

Senior Fellows Catalyst Grant Scheme 2022 Pilot

Application Guidance

Introduction

We want to encourage increased interdisciplinary scientific collaboration within our Fellowship community. We believe increasing scientific endeavors between Fellows will support our aims to further interdisciplinary science, develop Fellows as advocates and exemplars of interdisciplinarity, strengthen our long-term community, and provide opportunities for Fellows to pursue projects emerging from their Placements and/or Fellowship interactions that would not otherwise be supported by other funders.

We are launching a Senior Fellows Catalyst Grant Scheme Pilot that will provide funding for up to \$10,000 per successful proposal from two or more Senior Fellows to support the development, exploration, proof-of-concept, or delivery of an interdisciplinary science idea.

We have a total of \$50,000 total budget for the Pilot Round. The level of demand and quality of applications for this round will help to determine the long-term need and design for a scheme of this type. We do not commit to awarding all available funding if we do not receive enough proposals of sufficient quality.

We are interested in **any proposal that advances an interdisciplinary science idea by and between two or more Fellows**. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Delivery of a small-scale science project.
- Completion of a proof-of-concept experiment or study.
- Equipment or services purchase.
- Scoping or developing an idea, e.g. costs of convening the proposers.
- Exchange or secondment of Senior Fellows between organizations in pursuit of a specific scientific objective.
- Contracting of technical support and or expertise.
- ‘Buy out’ of a Senior Fellow’s time in pursuit of a specific scientific objective.

Eligibility

- Senior Fellows from the 2018, 2019, and 2020 cohorts (note – current Fellows are not eligible as we expect them to focus on Placement projects but any Fellow can be consulted or engaged as always within the Fellowship).
- Proposals must include at least two named Senior Fellows.
- Any Senior Fellow can be named on any proposal during this Pilot Round, but if an individual is included in more than one proposal, the contribution to each proposal needs to be explained in the relevant section of the application.
- Proposals must include details on how funds will be paid.
- Funds must be issued from the Program by 16 December 2022. Work on relevant Catalyst Scheme projects must commence by December 2022 and complete by 31 December 2023.

- **Proposals must be received to fellows@schmidtsciencefellows.org by 6pm EDT, Friday 19 August 2022**

Review Criteria and Decision Process

All proposals received by the deadline will be considered for funding by a Review Panel that will include at least the Executive Director and the Chief Scientist of Schmidt Futures.

Proposals will be reviewed on the following main criteria:

- **Scope and anticipated science outcomes** – Are the proposed outcomes scientifically interesting and will it, at any scale, contribute to furthering knowledge? Are the outcomes achievable within the time and funding request proposed?
- **Interdisciplinary scale** – How interdisciplinary is the proposal, either in terms of the Fellows' disciplinary expertise involved or the science required for the proposal itself?
- **Objectives, timescales, accountability, and budget** – Are the objectives proposed and the accountability of different Fellows clear and deliverable? Are the timescales and budget properly developed, reasonable, deliverable, and appropriate for the scale or breadth of the proposal?

The Review Panel will also consider:

- **Fellowship community contribution** – Does the proposal provide any argument that it will further strengthen the Fellowship community?
- **Follow-on plans for the project outcomes** – What ideas are there for utilizing the outcomes and who would use these and fund next steps?
- **Commentary on diversity, equity, and inclusion** – Does the proposal identify how the applicants are attentive to diversity, equity, and inclusion matters relevant to the proposal?

Making an Application

Each pair or group of Fellows wishing to submit a proposal should work together to develop their ideas and plan before submitting a single application. One Fellow must assume the role of lead contact. They will be responsible for correspondence with the Program Team, which will be sent to their SSF email. It will be assumed that all Fellows named on a proposal have agreed and approved the proposal and any commitments made. Final funding will be subject to an award letter to which each named Fellow will need to agree. This letter will confirm funding payment details and reaffirm the intellectual property and acknowledgment requirements from the Terms of Fellowship.

