

Applicant Guidance Notes – Leaders in Innovation Fellowships (LIF) programme

The Thailand Research Fund (TRF) and the Royal Academy of Engineering are seeking applications from researchers, with strong entrepreneurial potential, to take part in their Leaders in Innovation Fellowships programme. This is a residential training programme in innovation and technology entrepreneurship that will take place, in the UK, provisionally between Monday 15th January 2018 and Friday 26th January 2018.

Introduction

Working with a select number of partner countries, the objectives of The Royal Academy of Engineering's *Leaders in Innovation Fellowships* (LIF) programme are:

- to build the capacity of researchers for entrepreneurship and commercialisation of their research;
- to create international networks of innovators and technology entrepreneurs.

The programme is aimed at researchers who are about to develop, or are in the process of developing, a business proposition for their innovation. A select cohort of researchers from the same country will benefit from a focused period of training in the UK, access to expert mentors, and opportunities for international networking. In the short term they will develop, with the support of the programme, a commercialisation plan for their innovation. In the long term they will benefit from access to an international network of peer innovators, in taking their commercialisation plan forward.

The programme builds on the expertise of The Academy in supporting technology entrepreneurs within the UK through a variety of fellowships and prizes. Fellows supported through this programme will benefit from connectivity to The Academy's Enterprise Hub, a network of technology innovators, researcher entrepreneurs, and senior industrialists driving and supporting world class innovation.

The programme is part of the broader UK *Newton Fund* which seeks to build international science and innovation partnerships that promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries.

The Programme

7 successful applicants from TRF ('Leaders in Innovation Fellows') will be invited to attend a two-week residential programme, in the UK, arranged and supported by TRF and the Academy.

The programme will consist of a tailored and comprehensive training programme in innovation leadership, delivered by expert trainers and held at The Academy's offices in central London. The course will focus on transferable skills and knowledge in business modelling, customer development and presentation/pitching. Over the course of the two weeks, there will be time for each Fellow to develop their own business plan, at the same time receiving guidance and mentorship from expert mentors. The programme will conclude with an activity where Fellows pitch their revised business plans to a panel of expert mentors.

During the programme, Fellows will also benefit from opportunities to network with mentors, representatives of technology driven organisations, and each other. All participants in the LIF programme will automatically join an international network of innovators and mentors clustered around the Academy's Enterprise Hub. Fellows will also become eligible to attend events and further training opportunities open to the LIF network designed to build linkages across the participants but also with UK and regional/national innovation stakeholders and programmes of additional support to the most promising business ideas.

Please note that the residential programme will be conducted entirely in English.

Dates and Location

The programme will *provisionally* take place, in London, starting on the morning of **Monday 15th January, 2018** and finishing on **Friday 26th January, 2018**.

As well as the training and mentoring programme, international flights, airport transfers and other UK travel incurred by the programme, all hotel accommodation, breakfast and evening meals will be paid for by The Academy and The Thailand Research Fund (TRF).

However, please note that successful applicants will be responsible for arranging, and paying for their visas and travel insurance, as required, and covering any other expenses incurred during the programme.

Eligibility Criteria

Through their research, applicants must have developed (or co-developed), or be in the process of developing (or co-developing) a new technological innovation. Applicants should have the ambition to take a leading role in creating a new business to commercialise this innovation.

Specific eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Applicants must be employed full time at a university or Government funded research institute.
- Applicants must be citizens of, or have full resident status in, Thailand.
- The applicant's innovation can be any new product, technology or service, based on research in engineering defined in its broadest sense to encompass a wide range of fields, including: agricultural technology, biotechnology, chemical engineering, civil engineering, computer science, design engineering, electrical and electronic engineering, ICT, materials science, mechanical engineering, and medical engineering.
- The innovation should have the potential to benefit the applicant's country, or other developing countries, in terms of improving social welfare and driving economic growth.
- The primary application of the innovation must **NOT** be in the defence or military sector.

Note that previous experience of commercialisation or involvement with technology transfer is not required.

Monitoring and Reporting

TRF and The Academy will continue to monitor and evaluate the success of the Leaders in Innovation Fellowships programme against its objectives. After the programme, all Fellows will be expected to provide brief progress reports to TRF and The Academy about the progress of their business 6 months and 18 months after the residential programme has ended.

Submission Deadline

All applications must be received by **9 am on 31th August, 2017**.

How to Apply

All applications must be submitted via The Thailand Research Fund (TRF). The application form has five sections to complete. A CV is required as supporting documentation.

If successful, the information you supply will be shared with the trainers and mentors.

Completing the Application Form

1. Contact details

Please provide your name, institution, and preferred correspondence details.

2. About you

This section requests additional details about yourself and your suitability for the Leaders in Innovation Fellowship Programme. You will need to answer some questions and send your CV to TRF.

Q - Your CV

Please send your CV to TRF's coordinator. The format and content of your CV is left to your discretion. Your CV should not exceed three (3) pages, and should be a PDF document.

