



UK Research Office  
Brussels

# **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)**

## **Navigating the UK Immigration Landscape**

**Monday 5 December**

[mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk](mailto:mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk)

# Agenda

## 1 Welcome and UK Participation

*Dr Branwen Hide, UK MSCA NCP, UKRO*

## 2 Introduction to UK Immigration Routes

*Gabrielle Newson, Engagement Manager, UKRI*

## 3 Overview of visa routes for short-term mobility

*Isabelle Brown, Senior Strategy Advisor, UKRI*

*Stephen Longson, Immigration Manager, UKRI*

## 4 Question and Answer

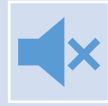
*Moderator, Branwen Hide, UK MSCA NCP, UKRO*



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# Housekeeping



All participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar.



A chat function is available and will be monitored.



The session is NOT recorded



**Please use the Q&A function to submit questions. Up voting is available**



# About UKRO

## We support UK research intensive organisations

- Maximise UK participation in Horizon Europe
- Provide a service to around 140 subscribers
- A Brussels-based team of advisors
- Part of UKRI's wider International team
- UK National Contact Point for [European Research Council](#) and [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programmes](#)



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<https://www.ukro.ac.uk/mariecurie/>



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# Disclaimer

The following slides do not provide  
immigration advice

Any individual requiring specific immigration advice must use an adviser approved through the Office of Immigration Services (OISC) or consult their internal HR or immigration team.



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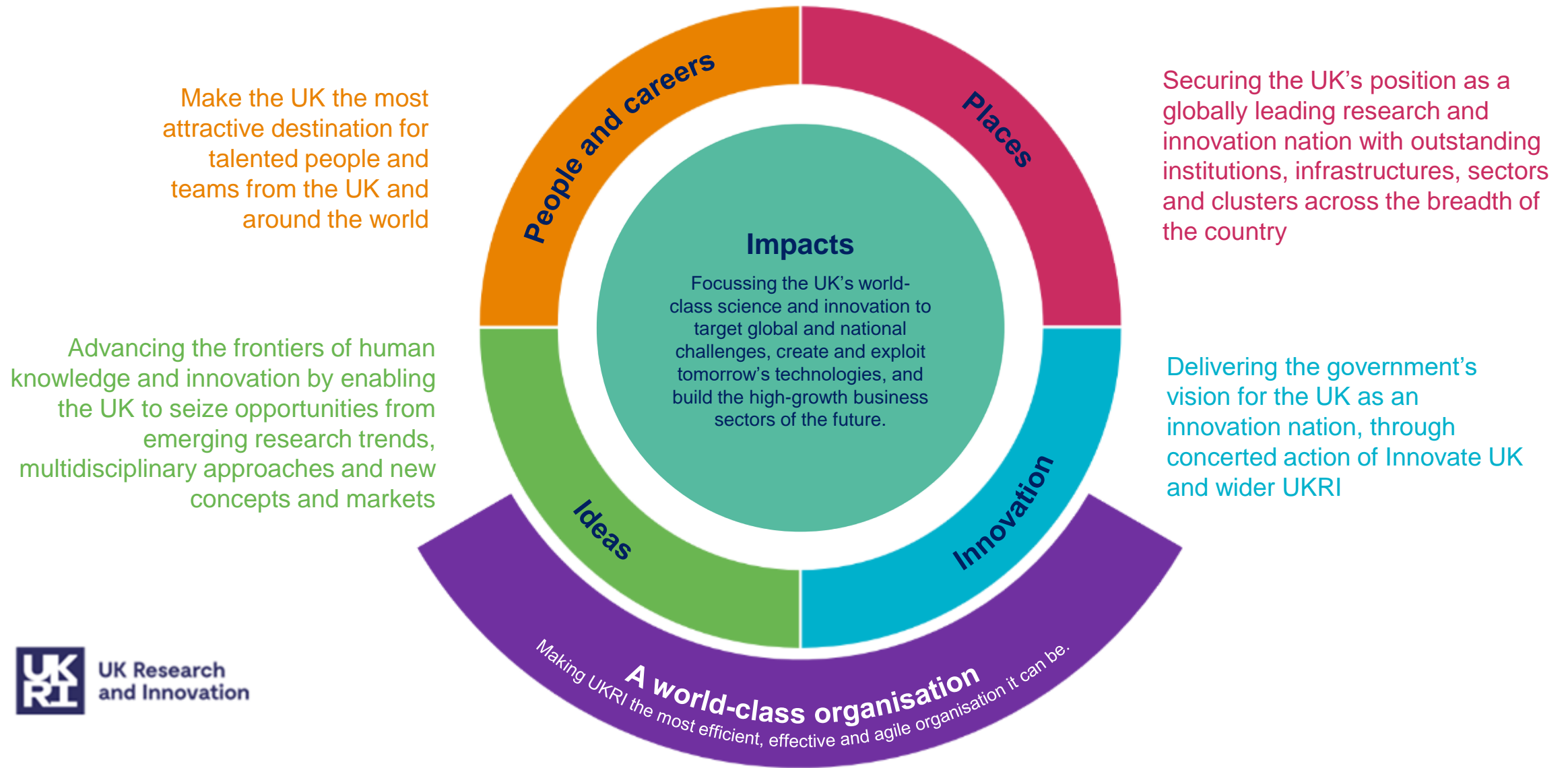




