



# All Souls College

## University of Oxford

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### **POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **WHAT IS MEANT BY 'AWARDED THEIR DOCTORATES' IN THE FURTHER PARTICULARS?**

'Doctoral award' should be taken as the date of the successful defence of your doctoral dissertation. If changes to your thesis are required after the initial defence, 'Doctoral award' should be taken as the date when your university approves the changes, so that you have fulfilled your university's requirements for the degree. Where no viva was required, the 'Doctoral award' will be the date of award on your degree certificate.

#### **I HAVE RECEIVED TWO DOCTORATES, THE MOST RECENT IS WITHIN THE ELIGIBILITY RANGE FOR THIS SCHEME BUT THE FIRST IS OUTSIDE OF THE DATE RANGE. AM I STILL ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

All Souls College considers eligibility from the award date of your first doctorate, rather than the most recent. If your first doctorate was awarded prior to 1 August 2024 you would not be eligible to apply.

#### **UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES MAY I REQUEST ADJUSTMENT TO THE ELIGIBILITY RANGE?**

Applications to adjust the College's eligibility criteria are typically due to serious long-term illness, parental leave, or exceptional caring responsibilities. The College is also aware that the academic calendar may differ in the Southern Hemisphere and an adjustment on that basis may be warranted. Candidates wishing to seek adjustment should upload as part of their application a letter explaining why they think the eligibility criteria should be altered in their case, together with any official supporting material. Cases will be considered by an Eligibility Panel.

#### **I HAVE SUBMITTED MY APPLICATION BUT MY REFEREES HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED AN EMAIL ASKING FOR THEIR REFERENCE.**

Ask your referees to check their Junk email box to see if the email is there. If not, please log into your FAS account and check that you entered their email address correctly in your application. You will be able to amend the email address if necessary. Please contact [pdf.admin@all-souls.ox.ac.uk](mailto:pdf.admin@all-souls.ox.ac.uk) with any queries.

#### **CAN I INCLUDE MORE THAN TWO REFERENCES WITH MY APPLICATION?**

No. To be fair to all candidates, the College can only accept two references per application.

### **CAN I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION VIA EMAIL OR POST?**

No. Applications must be submitted online.

### **HOW CAN I VERIFY THAT ALL MY REFERENCES HAVE BEEN RECEIVED?**

You will be able to log in to your application once submitted in order to check whether your references have been received.

### **CAN I CHANGE THE NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS FOR ONE OF MY REFEREES?**

You can change referee details (e.g. correct or update details, or change referee entirely) by logging into your FAS account. However, once a reference has been received, it will not be possible to change that referee.

### **CAN MY REFEREES SUBMIT A REFERENCE BEFORE I HAVE SUBMITTED MY APPLICATION?**

Yes, instructions to your referees can be triggered manually by applicants during the application process, or will be automatically issued once your application has been submitted. Please be aware that the application and reference deadline is the same (4 September 2026). If triggering the email manually, please ensure that you have already uploaded all relevant documentation for your referees to refer to in their supporting letters.

### **ONE OF MY REFEREES HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUBMIT THEIR REFERENCE BEFORE THE DEADLINE. WILL LATE REFERENCES BE ACCEPTED?**

Late references can be submitted and will be taken into account where possible, but the College cannot guarantee that they will be taken into account in assessing applications.

### **CAN I CHANGE OTHER DETAILS ON MY ORIGINAL APPLICATION?**

No, not unless you are included on the initial shortlist. If included on the initial shortlist for this competition, you will be asked to supply a further sample of your work; if included on the initial or final shortlist, you will be given an opportunity to provide updated information, e.g. details of new publications or positions.

### **AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY IF I HAVE ALREADY HELD OR CURRENTLY HOLD A JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP OR POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP?**

Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Further Particulars.

### **CAN I APPLY IF I AM NOT A UK OR EU CITIZEN?**

The College welcomes applicants of any nationality as long as they meet the eligibility criteria set out in the Further Particulars. All appointments are subject to proof of Right to Work in the UK. If you need a visa, you will normally need to apply for a Skilled Worker visa (<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa>). The College and University of Oxford Immigration Team will assist you with this process.

### **WHAT DOES THE 'THESIS ABSTRACT' REFER TO?**

The 'thesis abstract' refers to the abstract of your recently or almost completed doctoral thesis.

### **DOES THE WORD COUNT FOR THE 'STATEMENT OF PROPOSED WORK' INCLUDE FOOTNOTES AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY?**

Yes, footnotes and bibliography are included in the word count.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY DOCTORAL THESIS IS NOT WRITTEN IN ENGLISH?**

The 10,000 word sample of written work to be submitted as part of your application should normally be in English. Candidates whose thesis is in a language other than English will be asked to submit an untranslated copy of their thesis (or work of equivalent length), together with a substantial piece of work in English.

