



Urban Studies Foundation*

Postdoctoral Research Fellowship 2017 (at the University of Glasgow)

Guidance to University of Glasgow units

Preamble

Previously, the Urban Studies Foundation (USF) has made Fellowship grant awards to units within the University of Glasgow (UoG), and has left the units in question – historically either ‘Geography’ or ‘Urban Studies’ (under different institutional incarnations and labels) – to recruit suitable individuals to these Fellowship positions.

In future, and to create parity with how the USF deals with the Fellowships that it funds outside of the UoG, the USF will cease delegating the recruitment and selection process for such Fellowship to these units. Instead, the USF itself will run the recruitment and selection process, including widely advertising the scheme, in which regard applications will be solicited from applicants, wherever they might presently be based, who are interested in working/liasing with UoG units. The UoG units will need to provide a suitable mentor, and will need to contribute to the creation of high-quality applications.

In practice, though, the USF can envisage applications being initiated in one of two ways: **(a)** potential applicants approach a UoG unit about the possibility of putting together an application (the unit is of course at liberty to say ‘no’); or **(b)** UoG units may themselves be aware of potential applicants and approach them about the possibility of putting together an application (the individual concerned is of course at liberty to say ‘no’). Whichever route is followed, the final application will take the same form, with elements to be completed by the applicant, the mentor and an administrative representative of the unit. There is no maximum to the number of applications a unit or a mentor can support.

Members of the USF Board will oversee the whole application process – advertising, recruitment and selection (drawing up a shortlist, seeking references, conducting interviews, making selection decisions, communicating these decisions, etc.). Members of the UoG units will not be involved in any of these stages (ie. they will not be invited to take part in shortlisting or interviewing, etc.). Indeed, the units themselves will be evaluated for the quality of their input to the applications. To underline,

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the USF procedures here will precisely mirror those for the appointing of Fellows funded by the USF but placed in many other urban studies research units elsewhere across the globe.

In addition, UoG units should notice that, whereas before (with more or less USF oversight) the opportunity has existed for units to re-invest funds allocated to Fellowships in the event of Fellows leaving for employment elsewhere, this opportunity will no longer exist. Unspent funds will have to be returned to the USF. Again, this arrangement is entirely consistent with how the USF treats its Fellow 'investments' elsewhere.

What follows below are the Scheme Particulars as will be available from the USF, which should clarify to the UoG units all aspects of what is expected from applications.

Outline

In line with its mission to promote high-quality research in Urban Studies (broadly defined), the **Urban Studies Foundation** (USF) is running a competitive scheme to fund the appointment of a Postdoctoral Research Fellow to be based **at any research-based 'unit' at the University of Glasgow (UoG), Scotland, UK** that can demonstrate an existing profile of academic urban studies inquiry.

Here 'unit' can mean research group and/or School at UoG that undertakes urban studies research: obvious examples include the Human Geography Research Group in the School of Geographical & Earth Studies, the Urban Studies subject area in the School of Social & Political Studies, and the Adam Smith Business School. The Foundation would certainly consider applications arising from other UoG units, but the application will need to profile the extant urban studies research undertaken by the unit.

The scheme is designed to enable a successful applicant – the Postdoctoral Research Fellow – to undertake up to **3** years dedicated Urban Studies research, following a programme of research designed and executed by the Fellow. The maximum period that the USF will fund is 3 years, with no option for extending USF funding beyond this period. The Fellow's research programme would normally be expected to involve original empirical inquiry, methodological rigour and conceptual innovation, all set within a detailed knowledge of relevant existing research and scholarship. The expectation is that a Fellow will publish outputs from this research in the international Urban Studies (and cognate) literature, as well as seeking additional research grant funding, and taking seriously possibilities for developing the 'impact' of their research beyond the academy.

Each Fellowship will be held by an eligible applicant for up to a maximum of **3** years duration, through an award that will be paid to the UoG unit where the Fellowship is to be held for the duration. A successful applicant

must have a **mentor** based in that unit, with whom s/he should work closely for the duration of the Fellowship.

