

## REVIEW OF BBSRC FELLOWSHIPS

We have undertaken a review of our Fellowships programmes to ensure BBSRC's programmes of investments continue to meet the needs of the biosciences community and maximise the impact of substantial public investment. The [full report can be found here](#).

A range of opinions and perspectives were collected as part of this review, from former and current Fellows, as well as researchers involved in the evaluation of fellowship proposals, members of BBSRC's strategic advisory panels, and representatives from the wider research and innovation sector. The review considers how BBSRC's fellowships programmes can be best positioned to ensure maximum impact and value for money and continue to support world-leading early career bioscientists as they transition towards independence.

In light of this review, and following agreement by BBSRC Executive and Council, we are introducing the following changes to our programmes from 2021:

- The David Phillips Fellowships competition will be temporarily paused, recognising the limited numbers that have been awarded in recent years and changes to the wider fellowship landscape that have increased the opportunities for early career bioscientists.
- The assessment criteria and guidance for the Discovery Fellowships competition will be revised, including a relaxation of the upper budget limit that applicants can request.
- Review the changes made this year with a view to making them a permanent part of the new guidance. These include:
  - The requirement for a formal letter of support from the Head of Department of the host Research Organisation outlining their contribution to the success of the Fellow;
  - A narrative-based CV that focuses on the overall successes of the applicant rather than a metrics-only based approach to track record;
  - The introduction of a 'PI Response' stage to allow applicants the right of response to questions raised by referees.

**It is important to note that the 2020 competitions of both David Phillips and Discovery Fellowships that closed in June will not be affected by any changes above. The Fellowship applications are currently undergoing standard review which is also unaffected by the changes outlined above.**

We will continue to work closely with Committee E (BBSRC fellowships assessment committee) and our People and Talent Strategy Advisory Panel, as well as our Early Career Network and the wider community, as we implement these changes to our Fellowships competitions.