



Royal Society

**Faraday
Discovery Fellowships**

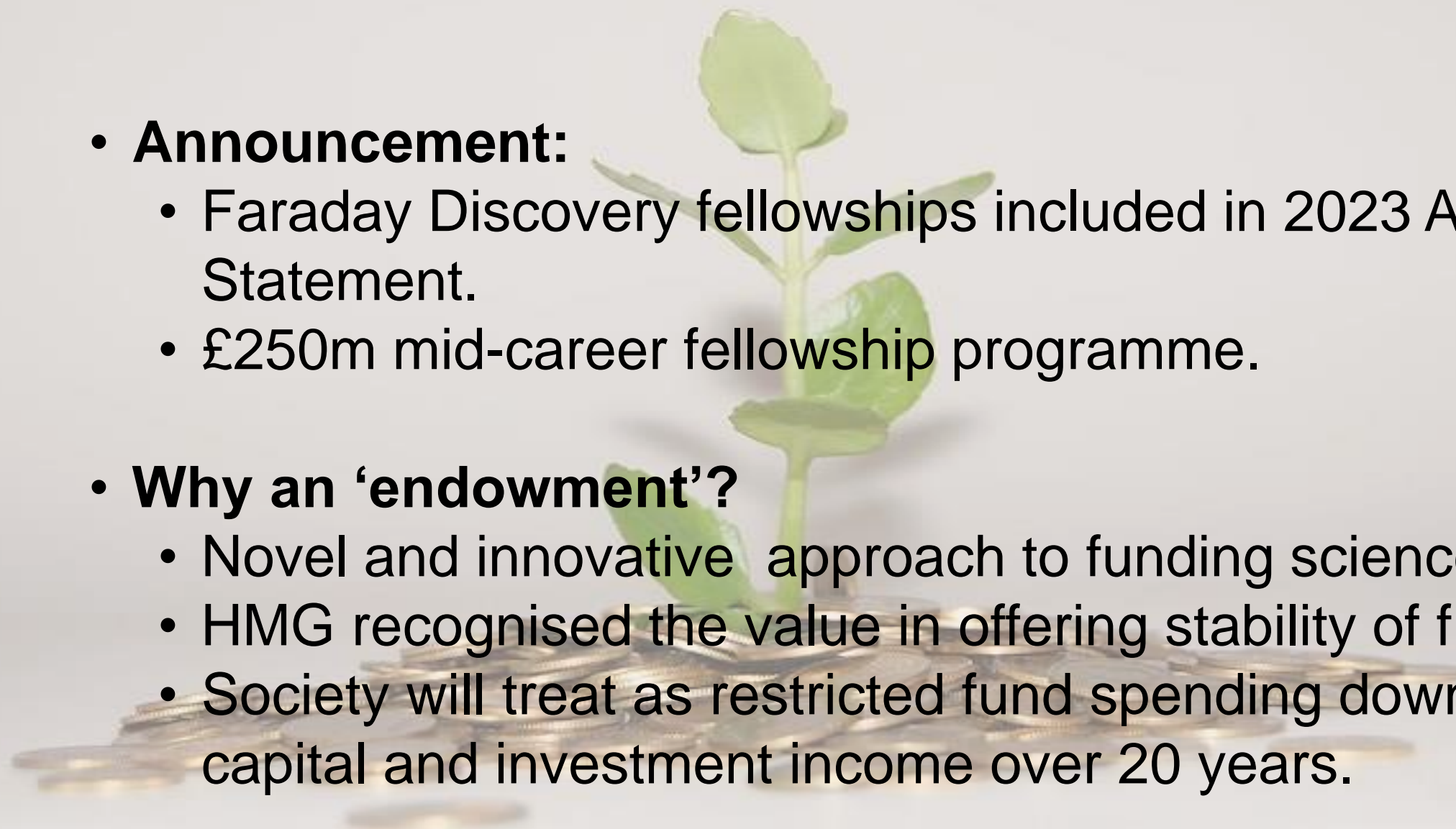
A guide for universities

Background



- **Mid-career gap** – Increasing support for mid-career researchers long standing strategic aim for RS.
- **Faraday Fellowships** – first pitched to government in 2019 spending review (unsuccessfully).
- **Pioneer** – Faraday Fellowships was proposed as an alternative to ERC consolidator grants.
- **Following association** – Government suggested that some elements may still be funded in future.
- **New Fund** – DSIT approach the RS about possibility of an alternative funding model in Oct 2023.

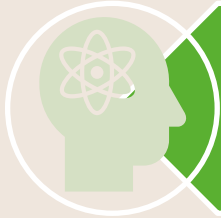
The Fund

- 
- **Announcement:**
 - Faraday Discovery fellowships included in 2023 Autumn Statement.
 - £250m mid-career fellowship programme.
 - **Why an ‘endowment’?**
 - Novel and innovative approach to funding science.
 - HMG recognised the value in offering stability of funding
 - Society will treat as restricted fund spending down all capital and investment income over 20 years.

Advantages



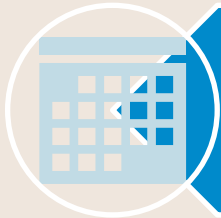
Greater certainty of funding



Greater flexibility for grant holders



Reduced bureaucracy



More flexible start dates and spend profile

Faraday Discovery Fellowships - Aims

- Support UK and emerging international research leaders to be based in the UK
- Fund high-quality original research
- Develop world leading research groups/teams in the UK
- Train the next generation

What should a mid-career fellowship provide?