# **Introduction to UK Immigration Routes**



# People & Culture themes core to UKRI's strategy





# Benefits of short-term mobility

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Research is an international endeavour

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The openness of UK research to global talent has been critical to success

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Enables the UK to maintain international standing and tackle global challenges

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International mobility ensures a circulation of skills and ideas around the world.

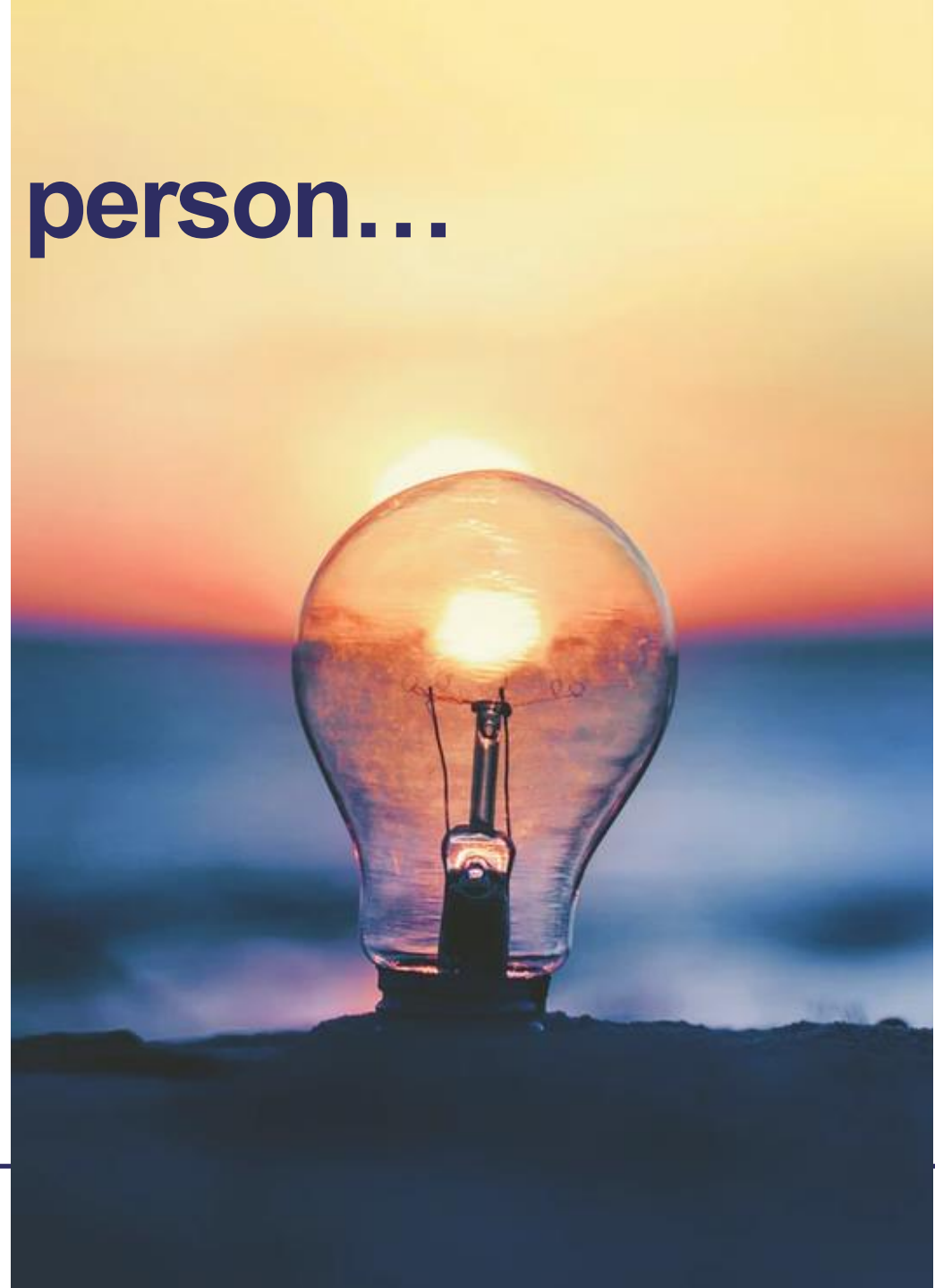
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Temporary mobility allows researchers to access specific expertise and new perspectives

