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AI in Science Global Faculty Fellowship Guidance Document

About the Programme:

Imperial's I-X Centre for AI in Science is recruiting for the Eric and Wendy Schmidt AI in Science Global Faculty Fellowship, supported by Schmidt Sciences. The Fellowship assists talented faculty members from global partner institutions to use AI to enhance their scientific research, while also building sustained local capacity at their home institutions. The programme will support one further cohorts of fellows, each on a two-year programme. The programme will enable colleagues from partner institutions to co-locate at I-X, Imperial's flagship AI initiative, to enhance their expertise in AI and its application. The following partners are participating in the programme:

- Indian Institute of Science
- National Centre for Biological Sciences, India
- University of Ghana
- University of Sao Paulo
- Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
- Universitas Gadjah Mada

The two-year fellowship will include the following:

- One year, fully funded at Imperial including resources to help visa and relocation costs and supported by a dedicated onboarding assistant.
- Generous tax-free stipend of £48,000 allocated for the year in London.
- Extra support for family: If Fellows wish to bring a partner or dependent children, we will pay for their flights, dependent visa and IHS medical surcharge for healthcare in the UK. If there are dependent children, we can offer additional financial assistance.
- Working space in I-X (Imperial's interdisciplinary AI initiative) co-located with I-X AI faculty and the ~25 AI in Science Fellows with access to GPU-compute.
- Dedicated support staff to help with AI training and career development. We conduct a training needs assessment prior to the beginning of the Fellowship to understand the areas to develop knowledge, and create a bespoke training plan together.
- Peer-to-peer support through in-house courses, workshops, technical talks and tutorials to share skills development and best practice.
- Cohort events, seminars and socials with the other AI in Science Fellows at Imperial and connections to the Women in AI network run from I-X.
- Funding given directly to the partner home institution for the second year of the fellowship to fund a partial buyout of the Fellow's time. By hiring a teaching fellow or equivalent, the Fellow can continue to focus on their research project in the second year. This is set at £24,000 for year 2.
- £30k 'flexi-fund' allowance per fellow for travel, conferences, and consumables. This will be managed by Imperial in the first year and by the home institution in the second year of the fellowship.
- Bidirectional visits to Imperial and other partners.
- Continuing support for career development, grants and Fellow-led conferences and workshops.
- Annual fellow-led conference and prize for the best AI in Science from Global researchers.
- Dedicated support with relocation administration including visas, travel and finding accommodation.

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- Post-acceleration career support following the fellowship ends including routes to seed-funding and international grants.
- Membership of the international Schmidt Sciences AI in Science Fellow network with its associated event series and alumni network including links to partner programmes in Oxford and Cambridge
- Links to events in Imperial's Global hubs in Accra, Bangalore and Singapore.

Eligibility:

- The target is that one fellow per year on average will be selected from each of the partner institutions, except for USP, from which three fellows per year will be selected.
- In order to be eligible to apply, applicants must be early/mid career and be within the AI in Science remit.
- Early/Mid-career will be interpreted broadly as we expect variation between partners but an extremely rough guide is to be within 10 years of having a PhD (we accept that there will be marked variation because of family circumstances, international difference in career progression rate and the manner in which different partners support international visits). Under the AI in Science Remit, 'AI' is interpreted very broadly, that is including topics in Bayesian Inference and Robotics, with 'Science' covering any typical topic in Natural Science and Engineering.
- These fellowships are not suitable for research into generic AI with general application - candidates must be aiming to substantially advance a very particular area of science. Applicants could view themselves as AI researchers tackling a particular piece of Science or Science researchers using AI to transform their area.
- A deep knowledge of AI is not a precondition for this fellowship: only an appreciation of the need for AI and a willingness for skill acquisition in AI.
- 'Science' covers any typical topic in Natural Science and Engineering. Epidemiology, Biology and basic science in biomedicine are included but, aside from Epidemiology, very clinical medical themes including conventional medical imaging, are not covered.
- Social sciences and humanities are not covered.
- AI must be an essential/catalytic component of the proposal and not an add-on which, upon removal, would leave the science unchanged. In a successful proposal, removing the AI (note our broad definition of AI) would severely compromise the whole project because it is through the use of AI that the scientific goal is being achieved.
- Full details of remit can be found here: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/ix-ai-in-science/apply/ under the 'Remit' drop-down. There is no flexibility about remit.

