

KAUST Global Fellowship Program

a Postdoctoral Fellowship in Saudi Arabia

Program Call for Applications - 2022 Cohort

Applications Opening: October 1, 2021

Why a Postdoctoral Fellowship at KAUST

King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) is a research university in Saudi Arabia, established in 2009, that has rapidly grown to become a leading global university. It is recognized for its unparalleled laboratory facilities, exceptional equipment, and outstanding expertise.

Watch the official 2020 presentation video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_GKusKETCE

The university's beautiful green campus is located on the shores of the Red Sea.

Learn more at <https://www.kaust.edu.sa/en/about/green-campus>

KAUST is recognized throughout Saudi Arabia and the world for its science and engineering excellence and its contribution to delivering effective solutions to national and global challenges.

KAUST seeks to be a catalyst for societal and economic change in Saudi Arabia and the world, addressing national and global needs in the five Research Pillars of KAUST: **Water, Energy, Environment, Food & Health, and the Digital domain.**

The KAUST Global Fellowship Program is designed to attract to KAUST and Saudi Arabia outstanding emerging research leaders working across areas under these five Research Pillars. This Fellowship will support excellent postdoctoral researchers in taking the initial steps towards a fully independent research career.

The Fellowship Program is designed with two strands: one that is general and relevant to topics under the five Research Pillars, and one that is focused on a research area that is time relevant. "Hydrogen" is the chosen topic for this launch year. Year-to-year, Strand 2 will focus on different Research areas that are strategically important to KAUST and highly topical.

The program call 2021, for the 2022-2025 Fellowship intake, is funding research projects across the five KAUST priorities under two strands:

1. Strand 1: Research projects falling within or across one or more of the five Research Pillars (**Water, Energy, Environment, Food & Health, and the Digital domain**).
2. Strand 2: Research projects focusing on hydrogen production and storage solutions across one or more of the five Research Pillars.

KAUST Global Fellows will enjoy opportunities for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural exchange, leadership training, teaching training, community engagement, professional mentorship, an international alumni network, and a welcoming staff dedicated to the wellbeing of all Global Fellows.

Program Guidelines

Eligibility

The Fellowship is open to candidates who:

1. Have been awarded a PhD degree from a well-recognized university from around the world.
2. Will perform their three-year research project in Saudi Arabia* at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology.
3. Have up to, but not exceeding, four years of relevant experience following the examination of their PhD degree. **

***Candidates will need to be able to satisfy all the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requirements to obtain resident status**

****Candidates with a justified career break may apply**

Academic Host – Support Letter

Though the candidate will perform their research activities as an independent investigator, all candidates are required to have identified a host who is a faculty member at KAUST (find your host in the faculty list here <https://www.kaust.edu.sa/en/research/Pages/areas.aspx>).

At the time of application, the candidate will need to provide a supporting letter from a potential KAUST host to confirm the proposed research's suitability and appropriateness within KAUST's research agenda and activities. The host should also confirm that they are willing to assist and facilitate administrative aspects of the Fellowship related to procurement and spending.

In addition to the host PI, who will act as a mentor, especially in relation to the research activities, the fellow will also have an assigned mentor as part of the KAUST mentoring program for career and professional advice.

Letters of reference

In addition, the candidate will need to provide two external reference letters, at least one of which is not from their direct supervisor (present or past), confirming the candidate's suitability and capability to undertake an independent research project.

Number of Fellowships

A maximum of 10 Global Fellowships for will be awarded each year. Selection will be based on merit only.

Fellowship Period

The Fellowship is offered for three years with an evaluation at the end of the second year.

The Fellowship will be awarded during the month of January. The award notification shall be accepted formally by the future fellow by the end of January 2022.

The official starting date of the Fellowship will be February 1, 2022, at the beginning of the Global Fellowship program academic cycle 2022-25. According to the onboarding procedures, candidates are permitted to start their Fellowship as early as February 2022 and, ideally, no later than June 2022.

