

What is BioFAIR?

BioFAIR is a new federated digital research infrastructure that will deliver a step change in 'Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable' (FAIR) research data management (RDM), providing end-to-end FAIR RDM & analysis capabilities along with the necessary support and training for UK researchers working in the life sciences.

BioFAIR is a five year, £34m UK-government funded initiative, co-led by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and Medical Research Council (MRC), on behalf of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)



£34 Million UKRI Investment



Pan-UK Life Sciences



Adopt FAIR Data Principles



Drive Culture Change



Our BioCommons

People

A pooled community of data stewards and Research Software Engineers supporting Data and Software Management Planning



Data

Enabling researchers to prepare, analyse, share and manage FAIR research data across the data's whole life cycle



Methods

Enabling institutes and research teams to access trusted and robust analysis platforms, workflows and tools, using their own and reference datasets



BioFAIR Objectives



Culture change

To drive adoption of FAIR principles and open data across the UK life sciences to provide high quality FAIR datasets ready for uptake and reuse.

Defragmentation

To increase the coordination, collaboration and cohesiveness of the UK's life science related data landscape, enhancing its effectiveness and efficiency.

Access

To enable democratised access to data and data methods within UK life sciences via a national capability.

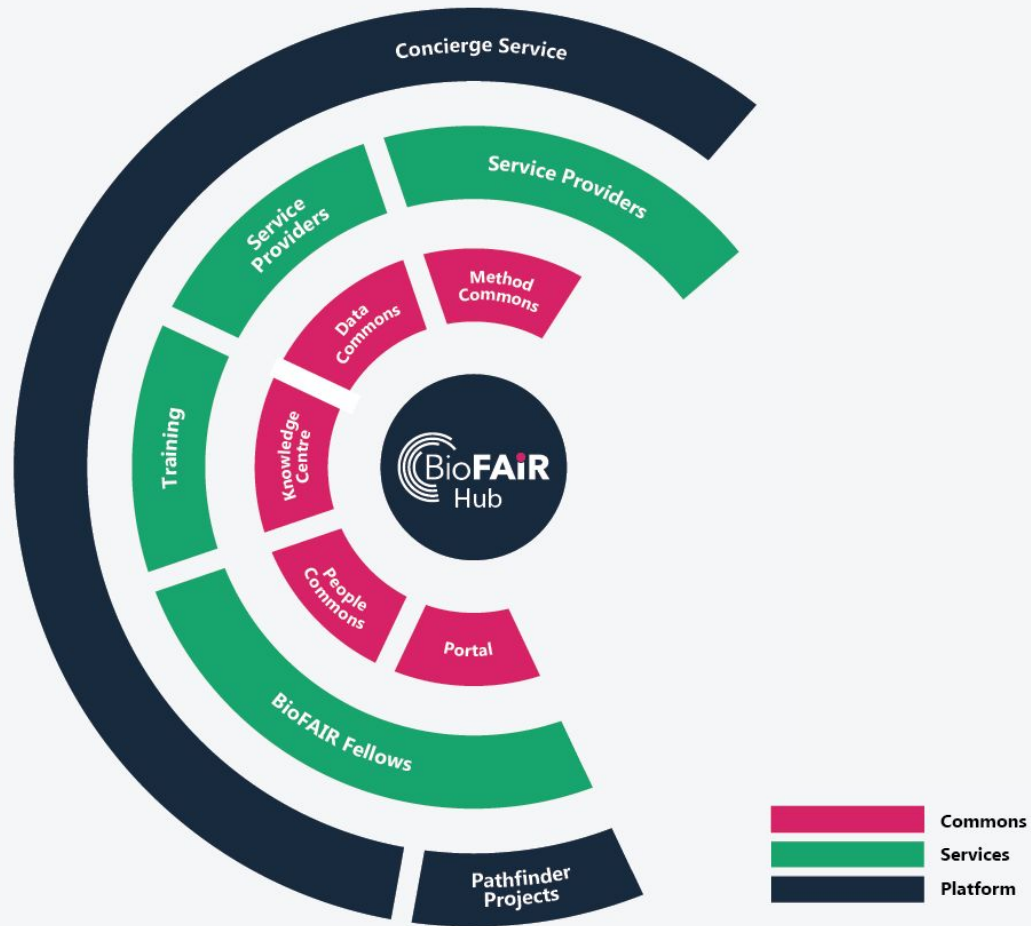
Skills

To attract, develop and retain excellent research data management skills and capacity for UK life sciences.