Long-term, stable funding to allow researchers to tackle the most challenging research questions.



Called a fellowship but provides resources to establish an outstanding team of researchers led by single PI.



Time and freedom to focus on research without distractions.



Focus on long-term outputs and impact.

Faraday Discovery Fellowships

Mid-Career PI
and their group

up to £8 million
over 10 years

Natural
Sciences and
Engineering

Training and
Mentoring

Costs of
collaboration

Flexible funding
and researcher
led

What is mid-career?

10- 20 years research experience post-PhD (*exceptional candidates with fewer years' experience will be considered). Candidates who have had changes in discipline or research direction, or time working on industrial research, are welcome to apply. As standard, career breaks and non-linear career paths will be taken into consideration.*

- **Be a recognised research leader** within their field with experience of managing significant research grants as the Principal Investigator. We would expect candidates to have experience of managing a research group, which should include training and supervising PhD students and junior staff.
- **Demonstrate significant and original research contributions** - The Principal Investigator should have an exceptional track record of outputs commensurate with their research experience and be able to demonstrate significant research contributions in the last 10 years.
- **Be well-established internationally** – Candidates should have well-established international networks and plans to consolidate their independence to become international research leaders in their field.
- **Demonstrate wider contributions to research, research impact and research culture** – for example public engagement, schools' engagement, knowledge exchange, industry collaboration, team leadership, commercialisation or broader business activity, peer review and committee membership.

Faraday Fellowships – Who can apply?

- **All Nationalities** – for applicants wishing to conduct research in a UK university/eligible organisation
- **Academic researchers** – HEI or not-for-profit research host organisations
- **Academics in collaboration with industry partners***
- **Academics with joint UK-International appointments****

Eligible research

- **Priority areas** – The programme will **not** operate thematic priorities.
- **STEM** – As with all RS funding the programme will fund research across the whole of STEM.
- **Examples** – We have suggested examples of research areas that might be supported.
- **Just examples** – These are just examples and will not be considered during the assessment process.

Frontiers of Science

An abstract digital background featuring concentric circles and various data patterns, including binary code and geometric shapes, in shades of blue and white.

Science for Resilience & Prosperity

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, green tree with its roots and soil. The background is a blurred green field.

The programme will not operate thematic priorities

Examples of areas may include:

Frontiers of Science

- quantum
- materials
- earth observation
- engineering biology
- understanding the microbial world

Science for Resilience and Prosperity

- net zero
- waste
- future telecoms
- scarce resources
- protecting planetary life support systems
- life in extreme environmental conditions
- science and engineering of cutting-edge technologies (such as batteries, AI, quantum technologies)

Faraday Discovery Fellowships



Up to £8m



10 years



approx. 7 per year for the
next 7 years



Eligible Costs

Start-up
costs

Research
Costs

Staff Costs &
Research
Students

Training
Costs

Equipment
Costs

Knowledge
Transfer
Costs

Inter-
disciplinary
Costs

Relocation
Costs

Public &
Schools
Engagement

Faraday Fellowships – Flexibility



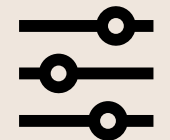
Portability of awards



Policies for Maternity, Paternity, Shared parental leave, adoptive and extended sick leave



PIs who require flexibility may hold the award on a part-time basis and buy in additional resources to meet the research objectives



Reasonable adjustments to support researchers with disabilities are an eligible cost

Faraday Fellowships – Career Development



Networking and Engagement – programme of support and engagement for researchers and their teams



Enabling Collaborations – international, with industry, with disciplines outside of STEM



Training – bespoke training for the PI plus access to the standard portfolio of RS training for the PI and staff

Commitments from the Host Organisation



Faraday Discovery Fellowships – Application process

Stage 1

- Outline application – CV and research vision
- Initial assessment by Committee
- Longlisting of candidates to be invited to submit a full application
- No Outline Costing

Stage 2

- Full application
- Committee assessment and shortlisting for independent peer review
- Independent peer review
- Applicant response to independent peer review
- Committee Meeting, recommendations for funding agreed
- Applicants are notified of outcomes

Faraday Fellowships – important dates*

Action	Dates (*tbc)
Scheme Documents Published	1 st May 2024
Open/Close dates for Stage 1 outline applications	14 th Aug / 2 nd Oct 2024
Applicants notified of Stage 1 decision	22 nd Nov 2024
Open/Close dates for Stage 2 applications	28 th Nov 2024 / 6 th Feb 2025
Shortlisted applicants respond to independent peer review	28 th Apr – 9 th May 2025
Applicants notified of funding decision	June/July 2025
Awards start	From October 2025

Future Rounds

Round	Stage 1 Opening	Stage 2 Opening	Awards start
2025 (Round 1)	14 August 2024	28 November 2024	October 2025
2026 (Round 2)	August 2025	November 2025	October 2026
2027 (Round 3)	August 2026	November 2026	October 2027
2028 (Round 4)	August 2027	November 2027	October 2028
2029 (Round 5)	August 2028	November 2028	October 2029

Contact details



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