

# Research and Commercial Services

## Fact Sheet Applying for funding to the British Academy

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### Remit

The British Academy awards funding specifically in the areas of humanities and social sciences although applications are welcome from other areas where a humanities or social science angle can be demonstrated.

### Sample of funding available

- [Small research grants](#) support advanced research, at postdoctoral or equivalent level, in the humanities and social sciences. The Academy awards small grants up to £7,500 over 2 years typically for pilot studies, small-scale projects. Costs covered are short-term research and secretarial assistance; consumables; travel and maintenance in connection with a research project; and in certain cases the costs of preparing illustrative material, and fees for reproduction rights for texts and images. These awards are not FeC funded. (**Deadlines: November and March annually**)
- [Research Development Awards](#): enable mid-career scholars to develop a significant research project. Applications are particularly encouraged from scholars who can demonstrate that they are developing an innovative line of research, with the potential to make a significant difference to their field and to their career profile. Awards are tenable for up to 36 months for up to £150k FEC. This is an annual competition with a December deadline with applications being considered via a two-stage process. Outcomes are announced in January.
- [Conference grants](#): provide conference support to promote the dissemination of advanced research. Conference convenors may apply for financial assistance, whether for bringing key speakers to the UK or for a wider range of expenses. Applications will be available as a contribution towards the expenses of bringing key speakers to conferences held in the UK. The Academy welcomes applications for conferences held in collaboration with other organizations. Applications will not be considered for less than £1000 with the maximum award being £20,000. Conferences attracting the higher level of support should be at least partly aimed at disseminating the results of research to a

broader public, and the Academy particularly welcomes applications that show how public interest might be engaged in the topics discussed.

- [Overseas conference grants](#): provides up to £900 for scholars to deliver a paper at a conference abroad. (**Deadlines: November and January annually**)

### Fellowships

- [Postdoctoral fellowship](#): designed to enable outstanding early career researchers to strengthen their experience of research and teaching in a university environment thus improving their prospects of obtaining permanent lecturing posts by the end of the Fellowship. Applications are subject to a two-stage process with an application **deadline of November** and shortlist announced in January for awards to be taken up from September 2010. This is a highly competitive scheme and applicants must apply within 3 years of award of doctorate. The following **research intelligence** may be useful to applicants from an individual here at Birmingham who holds a Postdoctoral Fellowship:
  - Take as much advice as possible on framing your proposal, not only from your proposed mentor but from other colleagues in the field.
  - Think long and hard about the title of the project and consult on this.
  - Remember that assessors will have dozens of applications to read - yours has to stand out and be clear and precise
  - Make sure that your proposal is feasible within the timeframe of the award.
  - Don't just propose rehashing your PhD. Your proposal has to sound as though it is something new for you.
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- [Visiting scholars](#): enable early-career scholars from overseas to apply directly to the Academy, in conjunction with their UK hosts, for research visits to the UK for two to six months. The main purpose of the visit should be to enable the visitor to pursue research. **Deadline:** December with results expected mid-March annually.
- [Senior research fellowship](#): The British Academy/Leverhulme Trust Senior Research Fellowships and British Academy Thank-Offering to

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Britain Fellowship scheme provide a period of research leave for one year for established scholars during which they will be able to concentrate on bringing a major piece of research towards completion while their normal teaching and administrative duties are covered by a full-time replacement. The Fellowships are tenable for one year beginning in the autumn of 2010. **Deadline:** December annually.

- [Worldwide congress grants](#): available for the congresses of major subject areas or disciplines, ordinarily occurring every three, four or five years, and involving an extensive programme and large attendance from all over the world. It should clearly be the British turn to host such a congress, and the event should not have been held in the UK for a considerable period. Awards of up to £20k are available. (**Deadlines:** October, January and April).

## International activities

- [Special joint project programme](#): the Academy has a number of special schemes with partner institutions to support bilateral projects with particular countries or regions. Click on the link above to access the relevant schemes.
- [European exchange science programme](#): a series of bilateral exchange programmes, involving balanced funds for research visits, between a number of European countries. Over the years the ESEP has expanded to cover most countries in Europe.

## Special funds

- The Academy has the following private funds, from which grants are made for particular and restricted purposes:
  - [Ancient Persia fund](#): for the study of Iranian or Central Asian studies in the pre-Islamic period.
  - [Elizabeth Barker Fund](#): for studies in recent European history, particularly the history of Central and Eastern Europe. (Deadlines: October, January and April)
  - [Sir Ernest Cassell Educational Trust Fund](#): For travel costs relating to a research project (particularly aimed at recent postdoctoral scholars) (Deadline: April).
  - [44th International Congress of Americanists Fund](#) : For travel costs relating to Latin American studies
  - [Elie Kedourie Memorial Fund](#): For the study of Middle Eastern and Modern European History, and the History of Political Thought
  - [Neil Ker Memorial Fund](#): For the study of Western medieval manuscripts
  - [Stein-Arnold Exploration Fund](#): For research on the antiquities, historical geography, early history, or arts of India, China, and Iran, including Central Asia

- [Sino-British Fellowship Trust](#): For individual or co-operative research projects in Britain or China

## Applying to the Academy

The Academy now operates an electronic system for application submission which is the same as the Royal Society's e-Gap system. Administration is via Research and Commercial Services (Huma Mumtaz 48586 [h.mumtaz@bham.ac.uk](mailto:h.mumtaz@bham.ac.uk)).

## Peer Review

The Academy's peer review:

- Is a light assessment procedure which is proportionate to the scale of funding applied for.
- Involves the use of subject specialists from within the Academy.
- Uses, for international grants, area specialists.
- Has recommendations confirmed by Award Committees, in light of available budgets.
- Uses external evaluation for larger awards.
- Operates to a strict Code of Practice for all assessors.

## What to take into account when applying

With respect to **research posts** the academic merit of an individual is the main criteria for the Academy together with the academic record i.e. a capacity to make a significant contribution to research. For **Postdoctoral Fellows** the potential to go on to lead a successful academic career as a teacher in HE needs to be highlighted. Those applying for a **Senior Research Fellowship** should well demonstrate how pressing the need is for them to devote this period of time to their research (stipulate factors).

## Birmingham's success

The British Academy tell us that Birmingham has one of the top 20 institutions to gain funding from them with grants to scholars her totalling around £323,000 against an overall budget of £24m for 2008-09.

## Further information

Additional information can be found at the Academy's website at [www.britac.ac.uk](http://www.britac.ac.uk) and specifically via its Guide to Awards available via the Academy's website at <http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/guide/index.cfm> . Anyone wishing to contact by telephone should call: 020 7969 5200 or via email to: [grants@britac.ac.uk](mailto:grants@britac.ac.uk)