

Global Talent Visa - Guidance

Contents

Overview	1
Benefits	2
Timeframes	2
Stage one: Endorsement options	2
Cost	2
Pathway 1: Academic and Researcher Appointments (Fast track route)	3
Pathway 2: Individual Fellowship (Fast track route)	4
Pathway 3: Endorsed funder (Fast track route)	5
Pathway 4: Peer review (Not Fast track route)	6
Stage Two: Visa application	7
Cost	7
Reimbursement of fees	7
Applying for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time	7
Resources	7
Document version control	8

Overview

The Global Talent visa is for recognised leaders (talented) and the leaders of tomorrow (promising) in fields such as:

- Science, Engineering, Humanities, Social Science and Medicine
- Arts and Culture, Architecture, Design Industry, Film and Television
- Digital Technology

This guidance focuses on the [Academia or Research](#) field. [Arts and Culture](#) and [Digital Technology](#) fields can also be explored separately.

An eligible applicant must apply for both stages:

1. Apply for endorsement (processed by one of the six Home Office approved endorsement bodies).
2. Apply for the visa (processed by UK Visas and Immigration, part of the Home Office).

An application for endorsement and the visa can also be made at the same time, please see [Applying for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time](#) for further details.

An applicant who has been awarded a prestigious prize (as listed in [Appendix Global Talent: Prestigious Prizes of the Immigration rules](#)) will already be considered as showing exceptional talent and therefore can go straight to the visa application stage without requiring endorsement.

Benefits

Once granted a Global Talent visa, the holder can:

- Work for employers or be self-employed
- Change jobs without informing the Home Office
- Bring dependents with the visa holder

Additionally, this visa route benefits from:

- No sponsorship requirements (such as reporting changes to the Home Office)
- No English language requirements
- No minimum salary thresholds
- Flexibility:
 - Consultancy
 - Other roles not necessary to be in same area
- Fast track for settlement in 3 years
- Research permitted outside UK without time limit

Timeframes

Stage 1 - Endorsement: Eight weeks unless fast track route available (when decision takes up to two weeks).

Stage 2 - Visa: Can be applied for maximum of three months before travel to the UK.

Application processing times depend on where the application is being made:

- Inside the UK is within eight weeks
- Outside of the UK is within three weeks

Priority and Super Priority Services exist to pay for a speedier decision. For further details please see: [Visa processing times - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times)

Stage one: Endorsement options

There are four different endorsement paths:

- [Pathway 1: Academic or Researcher Appointment](#): For individuals who have been appointed to an eligible PhD-level academic or research position at an approved UK High Education Institution (HEI) or research institute. The role must have responsibility for academic, research or innovation leadership and development **or** have performing research or innovation as a primary function.
- [Pathway 2: Individual Fellowships](#): For individuals who have been awarded an individual fellowship on the list approved by the British Academy, Royal Academy of Engineering, and the Royal Society. The fellowship must be current or within the last 5 years before the date of application.
- [Pathway 3: Endorsed Funders](#): For researchers and specialists working on an eligible grant/award from an endorsed funder approved by UKRI. Applicants must be hosted or employed by an eligible institution approved by UKRI.
- [Pathway 4: Peer Review](#): For individuals applying for full peer review.

The endorsement bodies are: [The Royal Society](#), [The British Academy](#), [The Royal Academic of Engineering](#) and [UK Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI).

Cost

The current fees are available via [Apply for the Global Talent visa : Overview - GOV.UK](#). **In all cases**, the endorsement costs are non-refundable.

Pathway 1: Academic and Researcher Appointments (Fast track route)

Endorsing bodies: The British Academy, The Royal Academy of Engineering, The Royal Society

Further details: [Work in the UK as a researcher or academic leader \(Global Talent visa\): Academic or researcher - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/work-in-the-uk-as-a-researcher-or-academic-leader/global-talent-visa/academic-or-researcher)

