

# 2025 Guidance for Nominating Partners



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## The Schmidt Science Fellows Vision

*Our vision is a world where interdisciplinary science flourishes without limit, accelerating discoveries to benefit the world, and driving innovation that improves quality of life for all.*

*We help scientists solve bigger problems faster by identifying, developing, and amplifying the next generation of science leaders, building a community of scientists and supporters of interdisciplinary science, and leveraging this network to drive sector-wide change.*

*Each year we are looking for the brightest minds in the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering, and computing who are interested in broadening their horizons and pursuing a challenging and rewarding period of study with the world's leading academics and institutions.*

*To find out more, please see our video:*

[Science Needs to Change – the Schmidt Science Fellows Vision and Mission](#)

## The Schmidt Science Fellowship Opportunity

Our Fellows:

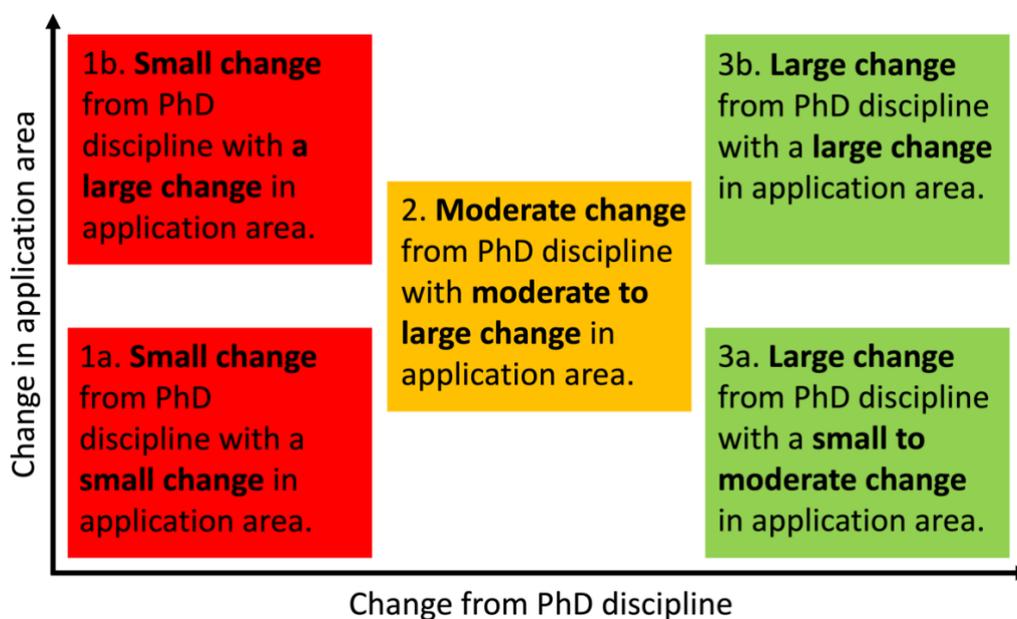
- Receive a personal stipend of **US\$110,000 per year** for up to two years of postdoctoral study **in a different area from their PhD**, at any approved location worldwide.
- Build a global network through our [Science Leadership Program](#), a bespoke professional development curriculum delivered across three week-long residential convenings and a rich set of virtual offerings.
- Benefit from personalized mentoring delivered by **experienced international interdisciplinary science leaders** to develop as **scientific and societal thought leaders**.
- Join a **lifelong community of exemplary interdisciplinary scientists**.
- Receive unique **scientific freedom** to pursue **ambitious research goals, take risks, and have bold ideas**.

## Who are we looking for?

- **Curious and creative scientists** who are interested in broadening their horizons by **pivoting away from their PhD research area** and pursuing a challenging and rewarding period of study in an alternative discipline with world-leading scientists.
- **Academically excellent, risk-positive**, early-career researchers who can demonstrate a commitment to **ambitious, high-impact science**.
- **Future leaders** with the potential and character to lead teams and **unlock transformative discoveries in the future**.
- Talented individuals from a wide range of scientific disciplines to **increase the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration**.

