

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RUTHERFORD DISCOVERY FELLOWSHIPS

BACKGROUND

The Rutherford Discovery Fellowships are administered by the Royal Society of New Zealand (the Royal Society) for the New Zealand Government.

The Fellowships will develop and foster the future leaders in the New Zealand science and innovation system. They will attract and retain New Zealand's most talented early- to mid-career researchers and encourage their career development by enabling them to establish a track record for future research leadership. It is expected that Fellows, throughout their careers, will contribute to positive outcomes for New Zealand.

Receipt of a Rutherford Discovery Fellowship is expected to have significant value in the future career development and leadership potential of a researcher.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Rutherford Discovery Fellowships are to support the development of future research leaders, and to assist with the retention and repatriation of New Zealand's talented early- to mid-career researchers. The scheme will support early-to mid-career researchers to develop a strong track record, allowing them to compete with the best researchers in New Zealand and the world for mainstream research funds.

DESCRIPTION

At least ten prestigious Fellowships of five years in length will be awarded on a competitive basis annually, for research based in a New Zealand host institution.

CRITERIA

The award criteria must ensure successful proposals are consistent with the background and objectives of the Fellowships stated above.

MSI and the Royal Society will determine eligibility and selection criteria, and may adjust these from time to time to increase the scheme's effectiveness. The Royal Society will publish these criteria annually at the start of each funding round.

The award criteria will be based on the following eligibility and selection criteria:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The Rutherford Discovery Fellowships are open to early- to mid-career researchers with the potential to become leaders in the New Zealand science and innovation system. For the purpose of this scheme, early- to mid-career researchers are researchers whose doctoral degrees were conferred between three and eight years prior to the year in which the fellowship is awarded.
- Applicants must:
 - be either New Zealand citizens or applicants who have continuously resided in New Zealand for at least three months prior to their application and hold, or are deemed to hold, a New Zealand resident visa.
 - be associated with a New Zealand-based research institution that can provide the appropriate support and facilities to enable the applicant to succeed in their Fellowship for the full five years of the Fellowship's term.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Research Quality	Leadership Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calibre of the research programme the applicant intends following while a Rutherford Discovery Fellow• Calibre of the applicant as a researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calibre of the applicant as a research leader, which may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Vision for their field of work– Entrepreneurial activity– Team leadership– Knowledge transfer activity

In the case of applicants of the same calibre, preference will be given to applicants who:

- do not already have tenure or equivalent, or
- who are living overseas and will use the Fellowship to return to New Zealand to continue their research careers.

RULES

- If the applicant is not already an employee of the host institution, the host must agree to employ the applicant for the duration of the fellowship.
- An applicant may make only one application for a Fellowship in any one application round.
- Where an applicant has previously submitted an unsuccessful application, they should discuss their subsequent application with the Fellowship Coordinator before reapplying.
- Successful applicants must commence their programme of research within a year of the award notification.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Royal Society of New Zealand will appoint a selection panel, chaired by the President of the Royal Society, or their nominee, to oversee the selection process. The chair of the panel will work with the Society's nominated manager to determine the best process to be used.

Advice shall be sought from the selection panel as to the allocation of funds to successful Fellows. This advice shall normally be accepted by the Royal Society. In the event of non acceptance of advice from the selection panel, the Royal Society will notify the Minister in writing and then enter into a mediation process. The Royal Society on behalf of the Minister shall then commission a mediation panel to review the selection panel's advice. Panel representatives shall include Ministerial, Royal Society and the selection panel's nominee(s). The Royal Society shall seek the Minister's approval of the final mediation panel and its terms of reference. The Minister shall have the final decision as to its acceptance or not of the mediation panel's decision to accept or reject the recommendation of the selection panel. The results of the review shall be made known to all parties.

SCHEME OPERATION

The scheme will award a minimum contribution of \$70,000 per year towards the researcher's salary, \$60,000 in research related expenses, and \$30,000 per year for the host organisations to support the Fellow's research programme.

Fellowships are awarded on a full-time basis of which at least 85% (or 0.85 FTE) of the Fellow's time must be dedicated to the research objectives identified in the proposal, unless an exemption to this requirement has been approved by the Royal Society. The remainder of their time may be used for other research, teaching and non-research related development opportunities.

As a condition of the Fellowship, Fellows will participate in an annual workshop organised by the Royal Society. These workshops should provide multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional links across the science and innovation sector.

At the end of the Fellowship period Fellows will present the findings and demonstrate the impact of their research at an appropriate forum identified by the Royal Society.

REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Royal Society will report to MSI on the Rutherford Discovery Fellowships in accordance with the Funding Agreement. The reporting will include:

- information on the applications, monitoring of the Fellows and administration of the scheme;
- any suggested changes to the scheme that might improve it obtaining its objective;
- ongoing assessment of the impact of the scheme on Fellows after the completion of their Fellowship.

An evaluation framework will also be developed by the Royal Society in consultation with MSI. The Royal Society will provide evidence to MSI that the Fellowship Programme:

- is helping New Zealand develop its best early- to mid-career researchers;
- is helping the researchers accelerate their personal development and the establishment of a competitive track record;
- provides advancement of knowledge;
- supports early- to mid-career researchers recognised for sustained excellence and developing leadership within their respective disciplines;
- supports repatriation of talented New Zealand researchers;
- enhances the international reputations of New Zealand researchers;
- is supporting increased research productivity; and
- has attracted national recognition and prestige for the recipients of the awards.