



ADDISON WHEELER FELLOWSHIPS: FURTHER PARTICULARS

DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Durham University, founded in 1832, is the third oldest English university. It has a worldwide reputation in all areas of the arts, humanities, natural and social sciences and is ranked 5th in the UK *Complete University Guide* (2026) and is Ranked 94th in the QS World University Rankings (2026). The University has over 21,000 students and employs over 4,300 staff. Its four faculties (Arts and Humanities, Business, Science, and Social Sciences and Health) comprise 26 schools and departments, and it maintains ten cross-disciplinary Research Institutes. The University is engaged in the full range of higher educational activities, including high-quality teaching and learning at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, advanced research and scholarship, partnerships with businesses and other private and public sector bodies, and initiatives with community and voluntary sector organisations. It provides a stimulating environment to support the needs of a world-class academic community.

ADDISON WHEELER FELLOWSHIPS

Addison James Wheeler

The Addison Wheeler Fellowships are funded by a bequest from Addison James Wheeler, who died in 1967 at the age of eighty-five. Having read Theology at Durham University, Wheeler became a schoolmaster and afterwards took Holy Orders. Ill health prevented him from achieving his ambition of a career in scientific research. During his lifetime this remarkable man devoted himself to building up sufficient capital to support young scholars, whom he hoped would be able to make a significant contribution to knowledge that he himself had been unable to achieve.

Call for applications

Durham University invites applications for six Addison Wheeler Fellowships, 36-month postdoctoral positions commencing on 1 October 2026. This scheme is intended to provide early career researchers of outstanding promise with an opportunity to complete a major project. It is open to scholars from any discipline and of any nationality.

Prospective applicants must hold a doctoral degree and gained it since 1 September 2020. They are expected to demonstrate an outstanding track record of prior achievement and a high degree of preparedness to undertake a novel and ambitious programme of independent research.

Applicants **must first secure the agreement of a Durham academic department or school** to propose their candidacy and of an academic staff member within that department to act as their mentor.

The project undertaken during the fellowship should complement and strengthen the host department's research activities.

Addison Wheeler Fellows are employed in the University on a non-renewable fixed-term contract. They have full social security coverage, are eligible to join the University Superannuation Scheme, and can avail of UK health services through National Insurance payments.

Addison Wheeler Fellows will be appointed at a point on the Grade 7 scale only, commensurate with their experience. Salaries will be in the range £38,784-£46,049.

Fellows have access to additional funding from the Addison Wheeler bequest to support research activities such as fieldwork, library and archive visits, and conference attendance.

The Addison Wheeler fellowship scheme is administered on behalf of the University by the Institute of Advanced Study.

Key tasks

Addison Wheeler Fellows will be expected to perform the following key tasks:

- execute the research project detailed in their application for an Addison-Wheeler Fellowship;
- plan and manage their own research activity and research resources;
- demonstrate initiative and creativity in surmounting problems that may affect the achievement of research objectives and deadlines;
- present papers or talks on their research at conferences or workshops;
- write up the results of the research project for publication in a form that is appropriate for internationally leading research in their academic field;
- liaise with research colleagues and make internal and/or external contacts to develop knowledge and understanding and to form relationships for future research collaboration.

Supplementary information

All fellows are provided with a mentor, an academic staff member in their host department who will provide advice and guidance, and assist with identifying opportunities to support the fellow's career progression.

There is no expectation that fellows will undertake any teaching or administration in their host department during the period of their fellowship, but they may do so (subject to the approval of the Head of Department) if it is considered useful for their professional development. Any additional duties undertaken must not be onerous (typically, no more than 3-4 hours a week over a limited period) or hinder the timely completion of the research project funded by the fellowship.

Durham University is a collegiate university, and all fellows will be given the opportunity to become a member of a Senior Common Room of a Durham College.

In addition to having opportunities to participate in research events organised in their host departments and in university research centres and institutes, Addison Wheeler Fellows will be appointed Associate Fellows of the [Institute of Advanced Study](#). Founded in 2006, the Institute aims to advance knowledge at the frontier of disciplines by bringing together scholars, intellectuals and public figures of world-class standing to address topics of major significance.

HOW TO APPLY

Before applying, you are expected to obtain the agreement of a Durham academic staff member to act as your mentor and propose your candidacy. It is important that you allow sufficient time to discuss your application with the staff member concerned, as they will need to consult with the departmental Head of Research, who will have to write a supporting departmental statement. Please be aware that departments often receive multiple enquiries from prospective applicants and are unable to propose all of them for consideration by the university Selection Committee.

It is also vital at this stage to alert your prospective departmental host if:

- (i) the proposed programme of research raises any ethical concerns, as these would need to be considered and addressed before your candidacy can be approved.
- (ii) the proposed programme of research is dependent on securing permission from or the co-operation of external bodies (e.g. an archive, an industry partner), as the offer of a fellowship will be contingent on such approvals being received.

If the host department invites you to proceed with an application, you should submit the following documents through the Durham University [online application system](#) under vacancy reference: 26000103.

- A letter of application which includes:
 - (i) a brief outline of the proposed research project in simple, non-technical language comprehensible by non-specialists (no more than 200 words)
 - (ii) a statement of how the research will satisfy the stipulation of the Addison Wheeler bequest—‘to encourage efforts for increased knowledge of people and their make-up so as to enable them to make better use of their life here on Earth’
 - (iii) an explanation of why you believe yourself to be a suitable candidate for a fellowship.
- A curriculum vitae
- A statement outlining the programme of research that you plan to undertake if appointed to a fellowship. It should describe the objectives, methodology and projected outcomes (e.g. publications), and enable the assessment panel to judge the project’s originality and significance. The statement should run to no more than two pages of A4 and be typed in Arial font size 11 with margins no smaller than 2cm.
- The names and contact details of two academic referees. You must arrange for your referees to submit their references to addisonwheeler.recruitment@durham.ac.uk by **midnight GMT on 26 March 2026**. Late references will not be considered, and applications will be deemed incomplete and not taken further.

Closing date

Applications and accompanying materials (including references) must be received by **midnight GMT on 26 March 2026**. Late or incomplete applications cannot be accepted under any circumstances.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Evaluation criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criterion 1

Evidence of exceptional preparedness to undertake an ambitious postdoctoral research project: the quality of the applicant and of their contribution to scholarship to date, relative to career stage.

Criterion 2

Outstanding quality, significance, and originality of the proposed programme of research, its alignment with the objectives of the Addison Wheeler bequest, and the feasibility of completing the project successfully within the period of the fellowship.

Criterion 3

The persuasiveness of the rationale for undertaking the project at Durham University: the suitability of the Durham research environment to support the project (e.g. facilities, staff expertise, pertinent research groups) and its alignment with the department or school's research strategy.

Selection process

Durham University is an equal opportunities employer, and the selection process will be conducted in conformity with institutional [EDI policies](#).

Stage One

Any applicant not nominated by an academic department will not be considered.

The Selection Committee will consider the applications nominated by academic departments, consulting as necessary with subject experts in Durham. Applicants will be graded against the assessment criteria, and the highest-ranking candidates will be invited to interview.

Candidates who are not short-listed will be informed within ten days of the short-listing meeting. Due to the high volume of applications to this scheme, the Selection Committee is unable to provide feedback if your application is unsuccessful at this stage.

Stage Two

The university Selection Committee will elicit the opinions of external subject specialists on the research proposals of the short-listed applicants. These must have no close professional or personal connection with the candidate and at least one will be based outside the UK. (Please note that applicants are not responsible for proposing external assessors).

Interviews of short-listed candidates will be held **in June 2026** and will be carried out by web conference.

The Selection Committee will review candidates' scores in light of the additional information provided by the expert assessors and the interviews, and then finalise the list of candidates to whom fellowships will be offered.

Unsuccessful candidates at Stage 2 of the selection procedure will be provided with feedback (usually within 1-2 weeks).

Offers of appointments are subject to successful candidates securing a valid visa and work permit, if required, from the UK Border Agency.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Should you wish to discuss informally matters relating to the Addison Wheeler Fellowships please contact IAS Manager, Linda Crowe (ias.manager@durham.ac.uk).