



Schmidt Science Fellows, in partnership with the Rhodes Trust

Developing the next generation of science leaders to transcend disciplines, advance discovery, and solve the world's most pressing problems.

2020 Nomination and Selection - Process and Guidance



Our Fellowship

Schmidt Science Fellows, in partnership with the Rhodes Trust, aims to develop the next generation of science leaders to transcend disciplines, advance discovery, and solve the world's most pressing problems.

We are in a new era of science, technology, and innovation. Scientific progress and cutting-edge technologies are rapidly accelerating our understanding of the natural and built worlds. Research is increasingly global and can affect a wide range of pressing societal challenges. In this new era, the best scientists should draw insights from across numerous different disciplines, be able to apply new techniques, and possess a broad world-view informed by the intersections between science and society.

Our Fellows receive a stipend of \$100,000 and are supported by the program to undertake a full-time, postdoctoral study for at least one year in a world-leading laboratory in a field different from their existing area of expertise. Fellows also spend five weeks during their Fellowship year at four residential meetings around the globe where they receive bespoke training to help them become the next generation of science leaders. In these meetings the Fellows are introduced to new research ideas, techniques and questions, they are exposed to a wide range of cutting-edge science, leading thinkers and institutions, and they receive tailored training in science communication, leadership and how to facilitate interdisciplinary research. Throughout the Fellowship year, Fellows receive regular scientific and professional mentoring from a member of our Academic Council, and they continue to have access to this support after their Fellowship is complete to support their professional development further.

Indeed, the Fellowship year is the beginning of their membership to a lifelong community of Schmidt Science Fellows, our partners and supporters, all of whom are committed to furthering interdisciplinary science to achieve greater global impact.

Nomination and Selection process

Applications to Schmidt Science Fellows are by invitation only, following candidate nomination by their PhD awarding institution. For our 2020 cohort selection process we are working in partnership with around 100 of the world's leading science, technology, and engineering institutions to identify the highest quality candidates based on scientific excellence and a commitment to interdisciplinary impact on a global scale.

We recognize that each institution has a different makeup and size of its graduate community and therefore we ask each to undertake an internal process to identify nominees that is most effective and appropriate to the institutional circumstances.

We provide marketing materials if you wish to organize an internal open competition amongst eligible candidates.

Once a nominee has been identified, institutions should issue them with one of the unique access codes we have provided and the details of our online applications system. Nominees will have until 12 August 2019 to access the system and enter basic information about themselves and their area of science.

Once this basic information has been submitted, applicants must complete a full application by 1 October 2019. Additional guidance will be provided to assist candidates in preparing the best possible case.

Applications will consist of details of academic history, including transcripts, current CV with details of relevant publications, at least five but no more than seven letters of recommendation, a personal statement, a proposal for potential postdoctoral research direction, and three short proposals for potential postdoctoral Fellowship labs.

Our Fellows are encouraged and supported to take an ambitious scientific risk with their postdoctoral placement and are required to outline their planned interdisciplinary pivot. The placement is a unique opportunity to study in a world-class lab anywhere in the world and candidates will be encouraged to consider the flexibility and global outlook that this can entail.

All applications will be reviewed in December 2019-January 2020 and submitted to a thorough process of screening, shortlisting interviews, and final selection panels by expert review committees. We expect to announce the 2020 cohort of Schmidt Science Fellows in April 2020.

Nomination and Selection Timetable – 2020 Cohort

June – early August 2019

Institutional Nominations: Institutions nominate candidates who must then submit their individual personal details to us.

29 July – 12 August 2019

Nominated candidates must complete their individual personal details on our online applications portal, using their unique access code.



August – 1 October 2019

Individual Applications: Nominated applicants use our online system to complete their full applications.

December 2019

Academic Review: Expert reviewers will perform an initial screening of all applications. Successful applicants will progress to the pre-selection stage.

Late December 2019 – January 2020

Pre-selection Interviews: Online shortlisting interviews will be conducted.