### **HOW INDEPENDENT DOES MY RESEARCH PROGRAMME HAVE TO BE?**

Collaboration on past and future projects is acceptable. However, if many of your papers are published with senior colleagues, the College would expect to see an explanation of your role in the conception of the work described.

### **I ALREADY HOLD FELLOWSHIP FUNDING THAT COVERS MY SALARY FOR PART OF THE TERM OF THIS SCHEME. CAN I APPLY AND ASK TO HOLD AN ALL SOULS POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP ON A NON-STIPENDIARY BASIS?**

All Souls Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships are stipendiary fellowships and cannot be held concurrently with other fellowship funding. They are not available on a non-stipendiary basis.

### **CAN I HOLD THE POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AND WORK ON SOMEONE ELSE'S PROJECT?**

The primary duty of a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship is to pursue in Oxford an independent programme of advanced study and research for publication. A research project that consists of work submitted and funded for a senior Principal Investigator grant is unlikely to be sufficiently independent for an All Souls College Fellowship, nor is the All Souls College Fellowship intended as salary funding for a post-doctoral role in a senior person's project.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I BECOME PREGNANT OR HAVE A BABY BEFORE I TAKE UP THE FELLOWSHIP?**

If you have a baby or adopt a child before you join the College, it may be possible to defer the start of your Fellowship and employment by the College. If you have taken up your Fellowship and commenced employment before your baby is born or your child is adopted and you assume the primary care responsibility, you will intermit your

Fellowship and be eligible to receive maternity or adoption leave for up to 26 weeks at your normal full rate of pay, inclusive of any statutory maternity or adoption pay to which you may be entitled. You (or the parent with primary care responsibility for the child) may extend the period of your intermission and leave for up to 26 weeks' further leave, during which period you may be entitled to receive housing allowance but entitlement to any statutory benefits will depend on your visa status. The Fellowship will be extended to cover the period of your intermission.

#### **MAY I APPLY TO MORE THAN ONE COMPETITION?**

No.

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### **FAQs FOR ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES**

#### **WHAT COUNTS AS ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES?**

For the purposes of this competition, Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) includes any subject that would normally be taught by the [Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies](#) at the University of Oxford. Geographically, this means the whole area from Arab North Africa in the west to Japan in the east and from Azerbaijan in the north to Indonesia in the south. Chronologically it includes all periods from around 3500BCE to the present day. We advise you to explore the Faculty's website for more information about the teaching and research.

#### **ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON PERIOD OR SUBJECT?**

There are no restrictions on time period. For subject, we would normally expect the candidate's research to fall within the remit of one of the disciplines currently represented in the research clusters in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, namely, Art, Cultural Studies, History, Language and Linguistics, Literature, Philosophy, Politics, and Religion (see the [Faculty's website](#)). This being said, we will consider candidates working on other subjects so long as the empirical and theoretical attachment to the history and culture of the region is strong. For instance, fieldwork-heavy Sociology research on China would be considered, whereas a project that happens to use Chinese data to develop a general theory in Financial Economics would not.

#### **DO I NEED TO HAVE RECEIVED MY DEGREE FROM A DEPARTMENT OF MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES OR ASIAN STUDIES?**

No. We recognise that different universities may have different departmental boundaries and that area studies research can be conducted from within other disciplines such as Archaeology, Anthropology, History, or Political Science. However, we would expect candidates from non-area studies departments to have demonstrated strong engagement with a relevant area studies community, for example through publications and conference activities.

**MY RESEARCH COVERS TWO OR MORE WORLD REGIONS, OF WHICH ASIA/MIDDLE EAST IS ONLY ONE. AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

Yes, provided that the Asia/Middle East component is predominant when the doctoral thesis and the postdoctoral project are considered together. For example, if a candidate's thesis is half-and-half on Japan and Russia, we would consider the candidate if the postdoctoral project pertains mainly to Asia.

**I WORK ON A LANGUAGE THAT IS TAUGHT IN OTHER ASIAN OR MIDDLE EAST STUDIES DEPARTMENTS BUT NOT IN OXFORD. CAN I APPLY?**

Yes. The range of languages offered by the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies can change over time, and there are relevant languages that the Faculty does not currently teach for lack of capacity. However, if you work on a language for which there are few specialists in Oxford, we would expect your statement of proposed work to address the question of mentoring and collaborations during the postdoctoral period. All else equal, we will prefer candidates that we can pair with at least one qualified mentor in the Oxford community.

