

LMB Career Returners Fellowship 2026

Additional Information

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1. Is the LMB Career Returners Fellowship only for people who have had a career break?

Yes, this scheme is for researchers who are not currently working in a scientific research role. They must have had a break from scientific research for at least 12 months.

2. Fellowship eligibility criteria

This LMB Fellowship is open to those who:

- Are not currently working in a scientific research role
- Have had a break from scientific research for at least 12 months.
- Have PhD or Postdoc experience in a relevant scientific area.

Career breaks or gaps due to maternity, parental leave, other caring responsibilities, volunteering activities, part-time working or illness will be taken into account when assessing each application. This list is not exhaustive. Disclosed information will not negatively affect application decisions.

3. How many Career Returners Fellowships will be awarded each year?

We expect to offer one fellowship per year.

4. How long are the Fellowships?

The LMB Career Returners Fellowship is a three-year postdoctoral position with the possibility of extending for a further year.

5. When does the Fellowship start?

While starting sometime between October and end of December 2026 is preferred, there is flexibility with the start date and this can be discussed. Please just let us know your circumstances.

6. What is included in the Fellowship?

The LMB Career Returners Fellowship benefits include:

- £41,344 per year for a three-year, fixed term, full-time position, paid monthly
- generous allowance for training, conference attendance and development
- research consumables included
- excellent pension package
- generous annual leave allowance of up to 30 days per year
- additional 10.5 days paid public holidays

Other benefits include:

- flexible working options
- employee assistance programme
- family-friendly building and policies [[link to family friendly section/page](#)]
- employee discounts and offers on retail and leisure activities
- reimbursement towards the cost of an eye examination and a contribution towards glasses required for use with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) work
- cycle-to-work scheme

Financial support is available via the UKRI staff packages:

- Rent Deposit Loan
- Season Ticket Loan

Training, development and support

Support from the start

A key element of this scheme is the provision of support from the start of the application process to the finish.

We want applicants to feel welcome and comfortable contacting our team to learn more about the application process and what it is like to work here. Please don't hesitate to contact us – these conversations are simply to support you and will not affect your application.

Training and development

Fellows can access:

- the University of Cambridge 'Researcher Development Programme' which is open to all research staff within the LMB
- the extensive UKRI training programme
- the Annual Postdoc Symposium
- regular scientific symposia, lectures and talks throughout the year
- Nature Masterclasses

Peer-to-peer support

Peer support is provided by the LMB Postdoc Association. Opportunities will also be made available to network with others on similar schemes in the Cambridge area.

7. Do I need to contact any LMB Group Leaders?

You are strongly encouraged to speak to relevant [LMB Group Leaders](#) to learn more about their research. This will help with your application, and ensure a strong alignment with the LMB's scientific programme. Please [get in touch](#) if you would like help with contacting the Group Leaders here.

Quite often Group Leaders are looking for someone who is scientifically curious and passionate about their science.

Before contacting Group Leaders, we strongly recommend that you:

- read scientific papers published by the research group you are interested in so you are familiar with their area of science.
- have some questions ready for the Group Leader about their research. Show your curiosity and wider thinking on the topic. You don't need to understand it all!
- think about how your research could complement theirs, what skills and techniques you have developed so far, what you would like to learn more about etc.
- think about where you would like your career to go and how being involved in their Group with help to enable that.

8. Can applicants choose which programme area to apply to?

Yes. On the application form, you should select up to three research areas that you are interested in and/or up to three Group Leaders who you would be interested in working with.

Please include this information in the application form and in your CV or letter.

After the initial longlisting exercise, we will send your application to the relevant Group Leader for shortlisting onto the next stage.

You are strongly encouraged to get in touch with [LMB Group Leaders](#) to discuss their science and how your skills might add value to the existing scientific programme. Please contact the [Fellowship Team](#) if you would like help doing this.

If you are not sure to which programme area you should apply, please indicate this in your application and we can arrange a call to discuss further.

9. How do I apply for the Fellowship?

Stage 1: Express your interest

Before applying, please get in touch if you:

- would like an informal discussion on the next steps of the process, including a discussion on the application form questions (30-minute call).
- need specific support with the next stages of the application process, for any reason.
- have any other questions.

We are happy to help at any stage of the process. Please email the Fellowship Team recruit@mrc-lmb.cam.ac.uk

Stage 2: Complete application

The deadline for applying is **23:55** on **Sunday 12 April 2026**.

You will need to upload:

1. A completed application form (see webpage to download this)
2. Your scientific CV with covering letter.

Guidance for what to include in your scientific CV and covering letter

Through your Application Form, CV and a covering letter, your application will be scored using the criteria below. To score highly, your application should provide evidence and examples of the following:

Assessment criteria	Assessed	
	Application	Interview
PhD in a relevant subject area or equivalent	✓	
Track record of research - this will include achievements, and contributions to published papers	✓	✓
Clear evidence of your capacity to learn new skills, and pick up new techniques quickly	✓	✓
Demonstrable scientific curiosity and motivation	✓	
Demonstrable ambition for using the Rising Talent Fellowship as a springboard for your scientific career	✓	✓
Examples of being a team player with the ability to work with others in a collegiate and collaborative environment		✓
Ability to effectively communicate ideas and results to collaborators and present orally to different groups	✓	✓
Ability to effectively prioritise and work independently	✓	✓
Detail-orientated with strong problem-solving skills		✓

Educational background - Please provide information about your educational background, key qualifications and relevant positions you have held.

Your research experience - Tell us how you think your research experience and broader contributions to the research environment will enrich your Fellowship experience at the LMB. Include any information about awards, publications, scholarships etc as appropriate. Mention key areas of expertise, particularly those relevant to the Research Group you are applying to join and your own research.

Your academic and research achievements - Tell us what academic and or research achievements you are most proud of and why.

Research area of interest - Which research area(s) are you interested in applying to? Details of the LMB research areas can be found on our [webpages](#).

Group Leaders of interest - Are there any Group Leaders you are particularly interested in working with? Information about our Group Leaders and their science can be found on our Research Leaders [webpages](#).

Additional contextual information - Please tell us about any career breaks, secondments, volunteering, part-time work or other relevant experience (including any time spent in different sectors), that might have affected your progression as a researcher? This information will not negatively impact any decisions made about applications.

Stage 3: Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview during May 2026. You can attend the interview in person or remotely via Zoom.

You will be asked to present your research to date outlining your scientific achievements and challenges, key areas of discovery and areas of future interest. This will be followed by an assessment of scientific competency, curiosity, motivation and passion via a question and answer session.

In the interview the panel is looking for candidates with:

- a clear track record of research - this will include achievements, and any contributions to published papers
- evidence of their capacity to learn new skills and to pick up new techniques quickly
- demonstrable scientific curiosity and motivation
- demonstrable ambition for using the Career Returners Fellowship as a springboard for their scientific career
- examples of being a team player with the ability to work with others in a collegiate and collaborative environment
- the ability to effectively communicate ideas and results to collaborators and present orally to different groups
- the ability to effectively prioritise and work independently
- strong problem-solving skills and who are detail-orientated

If you are unsuccessful at this stage, you will receive feedback about your application. You will also be supported to apply again in future rounds.

If you have not already done so, shortlisted candidates are encouraged to speak to relevant [LMB Group Leaders](#) to help steer the application ensuring a strong fit with the [LMB's scientific programme](#).

Please email the [Fellowship Team](#) if you have any questions.