



*The Royal Society
of Edinburgh*

KNOWLEDGE MADE USEFUL

CRITERIA FOR ELECTION 2020

Fellowship – FRSE

The Royal Society of Edinburgh was established in 1783 for “*the advancement of learning and useful knowledge*”. Born out of the Scottish Enlightenment, it remains true to two underpinning principles of the time, which still characterise a Scottish approach to learning:

- A broad understanding and appreciation of different forms of knowledge with a fellowship that encompasses the breadth of academia along with business, the professions and public service;
- The application of that knowledge for the betterment of society or ‘knowledge made useful’.

In that context, and consistent with RSE’s role as Scotland’s National Academy, the primary qualification for election to the fellowship is **excellence** demonstrated by: outstanding achievement in one’s field; professional standing and; contribution to society / public good. This contribution may be through, for example, expanding the boundaries of knowledge, improving practice and understanding, enhancing people’s lives and well-being, developing the cultural life of the nation and enhancing Scotland’s reputation globally.

All candidates for Fellowship should be active in their area of work. Election is not a reward for long service and candidates will be assessed on the **quality and significance** of their achievements commensurate with their career opportunities rather than quantum.

Successful candidates will be able to evidence a contribution across the three dimensions of excellence (outstanding achievement, professional standing and societal contribution). In assessing candidates for election, equal weight will be given to each of the three areas and it is expected that a candidate will be outstanding in at least two of the three. The selection committees will also take account of a candidate’s engagement in activities beyond their area of work / specialism and likely contribution to the Society. RSE Fellows have a fundamental role to play in enabling the RSE to deliver on its mission of ‘Knowledge made Useful’ and acceptance of Fellowship implies a strong commitment to the objectives of the RSE (to inspire, engage, provide expertise and promote – see **Annex A**) and a willingness to devote time and effort to its work whether at a local, national or international level operating in accordance with the set of values recently agreed by Council (**Annex B**).

Council wants to ensure that the fellowship is truly representative of excellence and reflects the breath of talent and achievement across Scottish society to enable RSE to deliver its mission most effectively. Whilst maintaining the overriding requirement for excellence, Council therefore wishes to see a reduction in the average age at election, continued improvement in gender balance and an increase in the number of fellows from business, the professions, public sector and third sector. RSE is also taking steps to gain a greater understanding of the diversity of the fellowship including ethnicity and disability.

There is no nationality requirement for ordinary Fellowship, but candidates for election must be resident in the UK and should have a clear connection with Scotland related to their expertise.

Corresponding Fellowship – CorrFRSE

Corresponding Fellows must be resident outside the UK and may be of any nationality. They should usually have some demonstrable interest in, or connection to, Scotland, and there is an expectation of future engagement with the RSE.

They should be of significant international distinction within their own subject or profession and are likely already to be members of relevant academic/professional societies in the country in which they work. It should be apparent that their acceptance of Fellowship will bring international credit as well as visibility to the RSE and possibly foster new academic and professional links. Also, the RSE may approach Corresponding Fellows for their views on consultative questions with an international dimension.

The election of a Corresponding Fellow is intended to be honorific, without subscription. They are not eligible to hold office or to vote at any meeting of the RSE. However, if a Corresponding Fellow subsequently becomes permanently resident in the UK, they may take on the rights of a Fellow subject to approval by the RSE Council and payment of the normal admission fee and subscription fees. They may also retain the post nominals of CorrFRSE if they wish.

The maximum number of Corresponding Fellows who may be elected in any one year is restricted to ten.

Honorary Fellowship – HonFRSE

Honorary Fellows are members of the Royal House, or persons of truly exceptional distinction who have made pre-eminent contributions in public service or in any subject within the disciplinary domains of the RSE, and who have a highly distinguished record in the promotion or advancement of the causes for which the RSE was founded. They will have rendered outstanding service which is recognised by peer groups as original and inspirational and which demonstrates a sustained commitment.

They should be internationally renowned and are likely to be widely known outside their specialism and would normally be members of their national academies. They may be of any nationality or country of residence but should usually have some demonstrable interest in, or connection to, Scotland.

The distinction of candidates for honorary fellowship should be such that their acceptance of Fellowship will enhance the prestige of the RSE. Current Honorary Fellows include Nicola Benedetti, Mark Walport, Carol Ann Duffy, Mary Robinson and Chunli Bai.

Honorary Fellows pay no subscription. They are not required to take an active part in the work of the RSE, although they are welcome, and indeed encouraged, to do so.

The maximum number of Honorary Fellows who may be elected in any one year, excluding members of the Royal House, is restricted to four. The distinction expected for this category of Fellowship means that only in exceptional circumstances would the RSE elect four Honorary Fellows in the same year.

Annex A

RSE Strategic Objectives



INSPIRE

Inspire and support Scotland's most promising young talent across the research, business and public sectors, in order to create value for the economy and society.

Enhance research capacity and leadership in Scotland.

Strengthen Scotland's cross-sector connections and its ability to realise benefits from its research and innovation.



ENGAGE

Engage on key contemporary issues by providing an impartial forum for public debate and discussion.

Enhance the public's contribution to and engagement with contemporary national and global scientific, cultural and economic issues.



PROVIDE EXPERTISE

Provide expertise to ensure that Scotland's policy makers and influencers have access to the best national, and indeed global expertise.

Inform and influence public policy.



PROMOTE

Promote Scotland's interests and reputation on the global stage.

Raise Scotland's profile and strengthen its connections with the world.

Annex B

RSE Values

Our values form the basis on which we operate, and underpin our mission to make knowledge useful. We want every decision we make, as individuals and collectively, and every interaction we have, to embody these values.