## Disciplinary pivot

Figure 1 – Categorizing the disciplinary pivot



- **The shift in research focus or disciplinary pivot is central to our mission.** It can be categorized by change - from the PhD discipline and in the application area (Fig. 1).
- Proposals requiring candidates to **immerse themselves fully in a new discipline from their current expertise** and to **address different or broader questions than those posed during their PhD** are valued most highly (Categories 3a & 3b).
- Proposals with less ambitious changes in discipline and application are valued less (Category 2).
- Proposals in sub-disciplines closely related to the PhD are not acceptable, even if there is a large change in the application area (Categories 1a and 1b).
- The pivot should enable a Fellow to achieve a scientific goal that is not possible while continuing their current course, allowing them to overcome a scientific challenge using different approaches or perspectives.

## Selection criteria

Your nominees 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 12-24 months of postdoctoral study in a different field 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



#### Character and Leadership

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



#### Global Ambition for Social Good

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

To learn more about the kind of candidates we are looking for, please visit our website. In particular, we recommend you view our Fellow profiles at <https://schmidtsciencefellows.org/fellows/>

## Timeline

- Feb – May, 2024**      **Nomination:** We invite institutions to select their nominees and share their details with us by the **nomination deadline of May 23, 2024.**
- May 9 – 30, 2024**      **Registration:** Nominees register their intent to apply and provide preliminary information by the **registration deadline of May 30, 2024.** Once this section is complete the full application is opened.
- May 9 – Jul 10, 2024**      **Application:** Nominees complete the remaining sections of the application form and submit their full applications by the **application deadline of July 10, 2024.**
- Aug – Oct, 2024**      **Academic Review** – Expert reviewers (leading researchers from the broad scientific discipline in which the candidate will receive their PhD) assess submitted applications to identify exceptional candidates for progression.
- Jan 2025**      **Final Interviews** – Senior figures from across science, business, and society review applications and interview Finalists (online).
- Mar 2025**      **Final Decisions** – Schmidt Science Fellows Board meet to determine the 2025 cohort of Schmidt Science Fellows.
- Apr 2025**      **Formal announcement and the start of onboarding** – 2025 cohort of selected Fellows are publicly announced. Fellows then work together with our Academic Council to determine the optimal host laboratory for their research placement.
- July – Oct, 2025**      **Fellowship placements begin** – 2025 Fellows start to engage with the Program team, Academic Council mentors and other members of their cohort, commence their research placements, and join their first Science Leadership Meeting.

## Eligibility

Your nominees must be:

- Studying for a PhD in natural sciences (Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences and Physics), Engineering, Mathematics, Computing – or any of the sub-disciplines, at one of our nominating partner institutions. Individuals on clinical track MD-PhD or Veterinary-PhD programs are not eligible.
- Expected to complete all requirements for the conferral of their PhD between **May 15, 2024 and June 30, 2025**.
- Able to start their Fellowship in **July 2025** or **October 2025** and available from **April 2025 to July 2026** to attend onboarding activities, the in-person [Science Leadership Program](#) convenings and the annual Schmidt Science Fellows Interdisciplinary Science Summit.

## Next Steps for Nominating Partners

Please can you:

- Confirm your organization's interest in nominating candidates to the 2025 competition using the link we shared with you by email.
- Share the opportunity and open it to your entire Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduate student community. To assist with this, we are sharing a one-page document, **2025 Call for Applications**, for you to distribute.
- Ensure your nominees:
  - have a genuine desire to pivot from their PhD,
  - meet the eligibility criteria,
  - are well aligned with our selection criteria,
  - are in good standing with your organization,
  - are from different disciplines (if possible) to avoid them being in direct competition with each other.
- Highlight our commitment to equality of opportunity for all candidates.
- Send us the names and email addresses of your nominees. We will then provide you with a unique authorization code and link for the application portal, for each candidate.
- Support your candidates where possible, with general guidance and mentoring on writing research proposals and personal statements, managing letters of recommendation, and preparing for interviews.

## Contacts and further information

For specific inquiries please email: [nominations@schmidtsciencefellows.org](mailto:nominations@schmidtsciencefellows.org)

Please note the Selection Team is based in the UK.

For more information, see the links below:

Website: [www.schmidtsciencefellows.org](http://www.schmidtsciencefellows.org)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/-schmidt-science-fellows/>

Instagram: @schmidt\_science\_fellows

Facebook: @schmidtsciencefellows

YouTube videos:

[Science Needs to Change – the Schmidt Science Fellows Vision and Mission](#)

[Who is a Schmidt Science Fellow?](#)

[Fellowship Research Placement](#)

