

SSI Fellowship Programme 2026: Terms and Conditions

On this page, we've provided more information about the Fellowship and how it works.

Support

All questions and suggestions should be sent to the Fellows Management email address: fellows-management@software.ac.uk

Terminology

We will use the word "event" to refer to all conferences, meetings, workshops and other events.

The word "expenses" will be used to describe expenses incurred for both travel, subsistence and expenses related to the running of and attending events (for example, allowable purchases to enable Fellowship plans).

The word "Fellow" or "Fellows" will refer to a single Fellow, or all Fellows, in the 2026 Fellowship intake, unless otherwise qualified.

The responsibilities of a Fellow

Fellows have the following areas of responsibility:

Mandatory

1. Prepare blog posts about events attended or organised where this has been supported by the Institute's funds.
2. Promote the Software Sustainability Institute and its work where appropriate.
3. Attend a Fellows Inaugural Meeting in 2026.
4. Attend the 2026 annual Software Sustainability Institute's Collaborations Workshop (CW26).
5. Deliver the plans described in your Fellowship application (and make the Institute aware of any substantive changes to your plans).
6. Attend the Fellows Community calls wherever possible
7. Provide feedback and ideas to help the Institute and the Fellowship programme.
8. Participate in an online survey to report back on your experiences on being a Fellow in your inaugural period.

Optional

Where possible, we encourage you to:

1. Suggest other uses of the award to further your aims and the Institute's aims.
2. Publish blog posts on the SSI website even where the Institute has not funded an activity.

3. Encourage other Fellows (2026 or earlier) to attend events you have organised (e.g. via email all-fellows@software.ac.uk or Slack)
4. Work with other Fellows.
5. Take part in future Fellows selection
6. Participate in annual Fellowship surveys
7. Attend the monthly Community Building Study Group or start your own Study Group

Funding

The Fellowship award has £4000 of funding to each Fellow. This funding is to aid the Fellow in carrying out their responsibilities as detailed above. If you have exhausted your Fellowship bursary, you can apply for amounts up to £1500, - to the Further Development Fund. This fund is intended to support the ongoing professional development of SSI Fellows by providing resources for activities that enhance their skills, impact, and contributions to the broader community. Regular calls for applications are held, when more information is provided, but we encourage you to contact us if you need support or plan to apply via fellows-management@software.ac.uk.

Preparing blog posts about events

Fellows will prepare a blog post about the events they attend, workshops they run, and other activities organised where this has been supported by the Institute's funds.

We recommend reading the [Guide for content contributors](#) while preparing your blog post. Information about when these blog posts are required is covered in the section 'How to apply for, and claim, expenses'. Please note: we welcome blog posts (e.g. about events and/or opinion pieces) even when the work was not supported by the Institute's resources.

Promotion of the Software Sustainability Institute

Fellows should promote the Software Sustainability Institute where appropriate. For example, we expect Fellows to discuss our work during conversations with interested delegates at conferences and events.

We also require our Fellows to include a slide about the Software Sustainability Institute in their presentation (if we have contributed towards the event) and, where possible, to leave publicity materials (typically A5 flyers and stickers) for distribution at in-person events.

We encourage Fellows to use social media in order to broadcast news about our work. Please contact fellows-management@software.ac.uk for information about logos and/or slide sets (etc.) that will help you promote the Institute.

Attend a Fellowship Inaugural Meeting in 2026

Fellows will attend an online inaugural meeting in early 2026, Fellows will get an introduction to the Institute and learn how they can collaborate with the staff. Fellows will get a chance to network, gain feedback on their plans and explore mutual points of interest. The meeting will last one working day at most, if any expenses are likely to be incurred to facilitate your participation please contact the Fellows Management team; SSI aims to reimburse reasonable costs.

Attending the Software Sustainability Institute's Collaborations Workshop

Fellows will attend the 2026 edition of Collaborations Workshop. This will take place as a hybrid event. Registration, travel and accommodation will be provided by the Software Sustainability Institute and will not be deducted from the individual's Fellowship budget.

Possibly run a Carpentries Workshop

A Fellow can elect to run a Carpentries (<https://carpentries.org/>) event at their home institution or at a domain conference (where there is clear benefit to the UK research base). The Software Sustainability Institute will provide expertise and advice on running the event. Funding for the workshop will come from the Fellows personal budget.

The Carpentries fee should not be paid for from Fellowship funds, however, catering and supporting the attendance of instructors are valid items that we reimburse (assuming approval of your event request).

Contract duration

In most circumstances, Fellows must submit requests for attending/organising events that will incur expenses. Requests for use of your funds that require an invoice or purchase order (e.g. catering by a third-party) should be made no later than three months before the event takes place. Regular expenses (e.g. travel by yourself or someone else) can be requested up to one month in advance. The expenses must be incurred over the period 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2027. The inaugural period of Fellowship where you have access to your dedicated funds is thus 15 months. After this period of time, Fellows remain as Fellows but they no longer have access to their dedicated funds.

This is subject to some basic requirements: such as keeping the Institute up to date with your latest e-mail address, some level of engagement with us (for example, helping with Fellows selection or e.g. writing/contributing to a blog post), for us and not bringing the Institute into disrepute by its association with you.

What events meet the criteria for funding?

Primarily these will be events that you specified in your Fellowship application.

We are very supportive of events that will help seed, nurture and grow Communities of Practice in a research related area.

Thus, we are interested in supporting research-related events that explore:

- The software being used by researchers to improve their research, and the ways in which that software is being used
- Current issues relating to software use and development in a specific field or fields of research
- Researchers who are developing software for other researchers to use
- Groups who are funding software development or helping researchers with software
- Other matters pertaining to software in research (but we encourage dialogue with the Fellows Management team prior to an event request)

Organising events such as a Carpentries workshop, Fellow-led workshops or other events will be agreed by dialogue; there must be a clear benefit to the UK research base and be in alignment with the [Institute's aims and objectives](#).

Supporting equipment and subscriptions that support online activities is also supported by the Institute; note this does not cover the purchase of computers, laptops, tablets, monitors or printers. You can [view example eligible expenses for SSI Fellowship funds here](#).

We expect Fellows to try and achieve the plans they laid out in their application, however with justification and communication with the Management team we can take a flexible approach to this.

How to apply for, and claim, expenses

The application process

Any Fellow can apply to have their allowable expenses paid by entering the required information on the Fellows event request page. The process is as follows:

1. At least one month before the event begins, the Fellow should log into their account on the Fellowship Administration Tool [lowFAT](#) and use the [funding request page event request page](#) to submit information about how the expenses will be incurred. This must include:
 - the name of the event
 - the dates over which the event takes place
 - a description of why the Fellow's participation in the event will generate benefit to the Software Sustainability Institute and/or the Fellow's research community
 - what successful outcomes from the event might look like
 - an estimate of the expenses that will be incurred
2. The application is reviewed by the Software Sustainability Institute.

3. The Fellow is informed by email (normally within two weeks) whether the application is successful (the Fellow may be contacted for further information before a decision is made).
4. The Fellow pays for their expenses and collects receipts and proof of purchase for all expenses incurred.
 - Note: If the Fellow requires support with costs up front (for example, such as invoices directly between the supplier and the Institute), then the Fellow needs to contact the Management team before submitting a funding request to find out what is possible. Setting up suppliers can take up to two months, so we recommend the Fellow gets in contact to discuss well before this.
5. Within one month of the end date of the event, they [submit their draft blog post on the event via lowFAT](#), and fill out and upload the relevant scans of the University of Edinburgh Payment for Non-Staff/Student Expenses form and all receipts/proofs of purchase through the [lowFAT expense claim submission form lowFAT expense claim form](#). (Note, it takes six weeks for payment once expenses have been received and we have passed them onto the University of Edinburgh Accounts office, however we will not pass these on until we have a reasonable draft blog post of your event).
6. The Software Sustainability Institute reimburses the Fellow for all relevant expenses (or the balance of the expenses, if some have been paid for in advance).

Limitations over what can be claimed, time limits and other restrictions are discussed in the Limitations section below.

Sending expenses and receipts

Please read the guidelines for reimbursement of expenses supported by the Software Sustainability Institute here. - <https://www.software.ac.uk/guide/guidelines-reimbursement-expenses-supported-software-sustainability-institute>

Expenses incurred by Fellows are subject to the Expenses Policy of the University of Edinburgh. When in doubt please write to fellows-management@software.ac.uk.

Limitations

Expenses will not be reimbursed if the limitations described on this page are not met. It is the responsibility of the Fellow to meet the limitations. The Software Sustainability Institute is not responsible for reminding Fellows of limitations and cannot be held liable if any of the limitations are not met.

The blog post on the event must be completed to a degree considered adequate and publishable by the Software Sustainability Institute. We suggest you read around five to ten of the recent blog posts at www.software.ac.uk/blog to understand the style, tone and type required. The [Guide for content contributors](#) is a valuable reference and following it will reduce the amount of iterations between the Institute and the Fellow required to get your post published.

The Software Sustainability Institute is not liable for any expenses incurred by the Fellow before permission for incurring expenses has been approved.

Expenses will not be paid until the Fellow submits their blog post in a publishable state on the event.

Unless suitable justification is provided, expenses will not be paid if the value of the claim is over 20% more than that of the original estimate of the expenses submitted during the event request process.

Unless suitable justification is provided, event requests must be submitted at least one month before the event takes place.

Expenses will only be reimbursed if the expenses form and receipts are received within a period of one calendar month from the end date of the event.

Termination

The Software Sustainability Institute reserves the right to cancel our contract with a Fellow at any time if the Software Sustainability Institute deems that a Fellow has not met the terms and conditions described on this page or has brought the Institute into disrepute.

Fellows who are inactive (no approved event requests in 6 months) and non-communicative (not responding to email or other contact requests within a month) risk the cancellation of their contract.

Any Fellow who has their agreement terminated will not be eligible to move onto the continuing Fellowship programme and references to them on the Fellowship pages will be removed.