Data reuse

To improve the efficiency of research and enabling new research by increased re-use of data in the life sciences.

BioFAIR Structural Model



FELLOWSHIPS



8 Ambassadors from across
the whole UK



Breadth of Scientific Domain
Experience



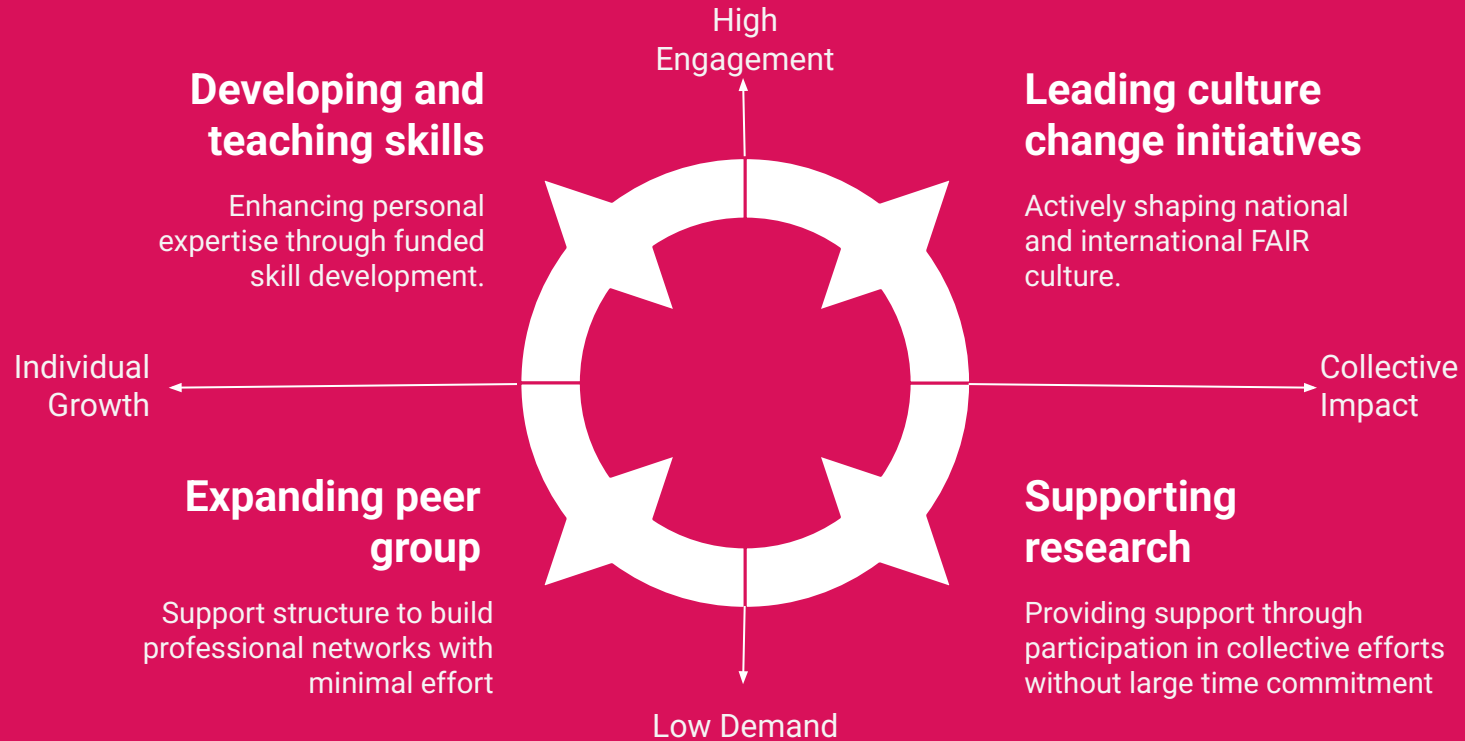
Representing different sectors

Why Fellowships?

- BioFAIR seeks to be team- and people- led
- We want to start by building networks of experienced research technical professionals
- We think this way we can build a better picture of what the community really needs to accelerate data-driven and FAIR-enabled research
- Change starts with people who can lead it
- Research technical professionals are often seen as a resource to draw upon, rather than experts and leaders of a possible FAIR revolution - we're putting them at the centre
- We think that BioFAIR is in a position to support the people who can drive culture change and be positive role models for research technical professionals



Benefits of Becoming a Fellow



Why Apply?

