

# Applying for Fellowships

Panel Discussion

Rebecca Slater, Carlo Rinaldi, Adriana Tomic, Caroline Hartley

# What is a Fellowship?

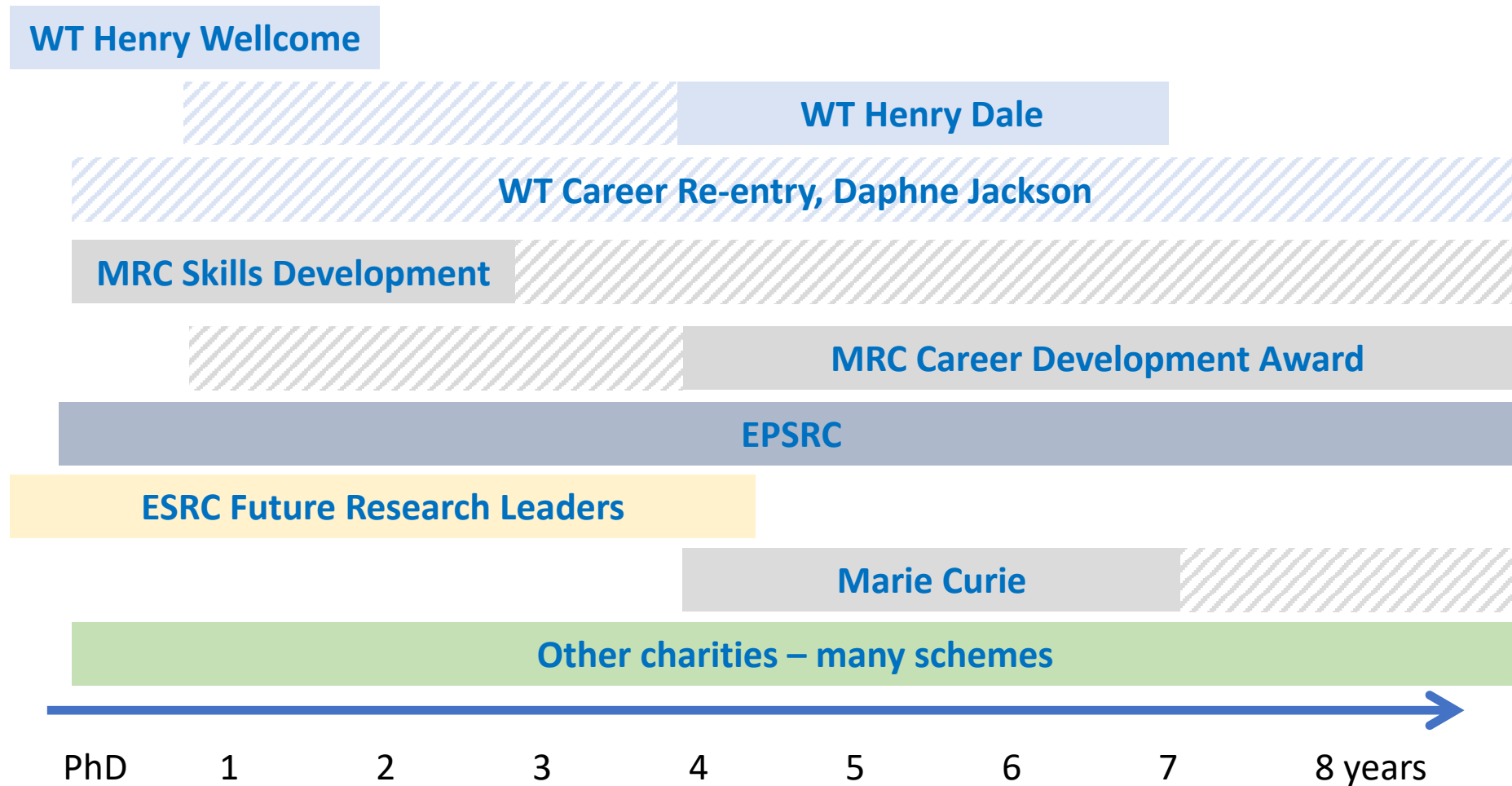
**A fellowship is distinct from a research grant:**

- **it funds an individual person rather than a research project**
- **it provides the opportunity to build an independent research career**
- **gives freedom, time and long-term flexible support to pursue innovative scientific research**
- **support development of a research leader by offering tailored, high-quality professional development, networking and engagement opportunities**

**Incentive:**

- **personal salary and secure position for 3-8 years**
- **provides enormous prestige**
- **You can lead your own group, staff, budget**
- **provides protected research time**

# Career Stages and eligibility – a few examples



# Core criteria

**Person:** Do you look like a “research leader of the future”? Is your proposal your own ideas, own work? Do you understand all aspects, rather than relying too much on collaborators? Do you have a detailed rather than superficial understanding. Are you driven and enthusiastic?

**Project:** Is it a coherent story? Have you considered flaws, risks etc. and are they mitigated? Contingencies? Do you understand the detail? Who/where are the competitors?

**Place:** Justify choice strongly – both institution and sponsors and mentors.

# What to do before applying

**GOAL: Be the right person, at the right time, with the right project, in the right place**

1. **Know your self, talk with others, find a mentor**
2. Take time to develop a project
3. Where to look: <https://ecrcentral.org/fundings>
4. Check suitability criteria (e.g. time from last degree, career stage, nationality, clinical, if in doubt call or email the agency)
5. Consider time commitments during the fellowship (part time vs full time, clinical duties)
6. Identify primary host research organizations (e.g. academic centres)
7. Plan in advance visit to second centres (e.g. industrial partners)
8. Have a plan B

# Writing the application

1. **PREPARATION** → application forms , manuals, documentations, workshops, successful applications from colleagues, contact funding agency
2. **THINK LIKE A REVIEWER** → find reviewer's forms to evaluate your own proposal, helpful while writing
3. **DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS** → research methodology and design
4. **IT IS NOT ALL ABOUT RESEARCH** → your CV, institution, impact, dissemination, inclusiveness, data management, career development
5. **FINDING A BALANCE** → MSCA - three parts - different weights: EXCELLENCE (50%), IMPACT (30%), and IMPLEMENTATION (20%)

# Interviews – what to expect

- Panels can be very large
- Presentation – make sure that this is understandable to a broad scientific audience
- Reviewer feedback – ability to address criticism
- Questions on research proposal, you and place. Give concise answers, have a well thought out contingency plan

# Interviews – how to prepare

- Do some mock interviews – we can arrange this (and review of applications before you submit them), please contact me (*caroline.hartley@paediatrics.ox.ac.uk*).
- Practice your presentation, making sure it is clear and you keep to time
- Practice answers to questions on different topics (e.g. your proposal, location, how you will achieve independence, what is your greatest career contribution to date etc).