



# Funding Opportunities for Early Career Scientists

**Kate Emond**

Grants Adviser

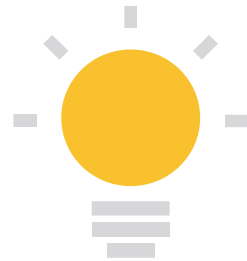
[k.emond@wellcome.ac.uk](mailto:k.emond@wellcome.ac.uk)



# Our strategic approach

Wellcome exists to **improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive.**

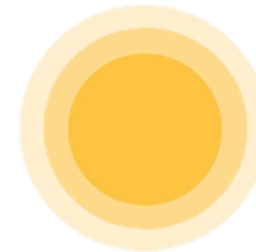
We support scientists and researchers, **take on big problems, fuel imaginations and spark debate.**



**Advancing ideas**  
We support great ideas and inspired thinking



**Seizing opportunities**  
We bring ideas together to make a difference

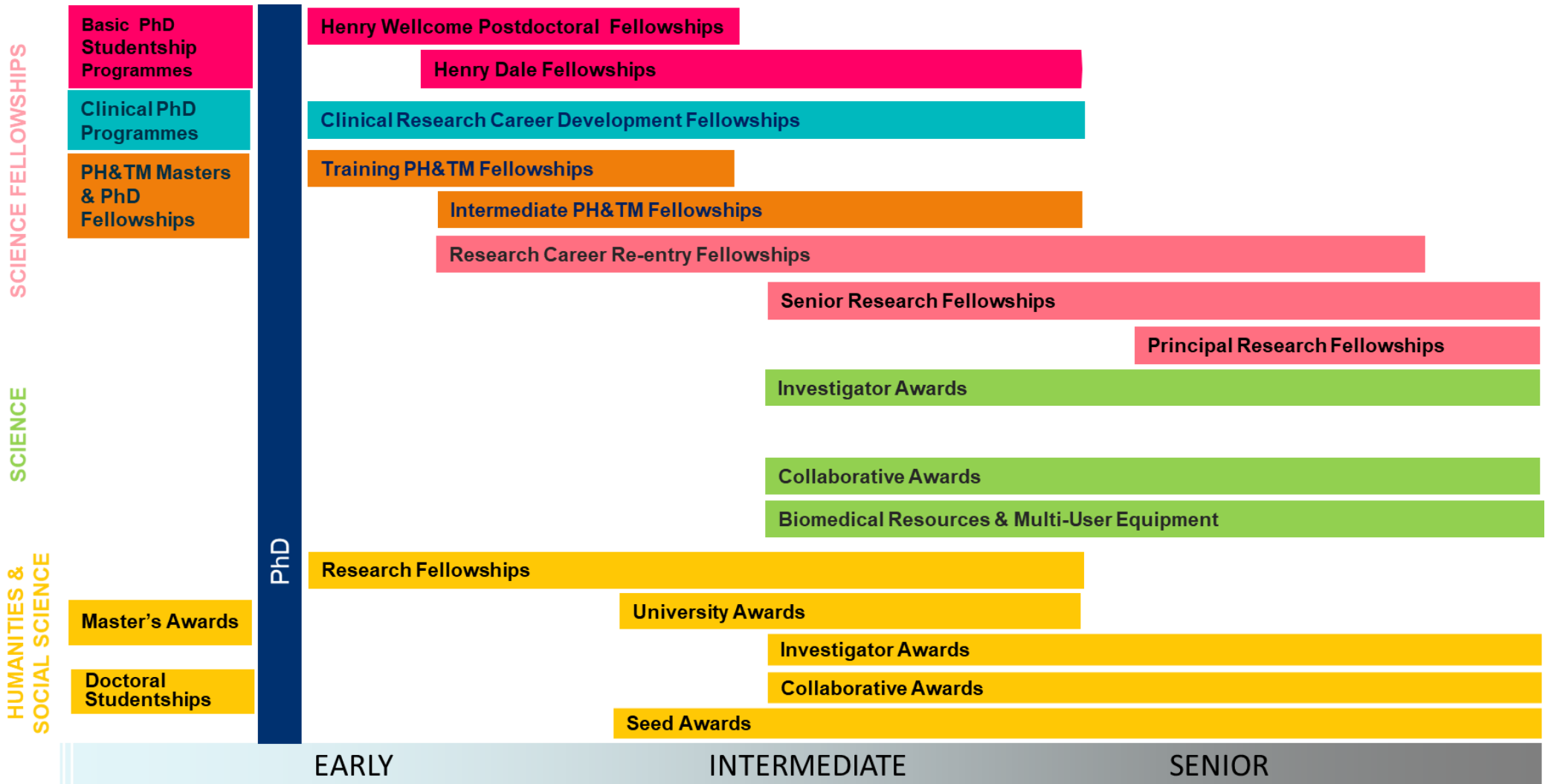


**Driving reform**  
We change ways of working so more ideas can flourish



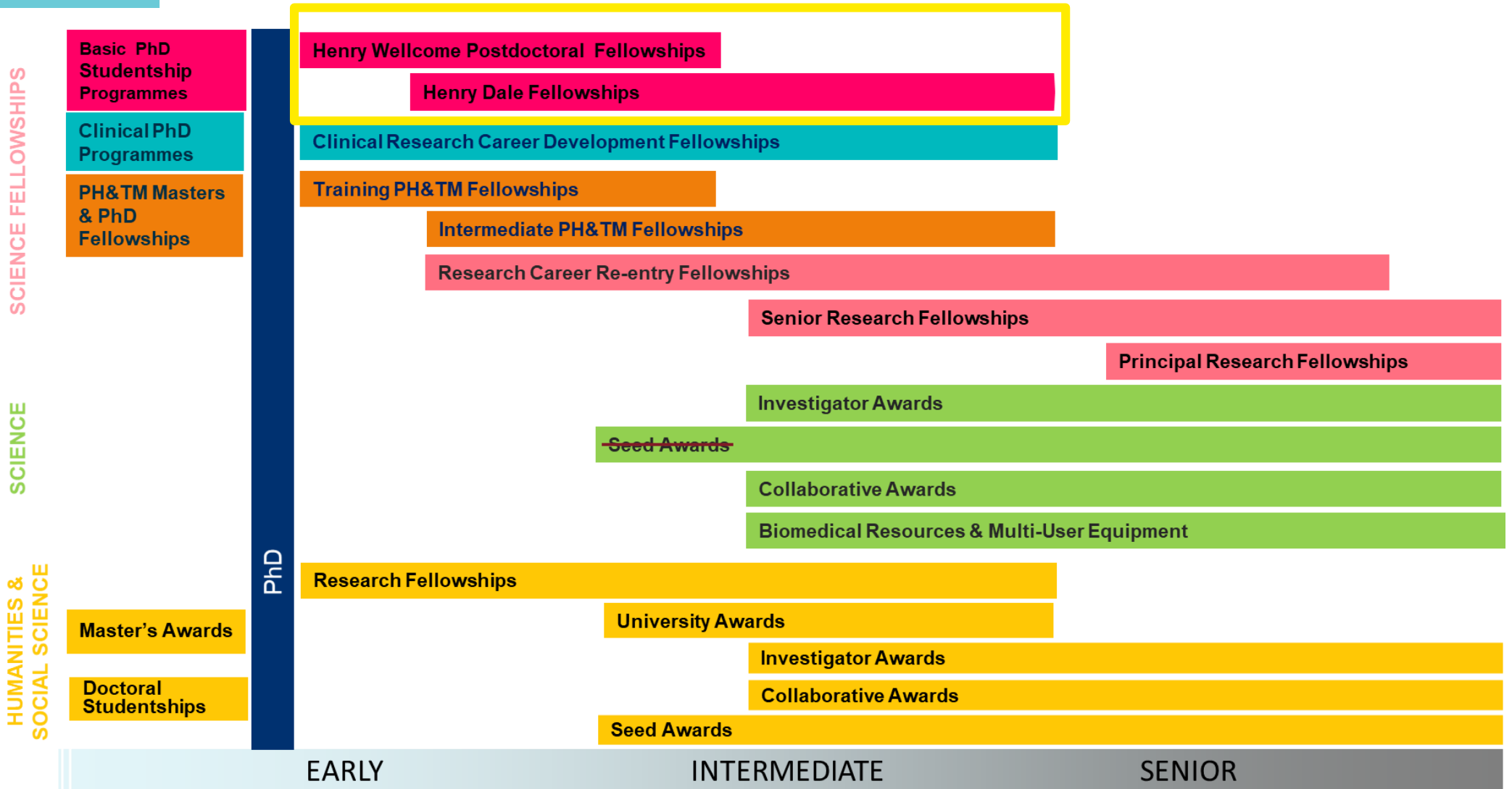


# Science funding





# Science funding





# Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship



# Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship

**For postdoctoral researchers who want to undertake a guided period of research and will go on to lead their own independent research.**

Career stage: Aimed at the best **recently qualified postdoctoral researchers**, who are starting to make important contributions to research

Level of funding: **£300,000**, including salary, fellowship supplement (£2,500) and research expenses

Duration of funding: 4 years

We consider applications twice a year; Spring and Autumn period





# Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship

- **Eligibility:**
  - You must either be in the **final year of your PhD studies** or be **an early-career researcher** with some initial postdoctoral experience.