- Gain recognition for your technical expertise and leadership
- Be part of a team of research technical professionals, spread nationally and across domains
- Expand your peer group
- Lead a wider culture change, with impact at a national and international level, that recognises FAIR expertise
- Have the opportunity to engage early with emerging BioFAIR services and shape their direction
- Get funded to develop and/or teach your skills
- Attend conferences and workshops to represent BioFAIR as an ambassador and advocate for a FAIR culture change
- Support colleagues and researchers directly in ways that have real, innovative and data-driven scientific impact



INTRODUCING THE PEOPLE COMMONS



A connected community with
shared ways of working



Professionalising research
technical skills



Advocacy for FAIR and
FAIR-enabling practices

What is a People Commons?

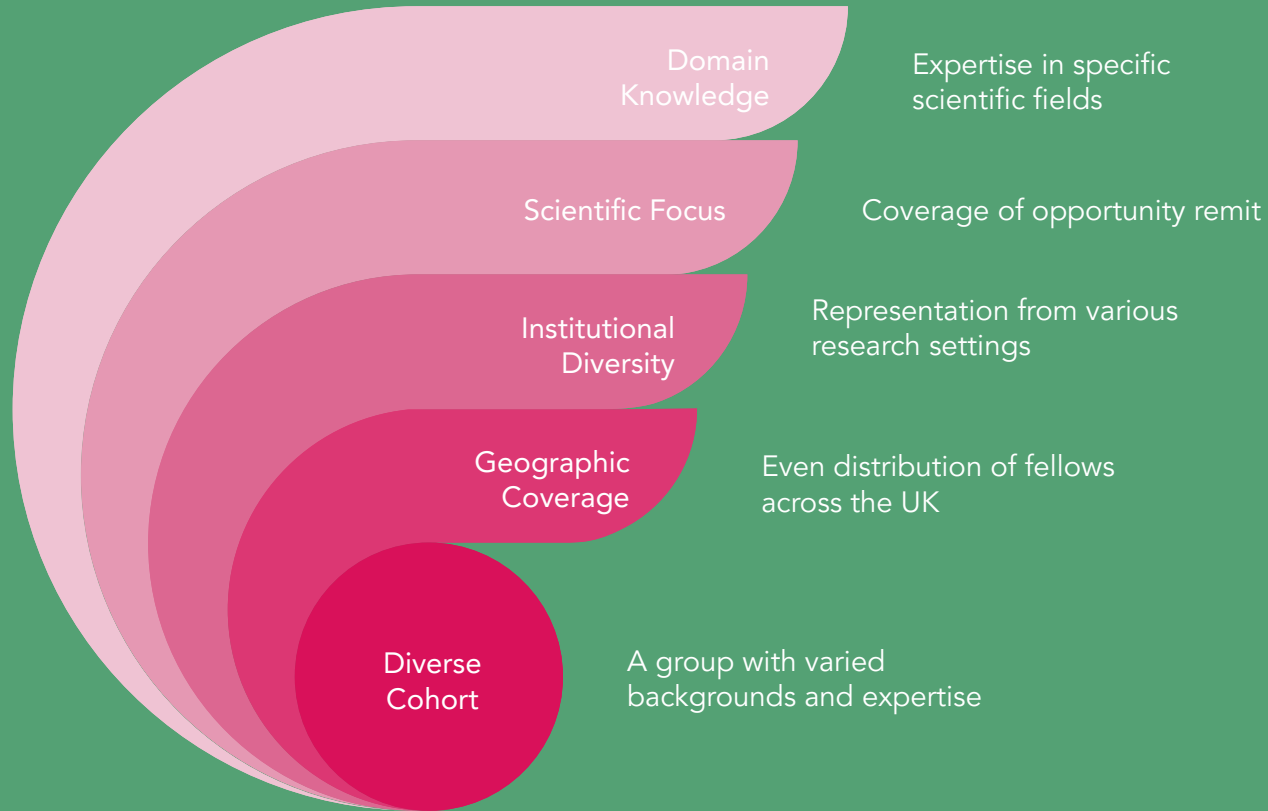
The BioFAIR People Commons is about connecting people, building a shared capability, and fostering a culture of collaboration across the UK life sciences research ecosystem.

We imagine the People Commons as a shared space that brings people together to collaborate, learn, and lead around better ways of working with research tools, workflows and data. We want to foster a community of practice where researchers, technologists, support staff, and other stakeholders can connect, share knowledge, and build skills.

