

UKRI Turing AI Pioneer Interdisciplinary Fellowships 2025

Outline Stage

Eligibility requirements and internal EoI process

Background

The University can submit a **maximum of four** outline applications as lead organisation. This document outlines UKRI's eligibility requirements and describes the internal Expression of Interest (EoI) process for selection of University of Reading candidates. For further details of the call please refer to UKRI's [Turing AI Pioneer Interdisciplinary Fellowships](#) scheme page.

1. Scheme requirements and eligibility criteria

Please check that you are eligible to apply according to the funder's eligibility criteria, which can be accessed in full [here](#), but are summarised below.

Applicants can apply from any research domain across UKRI's entire remit.

You can apply for a Turing AI Pioneer Interdisciplinary Fellowship if:

- you are an established researcher without a background in core AI research
- you would benefit from the time and flexibility the fellowship will afford you to build domain relevant AI skills and capability
- you have a vision for how the development of advanced AI systems and approaches could enable potentially transformative new avenues in your research and that of your broader community.

Those not eligible to apply are:

- researchers not hosted by an eligible research organisation
- applicants with a background in core AI research. For example, a researcher from a core AI research discipline, or a researcher who has spent most of their career working on development of frontier AI models

Uninvited resubmissions of projects that have been submitted to UKRI or any other funder are not allowed.

International researchers can only apply as 'project co-lead (international)' as part of an application making use of the [UKRI-RCN Money Follows Cooperation agreement](#) or [UKRI-IIASA agreement](#).

The fellowship must start on 01 October 2026. It is expected that successful fellows will focus primarily on their research and, on average, a minimum of 50% full time equivalent (FTE) commitment is expected over the lifetime of the award.

Applicants should collaborate with an established AI specialist or researcher and are expected to have identified and worked with the collaborator on the outline application. **You are required to let us know by**

12noon on Monday 11th August who your collaborator will be – see the ‘Internal timeline for all applications’ below.

Fellows should build strong relationships and cross-sector collaborations with potential end users of their research to drive their research direction.

Fellows should have access to one or more mentors from their host organisation who can support the fellow’s personal development, for example in leadership skills, team coordination, and project management. You are expected to have approached and secured a mentor prior to submitting the Eol.

2. Internal Eol process

This Eol process is intended to identify applications that stand a realistic chance of success and can be supported through the submission process. All candidates will receive feedback on their proposal outline, regardless of the outcome. It is therefore intended that this will be a supportive and constructive process.

The success of a fellowship proposal will depend strongly on the academic record of the applicant, which should be appropriate to their career stage. Fellowship proposal outlines will be considered on the strength of ideas and feasibility, while recognising that applicants will still have some time to improve presentation, prior to submission ahead of the funder deadline.

Internal timeline for all applications

- **By 12noon on Monday 11 August 2025:** email fellowships@reading.ac.uk with your intent to submit an Eol (you do not need to submit the Eol by this date) and also:
 - Provide the name of the AI specialist or researcher that you will be working with
 - Provide the name of your mentor, if possible
- **By 12noon on Monday 01 September 2025:** email your completed Eol (see template on next pages) to fellowships@reading.ac.uk and also:
 - Confirm that you have discussed this with your HoS/HoD and secured their permission for your application regarding the funder’s requirement for fellows’ time on this project (which must be a minimum of 50% FTE over the duration of the award)
 - Confirm that you have discussed your application with both your RDL and your RDM prior to submitting the Eol

These documents will be reviewed by relevant academic colleagues.

If you require this document in a different format please contact fellowships@reading.ac.uk

Proposal outline template:

General information

- Project title
- Please nominate one or more mentor(s); at least one should be based at the University of Reading. [NB Mentors should not be co-investigators. They could be from outside of the applicant's immediate field of expertise to assess the clarity of the application, or from within the field to help develop the science. There is an expectation that you will have engaged with your mentor(s), if possible, prior to submitting the EoI and that they will have read the EoI before it is submitted. Please note that we may contact mentors to ask them to provide written feedback on EoIs, after submission.]

Outline Vision and Approach (maximum of 2 sides of A4, single-spaced in 11-point Arial with margins of at least 2cm)

Explain how your proposed work:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
- is timely given current trends, context and needs
- impacts world-leading research, society, the economy, or the environment
- meets the strategic aims of the funding opportunity

References may be included within this section.

You may demonstrate elements of your responses in visual form if relevant.

Within the Vision section we also expect you to:

- demonstrate a clear vision of how AI will be embedded in your research within and beyond the fellowship and the benefits this will bring to your career as well as enhancing the broader adoption of AI in your research domain
- outline why the integration of AI enables potentially transformative new approaches to tackling your chosen research challenge
- identify the potential direct or indirect benefits and who the beneficiaries might be
- outline how you have or will co-create and collaboratively deliver the programme with non-academic partners or stakeholders to ensure your research will benefit the wider society and economy

For the Approach, explain how are you going to deliver your proposed work?

- is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives

Within the Approach section we also expect you to explain how you will:

- effectively initiate, develop, build and sustain relationships with your AI collaborator and partners across sectors to ensure you have the right expertise and structures in place to deliver on your vision
- undertake a clear plan for professional development, both in terms of developing technical AI skills and other softer skills (e.g. leadership, collaboration, entrepreneurship, mentorship, communication), identifying and pursuing potential training opportunities which will enhance and accelerate your learning

Outline applicant and team capability to deliver (max 500 words)

Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team, have:

- relevant research experience and skills to develop and deliver the proposed research programme
- planned to identify and embed additional expertise where gaps in the team exist

Within the applicant and team capability section we also expect you to explain how you have:

- potential to meet the expectations of a Turing AI pioneer interdisciplinary fellow as stated in the 'What we are looking for' section
- potential to develop a position of leadership in the national and international research community, championing broader inclusive AI use in their research community

The core leadership team should consist of the fellow and the project co-leads identified on the outline proposal. There will be scope to expand this team and include new collaborators on the full application, and you will be able to add further detail.

Showcase the range of relevant skills you and, if relevant, your team (fellow and project co-leads, researchers, technicians, specialists, partners and so on) have and how this will help deliver the proposed work.

UKRI has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on the Funding Service.

[The roles in funding applications policy](#) has descriptions of the different project roles.
