

# Global Talent visa

A comprehensive guide for departments and colleges

May 2024



# Staff Immigration Team

## Microphone:

- Due to the number undertaking training, please mute or turn off your mic

## Questions:

- The training will be broken into sections, with a 'pause' at certain points for questions
- You can type in questions in the chat panel or turn on your mic to ask

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# What we do

- Advise departments, colleges and visa holders on:
  - Global Talent, Skilled Worker and Tier 5 process and requirements
  - Right to Work checks
  - Visitor immigration requirements
- Process Skilled Worker and Tier 5 Certificate of Sponsorship applications and hold all data on these visa holders centrally
- Manage complex cases and matters of non-compliance with external legal input where necessary
- Support any EU/EEA Frontier worker applications and any staff applying late for the Pre-Settled/Settled status due to reasonable grounds
- Provide regular training on Global Talent, Skilled Worker, Tier 5, right to work and visitors
- Represent the collegiate University's comments and concerns with immigration policy to the Home Office
- Provide assurance to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on immigration and right to work compliance

# Contents of today's session

- Benefits of Global Talent visa
- Academic & Research criteria
- Stage 1 - Endorsement application
- Stage 2 - Visa application
- Visa holders arrival in the UK
- Visa restrictions and conditions
- Visa extensions & ILR
- Costs involved

# Points-Based System

## Global Talent

- For highly skilled academics and researchers, and those in the arts and digital technology
- Accelerated routes for external funded posts, Individuals Fellowships and Senior Academic and Research appointments

## Skilled Worker

- Worker with a job offer, and sponsored by the University

## Student Visa

- Managed by Student Immigration team
- Graduate Scheme – DPhil – 3 years post study visa, all other graduates – 2 years

## Tier 5

- Government Authorised Exchange (supernumerary researchers, lecturers, external examiners)
- Youth Mobility Scheme (for people under 31 from qualifying countries)

# Key benefits

**Greater flexibility**, no restrictions on hours of work, salary, place of work, leave and engagement with other organisations. For example no concerns with unpaid leave, sabbatical, changes in role, or part-time working.

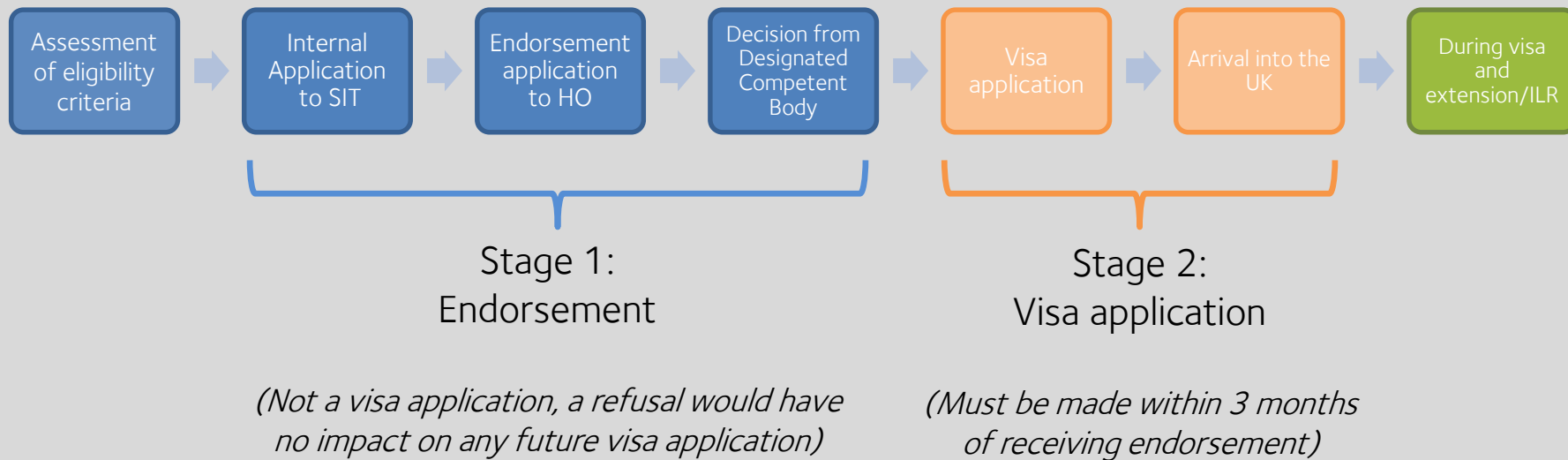
**No reporting and record-keeping requirements** as compared to Skilled Worker (Tier 2) visa holders who must report changes in circumstances to their department/college (who in turn must report to SIT).

**No limit on visa extensions** there are currently no restrictions on extending a Global Talent visa.

**Shorter qualifying period for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)**. Most Global Talent visa holders eligible for ILR after three years.

This can be combined with time spent on the Tier 2/Skilled Worker visa.  
Overseas work related travel does not count towards ILR absence.

# Global Talent process





# Questions



# Academia & Research Criteria

# Stage 1: Endorsement

Application for endorsement (Stage 1) is reviewed by the Royal Society, The British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering or UKRI

## Accelerated Routes

1. [Individual Fellowship](#)
2. [Academic and Research appointment](#)
3. [Endorsed Funder](#)
4. [Prestigious Prize](#)

These routes have a guarantee the stage 1 application will be endorsed, and quicker processing times

## Peer Review Route:

Assessment of applicants standing against a set of criteria;

- Exceptional Promise or
- Exceptional Talent

Peer reviewed by Fellows of the Academy, who are aligned to their specialism

**No guarantee the stage 1 application will be endorsed**

# 1. Individual Fellowship

Individuals holding/held in previous 5 years specific named fellowship from organisations including:

- Academy of Medical Sciences
- Alzheimer's Research UK
- Alzheimer's Society
- Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council
- Breast Cancer Now
- British Academy
- British Heart Foundation
- Cancer Research UK
- Diabetes UK
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- EMBO
- Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
- ERC, included MSCA Individual Fellowships and PI of some grants
- NIHR
- Human Frontier Science Program
- Humboldt Foundation
- Leverhulme Trust
- Medical Research Council (MRC)
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
- NIHR
- Parkinson's UK
- Royal Academy of Engineering
- Royal Commission for the Exhibition 1851
- Royal Society
- Royal Society/British Academy/Academy of Medical Sciences Newton International Fellowship
- Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
- UKRI
- Versus Arthritis
- Wellcome Trust

Full list at: <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/global-talent-visa/route-2-individual-fellowships/>

# 1. Individual Fellowship

## Key points for HR

- New appointments – Consider checking CV to see whether applicant has ever previously held one of these fellowships.
- Named PI of an ERC advanced/Synergy/Consolidator or Starting Grant eligible even if funding for a project outside of the UK.
- Individual in general require only their fellowship award letter no other documents from the University of Oxford required. MSCA Individual Fellowships may require a letter detailing their planned start and end date at Oxford.
- If individuals need support, send SIT Advisor the funding award letter and we can offer informal support and guidance to individual on the application process.

## 2. Academic & Research Appointments

Appointments to positions where they must:

- Have responsibility for academic, research or innovation leadership and development  
OR
- Direct or lead an individual or team in a research/innovation project or programme of research

Will include Professor, Associate Professor, Group Leaders and emerging leaders

- Recruitment process must demonstrate:
  1. Position was advertised and open competition held
  2. At least 2 references were received
  3. Interview panel composed of:
    - at least 3 academic representatives from Oxford
    - at least 1 expert in the applicant's field (can be 1 of academic representatives or an independent expert was consulted)
- Individual has been offered and accepted the position.

## 2. Academic & Research Appointments

### Key points for HR

- Grade 7 Postdoctoral positions are not eligible when they are working on a PI's research agenda, we have to demonstrate that their role involves;
  - Acting independently in initiating, planning and managing a research project
  - Must be done without supervision
  - If role includes teaching – must confirm that the research activities are a significant function of their role.
- Some fellowships, and independent research posts usually at Grade 8 or above may be eligible.
- Send JD to SIT to consider.

## 2. Endorsed Funder

Researchers and those providing critical contributions to research on projects funded by an 'Endorsed Funder'

Over [100 endorsed funders](#) including but not limited to:

### UK Funders:

- UK Research and Innovation, and its Councils
- The Royal Society
- The Royal Academy of Engineering
- The British Academy
- The Academy of Medical Sciences
- Wellcome Trust
- Cancer Research UK
- British Heart Foundation
- National Institute of Health Research
- Leverhulme UK
- UK Ministerial Departments

### European Agencies:

- European Union Horizon 2020 programmes
- European Molecular Biology Organisation
- European Molecular Biology Laboratory
- Human Frontier Science Programme
- International Institute for Applied System Analysis
- European Space Agency

### Non-European Funding agencies:

- The National Science Foundation of the United States
- The Japan Science and Technology Agency
- The Indian Council of Medical Research
- FAPESP, the Research Council for the State of São Paulo
- Fonds National de la Recherche (FNR) Luxembourg
- Science Foundation Ireland
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



# Endorsed Funder Criteria

## Funder

- At least £30,000 of funding
- At least a 2 year period (*can be less than this remaining*)
- *One off project or*
- *Large institutional award*

## Position

- Researcher (PDRA Grade 7 or above) or core technical–Statistician, bioinformatics
- At least 12 month contract/host agreement
- Open recruitment or individual named on funding
- At least 50% FTE

## Individual

- Researcher – PhD, and actively participating in research
- Core Technical expert - Bachelors and research experience

# Funder – Oxford's involvement

1. **Oxford the lead applicant**, award made directly to us
2. **Oxford listed as a co-applicant/academic partner**
  - Funds come to us via a different organisation (not an endorsed funder)
  - often a collaboration agreement in place

e.g.:

- University of Leeds awarded funding from Cancer Research UK, Oxford listed in funding application
- NIHR – award to NHS Trust, Agreement between NHS and Oxford
- EPSRC funding Rolls Royce, Oxford listed in funding application

3. **Individual has applied for a fellowship**, often hosted at Oxford

Funds cover research costs and a salary/stipend

Includes SNSF, EMBO, JSPS, DFG

*Canadian government fellowship has no research costs – cannot progress.*

# Funder Evidence

Evidence must show

- a. Funding Dates (2 year minimum funding period, can have less than 2 years remaining)
- b. At least £30,000 funds
- c. Post or individual is listed

## **One-off Research Project**

1. Funding Application
2. Award letter

## **Large Institutional Grants, renewable**

Examples – NIHR Funded Biomedical Research Centres (£122million over 5 years awarded in Oct 2020), Cancer Research UK

1. Award letter
2. Anything that specifically refers to the post or more often confirms the Director has discretion to allocate funds as they wish.

Large funding, multiple appointments – talk to SIT, we should be able to just keep repeating the evidence we submit

# Funder Evidence – Complexities

Complexities can arise that we need to explain/evidence:

- No cost extensions to the funding period
- Delays in recruitment – award said PDRA 2022 – 2024, but not starting until 2024
- Recruitment is a replacement for a person named on an award
- Funding for 1 PDRA, split into two posts
- PI's moving their award to Oxford
- Multiple funders for the post
- Some funders don't issue letters, only emails e.g BHF, or sign contracts (Ministerial Departments)

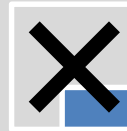
# Position

Either:

- Undertaking research either independently or under the supervisor of a PI. Standard Grade 7 PDRA template will meet requirements.
- Provide critical contributions by providing core technical support/domain excellence;



- Statistician
- Bioinformatician
- Engineer



- Lab Technician
- Project Administration
- Clinical Trials coordinator

- 1 year on their contract/host agreement when submitting the Stage 1 application – can be for an extension or new hire.
- At least 50%FTE working on the project
- Robust recruitment process/named on award

# Individual

**Researcher** – PhD, and actively participating in research

PhD student near to completion – not eligible under they have completed and been awarded their PhD – academic reference/leave to supplicate to confirm this.

Student visa holders switching, wait until they have completed.

Working on student visa:

- 20 hours during study periods (incl preparing for viva, minor corrections)
- Full time on vacation, once course completed

**Core Technical expert** – Bachelors and research experience

# Questions



# Peer Review:

Two categories:

Exceptional Talent	Exceptional Promise
Individuals who are already <b>proven leaders</b> in their field	Early-career individuals who have demonstrated <b>potential</b> to become leaders in their field of expertise.

Assessed by Fellows of the Royal Academy of Engineering, British Academy or Royal Society depending on the individuals specialism.

SIT cannot guarantee the outcome of an application. However, if the team feels that based on past experience an application may not be successful, we will indicate this.



