

C-DICE Postdoctoral Research Fellowships 2023

Issue Date: 20 September 2022

Closing Date: 14 February 2023, 16:00

Type: Invitation for proposals

Contents

1. What is a C-DICE Fellowship?	1
2. C-DICE Themes	2
3. Benefits of a C-DICE Fellowship	3
4. Who is eligible to apply?	3
5. Mentoring and Monitoring	3
6. Deliverables	4
7. Funding Level	4
8. Assessment Process	4
9. Timeline	5
10. How to Apply	6
11. Application Form Template	7

1. What is a C-DICE Fellowship?

The Centre for Postdoctoral Development in Infrastructure, Cities and Energy (C-DICE) invites applications for C-DICE Postdoctoral Research Fellowships from outstanding postdoctoral researchers and early career researchers (ECRs). These Fellowships are designed to promote research aligned to infrastructure, cities, and energy, that will accelerate the progress towards a net-zero society by 2050, whilst providing the opportunity for researchers to develop their independence, with significant support from C-DICE. A multidisciplinary approach would be an advantage. There are two C-DICE Fellowships available for a 2023 start.

The C-DICE Postdoctoral Research Fellows (“C-DICE Fellows”) will create their own research project with a minimum duration of 1 year. This may be worked full-time or part-time. The Fellowship will support the transition of postdoctoral researchers and ECRs to fully independent research leaders by developing and expanding their research experience and research portfolio through the Fellowship project. Alongside this, the C-DICE Fellows will need the support of a named Academic Mentor, as well as accessing a cohort of C-DICE Fellows and other support from the C-DICE project.

The Fellowship can be worked full time, part time, or any variation thereof. The C-DICE Fellow will need to be hosted at a C-DICE partner university (the “host university”) and will preferably be encouraged to utilise UKCRIC and/or ERA facilities during the research. The research will ideally take place in partnership, for example, with industry (with a big company, an SME, or a start-up), with policy makers (in government or with a local authority), at a non-profit organisation, at other suitable universities, in a research facility, or a combination of these (the “delivery partners”).

Each application for Fellowships is capped at a maximum grant of £140,000, with a maximum of £65,000 for directly incurred costs (e.g. salary, travel and subsistence, consumables) and a maximum of £75,000 for directly allocated costs (e.g. estates, indirect costs, infrastructure or pool technician). Note that C-DICE funds the Fellowship at 100% full economic costing. Matched commitments from external delivery partners are encouraged, and a Statements of Support from all delivery partners (including the host university) will be required.

For shorter-term (6 months or less) C-DICE opportunities, go to: [Postdoctoral Researcher Development Funding Opportunities](#).

C-DICE is committed to diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all under-represented groups. To support applicants in the EDI portion of the research proposal, C-DICE will hold an online “Embedding EDI into Research” workshop on 2nd November 2022. It is C-DICE's policy to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged or receives less favourable treatment because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. If you have special needs requiring assistance with the application process, please email Amy Beierholm at a.beierholm@cdice.ac.uk.

To support applicants during the preparation of their proposals, C-DICE will hold two information webinars (on 12st October 2022 and on 11th January 2023).

It is a condition of funding that C-DICE Fellows engage with C-DICE in relation to the funded activity. C-DICE Fellows are expected to participate in C-DICE events and attend C-DICE Fellow Cohort meetings for the duration of the project. C-DICE Fellows will also be invited to present at the C-DICE Annual Conference, will be expected to run an activity to benefit other postdoctoral researchers and ECRs, and will be asked to present a Case Study at a C-DICE Business Engagement Event.

Fellowships are intended to fund an individual to progress their research career with the expectation that this will lead to a full fellowship application via UKRI or similar. The funding can be used to support the eligible activities normally supported under UKRI research funding, including but not limited to staff time, travel, subsistence, and overheads. The applicant is encouraged to seek matched funding for consumables and experimental costs. These costs may be admissible for C-DICE funding in exceptional circumstances. All costs must be fully justified as relevant to the research. The funding is provided by Research England Development Fund and information on the eligibility of organisations and individuals to receive Research England funding is available in the following [T&Cs](#).