  - You must have an eligible sponsoring organisation in the UK or Republic of Ireland that will administer the fellowship for the full duration of the award.
  - **Either:**
    - Be a UK or European Economic Area national
    - Have, or expect to have, a PhD from a UK or Republic of Ireland university



# Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship

## What is expected of a Henry Fellow:

- Expand your research horizons and develop your **scientific independence** so that you can become a **leader** in the field.
- The idea for the research project should be **yours** and you should drive the development of your proposal, although you can take advice from research sponsors and mentors.
- The scope of your proposal should be **broader** than that of a typical postdoctoral position. It should enable you to explore a research area that will set you apart from your research sponsors
- We expect you to think about your **long-term vision** and the **skills** and **competencies** you'll need.

## At the end of the Henry Fellowship you should show:

- You have the potential to be an **independent leader** in your area of research
- You have the **skills** and **experience** to apply for more advanced (intermediate level) funding schemes.





# Sir Henry Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship

## What we review

- Your **research contributions**
- The **quality** and **importance** of your research question(s)
- Your **knowledge** of the scientific area
- The **feasibility** of your proposal
- The **suitability** of your choice of research **sponsors** and environments
- Your **vision** of how this fellowship will contribute to your career development.



# Assessment process – Key Features



- Application process takes approximately **7 months**, from prelim application to decision.
- 2 rounds a year. **Next prelim deadlines: 29 September 2020**
- Details of the Basic Science Interview Committee which reviews full applications and interviews candidates is available on our website:

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/basic-science-interview-committee>





# Sir Henry Dale Fellowship



# Sir Henry Dale Fellowship

**For postdoctoral researchers who aim to become independent scientists leading their own groups.**

- In partnership with the Royal Society
- Aimed at **experienced researchers** who are ready to **start building an independent research programme**
- Candidates will have:
  - already made intellectual contributions to research, and be able to demonstrate their **potential to carry out high quality independent research**
- 5 year award
- **~£500K - £1.2m** including Fellow's salary, 1 additional research post, animals, small items of equipment and other justifiable costs
- Applications 3 times a year





# Sir Henry Dale Fellowship

- **Eligibility:**
  - You're already **driving** your own research and you're ready to **lead an independent research programme**.
  - Have a PhD and significant postdoctoral experience
  - Made **important contributions** to your area of research, eg publications, patents, software development or an impact on policy.
  - Cannot have a **permanent** or **rolling employment contract** (unless good justification for moving organisations)
  - Cannot have held a **similar** nationally competitive fellowship



