

The Geological Society – Professional Development Bursaries

Application Guidance

1 Introduction:

The Society awards a limited number of bursaries each year (worth up to **£2000**) to support early career geologists, particularly those working in industry, with professional development activities (by contributing to travel costs or continuing professional development).

The application cycle opens on **1 September 2026** with applications for this year's bursaries to be submitted before **8 February 2027**.

All queries and submissions should be sent to grants@geolsoc.org.uk. Please note that due to the large volume of queries we may not be able to respond immediately, especially close to the application deadline. Applicants are encouraged to consider this when preparing their application forms.

Eligibility:

Applicants must be Fellows of the Geological Society. Preference is given to Fellows who are working towards, or who have recently attained, Chartership (CGeol/CSci).

Finance:

Bursary applicants may request up to **£2000**. All reasonable expenses will be considered, provided they are clearly justified. Examples of where funds might be used include:

Allowable costs include training course fees, travel* and subsistence, local travel costs, specimen shipping costs, conference attendance and / or field trip expenses, or laboratory expenses.

Non-allowable costs include funding for taught master's programmes, open access publishing costs, undergraduate field mapping projects.

*The Geological Society will not award a bursary to those applicants proposing to undertake fieldwork in countries where the UK Foreign Office advises against travel.

Payments will generally be made by BACS. If your application is successful, we will require BACS details to make payment.

2 Applications and assessment:

Applications for Society Professional Development Bursaries should be made using the downloadable form. Applications must be accompanied by two supporting statements, one completed by a chartered Fellow of the Society, and one from your employer / line manager.

Forms can be returned together or separately to the Funding Officer at grants@geolsoc.org.uk and must arrive no later than the closing date. Applications that arrive after the closing date without prior approval will be considered ineligible.

Application form:

Applications must be submitted using the downloadable form. The forms ask applicants to consider a range of information, including:

- The context for the activity to be undertaken, whether this is a conference, training course, laboratory or in-field training opportunity
- Where necessary, applicants should state that any necessary permissions or access requirements have been obtained
- Applications should demonstrate how the bursary will support your professional development
- The cost breakdown of the proposed development activity. The role of the applicant must be stated if the application is participating as part of a broader project (i.e., explain your role within the team and what it is that you will do).

Please complete all sections. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Supporting statement:

All applications are required to be submitted with **two** supporting statements, one completed by a chartered Fellow of the Society, and one from your employer / line manager. These individuals do not need to be a Fellow of the Society.

The Supporting Statement Form can be emailed directly to grants@geolsoc.org.uk, or it can accompany the application form.

Assessment:

Please note that applications will be reviewed anonymously. Therefore, please avoid providing any personal details except for on the grants cover page.

- All applications are judged on the scientific excellence of the project. In deciding between those of equal merit, preference will be given to those who make the strongest case for financial support.
- Applications which the Committee considers to be premature, e.g. too early in the applicant's career path, will be ruled out.
- All applicants will receive a brief statement of feedback. This statement is intended to be constructive and to aid the applicant with future funding applications. No further feedback will be provided; however, feedback can be clarified if any comments are unclear to the applicant.

3 Expectations of the successful awardee:

All applicants are required to be Fellows at the time of receipt of the grant money.

The grant may be used only for the purposes described in your application as approved by the Society. If you are unable to use the grant for the specific purpose for which it was intended, please contact the Society before spending any portion of the grant.

If any significant changes are likely to be made to a proposal's scope or if the project's timetable is delayed, inform us immediately to obtain approval for any variations. If changes are made without our agreement, we may consider reclaiming any funds not used for the intended purpose.

Project report:

Successful applicants must produce a report, either interim or full, 12 months from receipt of grant payment. There is no specified format, but example reports are available on request to help provide a guide. The preferred style is more a piece of scientific journalism than a learned paper.

The report should be no more than three pages clearly identifying the purpose of the research and what has been achieved. It should outline the results/findings and any next steps, rather than accounting in a financial sense on how the money was spent. It should be clear to the layperson what the societal impact or relevance of the results are. It must state whether the awardee has had articles published or about to be published. Failure to produce a report will make future applications ineligible and your referee may be contacted and requested to chase the missing report.

Separate to the project report, awardees should provide an account of how the money was spent and receipts where possible e.g. flights, laboratory costs, accommodation, equipment, fuel etc.

- Awardees must ensure acknowledgement of funding from the Society in all publications relating to the funded project.
- Successful applicants may be asked to write a piece for the Society's magazine, Geoscientist, and blog.
- Reports may be published on the Society's website.

4 Timetable:

Call for applications open:	1 September 2026
Call for applications closed:	8 February 2027
Review:	March 2027
Final results:	End of March 2027

5 Support:

Inquiries

For any inquiries about Society Professional Development Bursaries that are not explained in this guidance document, please use the contact details below.

- E-mail: grants@geolsoc.org.uk

Disability support

We welcome applications from disabled applicants and will accommodate adjustments to the procedures to ensure that these applicants are able to participate fully in the selection process. Adjustments to the application procedure could include:

- Extension of the application deadline
- Additional support to complete the application form

If you have any queries about accessing the support described in this section, please use the contact details above.

6 Privacy statement:

The information that you submit with your form will be processed by the Geological Society for the purposes of administering your grant application. It will only be shared with external referees from the relevant committees as part of the review process.

For more information, please refer to our Privacy Notice on our website www.geolsoc.org.uk/privacy.

7 The Distinguished Geologists Memorial Trust:

The Society's Professional Development Bursaries are supported by The Distinguished Geologists Memorial Trust, which was established by the [Institution of Geologists](#) with monies donated in memory of Sir Peter Kent, Dan Ion and Robert H Cummings. It acknowledges the significant contributions made by them to the science and profession of Geology in the UK and throughout the world.