The applicant

1. An applicant can come from any part of the world and/or currently be resident/working in any part of the world.
2. An applicant must have *completed* a PhD (or equivalent higher degree) in a demonstrably Urban Studies-relevant field of inquiry, with any disciplinary orientation within the broadly conceived social sciences or arts and humanities.
3. An applicant must have *completed* that PhD *within* 5 years of the date upon which their application is received by the Urban Studies Foundation (where date of 'completion' equates with the date of issue of a formal PhD award letter from the relevant HEI). Applications will not be accepted from individuals who are finishing/awaiting examination/undertaking corrections of their PhDs.
4. Unless applying *directly* after the award of their PhD, the expectation is that an applicant must have had formal association as an employee (as a lecturer, postdoctoral fellow, research assistant, etc.) of one or more HEIs during the intervening years (the intention of this scheme is not to offer a route back into academia for someone who has been 'away' from academia for several years, albeit the USF is prepared to consider 'special cases' if fully argued).
5. As indicated, the applicant must demonstrably be an Urban Studies scholar, and the onus will be on applicants to demonstrate that their research fits the description of being relevant to Urban Studies. It will not be sufficient for an applicant simply to state that their research is based *in* urban areas: it will have to be substantially concerned with dynamics/processes (environmental, demographic, economic, political, social, cultural, historical, etc.) that in one way or another serve to shape and change 'the urban'.
6. Even if applying directly after the award of their PhD, the expectation is that an applicant will already have *some* profile in Urban Studies research – more developed with greater time period since the award of their PhD – and applicants should expect to provide evidence of relevant achievements (publications, grant award, presentations, prizes, etc.).

The 'host' UoG unit and mentor

The UoG unit where the Fellowship is to be hosted – it should be the *same* unit throughout the duration of the Fellowship – must be one with a recognised base in Urban Studies research. The award – up to an *absolute maximum* of **£50,000 (Sterling)** a year¹ – will be paid directly to the unit, which should then (with advice from Human Resources at

¹ This stated amount may be subject to change by the time of appointment to stay in line with inflation.

UoG) agree an annual salary for the Fellow (with appropriate 'on-costs' [pension, national insurance, etc.] also met) to be paid from this £50,000, and with an undertaking to use all remaining funds for supporting the research of the Fellow (see below).

The contractual agreement will be between the USF and the UoG unit, *not* between the USF and the Fellow, and the USF cannot undertake to intervene in salary or other negotiations between the unit/UoG and the Fellow.² As a charitable foundation, it should be underlined that the USF does *not* pay 'full economic costs' (fECs), but *is* providing an award that is likely to be higher than the agreed basic salary of the Fellow.

The unit must undertake to meet the expenses of the Fellowship – eg. for field research, conference attendance, publication costs, etc. – as well as the Fellow's salary. Should these expenses lead the overall cost of the Fellowship to exceed £50,000 a year, then it is the responsibility of the unit, not the USF, to meet such additional costs. There is no scope for units to request additional funding from the USF. Should the appointed postdoctoral-fellow leave before the end of the 3-year contract, then the remaining part of the grant needs to be returned to the USF.

The anticipation is that the Fellow will have sought a host unit, and will have entered into detailed negotiations about precisely what arrangements the unit will put in place to support the Fellowship – office space, access to facilities, membership of research clusters, etc. – and, more specifically, will have developed a relationship with an identified **mentor** (a senior staff member) who will undertake such a role for the duration of the Fellowship. The mentor should be an established scholar with a strong track record of international research excellence in Urban Studies, and there should be a substantial 'fit' between his/her research interests and those of the applicant.

The Programme of Research

The proposed programme should normally specify original empirical inquiry, methodological rigour and conceptual innovation, all set within a detailed knowledge of relevant existing research and scholarship. The programme should be ambitious but plausible, and should rest on clear foundations established through the applicant's scholarly and research work to date (at PhD and maybe post-PhD level). It is acknowledged that Fellows will likely already have commitments to further research directions, publishing and networking, and such ongoing commitments should be factored into the proposed programme (or at least acknowledged as part of the applicant's 'academic context').

² Nonetheless, in the event of a Fellow having strong grounds for complaining about the conduct of the unit, the USF would reserve the right to withdraw the award (with a month's notice). The same would apply were the unit to have a serious complaint about the conduct of the Fellow.