April 2020

Final Selection and Announcement: In-person panel interviews will be conducted with senior figures from science, business, and society, followed by the announcement of the 2020 cohort of Schmidt Science Fellows.

April 2020 – June 2020

Global Placement: 2020 Fellows work together with the Academic Council Chair to determine the optimal placement laboratory for their interdisciplinary pivot. Placement is not restricted by institution, rather a Fellow can choose to complete their Fellowship in any laboratory globally that aligns with the program vision and individual training needs of the Fellow.

July/August 2020

The 2020 cohort commences their Fellowship year with their first Global Meeting and the start of their postdoctoral research.

Candidate Criteria

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for nomination and potential selection as a Schmidt Science Fellow, candidates must meet the following requirements¹:

- Have conducted their graduate degree in the natural sciences (Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Earth Sciences), Engineering, Mathematics, or Computing – and all sub-disciplines therein.

¹ Any questions about eligibility or accommodations for extraordinary circumstances should be directed to the Director of Admissions, Dr. Simon Vaughan, at: nominations@schmidtsciencefellows.org



- Have fulfilled or expect to fulfil all of the requirements for the conferral² of their PhD, including a successful defence, in one of these fields between 1 May 2019 and 30 June 2020³.
- Be available for the entire period of the 2020-2021 program, from July 2020 to July 2021, including attendance at each Global Meeting.

Individuals wishing to be considered for the Schmidt Science Fellows program must be nominated by a designated senior official at one of our nominating institutions.

Please note, the application and selection process, as well as the delivery of the Schmidt Science Fellows program, is only available in English and all engagement with the program must be in English.

Candidates

We are looking for the brightest minds in the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering, and computing who are interested in broadening their horizons and pursuing a challenging and rewarding period of study with the world's leading academics and institutions. Schmidt Science Fellows are expected to be future leaders and should demonstrate a keen interest in harnessing interdisciplinarity and interaction with wider society to accelerate discovery to achieve global impact.

Applications for the Schmidt Science Fellows program will be judged against the following **selection criteria**:

- Extraordinary achievement – Clear record of academic achievement during their PhD at leading institutions of higher learning.
- Alignment with the Program – Commitment to pursuing a year or more of postdoctoral study in a field different from the topic of study for which the applicant received their PhD.
- Scientific curiosity – Desire to achieve a broad level of exposure to and knowledge in cutting-edge innovations and research across the sciences.

² Conferral is taken to mean all official requirements have been met to grant graduate status from the awarding institution and that you are entitled to use the PhD title associated with your award. We do not require your graduation ceremony to have taken place, but by June 30th 2020 you must have submitted and defended your thesis and be able to provide formal proof that all requirements are met for the PhD. This is necessary for you to be able to legitimately undertake a post-doctoral placement at the start of the 2020 program and to meet any applicable visa criteria for placements overseas.

³ It is permissible to have already begun a post-doctoral position, but you will be expected to consider at least three options for potential placements during the Fellowship year and the placement must represent a true interdisciplinary pivot from your PhD studies. Applicants should view the Fellowship year as an opportunity to go anywhere in the world to acquire new skills in a new discipline and we require a flexible approach towards placements.



- Intellectual spark – High degree of intelligence, energy, and intellectual curiosity that will drive future scientific discoveries.
- Global ambitions – The will to make a lasting impact in the sciences and society, pursuing knowledge that will benefit the world by engaging in ambitious research and displaying great perseverance and appetite for risk throughout the scientific process.
- Character – A genuine and demonstrable interest in society and global challenges combined with a desire to use personal talents and expertise to make a positive difference in the world.
- Collaborative spirit – Demonstrated history of effective collaboration with diverse team members.
- Use of innovative tools – General interest and comfort in the use and potential of new ways of doing science, such as modern computing and data science techniques.

Contacts

Nomination and selection inquiries should be made to Dr. Simon Vaughan at:
nominations@schmidtsciencefellows.org

General inquiries:

Email: info@schmidtsciencefellows.org

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 280256

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