Endorsement Criteria/Key Points	Actions required by Employer/Hiring Manager	Actions required by Applicant
Appointed to a role which requires a PhD or equivalent research experience (academic, industrial or clinical) and: (1) has responsibility for academic, research or innovation leadership and development* OR (2) will be performing research or innovation as a primary function of their role** <i>* For individuals in leadership roles at department, faculty or institutional level; typical duties include strategy development and delivery and overseeing management of staff and resources. This is for roles such as: Head of School, Associate Dean, Vice-Chancellor/Pro-Vice Chancellor, but this list is not exhaustive.</i> <i>**For ERE Level 4+ roles only where performing research or innovation is one of the main responsibilities that defines the role. Professional services roles, such as roles supporting researchers, and ERE roles on the Education pathway, are not in scope.</i> For both (1) and (2), the job description must confirm the PhD is essential in the person specification. Roles requiring either a PhD or another postgraduate degree are not eligible.	Recruitment: role advertised and an open competition held. Where not advertised, the endorsing body must agree with the recruitment explanation given. Interview Panel: Minimum of three academic, research or innovation representatives from employing HEI present. Expert: At least one expert* in the relevant field is on the interview panel (this can be one of the 'three academics' above) or at least one relevant expert, independent of the University was consulted before the job offer being made. * 'expert' can be a senior academic or Professor from the appointing Faculty who has expertise within the same field as the appointment. References: at least two references required. Job offer: must be accepted by applicant. Evidence of the above and an eligible job description must be provided for a Statement of Guarantee letter to be issued.	Apply for Endorsement (or Endorsement and Visa) via GOV.UK - Submit all evidence (Statement of Guarantee letter + Job Description) within Endorsement application. - Await Home Office outcome. If successful proceed to Stage 2 (visa application), unless application has been made for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time. - Update HR contact on outcome of application.

Pathway 2: Individual Fellowship (Fast track route)

Endorsing bodies: The British Academy, The Royal Academy of Engineering, The Royal Society

Further details: [Work in the UK as a researcher or academic leader \(Global Talent visa\): Individual fellowship - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Endorsement Criteria/Key Points	Actions required by Employer/Hiring Manager	Actions required by Applicant
Fellowship must be current or held within the last 5 years before the date of application. Check awards that are eligible under the individual fellowships route via Route 2: Individual fellowships Royal Society Fellowship awarded must be on the list approved by The British Academy (BA), The Royal Academy of Engineering (RAE) and The Royal Society (RS). Copy of Fellowship Award Letter required for application. Suitable for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowship.	No employer requirements. The applicant can fulfil this application as a visitor, prospective or current employee.	1. Apply for Endorsement (or Endorsement and Visa) via GOV.UK (selecting either 'Exceptional talent' or 'Exceptional promise' as determined by the Award eligibility route) 2. Submit copy of Fellowship Award Letter within Endorsement application. 3. Await Home Office outcome. If successful proceed to Stage 2 (visa application), unless application has been made for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time. 4. Update HR contact on outcome of application.

Pathway 3: Endorsed funder (Fast track route)

Endorsing body: UK Research and Innovation

Further details: [Work in the UK as a researcher or academic leader \(Global Talent visa\): UK Research and Innovation endorsement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Endorsement Criteria/Key Points	Actions required by Employer/Hiring Manager	Actions required by Applicant
Individual researchers and specialists named working on an eligible grant from an endorsed funder. - Grant must be eligible: - Funded by endorsed funder - Minimum of £30K - Minimum 2-year duration - To be eligible applicant must: - Spend at least 50% of their time on the eligible grant - Have at least 1 year remaining on their employment contract at the time of endorsement application (duration of appointment not required to match grant duration, but must overlap) - Either: (a) direct independently, or under the supervision of a Principal Investigator, a unique research or innovation project. Must also hold a PhD or have equivalent research experience; actively participate in a relevant field in a University, research institute or industry; and have their name or post listed on the grant. OR (a) make critical contributions to research by providing core technical or domain excellence or in developing new technologies and methodologies. Must also hold a UK bachelor's degree (or equivalent overseas degree) or equivalent research experience; and have research experience in a University, research institute or industry.	Grant: ensures grant is eligible by checking grant offer letter or link to eligible grant/award. Job Offer Accepted: Applicant accepts job offer (including job title and department where applicant will be based). Contract Length: Applicant must have at least one year remaining on the applicant's employment contract or hosting agreement at the time of the endorsement application. Critical to Grant: Applicant must provide critical contributions to work supported by the eligible grant and must be essential to the execution of the grant/award. Time spent on Grant: Applicant must spend at least 50% of their time on the eligible grant/award (Principal Investigator, Co-investigator roles from an aggregation of eligible grants). Recruitment: If the applicant is not specifically named on the grant, details of the recruitment process are required to evidence robust recruitment 'at the highest standards for open recruitment'.	Apply for Endorsement (or Endorsement and Visa) via GOV.UK (selecting 'applying under UKRI endorsed funder route') - Applicant must provide the following for their application: - A link from a UKRI approved database where the grant or award is published. OR - Award Letter or written confirmation of the award from the endorsed funder showing eligibility criteria met. - Declaration letter from Director of HR. - Await Home Office email detailing outcome of endorsement. If successful proceed to Stage Two. - Await Home Office outcome. If successful proceed to Stage 2 (visa application), unless application has been made for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time. - Update HR contact on outcome of application.

Pathway 4: Peer review (Not Fast track route)

Endorsing bodies: The British Academy, The Royal Academy of Engineering, The Royal Society

Further details: [Work in the UK as a researcher or academic leader \(Global Talent visa\): Peer review - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Endorsement Criteria/Key Points	Actions required by Applicant
If ineligible for endorsement via any of the above three paths, peer review endorsement can be sought via the British Academy, Royal Society or Royal Academy of Engineering (as applicable). Applicant can choose to be considered under either: • ‘Exceptional Talent’ for being a leader in their field • ‘Exceptional Promise’ for having the potential to be a leader in their field The applicant should check they meet all criteria for either Exceptional Talent or Exceptional Promise: Work in the UK as a researcher or academic leader (Global Talent visa): Peer review - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) The application will be assessed by the relevant endorsement body, who will consider the following eligibility • The applicant’s career history e.g. international reputation and impact of work • Strength of recommendation letter(s) provided • How the applicant will contribute to UK research excellence and to wider society, including to the economy, by being based in the UK • Additional factors will be considered depending on whether the applicant applies for Exceptional Talent or Exceptional Promise	1. Apply for Endorsement (or Endorsement and Visa) via GOV.UK (selecting either ‘Exceptional talent’ or ‘Exceptional promise’ as determined by the Award eligibility route) 2. Applicant must submit: • Most recent CV setting out career and publication history • A letter of personal recommendation from an eminent person resident in the UK. • For ‘Exceptional Talent’, a letter from an additional eminent person in the applicant’s field. Check Work in the UK as a researcher or academic leader (Global Talent visa): Peer review - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) for further details on the documents required, including what the letters must include. 3. Await Home Office outcome. If successful proceed to Stage 2 (visa application), unless application has been made for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time. 4. Update HR contact on outcome of application.

Stage Two: Visa application

Following a successful endorsement decision or if awarded a prestigious prize, the applicant must apply for their visa (if not already done so) via [Apply for the Global Talent visa : Overview - GOV.UK](#)

The visa application must be submitted **within three months** of receipt of the endorsement confirmation.

Student visa holders wishing to switch into the Global Talent visa must check whether they are eligible to do so by checking the information on [Apply for the Global Talent visa : Switch to this visa - GOV.UK](#)

Cost

The visa application cost depends upon the applicant's circumstances. The Health Surcharge cost also applies. The current fees are available via [Apply for the Global Talent visa : Overview - GOV.UK](#).

Reimbursement of fees

If successful, the University may be able to assist with the Visa application fee and other costs associated with making a visa application. For further details and full eligibility criteria, please see the University's '[Visa and Immigration Costs Assistance](#)' policy.

Applying for Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time

If submitting both stage 1 and stage 2 at the same time, the applicant must tick the relevant box on the stage 2 form to confirm this. If the applicant ticks this box, their stage 2 application will be placed on hold until the outcome of their stage 1 application is confirmed by the relevant endorsing body.

Resources

- [Apply for the Global Talent visa : Overview - GOV.UK](#)
- [Immigration Rules Appendix Global Talent - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Immigration Rules Appendix Global Talent: Prestigious Prizes - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)
- [Endorsement review for Global Talent - GOV.UK](#)
- [Global talent \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Global Talent Visa \(sharepoint.com\)](#) – University of Southampton internal only

The endorsing bodies offer guidance and information on their individual web pages (they aim to maintain the same information across each of the endorsing body web pages to ensure consistency of guidance):

- [Global Talent Visa \(ukri.org\)](#)
- [Global Talent Visa \(raeng.org.uk\)](#)
- [Global Talent Visa | The British Academy](#)
- [Global Talent visa | Royal Society](#)
- [Frequently asked questions | Royal Society](#)

Document version control

Policy/governance	UKVI legislation and Sponsorship of overseas workers		
Reference	Immigration Rules - Immigration Rules Appendix Global Talent - Guidance - GOV.UK		
Author	Andie Jenkins	Owner	Manager – Staff Immigration Compliance

Document History		
Version	Date	Change
1.0	June 2020	First draft
2.0	December 2020	Addition of changes to Snr Leadership selection process
3.0	January 2021	Final draft
4.0	April 2021	Small amendments following changes to the guidance
5.0	May 2021	Updated information for prestigious prize
6.0	October 2021	Amendments to endorsement routes following changes to the immigration rules
7.0	August 2023	Updated to reflect changes to the immigration rules for Student visa holders switching into Global Talent
8.0	April 2026	Updated to reflect changes to the immigration rules for endorsement pathway 1