Q – Your photograph

Please send you CV to TRF's coordinator a passport-sized photograph. If your application is successful we will use this photo within the introductory pack for participating Fellows and to be placed in materials for wider publicity of the Leaders in Innovation Fellowship programme so please ensure it is suitable and professional.

Q – Your biography (100 words maximum)

Please give a brief narrative summary of your career and achievements. If your application is successful we will use this biography within the introductory pack for participating Fellows and to be placed in materials for wider circulation and publicity of the Leaders in Innovation Fellowship programme.

Q – Your personal qualities and experience (400 words maximum)

What qualities and experiences do you have that make you the right person to benefit from the Leaders in Innovation Fellowships programme? Please explain why you think you are an entrepreneur and include details of any relevant experience you believe demonstrates this. What knowledge, skills and aptitudes do you possess which will help ensure your business is successful?

Q – Your ambitions for the programme (250 words)

What do you hope to get out of the Leaders in Innovation Fellowships programme? Please explain what, in particular, you hope to get out of the programme. Describe which aspects of the programme will be particularly valuable to you in commercialising your technology, and explain why.

Q – Your long-term vision and ambition (250 words)

Where do you hope to be 12 months after the end of the programme, both in terms of your career and the business? Please describe your personal goals for the next 12 months in terms of starting a business. For example, do you expect the business to be successful enough at this stage to support you directly via a salary? Will further third party investment/awards be required to take your innovation forward, or will you support yourself in some other way?

Q – Dietary requirements

Please notify us of any special dietary requirements you might have (that is, are there any particular foods that you cannot eat). If selected, this information will help us with ordering meals during the training. This information will not be used to inform the selection of participants for the programme.

3. Your innovation

Q - Title

Give a brief title to the name of your innovation, or the name of your proposed business.

Q - Technological sector or research area

Please state the major technological sector or research area that your innovation derives from (e.g. 'biotechnology', 'nanotechnology' etc.)

Q – About your innovation (400 words maximum)

Please give a description of the particular science or technology that will underpin your proposed business. For example, what is the problem that your invention is intended to solve? Why is the proposed solution better than other existing solutions? Why are improvements necessary or desirable? How close in terms of development is the technology, product or service to market? What further development is required?

Q – Benefits of your innovation (250 words maximum)

One of the broader aims of the Newton Fund is to promote economic and social welfare development in developing countries. Please outline the potential benefits of your innovation in terms of promoting economic growth and/or improving health and social wellbeing.

4. Your business plan

Q – Market opportunity (250 words maximum)

Please outline what you think is the market opportunity for your business and how your products or services will address this market. For example, what is the size of the market that your company will address?

Q – Customers and their perceived needs (250 words)

Please give an outline of who you think will be the customer for your new product, technology or service, and their perceived needs. What problem do they have that will be solved by the innovation? What evidence is there that customers will pay for this product or service at commercially profitable levels?

Q – Major risks (100 words)

Please identify what you think will be the major risks and challenges that you will have to overcome in taking the business plan forward (e.g. lack of funding or securing intellectual property).

5. Declaration

In this section, you will also be asked to declare that:

- The information you have provided is accurate.
- If selected, you have the permission of your employer to participate in the residential programme.
- You understand that, if selected to participate in the programme, you do so entirely at your own risk. It is the responsibility of all participants and/or their employers to arrange suitable travel insurance *before* participants travel to the UK for the residential programme.
- You understand that, if selected to participate in the programme, it is your responsibility to obtain the necessary visa to travel to the UK.
- If selected to participate in the programme, you agree to provide TRF and The Academy with a brief report about the progress of your business 6 months and 18 months after the programme has taken place.

All participants in the programme will join a global network of innovators and technology entrepreneurs, centred around the Royal Academy of Engineering's Enterprise Hub. As part of this network, we will endeavour to maintain contact with all participants in the programme, and may periodically offer further opportunities for international networking and mentoring. We may also contact you for further updates about the progress of your business.

Q – Authorization Letter

Please send an authorization letter from your Line Manager or Head of Department permitting your application to the Fellowship to TRF's coordinator. If your employment situation is different, please upload a letter briefly explaining your situation and confirming you are able to attend the Fellowship, in principle.

Assessment of Applications

Applications will be assessed by the TRF together with a small panel of experts in engineering and innovation, convened by the Royal Academy of Engineering. The criteria used to select Fellows for the programme are as follows:

- Ambition and vision of the applicant;
- Track record of the candidate (including technical and non-technical capabilities);
- Entrepreneurial potential and commercial awareness of the applicant;
- Technological excellence, novelty and/or effectiveness of the innovation;
- Feasibility, market potential and distance to market of the innovation;
- Expected benefit(s) of the innovation in terms of promoting economic and social welfare development in developing countries.

Shortlisted applicants will also be invited to conduct an initial pitch presentation of their idea which will inform the final selection process.

Contact

If you have any queries, please contact Thitima Pikulthong, TRF's coordinator at Thitima@trf.or.th