# Sir Henry Dale Fellowship

## What we review

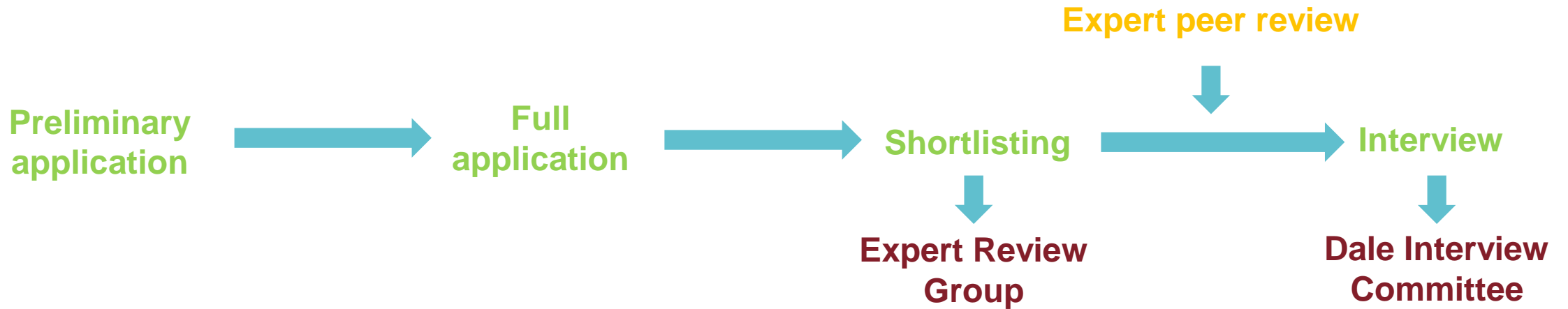
- Your **research contributions**
- The **scientific merit** of your proposed project
- The **significance** of the research
- The **feasibility** of your proposal
- The **suitability** of your **sponsor** and **host environment** for both your research and for the development of your independent career.

## At the end of the Dale Fellowship you should:

- Have achieved **international standing** in your area of research
- Be **leading** your own research programme
- Have the skills and experience to apply for **senior** level fellowships or permanent positions at UK research organisations.



# Assessment process – Key Features



- Application process takes approximately **7 months**, from prelim application to decision.
- 3 rounds a year. **Next prelim deadline: late November/early December 2020**
- Details of the Expert Review Groups, which reviews full applications, and the Sir Henry Dale Interview Committee, which interviews candidates, is available on our website:

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/funding-advisory-committees>





# Senior Research Fellowships





# Senior Research Fellowships

**For established researchers leading their own independent research programme.**

- The programme of work you propose must be **innovative** and **ambitious**.
- You have made **important contributions** to your area of research, eg publications, patents, software development or an impact on policy
- You have an **international reputation** as a research leader in your field
- You have a track record of **sustained research support** from major funding bodies
- You're committed to **developing** and **mentoring** less experienced researchers.





‘Grantsmanship’

# Assessment criteria

- **Person**

- **Track record** for your career stage (taking into account career breaks)
- The candidate's vision of how the funding will contribute to their **career development**
- **Ownership** and **independence**

- **Project**

- Research question (important in field, clear aims, achievable?)
- Approach (rationale, expertise, feasibility)
- Appropriate running costs

- **Place**

- Quality and suitability of the research environment
- Support from your host organisation (space and resources, mentorship, start up costs)
- Choice of research sponsors

# Preparing your application...

- Understand the **purpose of the scheme** to which you wish to apply
- Think carefully about **application timing** – when will you be most competitive?
- Read the application form and **guidance notes** carefully
- Ask for **feedback on your application** from individuals within and outside your field
- Balance **breadth and depth for expert peer reviewers and non-specialist committee members**
- **Plan your budget** – speak with your research support office
- Preparation, preparation, preparation!