# Peer Review: mandatory criteria

Exceptional Talent	Exceptional Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active researcher in a relevant field within a University, research institute or industry</li><li>• Hold a PhD or equivalent experience and have significant postdoctoral research</li><li>• Provide a letter of personal recommendation from an eminent person resident in the UK</li><li>• Be able to demonstrate there is a considerable ongoing benefit for their presence in the UK, to research excellence, and the wider society</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold an international standing in their specialism</li><li>• Provide a second letter from a senior member of a reputable UK organisation concerned with research or innovation, that provides an independent, objective assessment of the applicants claim to be of exceptional talent.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be at an early stage in their research career, with a steep career trajectory, including a clear path to independence or leadership.</li></ul>

# Peer Review criteria

You should consider:

- The significance of their published work and contribution to their field
- Significant funding secured (Talent) or additional funding secured during or following a fellowship/tenure (Promise)
- Invited talks, conferences internationally
- Teaching, supervision of students, postdocs
- Recognised through any internationally recognised prizes or awards
- Leadership roles held or previously undertaken (Talent)
- Are they regarded as a leader in their field & recognised internationally (Talent)

Criteria can be difficult to meet if:

- Individual between Exceptional Promise and Talent, e.g significant period out of PhD but impact not seen as international
- Individual straight out of their PhD or with a lot of work pending publications (unless there is an indication that this will have a significant impact and be well received)
- Individual that has more practitioner experience opposed to academic impact

# Questions



# STAGE 1: Endorsement application

# Internal application form

- SIT upon request can provide formal support to those pursuing the Academic & Research, Endorsed Funder and Peer Review routes
- Download and complete application form, sending it to SIT approx. 3-5 months before start date / visa expiry date
- Late submission could cause a delay in start date
- Place application form and supporting documents in one folder – password protect the folder using 7Zip
- Email folder to [Staff Immigration Advisor](#) – mark as confidential & include ‘Global Talent’, applicant’s name & start/ visa expiry date in subject line

# Internal application form

- Personal/contact details
- Employment details – job title, start & end date
- For Academic & Research appointments – confirmation of recruitment process
- For Endorsed Funder – confirmation of grant details, post and applicant
- For Peer Review – evidence of level of expertise to ensure the Global Talent criteria has been considered and confirmation either promise or talent
- Payment – cost code to cross charge application fee to. Colleges should contact SIT for information on the payment process
- List of supporting documents – note naming conventions
- Declaration – to be completed by key contact/ responsible person delegated by key contact

# Stage 1 Accelerated Routes

- Simple online application
- Supporting documents with input from HR

<b>Endorsed Funder</b>	<b>Academic &amp; Research</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director of HR letter of guarantee. Template provided to department/college to draft and SIT to arrange formal signature</li><li>• Copy of grant award letter &amp; funding application</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director of HR letter of guarantee. Template provided to department/college to draft and SIT to arrange formal signature</li><li>• Job Description</li></ul>

- Quick processing times, approx. 2 week to receive endorsement
- Assurance the endorsement will be granted

# Stage 1 Peer Reviewed

- More substantial online application and supporting documents than the accelerated applications
- 5 weeks to receive endorsement decision

<b>Individual</b>	Online application, including a 7,000 character personal statement as to how they meet the Global Talent criteria Short CV – 3 pages
<b>Letter of support</b>	Letter of personal recommendation from an eminent person resident in the UK. Should be familiar with the individuals work.
<b>Independent Assessment (Exceptional Talent only)</b>	Letter providing an independent, objective assessment of the applicants claim of exceptional talent in their field. Written by a senior member of a reputable UK organisation concerned with research or innovation in their field. In most cases this must be written by someone outside of the collegiate University.