Application Timeline

Date	Activity
November 2025	Fellowship Promotion
17 November 2025	Fellowship application opens
Mid December 2025	Information webinars
Early March 2026	Application Internal Deadline and Internal Review by Cross University/Institute panel
Mid-March 2026	Application Reviews & Interviews at Imperial and Candidate selection
April	Fellows announced

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1 September 2026   **Fellowship Begins**

Selection Process:
- Each partner institution will formulate an internal review committee that reviews and ranks the proposals submitted by candidates from their institution.
- The committee will then submit a ranked list of the top three (or less) candidates (Note: USP will submit the top six candidates) to the selection committee at Imperial.
- The selection committee at Imperial will conduct interviews as needed and would seek to select on average **one successful candidate** each from Indian Institute of Science, National Centre for Biological Sciences, India, University of Ghana, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universitas Gadjah Mada and **three successful candidates** from USP.
- Applicants must have identified and contacted researchers at Imperial in relevant research fields and secured interest from them in the form of a letter of support.

Example Internal Selection Protocol:
The following is a possible protocol for creating a ranked shortlist of candidate faculty members – this is only an exemplar.

1. Departments and faculties solicit their faculty members to put themselves forward for the fellowship. There can be a linked university-wide awareness campaign: A candidate email flyer is shared below. Imperial will also provide a video briefing on the fellowship in December. All Science and Engineering departments are eligible (the majority of current fellows are outside departments of Computing and do not have degrees in Computing).

2. Candidates solicit their heads of departments for letters of support. Individual departments might want to run their own selection procedure.

3. A cross-university panel is convened by e.g. the Vice-Dean for Research and this panel ranks the candidates based on their full application bundle including letters of support from both Head of Department and Imperial host (two candidates cannot be given the same ranking).

4. The shortlist and the application bundles are then passed to the I-X Centre for AI in Science where the candidates will be assessed for fit and interviewed as needed.

Application Requirements:
- **CV** including publications
- **Publication Elaboration**: a 1 page, or less, note outlining the research contribution of up to three papers by the applicant. This should be suitable for a general scientific reader.
- **Research Proposal Summary**: a 1 page or less, summary of the proposed research suitable for a general scientific audience including the title of the research project. Particular attention will be paid to this summary. It should answer the question of why/how this application of AI will be transformative for the target area of science. The proposal should start by mentioning the applicant's proposed department and at least one faculty member at Imperial who would support the visit and act as a host. Hosts must be contacted in advance of the application and will need to supply a letter of support form. It is not essential that the host be a very close fit to the proposed research, entirely independent research efforts are welcomed, but a

collaborative relationship is likely to make the science more credible and help with integration.

- **Research Proposal**: 3 pages or less proposal that explains why and how the proposed research could be transformative for a particular area of science. It can be structured around background, a small number of hypotheses/aims, and work packages. It can be assumed that the reader will first read the Summary and so content need not be repeated.
- **Training Plan**: a ½ page or less plan, identifying any particular skills that need to be acquired for the proposed research to succeed. Training is a key part of the proposed fellowship, whether helping an AI expert master a scientific topic or a scientific topic expert advance their AI skills. Deep expertise in AI (or the particular Science area) is not a pre-requisite: the minimum level of AI/Science experience is that needed to credibly articulate a plan for how AI will advance Science.
- **Fit to AI in Science Remit**: a ¼ page or less outline of how your proposal fits within the AI in Science remit.
- **Kindness Statement**: a ¼ page or less outline of your view on the need for kindness among scientists.

In addition:
- A Letter of Support form from proposed academic mentor at Imperial (see below)
- A letter of support form from Home head of Department (see below)

Selection Criteria:
- Fit with the programme: whether the proposed research vision and the specific project align with the AI in Science remit.
- Candidate track-record: the candidate's past experience and accomplishments in research; the candidate's potential to grow as a research leader through using AI: their willingness to take risks, creativity and originality, curiosity, collaborative spirit, entrepreneurship, and the ability to think big, as reflected in their past accomplishments and proposed plans.
- Research statement: the vision, the approach, and initial feasibility, the potential of making groundbreaking discoveries, the potential of becoming a sustained research portfolio after the Fellow leaves the program.
- Skills development: the candidate's potential to acquire strong AI skills for the proposed research and long-term impact in the field; evidence that the candidate and mentors have carefully thought about the needs for skills development and are committed to it.
- Academic support: whether the selection of Imperial host is appropriate for the research project, the training plan, and career development, as well as the host letters.
- Diversity: Of both fellows and mentors, along multiple dimensions, including demographics and disciplines.

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