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# Start by thinking about the person...

- What activities will they be doing?
- Where will they be doing these activities?
- How long will they be doing them for?
- Will they be visiting the UK multiple times to carry out these activities?
- Will they be reimbursed?



SHORT-TERM MOBILITY VISA	LENGTH OF STAY	WHAT DOES IT ENABLE
<b>Standard Visitor</b>	Up to 6 months, with no option to extend	Facilitates non-employed visits to the UK to undertake a range of activities, such as meetings, conferences, interviews, research visits, training, sharing knowledge on international projects, amongst others.
<b>Academic Visitor</b>	Up to 12 months, with no option to extend	A sub-category of the Standard Visitor route, allowing applicants to come to the UK to carry out academic activities.
<b>Temporary Worker - HEI &amp; GAE routes</b>	6 – 24 months, depending on the scheme	Facilitates the sharing of knowledge, experience and best practice through work placements, training, and project collaboration.
<b>Permitted Paid Engagement</b>	Up to 1 month, with no option to extend	A sub-category of the Standard Visitor route, allowing applicants to come to the UK to carry out specific engagements for which they may receive payment.



# Why is it important to use the right visa?

You need to apply for the **best visa for the engagement**. If you don't, you could incur:

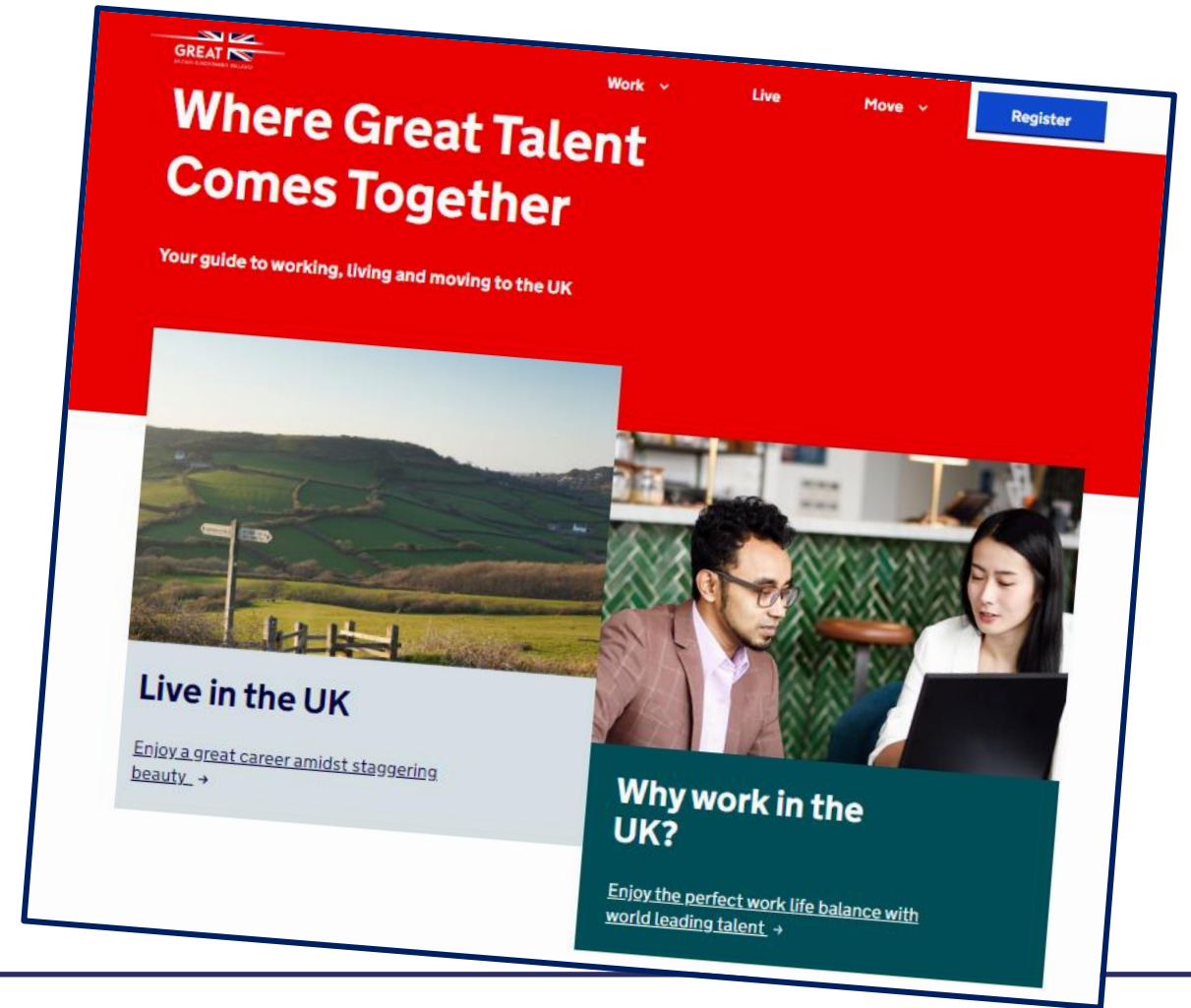
- lengthy application processes
- unnecessary additional steps
- delays to projects
- unnecessary costs to projects

If you are having trouble navigating immigration related websites contact:  
[mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk](mailto:mariecurie-uk@ukro.ac.uk)

# GREAT Global Talent website

- Launched in February 2022
- Signposts to visa information, all in one place
- Under continued development

<https://greattalent.campaign.gov.uk/>



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The background of the slide is a composite image. On the left, there is a solid dark blue semi-circle. On the right, there is an aerial photograph of a densely populated area with many small houses having colorful roofs (red, blue, orange). Below the houses, there is a brown field with several red lines and dots, possibly representing a map or a network. The text "Standard Visitor visa" is centered in a white circle that overlaps both the blue semi-circle and the aerial photograph.

# **Standard Visitor visa**

# Standard Visitor visa - summary

## Enables non-employed engagements including:

- Attending meetings, conferences, seminars, interviews
- Giving presentations or workshops (non-commercial)
- A formal exchange with a UK counterpart
- Contributing to the research of others (sharing knowledge and experience)

## Length of time

- 6 months maximum but can reapply for the Standard Visitor visa if necessary.