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**FAQs FOR HISTORY OF ART OR HISTORY OF MUSIC**

**ARE THESE SUBJECT FIELDS LIMITED GEOGRAPHICALLY?**

No. The subject-matter of your research may be from any part of the world.

**ARE THESE SUBJECT FIELDS LIMITED CHRONOLOGICALLY?**

Yes, to the period after 500 AD (C.E.). Note also that the study purely or primarily of contemporary matters will not count as 'history'. (See below.)

**HOW IS 'ART' DEFINED?**

As the visual arts (including architecture) generally studied at History of Art departments in universities. Research on the history of art theory and art criticism will also be eligible.

**HOW IS 'MUSIC' DEFINED?**

As those forms of composition and performance (including folk music and popular music) that are generally studied under the rubric 'history of music' at Music departments in universities. Research on the history of music theory and music criticism will also be eligible, as well as musical institutions, patronage and source studies.

## **I WORK ON CONTEMPORARY ART / MUSIC, BUT THERE IS SOME HISTORICAL DIMENSION TO MY WORK; DOES THIS COUNT?**

Only if your approach is primarily historical. If you are primarily investigating present-day practice or theory, and the historical dimension features only in a secondary way, that will not suffice.

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## **FAQs FOR LAW**

### **ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON PERIOD, REGION, OR SUBJECT AREA OF MY RESEARCH WITHIN LEGAL STUDIES?**

No.

### **DO I NEED TO HAVE A LAW DEGREE IN ORDER TO APPLY?**

No, but in order for a candidate to succeed in this competition, it will need to be evident that the candidate's research will make a significant contribution to legal studies.

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## **FAQs FOR LIFE SCIENCE**

### **AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION?**

Life Science is a broad term to describe research aimed at understanding living organisms and life processes. This includes research aimed at understanding life at a molecular, cellular, developmental, and organismal level as well as research aimed at understanding how organisms interact with each other and their environment, and how they evolve over time. In Oxford, this maps to research that is broadly carried out in the departments of Biology, Biochemistry, Experimental Psychology, and the Dunn School of Pathology. However, we recognise that some research that is carried out in other departments at the University falls within the definition of Life Science and if there is any room for doubt, you should ensure that your application explicitly addresses why your research falls under the umbrella of Life Sciences.

### **MY RESEARCH INCLUDES BOTH THEORETICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL WORK, AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

Yes. The vacancy is intended for candidates whose research proposal is theoretical, experimental, or a balance of both.

### **DO I NEED TO IDENTIFY A HOST LABORATORY IN OXFORD?**

Yes, if the research project is laboratory based, long-listed candidates will be asked to provide a letter of support from a suitable host department in Oxford confirming that laboratory space and access to shared equipment can be provided without cost to the College. We encourage applicants to get in touch with potential host labs and departments as early as possible as departments may have constraints on their

ability to support college-based research fellows.

### **CAN I USE COLLEGE SUPPORT FOR LABORATORY CONSUMABLES AS A CONTRIBUTION TO LABORATORY EQUIPMENT?**

If the research project is laboratory based, the College will provide additional funds for the Fellow's laboratory consumables and/or access to specialist shared-use equipment up to a maximum of £5,000 p.a., giving an annual research allowance of up to £9,552. All Fellows can apply for further research funding from the College through the Academic Purposes Committee. The College expects Fellows' laboratory work to take place in a properly equipped environment. The College provision is to cover expenses that are specific to the Fellow's own work.

### **CAN I HOLD RESEARCH GRANTS AS A FELLOW OF ALL SOULS?**

Fellows can directly apply to internal Oxford funding schemes, such as the John Fell Fund (<https://innovation.ox.ac.uk/award-details/john-fell-fund/>). Fellows can also apply for external research grants, such as ERC or UKRI, through Oxford departments.

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## **FAQs FOR THEORETICAL COMPUTER SCIENCE**

### **WHAT IS MEANT BY 'THEORETICAL COMPUTER SCIENCE'?**

We are interested in candidates whose research addresses fundamental questions in computation, and whose methods are rigorous in the mathematical sense. We expect that a substantial portion of the research done by the successful candidate will be in proving interesting theorems.

### **MY RESEARCH AREA IS 'X', AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION?**

Our search is not restricted to any particular subarea; the topics found in the Theory of Computation section of the ACM classification at <https://dl.acm.org/ccs> provide a good guide. If there is room for doubt, you should ensure that your application explains why you believe your work fits.