

# 2026 Brain & Mental Health Sciences Fellowships

## Invitation to Apply

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### Overview

Thanks to a generous benefaction we are pleased to offer a Fellowship scheme to support the careers of promising emerging researchers in brain and mental health sciences within the University of Oxford.

Applications are invited from early- or mid-career researchers who require protected time to develop their research portfolio to the point of a successful application for an externally funded fellowship, or to build a sustainable independent programme of research.

### Purpose of the scheme

This scheme is particularly aimed at researchers who have experienced disruption to their research or career progression. The scheme is open to clinical and non-clinical researchers. Applications are welcomed from researchers at different career stages whose circumstances may not align with traditional measures of academic progression.

In making awards, the panel will take account of career stage and trajectory, including delays or disruption to career progression due to personal circumstances. This can include parental responsibilities, caring responsibilities, health conditions, or other personal circumstances that create a need for funding flexibility. There is no specific timeframe for career breaks or disruptions. The panel seeks to support researchers whose career trajectory may have been impeded by personal circumstances.

### Funding available

The scheme will provide salary support and some research expenses for up to four years, depending on need. Research expenses of up to £25k per year, in addition to applicant salary, will be considered.

The precise level and duration of salary support will be considered in relation to the applicant's needs, proposed career development plan, and departmental context.

### Eligibility and departmental context

Any research conducted within the broad field of brain and mental health science will be eligible. Applicants must have an appropriate departmental affiliation within the University of Oxford.

Candidates must already hold a PhD and are expected to take up the funding within six months of the award.

### Evidence of career trajectory

Candidates should be able to demonstrate that they are on track for an independent research career. Relevant evidence may include research grant income as PI or Co-I, experience of supervision, a strong publication record, and evidence of research leadership, for example as joint or sole senior author.

These criteria will be assessed in the context of each applicant's career stage and individual circumstances.

## **Assessment criteria**

Applications will be assessed on the applicant's research track record in relation to career stage and circumstances; evidence of potential for research independence; the quality, feasibility and significance of the proposed research; the case for how the fellowship will support career progression; and fit with the aims of the scheme.

## **How to apply and deadline**

Applicants should submit a single Word or PDF application document, using the application form provided. The form sets out the required sections, section order, page and word limits, and formatting instructions. Additional attachments should not be submitted and may not be included in the panel papers.

Page and word limits apply to the applicant response only and do not include section titles, headers or guidance notes in the application form.

Applications should be sent by email to Valerie West ([valerie.west@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:valerie.west@psych.ox.ac.uk)) by midday on Monday 27 July 2026.

## **Shortlisting & Interviews**

Shortlisted applicants will notified in August and invited to interview on 15 September 2026.

## **Questions**

If you have any questions about the application instructions or other aspects of the application process, please contact Valerie West ([valerie.west@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:valerie.west@psych.ox.ac.uk)).