/PandS/SinS/AimObj/aims.aspx
- the likely impact on target audiences.
- the 'spread' of research areas, both in the applications received this round and in the total 'stock' of Fellows.

Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

Dissemination and Acknowledgement

Fellows are expected to share lessons learned with the wider research community. Any publication must acknowledge the support received from STFC in the form of a Science in Society Fellowship. STFC should be supplied with copies of any published material or resources produced with the aid of the fellowship.

General Policy on Exploitation

Fellows shall ensure that the results, reports and all other materials arising out of, or deriving from, the fellowship shall be made freely available to educational and other institutes involved with Public Engagement with Science activities or the national curriculum. STFC shall have full user rights for all results, reports and materials produced under the fellowship.

Data Protection Requirements

Freedom of Information Act/Confidentiality

STFC is a Public Authority within the meaning of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. STFC is in full compliance with the requirements of this legislation.

STFC records information about Council-supported Fellows on a computerised database. This information is used for administrative and management purposes, e.g. payments, statistical surveys or reports, career path tracking.

Details which may be made publicly available are:

- host organisation;
- name and gender of Fellow;
- project titles.

Personal data will not be used for any purposes other than those stated above, nor will any additional data other than that stated above be disclosed to any third party.

Career Path Tracking

STFC is keen to track the careers of its former Fellows and may undertake detailed studies of the career paths followed by Fellows several years after their fellowship has been completed. Such studies inform policy decisions affecting STFC's fellowship programme.

Fellows should be aware that STFC will maintain their details on a database for the purpose of contacting them for assistance with future career path studies.

Organisations are encouraged to register their fellowship data with the Information Commissioner in a way that will allow it to be released for career path tracking exercises, as this will help STFC in tracing former Fellows.

Equality of Opportunity

STFC seeks to reflect its equality of opportunity policy in the arrangements and conditions which apply to the staff posts, fellowships and postgraduate studentships it funds through research grants and awards.

In order to ensure that this policy is put into practice, STFC:

- will review objectives for equality of opportunity as part of the annual business planning process and report on progress in its annual report;
- may collect and analyse data on the gender, ethnic origin and age of STFC supported Fellows to monitor the effectiveness of its policies and initiatives.

In fulfilling its mission to promote the public understanding of science, engineering and technology, STFC will aim to involve and communicate with all sections of the community.