2. C-DICE Themes

The overarching goal of C-DICE is to accelerate progress towards a net-zero society by 2050 by building and sustaining the advanced skills base required to create a pipeline of world-class talent for the Infrastructure, Cities, and Energy sectors. C-DICE Fellowships must contribute to the acceleration of progress towards a net-zero society by 2050 and align with two or more of the following:

- Research in infrastructure, cities, and/or energy.
- Research using the UK Collaboratorium for Research in Infrastructure and Cities (UKCRIC) and/or the Energy Research Accelerator (ERA) facilities. Priority will be given to proposals which bridge ERA and UKCRIC.
- Knowledge exchange between collaborating C-DICE universities.
- Development and networking benefits for postdoctoral researchers and ECRs.

3. Benefits of a C-DICE Fellowship

A C-DICE Fellowship introduces postdoctoral researchers and ECRs to new perspectives, skills, and techniques, while giving them new opportunities & responsibilities. A C-DICE Fellow can “sector-hop”, test innovative thinking and skills in a different environment, and gain access to world-leading facilities and research teams. Furthermore, a C-DICE Fellowship allows for mobility to gain breadth of experience. They can combine academic research with an industrial placement to suit their needs. Sector-hopping may include a short-term placement in an industrial setting. Mobility may include visiting a research lab in another university or developing skills in an ERA or UKCRIC facility. It would also be possible to access multiple universities in one region – e.g. the C-DICE Fellow may do their research with two local C-DICE universities and an industrial partner. Note that Statements of Support must be obtained from all delivery partners.

A C-DICE Fellowship is a unique tool for career development and a means to expand the C-DICE Fellow's network. A distinct benefit will be the support provided to the C-DICE Fellows through cohort activities and additional support from within the project.

4. Who is eligible to apply?

- Applicants must have either a PhD or at least four years' experience as a postdoctoral researcher in a relevant field by the start of your fellowship.
- PhD students are eligible to apply but must have been awarded their PhD (or passed the viva with minor corrections) before 14 February 2023 or the Fellowship offer will be withdrawn.
- Applicants must not hold a permanent academic position (e.g. assistant professor or lecturer) before the start of the C-DICE Fellowship.
- The C-DICE Fellow must be hosted at a C-DICE university, although partnership with other organisations is encouraged.
- The applicant must identify an Academic Mentor, who is different to their PhD or postdoctoral research supervisor.
- Before submitting an application, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the host university and delivery partners and gain the formal approval from the relevant head(s) of department/school in the form of a Statement of Support.
- Note that the host university must provide a Statement of Support stating that they will provide an employment contract for the duration of the Fellowship.
- Statements of Support must also be included from other named delivery partners.
- C-DICE Fellowships must commence as soon as possible after 1 May and no later than 1 November 2023, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The minimum duration of the Fellowship is one year, but may be pro-rated on a part-time basis. Awards may be held on any part-time or full-time basis. All awards must be completed by 30 April 2025. Proposals for a C-DICE Fellowship shorter than one year are not advised. Consider applying for Networking Grants or Visiting Fellowships for shorter placement opportunities.
- There are no nationality and age restrictions for applicants. The host university is responsible for securing all necessary visas, work permits, and related costs for the C-DICE Fellows.

5. Mentoring and Monitoring

The C-DICE Fellow should choose an Academic Mentor who is not their PhD or postdoctoral research supervisor, ideally from a C-DICE university. The Mentor will support and provide independent expert advice throughout the research fellowship about research and career development. The C-DICE Fellows must submit a progress report every three months throughout the duration of the Fellowship. The reports summarise the research accomplishments during the C-DICE Fellowship, including publications, papers presented, conference participation,

knowledge transfer and other aspects of the research outcomes. A template will be provided for the report. The release of payments is dependent upon the receipt of reports by C-DICE. In addition, the C-DICE Fellow, a C-DICE representative, and Academic Mentor will meet within two weeks of receipt of each report to discuss the reports, identify progress being made and make plans. The C-DICE Fellows are responsible for arranging the quarterly progress report meetings with their Academic Mentors.

C-DICE Fellows will be invited to present at the C-DICE annual conference during the period of the Fellowship. Each C-DICE Fellow will be encouraged to hold one or more training sessions for other researchers in their area.