Please complete all sections of the application (the feedback section is optional) using the guidance below. **The information included should be proportionate to the amount of funding requested. We are not expecting an NIH or NSF proposal!**

Fellow details – please include all Fellows involved in the proposal. There is no additional weighting to a higher number of Fellows as we want to ensure grouping represents what is needed for the proposed project. Please add further lines if required.

Project Title – please give your proposal a title for future reference.

Project Science Statement – please outline the scientific purpose and anticipated outcomes of the proposed project. We are interested in why you want to do the proposed project, how it will contribute knowledge or an advance to a wider question or area, and what you believe the outcomes will be. This does not need to be unrealistically ambitious considering the funding and timing available but instead we are interested in why you think your proposal is interesting and useful.

Please note – proposals must outline an interdisciplinary science idea. We are not intending to support proposals for science-art, outreach, or the involvement of non-STEM disciplines, such as social science or economics.

Interdisciplinary Aims Statement – a major aim of the Catalyst Scheme is to advance interdisciplinary science. Please outline how your proposal is interdisciplinary and how it advances further interdisciplinary practice. This could be through the project itself, the Fellows involved, or the disciplines required for the proposal.

Fellowship Contribution Statement – Please describe how the proposal could strengthen the Fellowship. This may include the breadth of Fellows involved (e.g. across cohorts or locations) or plans to engage with or disseminate outcomes to the wider Fellowship community.

Objectives, timescales, and accountability – It is important that you outline the specific objectives for your project and how you will measure progress against these. Please include details about milestones and timings and, importantly, which Fellow is accountability for which part of the proposal and the contribution they will make.

Follow-on Plan – We intend the Catalyst Scheme to promote interdisciplinary science within our community and to bridge Fellows to further funding or initiatives. Please use this section to describe what the next steps after the Catalyst project may be, who could utilize the outcomes and how, and if there are other funders who you think would support your next steps. You should also use this section to explain your approach to disseminating any data or results that arise from the proposal (if relevant) and the management of IP. The Program will require that each is handled according to our Fellows' Handbook which confirms we make no claim to IP and delegate this to host institutions.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Please describe any relevant diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations and how you are addressing these. This may include but is not limited to considering diverse views in setting research questions, potential engagement with relevant communities, dissemination plans, and the diversity of individuals or groups involved with the proposal.

Ethics Approvals – Please confirm if there are any ethical considerations or approvals applicable to your proposal and note how you plan to ensure these are appropriately managed. This may include but not be limited to use of personal data, human subjects, animals, or environmental impact. If any part of your proposal is expected to require ethics approval from an institutional committee (e.g. through an IRB, IACUC, or non-US equivalents) please explain which institution will be responsible.

Budget – Proposals may request between \$1,000 and \$10,000 (with no penalty for the scale of the request).

Please include a budget line for each main activity within the proposal. We do not require itemized lists or quotes for all supplies, but the budget should be sufficiently detailed to provide a realistic sense of what it will cost to complete each aspect of the project as well as providing an overall total.

Please also describe how and when funding will be paid. All funds must be issued by 16 December 2022. Funds may be issued as a grant to your current institution or as a direct payment to Fellows. However, we will not process individual purchase orders (e.g., for travel or supplies).

Please consider the best approach for managing the funding for your project, including the number and location of Fellows involved. You must ensure you have checked the details of the payment method (e.g. that your institution will accept a small grant) and that all Fellows involved in the project agree to this (e.g. if one Fellow will be managing directly issued funds for the group).

Scheme Feedback – This is an optional section that will not be considered as part of the proposal review. As this is pilot phase, we are interested in your feedback on all aspects of the Catalyst Scheme. Please share any thoughts here.

Further information

Please contact Matt Goode or Arielle Baker for more information and with any questions – fellows@schmidtsciencefellows.org