# Submission of Stage 1 Endorsement

- Once all documents are finalised, SIT will submit the application to the Home Office
- Home Office receive this application and transfer to the Designated Competent Body:
  - British Academy
  - Royal Academy of Engineering
  - Royal Society
  - UKRI
- Designated Competent Body will assess the application and if applicable assign two Fellows aligned to the individuals specialism to consider the application
- Decision is made, and the Home Office inform SIT/Individual by email
- Individual has 3 months to submit the Stage 2 visa application

# STAGE 2: Visa Application

# Visa application

- SIT provides endorsement confirmation email together with visa application guidance to the applicant. Email copied to department/college HR contact
- Advise applicant to apply as soon as possible – to avoid delay in start date
- Must apply no later than three months after endorsement is received, but no more than three months prior to start/arrival date
- Can apply for 1 to 5 year visa duration

Application process varies slightly from country to country but generally:

- Online application, paying the NHS Surcharge and application
- Must give biometric details (fingerprints and photographs) at an appointment
- Provide supporting documents – passport, photographs, evidence of endorsement  
Unlike Skilled Worker, no maintenance or English language requirements
- Tuberculosis testing for applicants who have lived in a listed country or countries for more than six months <https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa>
- Priority service for a quicker decision generally available at a premium fee

# Application fees

## Visa Fees

- Stage 1 – £524 (SIT pays and cross charges to department/college)
- Stage 2 visa application – £192

Each dependent applications – £716

## NHS Surcharge

- Charged to all individuals coming to work, study or join family for more than 6 months OR extend their stay;
- Charged at £1,035 per year for main applicant and each dependant (£776 if under 18), based on visa period requested
- Applicants will be required to pay for the full fee up front. For example a visa application for 4 years will incur a NHS Surcharge of £4,140

Details on the University Visa Loan Scheme and recommendation on reimbursement of visa costs: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

# Questions



# STAGE 3: Arriving in the UK



# BRPs still issued to some but no longer accepted as proof of RTW

If new starter whose Home Office letter states they will be issued a BRP is unable to collect their BRP before commencing engagement:

- Can rely on the 30 day vignette as proof of right to work
- Advise new starter to collect BRP within 10 days of arrival into the UK and BEFORE vignette expires. If any error on BRP contact the SIT Team
- BRP cannot be relied on as proof of right to work but they will need the BRP number to generate a 'share code' so you can carry out an online right to work check

Individuals with electronic immigration status, must provide a 'share code' and their date of birth for an employer check to be completed. Full details on [SIT website](#)



# Arrival

1. Conduct RTW check **before** new starter commences work – remember if you are relying on a temporary one month visa, you must complete a new right to work check when the visa holder has collected their BRP
2. Departments fill out Right to Work screen in People XD
3. Add to your list of List B document holders (include expiry date and type of visa)
4. Provide copy of RTW documents to SIT

# Questions



# STAGE 4: During visa period & extension

# Visa Conditions

- No restrictions on: hours of work, self employment, consultancy, voluntary work or study
- No employment as a professional sportsperson
- No recourse to public funds

# Visa extensions

- Organise approx. 2 months prior to visa expiry date
- Requirement to evidence they have earned money in the UK from their specialism
- Designated Competent Body has not withdrawn their endorsement (unlikely to happen)
- Visa application can be checked by SIT prior to submission
- Priority appointments available for urgent applications
- Application can be made inside the UK or overseas

# Indefinite Leave to Remain

Global Talent can lead to settlement (ILR) on completion of:

- 3 years 'continuous residence' in the UK for all applications under the Academic & Research routes
- 5 years if the last endorsement was given under the "Exceptional Promise" criteria for Arts Council England or Tech Nation
- All dependants have to show 5 years 'continuous residence' in the UK

# Indefinite Leave to Remain

Qualifying period can include time spent under:

- Tier 2/Skilled Worker visa holder (excluding as a Tier 2 (intra-Company Transfer))
- Innovator visa, Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa. Excludes Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur)

Have to evidence:

- They have earned money in the UK in their specialist field
- Demonstrate their knowledge of the English Language and pass a 'Life in the UK' test
- Absences from the UK can be no more than 180 whole days in any 12 month period within the qualifying period (unless they've been travelling for work purposes)
- Dependants – 'continuous residence' 180 day requirement applies to time spent under any visas issued after 11 January 2018

# Summary

- Much wider remit for Global Talent now, so consider alongside Skilled Worker route.
- Timescales: allow 3-5 months for both Stage 1 and 2
- Engagement from Heads of Department/Colleagues to review individuals standing against Peer Review criteria
- Complete internal application, and submit using 7Zip
- Be prepared to assist in drafting letter of support for the Stage 1 application
- Complete RTW check prior to the individual commencing employment
- Provide copy of RTW to SIT & let us know when they leave



# Questions