6. Deliverables

C-DICE Fellows will be required to produce:

- Progress reports every three months throughout the duration of the Fellowship. The reports summarise the research accomplishments during the Fellowship, including publications, papers presented, conference participation, knowledge transfer and other aspects of the research outcomes.
- The last progress report (final report) will also summarise key outcomes, which will be used to verify completion and inform future activities. The final report is due within 3 months of the completion date of the project.
- The release of payments is dependent upon receipt of progress and final reports by C-DICE.
- A summary of project activities or findings to be published on the C-DICE website. This can be in the form of a blog post or a short research video.

7. Funding Level

Applications can be submitted for projects up to £140,000 in value, with a maximum of £65,000 in directed incurred and £75,000 in directed allocated costs. The Fellowship award will be funded at 100% full economic costing. Eligible costs are as defined in the standard UKRI [terms and conditions](#) for research grants and should be justified in the application. Project awardees can invoice 100% of the full economic costs quarterly in arrears. To support Fellowship applicants in understanding research proposal budget, C-DICE will hold an online “Creating a Research Proposal Budget” workshop on 18th October 2022.

8. Assessment Process

We aim to score Fellowship proposals by at least three Reviewers. The scores will be ranked by the Reviewers who will create an interview shortlist, informed by the reviews received. A panel interview process will be conducted for the shortlisted candidates where the candidates will be asked to deliver a presentation (max 10 minutes) pitching their research proposal. To support Fellowship applicants, C-DICE will hold an online “Interviewing Skills” workshop on 14th Dec 2022.

Applications are welcomed from all sections of the research community. C-DICE encourages diversity in applications and awards. We would particularly encourage applications from those early in their research career or returning from career breaks, and members of the core management group may therefore personally invite proposals from applicants in these or other under-represented groups whom they think might otherwise not apply. These applications will subsequently be processed, reviewed and ranked in the same way as other proposals.

Proposals will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Quality of science

- Novelty, originality and contribution to knowledge
- Alignment to C-DICE themes
- Pathway to impact
- Career development for applicant
- Promotion and dissemination including engagement with C-DICE such as training of younger researchers
- Project management
- Value for money
- Partnership(s) and/or collaborations if any

9. Timeline

Call Issue	20 September 2022
Info webinar	12 October 2022 (14:00-14:45)
Creating a Research Proposal Budget – online workshop	18 October 2022 (10:00-11:00)
Embedding EDI into Research – online workshop	2 November 2022 (13:30-15:00)
Interviewing Skills – online workshop	14 December 2022 (10:00-11:00)
Info webinar	11 January 2023 (11:00-11:45)
Closing date for submissions	14 February 2022 at 16:00
Interview dates	w/c 20 March 2023
Award decisions made by Review Panel Meeting	29 March 2023
Email notification of award	31 March 2023
Offer letters and contracts issued	7 April 2023
Project acceptance required by	14 April 2023
Earliest project start date	1 May 2023
Latest project completion date	30 April 2025

10. How to apply

- Sign up to Inkpath and link to C-DICE. For more details on how, click [here](#).
- Apply using Inkpath, search for C-DICE activity code DFAB0005 or click [here](#).
- When you sign up for the activity, you will receive a link to an online application form.
- If you need additional assistance with completing an application or Inkpath, contact Amy Beierholm at a.beierholm@cdice.ac.uk
- You will need:
 1. Applicant and host university details
 2. Narrative CV and track record
 3. Research proposal concept and objectives (max 1250 words)
 4. Cover letter, including alignment to C-DICE themes (max 250 words)
 5. Budget justification and requested funding
 6. Career development plan (max 250 words)
 7. Statement(s) of Support
 8. Reference Letters

1. Applicant and host university details

- Applicant name and preferred correspondence details.
- Details of the academic and non-academic delivery partners.
- Confirm which is the host university, where the C-DICE Fellowship will be held.
- Details of Academic Mentor.

2. Narrative CV and track record

- For guidance on writing a narrative CV and track record, go to this [UKRI page](#).

3. Research proposal concept and objectives

The research proposal has a word limit of 1250, and includes:

- Research area (*separate section, not included in word limit*)
- Project title (*separate section, max 30 words, not included in word limit*)
- Abstract (*must be understandable to a non-specialist reader*)
 - Statement of problem
 - Brief outline of the basic facts of the problem, explain why the problem matters
- Background and relevance to previous work (*must be understandable to a non-specialist reader*)
 - Make clear what the research problem is and exactly what has been accomplished
 - Give evidence of your competence in the field
 - What similar research is being/has been undertaken, and how does your project differ?
- General methodology
 - Detailed description of the exact work to be completed
 - Detail the methodology to be used in pursuit of the research and justify this choice
- Project Management
 - Skills to manage the project / professional development
 - Project impact / engagement
 - Key milestones and deliverables
- Diversity and inclusion (*250 words, as part of the total word limit*)
 - What does diversity and inclusion mean to you and your research?
 - What are you doing to address it?

