



RESEARCH,
IMPACT &
ENGAGEMENT
TEAM



John Fell Fund Guidance Notes

Each year, Oxford University Press transfers £5m to the John Fell OUP Research Fund, named after the seventeenth-century 'father' of the modern Press, Dean of Christ Church, Vice-Chancellor and Bishop of Oxford.

The fund aims to foster creativity and a proactive approach to research opportunities in all subject areas, and particularly interdisciplinary fields. It makes seed-corn and start-up grants, and provides staff and funds to stimulate applications to external agencies.

Reports on completed projects indicate that awards made from the John Fell Fund are successfully fulfilling its purpose, leveraging additional funding at a ratio of up to 1:7.

For more information about the Fund, please see the [Fell Fund Website](#)

All applications require your Department's approval before they can be submitted to the division. Please check internal deadlines with your departmental administrator and make sure you allow enough time for the approval process.

BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION, PLEASE USE THE CHECKLIST PROVIDED IN ANNEX 1.

Deadline:

The Fell Fund has three termly rounds of Main and Small Award applications. **The deadline is 12 noon on Wednesday of Week 2 every term.** All applications should be submitted through IRAMS.

Budget:

Small Awards: for projects up to £10,000

Main Awards: for project from £10,000. While there is no limit to how much money you can apply for, the Fell Committee rarely approves project over £65,000.

Eligibility:

All subject areas are encouraged to apply, and interdisciplinary and/or interdivisional projects are especially welcome.

The applicant should be a current salaried employee of the collegiate university holding an academic post, or a research fellowship awarded competitively and intended to enable the holder to establish an independent research career (e.g. Royal Society University Research Fellow, Junior Research Fellow).

The same eligibility rules apply to both the principal applicant and the co-applicant.

Retired and emeritus fellows, and DPhil and other students, are not eligible to apply to the John Fell Fund (including as co-applicant).

Main awards

For main award applications (more than £10,000), you must hold a post that includes responsibility for developing your own research agenda. If you do not hold an academic post, but the department would support a research application to an external body in your name as principal investigator, then you will normally be eligible to apply. Please contact your divisional John Fell officer and/or your departmental support officer if you are not sure about eligibility. Your application will not be considered unless it is supported by your department or faculty via the online application process.

Small awards

For small award applications (up to £10,000), the same rules apply as for main awards, except that the committee will also consider applications from an early career researcher employed by the collegiate University who aspires to an academic post or fellowship, but does not yet hold such a post, provided that **the applicant has the support of their line manager**. The line manager should supply a letter of support, including confirmation that holding the John Fell award would be consistent with the applicant's existing duties (e.g. meeting the requirements of external funders). The application must also be supported by the department via the online process.

Researcher Co-Investigators

The status of Researcher Co-Investigator (RCo-I) allows for named researchers working on JFF projects who are providing significant intellectual input to the development of the research proposal and management of the project to have their contribution recognised.

Researcher Co-Investigators are research staff at the University who would not normally be eligible to apply to JFF in their own right. The RCo-I's details should be included in the 'Researcher Co-Investigator' field on the Investigators section of the online application form.

Any salary costs requested for the Researcher Co-Investigator's time working on the project should be included as a Directly Incurred cost within the Financial Details section of the application form. Please also indicate in the description field of the costing table that the staff costs requested are for an RCo-I.

A supporting statement from the PI/department to include details of the contribution by the RCo-I to the design and management of the project, as well as any mentoring arrangements that will be provided, and expected next steps following the JFF project, should be attached to the Part 2 Case for Support section of the application (additional to the usual page limit). A 1-page CV for the RCo-I should also be included.

Note: The RCo-I status is intended to support early career research staff in the development of their career. Accordingly, the review panel might not favourably assess applications if the RCo-I status is used to bring an established external scholar.

Assessment Criteria:

The John Fell Fund seeks to fund proposal that clearly demonstrate:

- Excellence and intrinsic merit of research
- Potential for long term sustainability and academic impact of the project
- Relevance to department and divisional research strategy
- Necessity for John Fell Fund versus other sources of funding
- Value for money, noting in particular the potential for shared use of equipment and other facilities.

