

South and East Network for Social Sciences (SENSS)

Post-Doctoral Fellowship Competition:

Guidance Notes for Heads of Departments: February 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

SENSS offers four ESRC-funded Post-Doctoral Fellowships (PDF) each academic year.

There are two stages to the PDF competition application phase: first, applicants must submit an expression of interest, by **12.00pm on Friday 8 March 2024**. These expressions will be used by your home university to conduct an initial sift both to ascertain eligibility and consider quality. Those expressions deemed to be eligible and of a sufficient quality will result in the applicant being invited to put in a full application for the second phase of the competition.

As part of this second phase, as the Head of a Department (HoD) at the university at which a PDF applicant is seeking to be based, you will be asked to complete a form using HEapply, the online application management platform SENSS uses to run its competitions, to provide your statement in support of the applicant. The deadline for doing so is **4.00pm GMT on 16 May 2024**, otherwise the applicant will not be considered for an award.

Further information on this competition is available on the [SENSS website](#).

2. WHAT IS REQUIRED OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS?

2.1. To give certain guarantees

As the HoD at the applicant's proposed home institution, you are required confirm your institution's support for the applicant, guaranteeing, at a minimum, that:

- The primary mentor will be available to mentor this applicant, which is expected to take a minimum of 1-2 hours each week. Please note that the primary mentor's costs for this work will be paid by the PDF grant; and,
- Appropriate support facilities, including office space and appropriate computing facilities, will be made available to the applicant during the period of the award.

2.2. To provide confirmation or evidence in support of the PDF applicant

In your supporting statement, please:

- Confirm that the applicant would be accepted into your department for the purpose of undertaking the proposed programme of work;
- Explain how the applicant's proposed programme of work would fit in with your department's wider research programme;

- Confirm that the applicant would have access to the same training and development opportunities open to permanent members of academic staff at your home institution;
- Confirm that the applicant's work and progress would be subject to the same monitoring and appraisal as those of other academic staff within your home institution; and,
- Show how your home institution is committed to supporting and promoting early-career researchers and lecturers.

3. HOW DO I SUBMIT MY SUPPORTING STATEMENT?

- You will receive an automated email from HEIapply, asking you to provide a supporting statement for the applicant. If you don't receive an email in your inbox, please check your junk/spam box, as it may be delivered there.
- Please click on the link provided in the email and fill out the form as instructed.
- You will be asked to:
 - Complete a **very brief form** on HEIapply, providing your details, and confirming the points set out above;
 - Upload your supporting statement as a **.pdf file**. It must be a **maximum of one side of A4 paper**, written in a **minimum of font size 11**.

4. WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

If you experience any difficulties accessing or using HEIapply, please contact the SENSS Co-ordinator for advice at admin@SENSS-dtp.ac.uk.