Call for members: People and Talent Strategy Advisory Panel (PAT SAP) Researcher Subgroup

Background

The People and Talent Strategy Advisory Panel (PAT SAP) Subgroup was developed to focus on issues related to researcher careers and development. In light of the everchanging landscape of postdoctoral research including the publication the Researcher Concordat and new ways of working over the past year, and insight into alternative careers of researchers, the membership of the subgroup is currently being refreshed.

This is to ensure that the Subgroup have the necessary skills and expertise to feed into the fundamental rationale of work developed at the BBSRC. For example, the Subgroup would have the opportunity to have profound, significant contributions to the rationale of new BBSRC fellowship schemes and strategy, to provide informed real-life insight into the implementation and effectiveness of the Researcher Concordat in addition to contributing to discussions and working groups around key themes and foci of BBSRC such as equality, diversity and inclusion in research careers. The Subgroup’s remit and Terms of Reference can be found here or a copy can be requested from postdoc.researchers@bbsrc.ukri.org.

Summary

BBSRC are looking to appoint up to 9 individuals (4 vacancies will replace outgoing members towards the end of 2021, and up to 5 additional members) to the Researcher Subgroup, add to the 6 existing members. BBSRC encourage researchers from across academia, industry, enterprise, and policy to apply to this opportunity of contributing to and influencing change around key themes for BBSRC. The widening of the remit of individuals included in this group reflects the every-changing career trajectories of researchers, with there not being a traditional, canonical route in research in the same way as past research careers.

Applications are sought from researchers, fellows and postdoctoral researchers which qualify under our definition of ‘researcher’ and are from the following:

- Academics including postdoctoral researchers, early career researchers and fellows, and researchers who are starting out in the initial stages to independence (for example, researchers who have yet to establish an independent position managing a lab/group) from research institutions and organisation
- Industrialists having undertaken a PhD and now working in an industrial setting
- Individuals from Government-funded laboratories
- Early career stage individuals who have moved from traditional academic pathways into policy, enterprise, business, or innovation sectors

Please refer to the ‘Membership’ section of the webpage that can be found here.

Person Criteria

The desired attributes of researchers sought are described below. Please note that this is guidance for applications, and it is not expected that all of the experiences and attributes
sought will be found in each individual member; having gaps in these should not therefore prevent potential applicants from applying.

- **Personal effectiveness**
  - Is empowered to use their own initiative and empowers others to do the same
  - Plans effectively and realistically
  - Keeps to commitments made such as attending quarterly meetings and responding to papers in preparation for the meeting explains when they cannot be met
  - Prioritises well - balances importance and urgency to deliver what is required on time
  - Has genuine interest in effecting change and influencing BBSRC strategy

- **Communication**
  - Communicates effectively and flexibly, varying style for audience, setting and level in the organisation
  - Is able to persuade and influence audiences at varying levels of seniority
  - Seeks and respects other people’s opinions and perspectives - is open to suggestions
  - Deals assertively and fairly with disagreement, conflict and challenge
  - Is receptive to and open to feedback
  - Puts across difficult concepts simply, concisely and clearly

- **Working with others (collaborating and partnering)**
  - Is able to build networks with stakeholders from a range of sectors
  - Ability to work effectively, confidently and diplomatically with a diverse range of stakeholders
  - Promotes collaboration and cross functional working
  - Hold equality, diversity and inclusion at the core of discussions and decisions that they share

**Eligibility**

Applicants based in academia should be currently working on or have worked in the past on a BBSRC-funded project, or with an academic funded by BBSRC or within a BBSRC-funded institute. This can include a BBSRC-funded PhD. BBSRC are broadening our remit to include individuals who are undertaking research that falls within the BBSRC Portfolio remit at the time of application to the Subgroup (please see Our portfolio - BBSRC (ukri.org) to search BBSRC Portfolio or contact bbsrc.remit@bbsrc.ac.uk, for clarification around Remit areas.) Early career fellows should not have established a leadership position in their own independent lab or group. Those that have, will not be eligible.

Applicants for industry should, similarly, have experience of working on a BBSRC-funded project, including a BBSRC-funded PhD, or with an academic funded by BBSRC and/or be working at a company where BBSRC has an existing relationship or a company (i.e. a SME) with intent to develop a collaborative partnership with BBSRC.
Applicants from policy/enterprise/business or the innovation sector should have experience of employment or working with BBSRC or a Research Council including Innovate UK and Research England. This can include, for example, working in a Technology Transfer Office at a university or at an Innovation Centre which may have applied for funding from BBSRC. Additionally, applicants from policy/enterprise/business or the innovation sector could also be eligible if they have an academic background relating to BBSRC (including BBSRC-funded PhD) or UKRI more widely (including MRC or an EPSRC-funded PhD, for example).