## Type of researcher

- Students can use this route
- International researchers can use this route



# **Academic Visitor visa**



# Academic Visitor visa - summary

## Enables

- Visits for academic purposes (meeting, conferences, workshops, formal exchanges or carrying out research/ on leave from home institution. Can also contribute to research or others.
- Commonly undertake private research

## Length of time

- 12 months (to qualify for 12 months, the Academic Visitor must be highly qualified in their own field, currently working in this field in an academic institution or on sabbatical from their home institution)

## Type of researcher

- Research staff (Only those employed by academic or higher education institutions overseas in teaching or research roles are eligible to apply to come to the UK under the Academic Visitor route)

The background of the slide is an aerial photograph of a densely populated urban area, likely in a developing country, characterized by numerous small buildings with colorful roofs (red, blue, orange). A large white circle is superimposed on the left side of the image, containing the main text. The text is in a bold, dark gray, sans-serif font. The overall design is clean and modern, with a dark blue background on the far left.

# **Temporary Worker visa – HEI & UKRI's GAE route**

# Temporary Worker visa - summary

## Enables

- Can take part in a formal project or collaboration, funded by their host, their overseas employer, or a funding body, a period of work-based training/work experience/internship/ placement, skill development/knowledge transfer, a series of lectures, which doesn't amount to a formal teaching post or external examinations.

## Length of time

- Up to 2 years

## Type of researcher

- Academics, researchers, scientists, research engineers or other skilled research technology specialists who will be hosted through an approved research institute, in a supernumerary role



# UKRI Temporary Worker Government Authorised Exchange Scheme

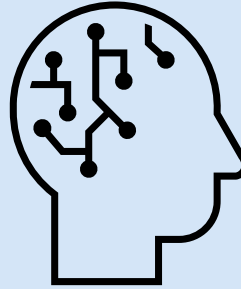
- In July 2018 a new UKRI-led Temporary Worker GAE scheme was created
- The UKRI Temporary Worker GAE scheme was made to mirror the GAE scheme for UK Higher Education Institutes
- Initially only independent research organisations were eligible. Last year, the scheme was expanded so that public sector research establishments could use the scheme.



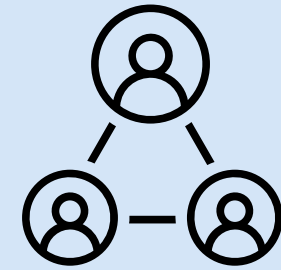
# What the UKRI Temporary Worker GAE scheme offers



Parity between HEI's  
and public sector  
organisations




Access to rare  
and desired skills



Supports flow of  
people and ideas

# Who can be sponsored under the scheme?

Researchers can use the Temporary Worker scheme if they are being sponsored by a participating organisation in this scheme to come to the UK, and are able to undertake the following activities for up to 24 months:

- 
- To take part in a formal project or collaboration, funded by their host, their overseas employer, or a funding body
  - A period of work-based training/work experience/internship/ placement
  - Skill development/knowledge transfer
  - External examinations
  - A series of lectures, which doesn't amount to a formal teaching post

# Other benefits...

Researchers can stay for up to 2 years

Family can come too

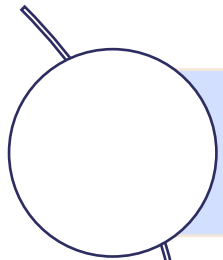
Researchers can come and go from the UK

Flexible visa route

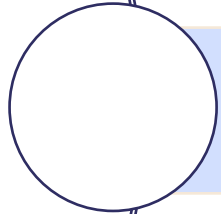
Researchers can be hosted in IRO's, HEI's and PSRE's depending on the GAE scheme.



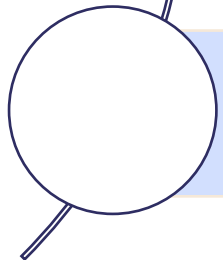
# Joining the UKRI Temporary Worker GAE scheme as an organisation



Must meet UKRI eligibility criteria for funding

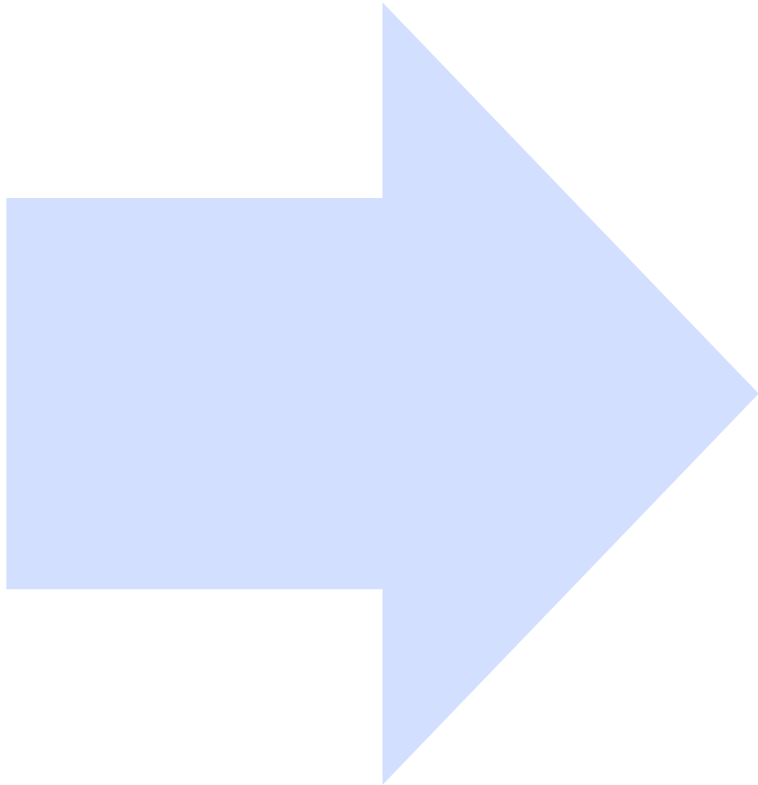


Must have an A-rated Skilled Worker Licence



The researchers that will be sponsored under the scheme must be supernumerary and in receipt to funding equivalent to national minimum wage.

# The endorsement process for organisations joining the scheme



- An initial conversation with the interested organisation is held
- The organisation is asked to confirm that the organisation meets the criteria.
- The organisation is sent a set of scheme details to sign.
- UKRI issues the organisation with an endorsement letter from UKRI, and an endorsement letter from Home Office.
- The organisation can use these letters as supporting documents to apply for their licence.
- Assurance is undertaken every 6 months

# Employing a researcher using the scheme

Roles are not advertised and recruited to in the 'conventional' way

- The work undertaken must never amount to a '**genuine vacancy**'
- The job description must match an equivalent SOC code and must be at RQF level 3 or above (or Scottish equivalent)
- Researchers must carry remuneration equivalent to, or in excess of the UK National Minimum Wage. They cannot be self funded.
- Applicants cannot switch between the different Temporary Worker routes; however, they may apply for extensions on the same TW route if they have not exceeded the maximum grant of leave.



# **Paid Permitted Engagement Visitor visa**



# Paid Permitted Engagement Visitor visa - summary

## Enables

- Researchers who have been invited to the UK due to a particular skill/ expertise – must be an expert in their field.

## Length of time

- These individuals can come to the UK for up to **one month** to undertake pre-arranged engagements for which they must be paid (there is no specified level of payment that must be made).

## Type of researcher

- Researcher who can prove that the pre-arranged engagement relates to their area of expertise and qualifications and has been formally invited by an HEI



# **The Global Talent visa**

# Global Talent visa – endorsed funder route

For talented or promising individuals working in **academia or research**; arts and culture or digital technology

Apply for up to  
five years

Fast-tracked  
process

No sponsor  
required

Not tied to a  
single job or  
organisation

Family  
members can  
come too

Path to ILR  
after three  
years

No need to do  
an English  
Language Test

Come and go  
from the UK at  
will



UK Research  
and Innovation

# Other resources

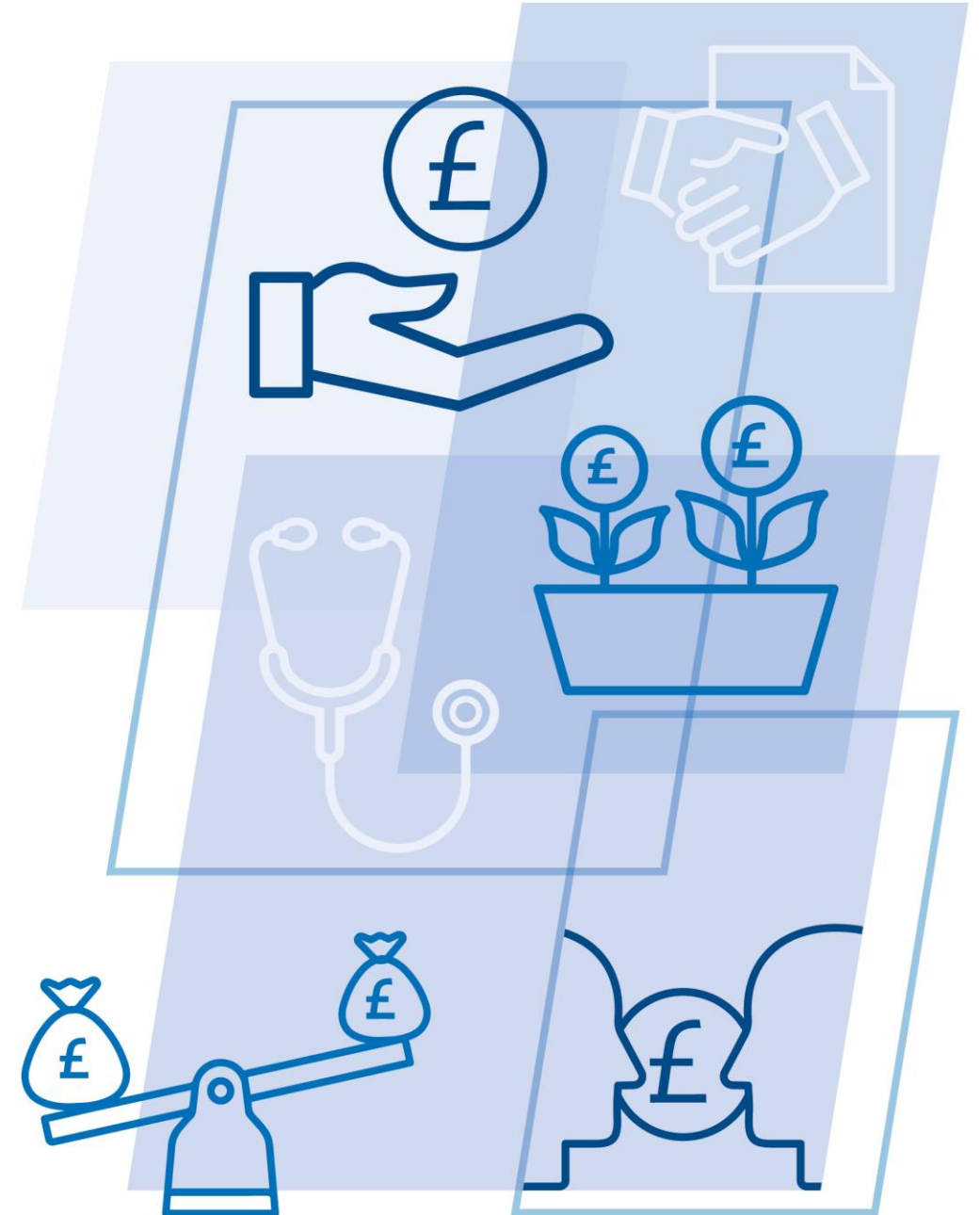




## UCEA Immigration HR network

UCEA members: aimed at HE HR professionals responsible for the recruitment and selection of overseas nationals to share information experiences and exchange information on policy and practice in this area via :

- The immigration network jiscmail base (circa 480 members)
- Network meetings – usually 3 a year
- Contact [a.mcgrand@ucea.ac.uk](mailto:a.mcgrand@ucea.ac.uk)





# Other UCEA resources

- Member resources on UCEA webpages - [Immigration and Brexit](#) – includes information about the points-based immigration system & links to UKVI/Home Office and other immigration information, responses to government consultations, survey reports, lobbying activities.
- UCEA works with Universities UK, UKRI, the Russell Group and other sector bodies on immigration issues and concerns e.g. ATAS, delays in visa processing times, responses to MAC calls for evidence and other consultations.



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# Thank you Questions?



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