

News story: New scheme for overseas researchers to come to the UK

The new 'UKRI Science, Research and Academia' scheme, which allows non-EEA researchers, scientists and academics to come to the UK for up to 2 years, opens today (Friday 6 July), the Immigration Minister has announced.

The new scheme, which is being added to the Tier 5 (Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange (GAE)) visa route, has been introduced to reflect and encourage the ongoing growth of the research sector in the UK.

It will be operated by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and will mean that they, along with 12 approved research organisations, such as the Natural History Museum, are able to directly sponsor highly skilled individuals, such as specialist technicians, to work and train in the UK.

The sponsor organisations will be monitored by UKRI as the scheme owner and they will also require individual Tier 5 sponsor licences.

Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes, said:

I recognise the crucial contribution science makes to the UK economy and society and I am determined that the UK will continue to welcome leading scientific and research talent from around the world.

The UK is a world leader in research and innovation and these changes will make it easier for international researchers to work and train in the UK.

We must have an immigration system that makes sure we can attract leading international talent and benefit from their knowledge and expertise.

UKRI brings together the 7 research councils, Innovate UK and Research England.

UKRI chief executive Professor Sir Mark Walport, said:

Research and innovation is inherently international, as are the unprecedented 21st century challenges we must address.

Global collaboration through the movement of talented people plays an essential role in meeting these challenges and this new scheme will provide further support for international researchers to work and train in the UK.

The Tier 5 GAE is the principal visa route by which non-EEA nationals who wish to undertake training and work experience are able to come to the UK. The route allows individuals entering the UK through this scheme to stay for up to 2 years.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will monitor the activity of the scheme on a regular basis with UKRI, to provide assurance that it is meeting the criteria for a Tier 5 scheme.

This initiative demonstrates the government's commitment to making the UK a dynamic, open, globally-trading nation and builds on other recent reforms to the visa system, including:

- doubling the number of visas available on the Exceptional Talent route to 2,000 per year
- a new Start-up visa route which will replace the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) route and widen the pool of candidates who can apply to launch a new business in the UK beyond graduates endorsed by higher education institutions
- removing doctors and nurses from the Tier 2 cap

Further details on the approved [Tier 5 GAE schemes can be found online](#).