Moreover, the USF acknowledges that academic research can take unanticipated twists, depending on fieldwork opportunities/restrictions or due to new possibilities for collaboration, etc., emerging during the Fellowship. Hence, the USF does not necessarily expect a Fellow rigidly to meet every target set in the original programme, provided that good reasons can be given for changes from these targets. Fellows are encouraged always to be in contact with the USF if ever in doubt about what will be considered acceptable variations on his or her original proposal.

Submission

Applications must be completed by the individual applying for the Fellowship, but it is expected that they will have worked closely on this application with staff, and particularly the mentor, from the proposed host unit. Indeed, some sections on the application form will need to be completed by both the proposed mentor and an administrative representative from the proposed host unit.

Completed applications must be sent electronically to Ruth Harkin (ruth.harkin@glasgow.ac.uk), cc-ed to Dr Evert Meijers (e.j.meijers@tudelft.nl), by **15 October 2017**.

The application must include the following:

1. **Completed application form:** a WORD version of this application form will be available on the USF website, containing a number of fields to be completed by the applicant, by the mentor and by the proposed host unit. Note that here the mentor will need to provide a statement, and the unit will need to confirm the arrangements that it would put in place.³
2. **Outline of proposed programme of Urban Studies research to be undertaken by the Fellow:** the last part of the application form is given over to up to 5 pages for the applicant to elaborate on their contribution/commitment to Urban Studies, and to provide details of their proposed research programme (covering: 'academic context'; 'research questions'; 'conceptual issues'; 'methodological issues'; 'ethical issues'; 'outputs' (academic); 'impact' (outreach activities based on the research); and anything else thought relevant).
3. **3-page CV listing academic achievements and publications.**
4. **Copy of PhD award letter** or some equivalent document that can confirm the veracity and date of the applicant's PhD award.
5. **Two academic references:** it will be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their two referees (at least one of whom should have acted as their PhD supervisor) send their references directly to the above e-mail address (only to Ruth Harkin) by the specified deadline of **15 October 2017**. Failure of referees to send

³ Feel free to convert the completed application form to a pdf for final submission, particularly if it includes electronic signatures.

references on time will mean that an application cannot be considered.

Evaluation and decisions

The completed applications will be subject to a preliminary assessment, and those that are incomplete or from applicants/mentors/units deemed ineligible or inappropriate will be discarded (and these applicants will be informed by e-mail of this outcome). Those applications that remain 'live' will be subjected to critical review by members of the USF, if necessary with assistance from invited external assessors (senior Urban Studies scholars with relevant expertise). It may be that the USF will request further clarification or information from applicants, mentors and/or HEIs.

A shortlist of circa 3-5 applicants will be agreed and they will be invited for interview at the University of Glasgow or, if not possible, arrangements will be made for an interview via Skype (but the strong preference is for face-to-face interviews). The USF will cover second-class rail travel or economy-class flights, as well as accommodation when deemed essential. The anticipation is that these interviews will be held **30 November 2017**, and that the successful applicant will be informed as soon as possible thereafter.

The successful applicant will then be expected to accept or reject the offer of a Fellowship within 14 days of the offer being sent out. A formal contract will then be drawn up between the USF and the unit, with the expectation that the funded period of the Fellowship will commence in early 2018 (preferably starting before June 2018): should the Fellowship *not* be commenced by summer 2018, the USF would reserve the right to withdraw the award.

There will be an expectation on successful applicants (the Fellows) to make Annual and Final reports to be sent to the USF by specified deadlines, and to respond, where possible, to any other requests for information or participation from the USF.

The decisions made by the USF must be regarded as *final*, and we are not prepared to enter into discussions about our decisions.

Candidates or potential mentors wishing to discuss their application informally may contact:

Dr Evert Meijers (e.j.meijers@tudelft.nl or +31628616571)

Further details about the Urban Studies Foundation can be found at:

<http://www.urbanstudiesfoundation.org/>

* Please note that the USF currently also advertises a parallel postdoctoral research fellowship scheme for positions not based at the University of Glasgow.

The USF, 21st June, 2017