Fellowship Value and Benefits

The KAUST Global Fellowship offers selected fellows:

- An annual stipend of 75,000 USD (6,250 USD monthly)
- Additional benefits including medical insurance, relocation allowance, schooling, and accommodation according to the individual or family situation
- An annual research budget split according to activities as follows:
 - Conferences and work-related travel 5,000 USD.
 - Use of KAUST Core Labs facilities 10,000 USD.
 - Consumables, depending on the research topic, of up to:
 - 10,000 USD for computational sciences. OR
 - 15,000 USD for experimental/physical science. OR
 - 30,000 USD for biological / life science.
- Career and professional development programs, including mentoring and leadership programs

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Quality, originality, and output of candidate's research to date
- Candidate's demonstrated ability to carry out independent research
- Previous awards or scholarships
- Quality and feasibility of the Research Proposal submitted by the candidate
- Potential for innovation and development of research outputs
- Other unique attributes or contributions to the research environment of the candidate

More specifically, the proposed research project will be evaluated on its:

- *Scientific quality: Theoretical framework, background and originality*
 - Study design, methods for data collection and analysis
 - Interdisciplinary and/or multidisciplinary approach
- *Relevance:*
 - Relevance in relation to KAUST priorities
 - Dissemination of research project results

- *Feasibility:*
- Work plan quality
 - Research relevance to KAUST academic sponsor
 - Budget, assessed on reasonableness

Selection Process

The selection process will take place in four stages. At the end of each stage, a shortlist of candidates will advance to the next stage. At every stage, all participating candidates will be notified accordingly.

1. **Technical Eligibility:** Proposals that do not meet the call criteria or guidelines set will not move forward to review.
2. **Triage:** Depending on the number of proposals submitted, a triage panel may be introduced to provide a shortlist of proposals that will advance to the peer-review process stage.
3. **Peer Review:** All proposals reaching this stage will be reviewed by at leading researchers in the respective fields. A sitting panel will then convene to rank the proposals based on the selection criteria above.
4. **Interviews** will be held with final shortlisted candidates.

Fellows' Obligations

Alongside unique benefits, Fellows will have a number of obligations:

1. **Maintaining high academic standards:** Fellows are expected to maintain a high level of academic excellence at KAUST throughout the program. This will be evaluated and closely monitored through regular progress reports. Fellows are expected to be based in KAUST, Saudi Arabia.
2. **Participation in program-sponsored enrichment activities:** The Fellowship's program activities and events aim to create a welcoming environment for the ensemble of the cohort. Participation in programs to develop skills, promote leadership and encourage interdisciplinary research is expected. Involvement in the program's activities promotes interaction with researchers in the same cohort in a multidisciplinary setting, reciprocal introductions to world-renowned scientists and scholars, and networking with a vibrant community of academics.
3. **Community Engagement:** Fellows are encouraged to engage with the local academic and general community in activities of voluntary, non-political/non-partisan nature.
4. **Publication & Dissemination:** Any publications that result from research activities conducted during the fellowship period must acknowledge the support of the KAUST Global Fellowship program. Fellows may also be asked to submit an abstract of their dissertation and published works to the Fellowship Program management for use in publicity material produced by the program and on the website.
5. **Communication:** Fellows are expected to give public lectures about their research inside and outside the university, using their allowance for travelling to conferences, by reaching out to the international academic community using all lines of communication, including personal accounts and social media and tools already in place at KAUST.
6. **Alumni Activities:** Fellows will become part of a growing global community of Fellows, past and present, and act as ambassadors for the program. Alumni often share their experiences with others, publicize the program to their colleagues and participate in information sessions for new candidates.

Key Dates for Selection of 2022 Cohort

October 1, 2021 – Call Publication

November 30, 2021- Application deadline

December 1, 2021 – January 31 2022 – Selection process and interviews with final candidates.

January 31, 2022 – Award notification

February 1, 2022 – Start of onboarding procedures

For any questions:

Contact us at the KAUST Global Fellowship office: kgfp@kaust.edu.sa