

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships for 2026 Entry at UBEL DTP Frequently Asked Questions for Applicants

Launching Wednesday 1 April 2026 12:00
Application deadline: Monday 1 June 2026 23:59

These FAQs are specific to the Postdoctoral Fellowships for 2026 Entry at the UBEL DTP and should be read in addition to those provided by the ESRC about the Postdoctoral Fellowships scheme.

Many of the answers below relate to arrangements UBEL DTP is putting in place to manage the condensed application period that is available for the 2026 competition.

Stages and timeline for applications for 2026

What are the application stages and deadlines I need to be aware of?

The application stages and deadlines are listed below. Dates in bold are particularly crucial to applicants during the Fellowships application process. The hard deadline of **1 June 2026 23:59** for the Full application has been agreed with the ESRC and applies to all DTPs.

Stages **one** and **two** apply to all eligible applicants.

Stage **three** applies to applicants invited to interview.

Stage **four** applies to the five successful candidates following interview. Please refer to the relevant sections in these FAQs for more information about each stage.

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship Call opens	1 April 2026 12:00
Stage 1 - Pre-registration Deadline for applicants at UBEL DTP	18 May 2026 23:59
Stage 2 - Full application Deadline to DTPs (agreed with ESRC)	1 June 2026 23:59
Stage 3 - Interviews for shortlisted applicants at UBEL DTP	19 June 2026
Stage 4 - Successful candidates submit ESRC application internally	30 June 2026
Offer letters issued by ESRC	Mid-August 2026
Fellowships start date	1 October 2026
Completion of full-time Fellowships	30 June 2027
Completion of part-time Fellowships	31 March 2028

Start Date of Postdoctoral Fellowships for 2026

When does the Fellowship start?

1 October 2026. Full-time Fellowships must be completed by 30 June 2027, so it will not be possible to start later than this.

I have an employment contract that finishes later than 1 October 2026 – can I defer my start date?

This will not be possible. We have been advised by the ESRC that full-time Fellowships must be completed by 30 June 2027 and the nine month awards give Postdoctoral Fellowship holders a better opportunity to focus on the activities they have identified in their application.

Duration of 2026 Fellowships at UBEL DTP

How many Postdoctoral Fellowships are available at UBEL DTP for 2026 entry?

There will be five awards of nine months each.

Can I apply for a longer or shorter Fellowship than nine months?

No. We have been advised by the ESRC that full-time Fellowships must be completed by 30 June 2027, so this does not allow for a longer award. We are not offering shorter awards, as the nine month awards give Postdoctoral Fellowship holders a better opportunity to focus on the activities they have identified in their application.

Are other DTPs offering Fellowships of a different duration?

The different DTPs will be offering awards that are appropriate for them, but no individual award can be longer than nine months because full-time Fellowships must be completed by 30 June 2027.

Can I apply for a Postdoctoral Fellowship at more than one DTP?

Only one full Fellowship application may be made to a single DTP. Candidates may apply for more than Preliminary stage where a DTP offers this, but only one full application to a single DTP will be accepted. DTPs will share the names of applicants and the research organisation where they obtained their PhD with each other. If you are found to have submitted more than full application, all of your applications will be withdrawn from further consideration. You will be confirming your acceptance of this when submitting your full application.

Making your application for a Postdoctoral Fellowship at UBEL DTP

How do I apply for a Postdoctoral Fellowship at UBEL DTP?

You need to make your application on our SurveyMonkey applications platform. Applications will not be accepted via any other route. The link to the application will be on UBEL DTP's Postdoctoral page on our website: <https://ubel-dtp.ac.uk/postdoctoral-fellowships/>

Before registering for an account on the platform, please read the Pre-registration form to check you are eligible to apply for a Postdoctoral Fellowship. The form is available on our website <https://ubel-dtp.ac.uk/postdoctoral-fellowships/> and, if you plan to make an application, will need to be completed on the SurveyMonkey applications platform before the full Postdoctoral Fellowships application form becomes available to you for completion.

Please see the **Pre-registration** section below for further information.

Stage 1: Pre-registration

When does the Pre-registration window close?

It closes on **Monday 18 May 23:59 (BST)**. You must have done both of the following by then:

- Completed the Pre-Registration form on the SurveyMonkey applications platform by being able to answer Yes to all the questions. This will make the Postdoctoral Fellowships application form available to you for completion;
- Started your UBEL DTP Postdoctoral Fellowships application form.