Both the Small Awards and Main Awards panel will review whether the proposal:

- Meet in full or part the Fell criteria outlined above
- Is written in a clear and concise manner (i.e. needs to be understood by a non-specialist panel)
- Is within the word limit (2 pages for Small Awards, 4 pages for Main Awards. The template **must not be amended**).
- Be appropriately costed in detail (see below for Guidance for costs);
- Demonstrate a clear plan for the sustainability of the project beyond the duration of the John Fell Fund and how external funding will be sought.

The panels will also consider the feasibility of the project.

Decision-making process for Fell Fund applications

John Fell OUP Research Fund Committee

The University's John Fell OUP Research Fund Committee (from hereon the 'Fell Committee') is a sub-group of the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee (PRAC) and the Research and Innovation Committee (RIC). The Fell Committee is Chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and has representatives from all academic divisions (MPLS, SSD, MSD and Humanities). Fell Committee membership is given on the Fell Fund web pages. The Fell Committee meets in Week 10 every term.

Social Sciences Divisional Fell Panel

The SSD Fell Panel consists of the Head of Division and the Associate Head of Division (Research).

Small Awards Panel

SSD Small Award applications are assessed, scored and ranked by the Small Awards panel according to the Fell Fund criteria described in the section above. The ranking and scoring are confirmed by the SSD Fell Panel, who then submits its recommendations for funding to the Fell Committee. Where appropriate, the release of funds may be subject to particular

conditions, for example the PI attaining ethics clearance before the project starts. Small Award applications are approved by the Chair of the Fell Committee.

The amount of money available each term for Small Awards is c. £75,000.

The Small Awards panel consists of the Senior Divisional Research Facilitator, the Divisional Research Facilitator, as well as a representative from the Research Staff Forum and a Departmental Research Facilitator who serve on the panel for one academic year and assess applications from the three termly rounds.

Main Awards

Main Award applications are assessed, scored and ranked by the Main Awards Panel according to the Fell Fund criteria described in the section above. The ranking and scoring are confirmed by the SSD Fell Panel, who then submits its recommendations for funding to the Fell Committee. Where appropriate, the release of funds may be subject to particular conditions, for example the PI attaining ethics clearance before the project starts. SSD Main Award recommendations are considered alongside applications from all divisions at the Fell Committee meeting.

The amount of money available for SSD Main Awards each term is dependent on the amount of funds available within the Fell Fund. Usually, SSD is able to recommend that SSD Main Awards are funded up to the value of c. £250,000 - £300,000.

The Main Awards are now reviewed by a rotating panel consisting of 4/5 Research Directors from the different Departments in the Division. The rota is as follow:

Michaelmas Term	Hilary Term	Trinity Term
Economics	Sociology	DPIR
OSGA	ODID	Education
Law	SOGE	Anthropology
OII	BSG	SPI
Archaeology		SBS

Applicants should note that scores and rankings from assessors from the same department as the candidate will be discounted in the overall rankings (these scores will however be shared with the SSD Fell Committee for reasons of transparency).

Adjustments to budgets and queries about applications

Given the funding envelope available each term and the desire to fund as many outstanding proposals as possible, the SSD Fell Panel may contact PIs with applications that are being considered for funding with budgets over £65K to request that PIs adjust their budgets. The SSD Fell Panel may also contact PIs with queries and requests for clarification about applications.

Notification of application outcome

The central Fell Fund administration team notify applicants about the outcome of their application and handle the administration of awards (e.g. generating cost codes). See the [University Fell Fund website](#) for more information.

Feedback on applications

The SSD Fell Panel may be able to offer feedback to applicants. Please contact the SSD Fell Fund Officer to request feedback (fellfund@socsci.ox.ac.uk).

Contact:

If you cannot find the information you require on the Fell Fund website or in the Divisional advice, or have further queries, please contact the SSD Fell Fund Inbox (fellfund@socsci.ox.ac.uk)