# Research proposal tips

- Keep it **focused, original, novel**
- Find the correct balance between **feasibility** and **risk**
- Include **preliminary data** to support your theories
- Include **alternative strategies** should the original ideas fail
- Use **diagrams** where appropriate
- Cite appropriate studies
- Access to required **collaborations, resources and technology**

# Avoid common mistakes

- Have you considered the following?
  - Be realistic
  - Submit relevant evidence
  - Be analytical and critical
  - Do not depend on your track record alone
  - Don't assume reviewers will know what you've done – even those in your field
  - Dedicate sufficient time to the project
  - Justify your budget
- **Proof read the application and ask others to read it critically before submission – you will need to give them plenty of time to do this well!**



# Reviewer comments

## *Strong hypothesis/research vision/important research question help define your aims*

- “...this does not appear to be hypothesis driven...there are no specific aims or objectives....”

## *Be realistic about your goals - feasibility*

- “...the work described in this application is over-ambitious, it could not be achieved in the life time of the Principal Investigator...”

## *Relevant experimental approach*

- “...an intriguing hypothesis, however the experiments proposed for testing will not provide unequivocal evidence for or against it...”

## *The importance of a back-up plan*

- “...one weakness in the proposal is that there is no alternative plan should the proposed approach not yield information relevant to the hypothesis proposed...”

# Reviewer comments

## *Persuasive but unbiased arguments are needed*

- “... done a commendable job of marshalling evidence to support their hypothesis, however, the applicant has put aside facts that do not support their point of view...”

## *Preliminary data and appropriate expertise*

- “...it involves techniques with which the applicant appears to have no prior experience and for which no preliminary data are proposed...”

## *Get a second opinion, proof read & spell check*

- “I had only one problem with this application, I had no idea what they were trying to do...”
- “The poor writing, referencing and proof reading of this application significantly detract from its overall quality”



# The interview

- Practice, practice, practice!
- There is no substitute for **mock interviews**
- **Own** the project
- Be familiar with **recent advances** in the field
- Be prepared to provide a **concise summary** of the proposed project and research career to date





# Research Enrichment Funding

**Research Enrichment funding supports activities by Wellcome grant holders that will increase the impact of their work.**

We offer enrichment funding in the following areas:

## **1. Public Engagement**

- *inspire, consult or collaborate with the public about your work*

## **2. Diversity and Inclusion.**

- *trial new approaches to diversity and inclusion*

# Support and flexibility for our researchers

## Flexible research careers

We understand that different people choose different career paths, so we want to provide flexible research career opportunities.

We constantly review the funding and career support we offer our researchers.

## Re-entering a research career

Our [Research Career Re-entry Fellowships](#) offer postdoctoral research scientists the opportunity to re-establish their scientific career after a continuous break from research of at least two years.

The Wellcome Sanger Institute's [Janet Thornton Fellowships](#) help scientists to return to research after a career break of a year or more.

UK universities that receive one of our [Institutional Strategic Support Fund awards](#) can use part of the award to co-fund [Daphne Jackson Trust Fellowships](#).

## Sick leave

If you need to take [sick leave](#), we'll supplement your grant to cover your salary and contribute towards your research costs.

## Maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave

We cover the costs of [maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave](#) for our researchers.

## Support for researchers with caring responsibilities

- Generous maternity/paternity/adoption sick leave supplements and extensions
- Flexible (part-time) working
- Take into account part-time working, 'stop the clock', eligibility for the primary carer (either the mother or father) irrespective of the actual period of paternal leave taken. Each case will be considered individually

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/guidance/flexible-research-careers>



Contact us!!

## General Grant/Application queries

grantenquiries@wellcome.ac.uk



**Kate Emond**  
Grants Adviser

k.emond@wellcome.ac.uk

## Research content or scope of proposal

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/about-us/teams/science-teams>

[www.wellcome.ac.uk](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk)