Commonwealth Professional Fellowships

2019 terms and conditions
INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) is one of the largest and most prestigious international scholarship schemes in the world. Since it was established in 1959, 35,000 individuals have held a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship – 27,000 of them were funded by the UK government, through the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom (CSC).

The CSC awards around 800 scholarships and fellowships for postgraduate study and professional development to Commonwealth citizens each year. The CSC’s Secretariat is provided by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, based in London; overseas services are provided by the British Council.

For information about the other scholarships and fellowships offered by the CSC, visit www.dfid.gov.uk/cscuk. For information about Commonwealth Scholarships offered by other Commonwealth countries, visit www.acu.ac.uk/commonwealth-scholarships

COMMONWEALTH PROFESSIONAL FELLOWSHIPS

For mid-career professionals from low and middle income countries to spend a period of time at a UK Host organisation working in their sector for a programme of professional development.

**Purpose:** To provide professionals with the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills in their given sector, and to have catalytic effects on their workplaces.

**Intended beneficiaries:** Mid-career professionals (with five years’ relevant work experience) working in development-related organisations in low and middle-income Commonwealth countries.

Commonwealth Professional Fellowships are offered under one of the CSC’s six themes:

1. **Science and technology for development**
   The fellowship, which may be in any area of science or technology (including, for example, agriculture, veterinary science, or forestry), will develop knowledge and/or skills that are directly related to the specific needs of a low or middle income country. Where possible, applications should cite expressed national or local priorities.

2. **Strengthening health systems and capacity**
   The fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will improve health provision or outcomes for disadvantaged groups in low and middle income countries. A range of approaches could be adopted, such as training staff to fill critical shortage areas; establishing better systems, processes, or management; health promotion and improving understanding of non-take up; or developing new treatments.

3. **Promoting global prosperity**
   The fellowship will support economic prosperity in low and middle income countries. The knowledge and/or skills gained could lead to, for example, enhanced trade capacity; improved economic understanding or decision-making by business or government; new products and services; or long-term capacity building, through the development of entrepreneurial skills, for instance.

4. **Strengthening global peace, security and governance**
   The fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will strengthen peace and security at national, regional, or international levels. Multiple approaches could be used, such as strengthening open and transparent governance; improving mutual understanding within and between societies; or building systems that reduce the potential for conflict or encourage its resolution.

5. **Strengthening resilience and response to crises**
   The fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills which will help low and middle countries adapt to changing contexts, withstand sudden shocks, or increase capacity to preserve the continuity of operations following such events. This could apply to a broad range of threats, including natural and physical disasters; long-term threats such as climate change; interruptions to the supply of key resources; or sudden economic or technological disruption.
6. **Access, inclusion and opportunity**

The fellowship will develop knowledge and/or skills that will promote opportunity amongst historically disadvantaged groups in low and middle income countries. This could be through, for example, expanding educational opportunities; conducting community outreach; enhancing access to decision making; or increasing understanding of the barriers faced. A range of disadvantage can be addressed – including social, economic, gender, ethnic, regional, or political – provided that the need is clearly stated.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Organisations from any sector can apply to host two or more Commonwealth Professional Fellows within their own organisation.

To apply for these fellowships, prospective **Host organisations** must:

- Be based in the UK
- Be a publicly funded organisation (including public bodies, universities, Research Institutions, local government departments and NHS Trusts) or a Charity (registered with the Charities Commission)
- Be able to demonstrate the capacity to set up and manage the fellowships on a day-to-day basis including being able to demonstrate that they have cash funds of at least £30,000 available and that the previous year’s income was greater than £50,000
- Have set up a programme of activities for the fellowship between six weeks and three months
- Have identified between two and five Fellows who they wish to nominate, through existing networks or wider advertising (the CSC will not accept applications for programmes set up by Host organisations at the request of an individual wishing to undertake a Fellowship)
- Agree to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the CSC which includes obligations to have anti-fraud and safeguarding policies in place and for the CSC to be given permission to audit funds dispersed for the purposes of the programme
- Only apply for fellowships starting between the prescribed dates as stated on the CSC website.

Programme dates must be the same for all Fellows

To be eligible for these fellowships, **prospective Fellows** must:

- Be a citizen of or have been granted refugee status by an eligible Commonwealth country, or be a British Protected Person
- Be permanently resident in an eligible Commonwealth country (see page 6)
- Have at least five years’ full-time, or equivalent part-time, relevant work experience, in a profession related to the subject of the Fellowships programme, by the proposed start of the fellowship – voluntary work experience will not be counted towards this minimum
- Be in employment at the time of application that they will return to upon completion of the fellowship
- Not have undertaken a Commonwealth Professional Fellowship within the last five years (at the time of application)
- Not be seeking to undertake an academic programme of research or study in the UK. Academics are eligible to apply for the scheme, but only to undertake programmes of academic management, not research or courses relevant to their research subject
- Be available to start their fellowship within prescribed dates as stated on the CSC website

The CSC aims to identify talented individuals who have the potential to make change. We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination and encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates. For further information on the support available to candidates with a disability, see the CSC disability support statement at [http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/csc-disability-support-statement](http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/csc-disability-support-statement)
GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS

- Fellowships must be between a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of three months in length. Fellowships should be long enough to enable the serious development of professional skills, so the CSC will not consider applications for fellowships with a duration of less than six weeks.

- Applications from prospective Host organisations should include a clear programme of professional experience and exchange for mid-career professionals. Visits to, and periods of experience with, relevant UK organisations are particularly encouraged. Attendance at short courses or conferences during the fellowship is acceptable, providing that this can be justified within the selection criteria and that attendance is not the main focus of the fellowship.

- Fellowships should be UK-based for their full duration.

- Organisations can apply to host a minimum of two Fellows in any application round and up to a maximum of five Fellows in one year. The CSC will decide on the actual number of Fellows to be supported.

- Applications will not be considered from candidates who are undertaking a course of full-time study at the time of application; seeking assistance towards the cost of commencing or completing a formal academic or professional qualification; or wishing to undertake an academic programme or research of any kind in the UK. Applications presenting an academic research proposal or plan will be considered ineligible.

- Candidates who have previously taken a leave of absence to study or work abroad in a high income country should make an additional case for why they should be considered for a fellowship in the UK and make clear what they have gained from their previous experience.

VALUE

Each fellowship provides:

- Approved return airfare from the Fellow’s home country to the UK

- Stipend (living allowance) payable monthly (or pro rata) for the duration of the award at the rate of £1,696 per month, or £2,104 per month for those at organisations in the London metropolitan area (rates quoted at 2019-2020 levels). Exceptionally, depending on the programme arranged, a peripatetic living allowance may be payable. Further details if applicable will be given at the time of offer

- Arrival allowance of up to £953.45 at current rates, including an element for warm clothing and reimbursement of the standard visa application fee

- Flat rate contribution of £800 to the costs of the Host organisation relating to the administration and support of the Fellow, setting up of appropriate meetings, any materials required, and incidental travel for the Fellow during the award (to be paid to the Host organisation on receipt of an invoice)

- Fees of up to a maximum of £2,000 will be agreed for awards under two months and up to a maximum of £3000 for awards of three months (to be paid to the Host organisation on receipt of an invoice)

Full justification must be given for the amount being claimed. Such claims can cover:

- Fees for any conferences or short courses attended during the fellowship, provided that these are approved as part of the original application
- Cost of travel for visits to other organisations in the UK, where these form an integral part of the programme
- Other fees, for which the CSC will consider requests on a case-by-case basis
Host organisations should bear in mind the following restrictions when planning an application:

- Induction/evaluation programmes must be in scale with the programme.
- Modest fees including catering, room hire, and facilitator hire for such programmes may be agreed; however, fees for facilitators for evaluation programmes will not be approved.
- Costs associated with research of any kind (research support grants, bench fees, or costs of consumables) will not be approved.
- Additional accommodation costs may be recovered from the Fellow's stipend.
- Requests for funds for cultural events, mobile phones, laptop hire, professional association memberships, costs associated with visits outside the UK, and contingencies will not be approved.

**HOW TO APPLY**

Applications must be made using the CSC’s Online Application Form. Information on how to use this is available at [http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/scholarships/commonwealth-professional-fellowships/](http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/scholarships/commonwealth-professional-fellowships/)

Stage 1: Prospective Host organisations must first submit an application to CSC through our online application form. As part of the application process the Host organisation will be asked to provide documentation to show they meet the eligibility requirements.

Stage 2: Applications from Host organisations will be reviewed by a Commission selection panel with results communicated to all organisations who applied.

Stage 3: Prospective Fellows will then be invited to apply for a programme at a specific Host organisation using the CSC’s online application form.

Stage 4: These applications will be shared with Host organisations through Huddle. Host organisations will submit the names of between two and five Fellows they wish to nominate to the Commission.

Stage 5: The Commission will make the final selections of individual Fellows.

At least two references must be submitted for each Fellow, one of which must be from their current employer. Any applications for which references are not received by the reference closing date will be considered ineligible.

Closing dates for applications from Host organisations and from Fellows and for nominations in 2019 will be published at [http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/professional-fellowships/commonwealth-professional-fellowships/](http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/professional-fellowships/commonwealth-professional-fellowships/)

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Applications are considered according to the following selection criteria:

- The extent to which the proposed fellowship will ensure the transfer of skills relevant to the needs of the Fellow’s home country.
- The extent to which those skills will lead to practical benefits for the home country following the fellowship.
• The extent to which the fellowship will have a catalytic effect, either within the home country concerned, or in establishing new relationships with the UK

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CSC and its Secretariat are responsible for selecting candidates and administering the scheme, including:

• Liaising with the Host organisation about the dates and details of the Fellowship and any associated courses

• Issuing a formal Notification of Award to each Fellow outlining the terms and conditions of the award

• Issuing a Certificate of Sponsorship for the Fellows’ Tier 5 (Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange) visa application on behalf of the Host organisation (with the ACU as the sponsoring body). The CSC cannot guarantee that Fellows will be able to obtain a visa for themselves or any family members to accompany them to the UK.

• Making all payments to Fellows and to Host organisations

Host organisations will be the CSC’s point of contact about all aspects of the fellowship, and are responsible for establishing a suitable programme of activities and the day-to-day supervision of the Fellows, including:

• Verifying the identity and good standing of the Fellows they nominate (the CSC does not carry out background or qualification checks on applicants)

• Confirming that the Fellows they nominate have the qualifications and experience that they claim and that these are appropriate to the programme they plan to undertake

• Appointing a nominated ‘mentor’ who will act as a first point of contact for the Fellows

• Giving clear information to the Fellows about who within the Host organisation will be responsible for them and the programme of activities on a day-to-day basis

• Providing information and assistance to the Fellows to enable them to secure suitable accommodation for the tenure of their fellowship. The CSC does not have a supply of accommodation anywhere in the UK

• Assisting the ACU as the visa sponsor, by monitoring Fellows while they are in the UK and reporting any changes in their circumstances. Host organisations will be sent a document setting out their and the ACU’s responsibilities in this regard, which must be signed and returned

• Providing a report evaluating the Fellowships within six weeks of the Fellows returning home. In addition, each Fellow will be expected to produce his/her own report on the Fellowship, commenting on both the appropriateness of the arrangements and the likely impact of the award

GENERAL CONDITIONS

• A Commonwealth Professional Fellowship covers a contribution to the Host organisation costs, approved fares, and personal maintenance. Other Fellowships, awards, or bursaries that cover the same costs may not be held concurrently
In order for the CSC to administer your application effectively and efficiently after you have submitted, it will be necessary to create a record in your name. If you are nominated for an award to the CSC, your details will be kept on file. Basic anonymised demographic data for all applicants will be kept for analytical research. The CSC is committed to protecting your personal information and to being transparent about the information we are collecting about you and what we do with it. To find out more, see our privacy notice: cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/privacy-notice

If your application is successful, the CSC will notify you that you have been provisionally selected (selected for an award subject to the CSC agreeing your terms of admission to the Host organisation)

When all conditions of the Notification of Award have been met, the CSC will send a formal Confirmation of Award to the Fellows.

Fellows must submit a medical form before the Confirmation of Award can be issued.

Fellows will be required to sign an undertaking to return to their home country as soon as possible after the end of their award.

Fellows are expected to start and complete their award on the dates stated in their Notification of Award. The CSC is usually not able to agree any changes to these dates after the Notification of Award has been issued.

Fellows require a Tier 5 (Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange) visa to come to the UK for their award, and must meet all relevant immigration regulations set by UK Visas and Immigration. These regulations are subject to change at any time. For updated information, check the GOV.UK website at www.gov.uk/visas-immigration

All UK immigration regulations are set by UK Visas and Immigration and are subject to change. The CSC has no control over these regulations.

Fellows must reside in the UK throughout their award, and seek approval from the CSC in advance for any overseas travel, which will be granted in exceptional circumstances only.

Fellows must not undertake paid employment during their award.

The CSC cannot provide a letter of support for any Fellow to remain in the UK after their award to work.

An award may be terminated at any time for reasons of unsatisfactory conduct, progress, attendance, or violation of visa conditions, or if the Host organisation decides it is unable to proceed with the fellowship for any reason before or during the award.

Applicants are expected to adhere to the CSC’s Code of Conduct for award holders which states:

As a Commonwealth Scholar or Fellow, you are an ambassador for both the CSC and your home country, and your actions and remarks will have an impact on the reputation of both. You are therefore expected to adhere to high standards of conduct and behaviour and to show respect to others and your surroundings at all times.

The CSC aims to enable a free exchange of ideas during all its activities in order to achieve the maximum potential impact for all participants. Recognising the diversity of backgrounds among our award holders – in terms of race, religion, gender, sexuality and cultural values – you are reminded to always be respectful to others.

The CSC is committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows, and to protecting all those with whom the CSC comes into contact. The CSC requires Commissioners, Secretariat staff, and Scholars and Fellows to fulfil their role and responsibilities in a manner consistent with requirements for safeguarding.

The CSC safeguarding policy will be available at www.gov.uk/cscuk

Any complaints received will be taken very seriously and any behaviour that does not adhere to the above values and expectations will be addressed by the CSC.
In line with the UK Bribery Act 2010, any applicant convicted of bribery will be banned from reapplying for a Commonwealth Scholarship or Fellowship for a period of up to five years.

The CSC is committed to administering and managing its scholarships and fellowships in a fair and transparent manner. For more information, see the CSC anti-fraud policy and procedure at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/csc-in-the-uk-anti-fraud-policy-and-procedure](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/csc-in-the-uk-anti-fraud-policy-and-procedure) and the DFID guidance on reporting fraud at [https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about#reporting-fraud-or-corrupt-practices](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about#reporting-fraud-or-corrupt-practices)

All terms and conditions of award are subject to UK local law and practices and are subject to change by the CSC.


**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Host organisations are responsible for obtaining any Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or ‘good character’ checks that may be required.

**ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES**

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