



SCHMIDT SCIENCE FELLOWS

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

2021 Nominations

Guidance for nominating partners



Our Fellowship

ABOUT SCHMIDT SCIENCE FELLOWS

Infectious disease. Climate change. Food insecurity. An aging population. Species extinction. The crises that face our planet and our society are broad, deep, and multi-faceted. They recognize none of the neat boundaries that are often and traditionally applied to science.

We are living 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 global and is helping us to tackle many pressing challenges and improving lives around the world.

In this new era, the best scientists should draw insights from across numerous disciplines, be able to apply new techniques, and possess a broad worldview informed by the intersections between science and society. This is the space we work in. Schmidt Science Fellows are pioneers, trailblazers, and risk-takers. Our Fellows enjoy unparalleled intellectual and scientific freedom and membership of a supportive, lifelong community that provides a safe place to take scientific risks and push the boundaries of science.

Our Fellows receive a stipend of \$100,000 and are supported to develop the skills and perspectives needed to accelerate discovery, advance solutions to the world's most pressing problems, and to become future leaders in science and society. Fellows are supported to pursue a postdoctoral placement at a world-leading laboratory anywhere in the world in a disciplinary pivot from their PhD. During their Fellowship year, they also participate in a varied and challenging Global Meeting Series that introduces new research ideas, techniques, and questions, in addition to a tailored training program. Our Fellows benefit from a personalized mentoring program, providing professional development support from experienced and internationally accomplished scientists, and at the completion of the Fellowship Year, join our Senior Fellows community for ongoing support, interaction, and programming opportunities.

Indeed, the Fellowship year is the beginning of membership of 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.

Schmidt Science Fellows is an initiative of Schmidt Futures, delivered in partnership with the Rhodes Trust. Announced by Eric and Wendy Schmidt in 2017, the Program has recently selected and announced its third cohort of Fellows, and our Senior Fellows are already progressing to positions in academia, not-for-profit organizations, government labs, and start-up companies.

To learn more about Schmidt Science Fellows, the science, and motivations of some of our Fellows, please see our 'We Are Schmidt Science Fellows' features and film series:

<http://schmidtsciencefellows.org/news/we-are-schmidt-science-fellows/>

Candidate criteria

In order to be eligible for nomination to the Schmidt Science Fellows application process, 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.
- Have completed, or expect to complete, all of the requirements for the conferral of their PhD in one of these fields between 30 April 2020 and 30 September 2021.²
- Be available for the entire period of the 2021 program, from July 2021 to July 2022 including attendance at each Global Meeting (whether virtual or in person, as conditions allow).

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.

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all candidates. Applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, parental status marital or civil partner status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion or belief.

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.

Nominations and selection process

Applications to Schmidt Science Fellows are by invitation only, following candidate nomination by their PhD awarding institution. For the 2021 intake we will be working in partnership with around 100 of the world's leading science, technology, and engineering institutions to identify the highest quality candidates.

Each Partner institution is issued a quota of applications and authorisation codes to accompany their quota. We recognize that each institution has different administrative structures and therefore ask each to undertake an internal review to identify the most appropriate nominees from across their STEM graduate community in a manner that is most effective and appropriate to institutional circumstances.

Once nominees have been identified, institutions should issue them with details of our online application system and one of the unique access codes we have provided.

¹ Any questions about eligibility or accommodations for extraordinary circumstances should be directed to nominations@schmidtsciencefellows.org

² Note in light of restrictions arising due to global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have extended the eligibility period for conferral of PhD, delayed the closing date for applications, and merged the Pre-and Final Selection processes into concurrent assessments.

The application portal will open on **14 September 2020**. Nominees will have until **30 September 2020** to access the system and enter preliminary information about themselves and their area of science.

Once this preliminary information has been submitted, access will be granted to the full application and nominees will have until **30 November 2020** to complete their application. Additional guidance will be provided via the application portal to assist candidates in preparing their applications.

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 research statement outlining their proposed postdoctoral research, and a brief description of potential labs for the postdoctoral placement.

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.

Nominations and selection timetable – 2021 cohort

June – mid September 2020 – Institutional nominations – institutions select candidates to nominate and issue them with authorisation codes and the link to the applications portal.

14 -30 September 2020 – nominated candidates must register their intent to apply online, using their unique access code and submit preliminary information to access the full application.

14 September – 30 November 2020 – Individual applications – nominated applicants use our online system to complete their full applications.

December 2020 – February 2021 – Academic review – a disciplinary screening of all applications by panels of expert reviewers to determine which candidates' progress.

March- April 2020 – Final Interviews - online panel interviews with senior figures from academia, business, and society.

May 2021 – Final Decisions - Internal committee considers recommendations and reviews to determine the 2021 cohort of Schmidt Science Fellows.

May 2021 – October 2021³ – On boarding/ placement commencement – 2021 Fellows work together with the Academic Council Chair to determine the optimal placement laboratory for their interdisciplinary pivot and the optimal start date in this window of time.

July/August 2021 – 2021 – The 2021 cohort commences their Fellowship year with their first Global Meeting and the start of their postdoctoral research placements.

³ In light of anticipated COVID19-related delays to the completion of some PhD's we anticipate some placements may not commence until after the first Global Meeting of the 2021 cohort. Placements are not restricted in any way - 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.

Selection Criteria

We are looking for the brightest minds in the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering, and computing who are interested in broadening their horizons, pivoting from their PhD research 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 science leaders and should demonstrate a keen interest in harnessing interdisciplinarity, and interaction with wider society, to galvanize collaboration, and lead and inspire teams to accelerate discovery.

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

Intellect



Extraordinary Achievement

Clear record of academic achievement of the highest quality in the sciences and an extraordinary degree of intelligence.



Scientific Curiosity

High degree of intellectual curiosity combined with energy and creativity; a record of continuous innovation and/or use of new technologies.

Programmatic Fit



Alignment with the Program

Interest in pursuing a year or more of postdoctoral study in a field different from the applicant's PhD discipline and a belief that interdisciplinary science and the taking of appropriate scientific risks are important for the advancement of discovery.



Collaborative Spirit

History of effective collaboration with diverse team members.

Leadership



Global Ambition for Social Good

Desire to use one's personal talents and science to make a positive difference in society and the world.



Character and Leadership

Genuine and demonstrable potential for science leadership; displaying perseverance, resilience, a moral compass, and a galvanizing force of personality.

Contacts

For Nominating Partners: please email nominations@schmidtsciencefellows.org for further enquiries.

For Candidates: We recommend potential applicants contact their university coordinator in the first instance and to visit www.schmidtsciencefellows.org for further information concerning our program and selection process.

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