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

Launching Tuesday 10 November 2026 16:00

Application deadlines:
Pre-registration: Friday 18 December 2026 23:59
Preliminary: Friday 22 January 2027 23:59
Full: Tuesday 23 March 2027 23:59

These FAQs are specific to the Postdoctoral Fellowships for 2027 Entry at the UBEL DTP and should be read in addition to those provided by the ESRC about the Postdoctoral Fellowships scheme.

Stages and timeline for applications for 2027

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 application deadline of **23 March 2027 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 submit a Full application.
Stage **four** applies to applicants invited to interview.
Stage **five** applies to the five successful candidates following interview. Please refer to the relevant sections in these FAQs for more information about each stage.

Application timeline for Fellowships for 2027 entry

DTP Postdoctoral Fellowship Call opens	**10 November 2026 14:00**
Stage 1 - Pre-registration Deadline for applicants at UBEL DTP	**18 Dec 2026 23:59**
Stage 2 – Preliminary Deadline for applicants at UBEL DTP	**22 Jan 2027 23:59**
Stage 3 - Full application Deadline to DTPs (set by ESRC)	**23 March 2027 23:59**
Stage 4 - Interviews for shortlisted applicants at UBEL DTP	**14 or 21 May 2027**
Stage 5 - Successful candidates submit ESRC application on TFS	**30 June 2027**
Offer letters issued by ESRC	Mid-August 2027

Fellowships start date	1 October 2027
Completion of full-time Fellowships	30 June 2028
Completion of part-time Fellowships	31 March 2029

Start Date of Postdoctoral Fellowships for 2027

When does the Fellowship start?
1 October 2027. Full-time Fellowships must be completed by 30 June 2028, so it will not be possible to start later than this.

I have an employment contract that finishes later than 1 October 2027 – 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 2028 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 2027 Fellowships at UBEL DTP

How many Postdoctoral Fellowships are available at UBEL DTP for 2027 entry?
There will be four 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 2028, 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 2028.

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 one 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 is 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 **Friday 18 December 2026 23:59 (GMT)**. 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 Preliminary application form available to you for completion;
- Started your UBEL DTP Postdoctoral Fellowships Preliminary 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 Preliminary 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 academic review timelines for the Fellowships.

Stage 2: Postdoctoral Fellowships Preliminary Application Form

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 earlier in this document.

What is the deadline for submitting the Postdoctoral Fellowships Preliminary Application Form?
This is **Friday 22 January 2027 23:59 (GMT)** and has been agreed by the ESRC and all of the DTPs. Due to the academic review timelines for the Fellowships, it will not be possible to extend this deadline. You must ensure you have submitted your Pre-registration application **and** started your Preliminary application by the previous deadline of 18 December 2026 23:59

Stage 3: Postdoctoral Fellowships Full Application Form

Are the "Letter of Support from your Mentor" and the "Mentor Statement and Summary CV" two separate documents?

Yes. These are two distinct documents.

- Letter of Support from your Mentor: This document should focus on the specific applicant, outlining their proposed plans and explaining how the mentor will support them. This letter will therefore vary between applicants.
- Mentor Statement and Summary CV: This document is focused on the mentor themselves, including their background and suitability as a mentor. It would generally remain the same across different applicants mentored by the same academic.

Can my PhD supervisor provide the academic reference if they are also acting as a secondary mentor?
Yes. If your PhD supervisor is acting as a secondary mentor but is not providing the mentor statement, they may still provide the academic reference.

Do I need to provide information about the costings of my Fellowship?
Yes – you need to provide this on the Justification of Resources attachment. There are more details of the requirements on pages 3-4 of the ESRC Call document. You do not need to complete the spreadsheet about this as in previous years and only the four nominated Fellows will need to provide more detailed costings with the help of their departments around mid-May 2027.

Stage 4: 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 14 or 21 May 2027** (date to be confirmed).

When will I know if I've been invited to interview?
We will inform shortlisted applicants by **Friday 30 April 2026**.

Will it be possible to be interviewed on another date?
Unfortunately not. Due to the application timelines and staff availability, we have identified **the dates above** as the most appropriate . There are also a number of internal requirements at UBEL institutions for the form required at Stage five (below), as well as checking and confirming awards by the ESRC to ensure a start date of 1 October 2027.

What format will the interview take?
The interview will be held online, lasting around 30 minutes, and will include a five-minute presentation using slides. 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 **21 or 28 May** 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 five below.

Stage 5: 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 (TFS), 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 postgraduate administrator or finance officer in your academic department, but please contact UBEL DTP **ubel-dtp@ucl.ac.uk** if you are unsure.

What is the deadline for submitting the form to The Funding Service?
The ESRC deadline is **30 June 2027 at 16:00**. Your department is responsible for submitting your form via TFS and they may have their own internal deadlines ahead of the ESRC deadline of 30 June, so it's important that you this check with them. Your form may also need to be checked and submitted to ESRC by staff in central services in the institutions, which needs to be built into the timeline ahead of ESRC's own deadline of **30 June 2027**.