4. Cover letter, including alignment to C-DICE themes

- Word limit 250

5. Budget justification and requested funding

- Costed by host university
- Salary should be at a level commensurate with skills, responsibilities, expertise, and experience of the C-DICE Fellow
 - No other staff salaries can be requested
- Travel and subsistence
 - Travel and subsistence costs for the C-DICE Fellow to participate in activities directly linked to the research project
- Estates and indirect costs may be covered, although in-kind contributions from host university to cover part of these costs would be welcome
- Consumables and experimental costs may be admissible for C-DICE funding in exceptional circumstances, but the applicant is encouraged to seek matched funding for these costs
- Justification of costs – this can be in table form with description of each cost
- If you have any queries about eligibility of costs, please raise these early with Amy Beierholm (a.beierholm@cdice.ac.uk)

6. Statements of Support

- Confirm that the host university will support the C-DICE Fellowship
- Include a Statement of Support from each research delivery partner
- Note that the Statement of Support from the host university must state that they will provide an employment contract for the duration of the Fellowship

7. Career Development Plan

- Well thought out development plan detailing how the C-DICE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship will contribute to your career development
- Word limit 250

8. Reference Letters

- Provide two reference letters in digital form. At least one letter should be from a current or past supervisor (e.g. PhD supervisor)

Application will be made by online form. You will receive a link to the application form when you sign up to activity DFAB0005 on Inkpath. The following application template is to help you focus your thoughts before making the actual application. Use of this template is optional.

11. Application Form Template

Applicant Details
Full name:
Preferred name:
Email:
Address:
Telephone:
How do you fulfil the following eligibility criteria?

To be eligible to hold a C-DICE Fellowship, you must have been awarded your doctorate (or passed the viva with minor corrections) before 14 Feb 2023 OR have had four years' experience as a postdoctoral researcher in a relevant field by the start of your fellowship. Check one of the following:

- Have a Doctorate
- Passed my viva with minor corrections
- More than four years' experience as a postdoctoral researcher
- Other (give details):

Research Area

Please add the discipline(s) that the research you propose to carry out during the C-DICE Fellowship covers

Project Title

Please add a short title for your project so that it can be easily identified (max 30 words)

Research Proposal Concept and Objectives

Please see guidance in Section 10 How to Apply, Subsection 3 above (max 1250 words)

Proposed Start Date:

Proposed End Date:

Percentage of time spent on this Fellowship (indicate numbers of days per week between 1-5):

Cover Letter

Please describe how your project aligns with the C-DICE themes (max 250 words)

Career Development Plan

Well thought out development plan detailing how the C-DICE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship will contribute to your career development (max 250 words)

Delivery Partners		
<i>Please list delivery partners (including non-academic partners), key contacts and contact information. Clearly identify the host university and Academic Mentor.</i>		
Partner Organisation	Key Contact	Contact Details
Budget Justification / Resources Requested		
<p>Total Project Costs: Provide a brief cost summary and justification of resources. Note that costs (including salary costs) should be calculated on a full economic costing basis, up to a maximum of £140,000, with a maximum of £65,000 in directly incurred and £75,000 in directly allocated costs. Costings from your host university must be submitted by 14 February 2023.</p>		
Resource Category	Justification	Full economic cost
TOTAL		
Matched Funding		
<p>Does your proposed project have matched funding? <i>Matched funding is welcome, but not necessary, unless your budget exceeds £140,000. If yes, please give brief details: e.g. source of funding, amount, cash or in-kind</i></p>		

The following items will be emailed as attachments:

- Research Proposal Concept and Objectives
- Cover Letter
- Career Development Plan
- List of Delivery Partners
- Budget Justification and Costing (may be separated)

- Narrative CV and track record
- Statement(s) of Support from host university and any delivery partners (including any in-kind or cash contributions)
- Reference Letters (including one from a current or past supervisor)