Can I see what questions the Pre-registration form asks before I register for a SurveyMonkey account?

Yes. The form is available as a document for reference on our website here <https://ubel-dtp.ac.uk/postdoctoral-fellowships/> so that you can check whether you are eligible to apply.

Can I submit the Pre-registration form by email to UBEL DTP?

No. The form must be completed on SurveyMonkey and is connected to your Postdoctoral Fellowships application form, which becomes available once you complete the Pre-registration form on the platform. The document on our website showing the Pre-registration form is for reference only to assist you in checking whether you are eligible to apply.

I've missed the Pre-registration window – can an exception be made for me to access the Postdoctoral Fellowships application form?

This will not be possible due to the condensed application window.

Stage 2: Postdoctoral Fellowships Application Form

Which documents do I need to submit alongside the Postdoctoral Fellowships application form?

You need to submit the following:

- Mandatory Attachments 1-4 as listed on pages 6-8 of the ESRC's Postdoctoral Call document
- A Gantt chart setting out your plan of activities and timeline (mandatory for UBEL DTP)

- Statement from your Mentor
- Statement from your Head of Department
- Academic Reference
- Costings spreadsheet 2a (in consultation with your academic department)

Where necessary you may also need to submit the following:

- Optional attachments 5-7 listed on pages 8-9 of the ESRC's Postdoctoral Call document

What are the eligibility requirements for having passed my viva voce?

Please read page 4 of the ESRC's Postdoctoral FAQ document.

What does 'active postdoctoral experience' mean?

Please read pages 4-5 of the ESRC's Postdoctoral FAQ document.

Can my mentor or department support more than one Postdoctoral applicant?

Yes, although this will vary among different mentors and departments, so it's important that you check with them. Applicants themselves can still only make one Postdoctoral Fellowship application to a single DTP, as outlined near the bottom of page two of this document.

What is the deadline for submitting the Postdoctoral Fellowships Application Form?

This is a hard deadline of **Monday 1 June 23:59 (BST)** and has been agreed by the ESRC and all of the DTPs. As well as submitting your application form on SurveyMonkey, your application must include all of the mandatory attachments listed above, as well as the optional ones where necessary.

Stage 3: Interviews for shortlisted candidates

How many applicants will be invited to interview and when will they take place?

We will invite eight shortlisted applicants to interview on **Friday 19 June 2026**.

When will I know if I've been invited to interview?

We will inform shortlisted applicants by **Friday 12 June 2026**.

Will it be possible to be interviewed on another date?

Unfortunately not. Due to the condensed application period and staff availability, we have identified **19 June** as the most appropriate date. There are also a number of internal requirements at UBEL institutions for the form required at Stage four (below), as well as checking and confirming awards by the ESRC to ensure a start date of 1 October 2026.

What format will the interview take?

The interview will be held online, lasting around 30 minutes, and will include a five-minute

presentation. Interviews will be scheduled to take place between 10:00-17:00 UK time.

When will I know the outcome of the interview?

We will inform candidates (successful and unsuccessful) by the end of the day on **22 June 2026** and we will nominate reserve candidates where possible.

What do I do next if I am successful at interview?

We will ask you to confirm as quickly as possible that you wish to accept your nomination for a Fellowship and ask you to complete the application to the ESRC. See Stage four below.

Stage 4: Completing your application to the ESRC

Why do I need to complete another application form to the ESRC?

This is so that the grant can be issued to your host institution. The application is made on The Funding Service, the UKRI's system for applying for the grant.

Does this mean there is another layer of approval for my application at this stage?

No, but the ESRC will check your eligibility and the remit of your programme at work. They will also check your mandatory attachments and costings.

Who do I need to contact at my institution when completing the form?

This will usually be the person in your academic department who helped you with your costings at the Full application stage, but please contact UBEL DTP ubel-dtp@ucl.ac.uk if you are unsure.

What is UBEL DTP's deadline for submitting the form to The Funding Service?

The deadline at UBEL DTP is **30 June 2026 at 16:00**. This deadline allows departmental staff at the UBEL DTP institutions to check the form and refer back to you with any queries. Your form may also need to be checked and submitted to ESRC by staff in central services in the institutions, and this deadline allows time for that before ESRC's own deadline of **23 July 2026**.