How to apply
The **deadline** for applications is **Monday 5 April 2021 at 16:00**.

Before you apply, it is recommended that you take a look at the [PAT SAP Researcher subgroup webpage](#) and the [BBSRC Vision for Postdoctoral Researchers](#) to familiarise yourself with the aims and objectives of the Subgroup as well as wider strategy relating to this area. If you have any questions about the work of the subgroup or the role of the postdoc members, please contact [postdoc.researchers@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:postdoc.researchers@bbsrc.ukri.org).

To apply please complete the ‘PAT SAP Researcher Subgroup – Application Form’ which can be found here. If you have any problems with accessing the survey and/or queries regarding the application, please contact us at [postdoc.researchers@bbsrc.ukri.org](mailto:postdoc.researchers@bbsrc.ukri.org). If this is not possible, please contact the Office and we can alternatively provide you with a paper copy your application.

The **Application Form** requests the following:

- **Personal information** (e.g. name, organisation, contact details, area of research)
- **Personal statement**
  - Applicants should describe how their experience, expertise and career path to date mean they have the attributes sought in subgroup members
- **Your answer to the following:**
  - Why do you want to join the PAT SAP Researcher Subgroup and what do you think you can bring to the role?
  - What do you think is the greatest challenge currently facing postdoctoral researchers, including early career researchers, in the UK?
  - How do you think the Concordat for Researcher Development helps to improve research culture?
- **Details of your involvement in any relevant advisory, strategic, policy, assessment or similar groups, panels, boards or committees**
- **Diversity information** (see Equality and diversity for further information on why we request such data)

Applications to the Subgroup will be initially sifted by the Senior Portfolio Manager for Fellowships and Early Career Researchers, Portfolio Manager, Business Interaction Unit and the Head of Research and Skills at BBSRC. The applications will then be assessed by the
Chair of the Subgroup, the Chair of PAT SAP and the Associate Director – Research and Innovation Talent at BBSRC.

Candidates will be assessed against the above stated attributes and the expertise and experience sought in members as described on the PAT SAP Researcher Subgroup webpage. Appointments will be offered based on this assessment, the need to balance the overall expertise of the subgroup, the need to maintain a diversity of institutions represented (no two postdocs will be appointed from the same organisation), and the need to ensure appointments to the subgroup are balanced and in line with BBSRC’s equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Equality and diversity

We recognise that diverse ideas, experiences, backgrounds and perspectives are fundamental to successful science and innovation and we are committed to ensuring that our Committees, Panels and Boards are inclusive, diverse, and representative of the research community.

Through this appointment activity, we aspire to improve the diversity of the PAT SAP Researcher Subgroup. We are committed to the principle of providing equal opportunities for all. We are keen to obtain more diversity in our appointments so would welcome applications from a range of candidates from all backgrounds. Applications from women, those with a disability, and members of minority ethnic groups, who are currently underrepresented on the pool, are especially welcome. Applications from business, user and government colleagues are also particularly encouraged.

An Equality and Impact Assessment (please contact postdoc.researchers@bbsrc.ukri.org to request access) has been developed to support and inform applicants and ensure that we enable participation and attendance at meetings. For example, we use venues that have good transport links and are accessible, we will also contribute towards additional costs for caring responsibilities to enable you to attend. Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you wish to discuss further.

To support us in assessing how effective our policies and procedures are in eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting opportunities, we ask that you provide diversity information that will be used anonymously by BBSRC for statistical purposes. This information will be treated in confidence by BBSRC and will not be used in the assessment of applications.

Career Breaks and Flexible Working

Time spent outside the active research and business environment, whether through career breaks or flexible working will be considered in the assessment process.

Applicants should indicate any substantive periods of absence within their application. Further details on the nature of the absence and how it has affected track record, productivity and career progression may be provided, if desired. Information provided will be used only to make appropriate adjustments when assessing an individual’s track record, productivity and career progression.
In assessing applicants, panels will recognise that the effects on productivity of a career break, or a period of flexible working, may continue beyond the return to work.

Contact details

Please contact Hayley Moulding, Senior Portfolio Manager (Fellowships and Early Career Researchers) or Ben Angus, Portfolio Manager (Business Interaction Unit) postdoc.researcher@bbsrc.ukri.org for further information on the opportunity.