Our aim is to create an inclusive environment for innovation, mutual support, and professional development. We believe BioFAIR can play a role in helping research technical professionals become part of a wider movement to make research more open, FAIR, impactful, and to gain recognition for the people who often do the invisible work behind digital research infrastructure.



Breadth and Diversity



FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES



Workflow development
practices for reuse

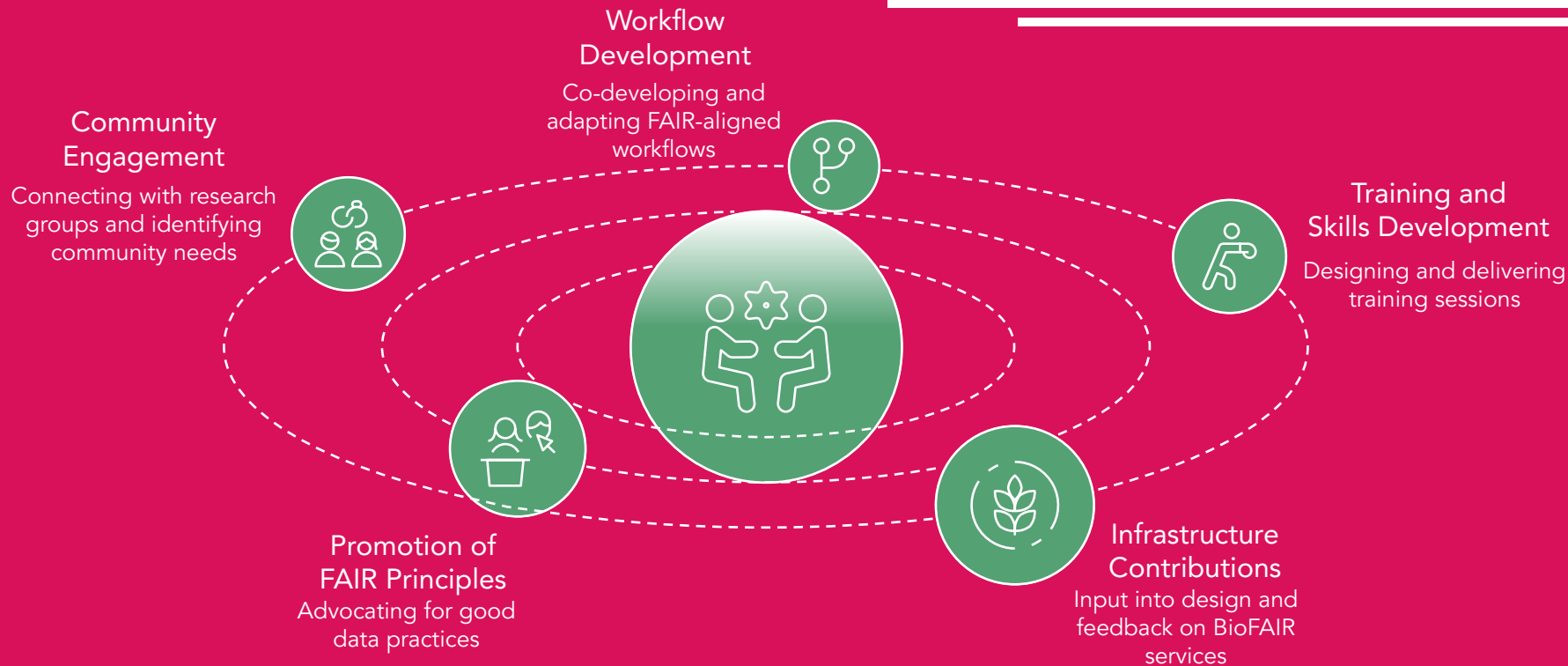


Engagement and researcher
support



Working with and defining needs for
BioFAIR core infrastructure services

In scope activities



Activities in depth...

- Community engagement and needs identification
 - Connecting with research groups and facilities in your region or scientific domain
 - Surfacing community-specific requirements for FAIR data, tools, workflows and services
- Development and stewardship of analysis workflows
 - Co-developing or adapting FAIR-aligned workflows for research use
 - Preparing FAIR-aligned workflows for sharing and reuse
 - Supporting researchers (both inside and outside your own institution) in workflow use and best practices
- Training and skills development
 - Designing and delivering training sessions
 - Supporting BioFAIR learning pathways and national training resources
- Promotion of FAIR principles and open research
 - Advocating for good data practices at institutional and national level
- Use of and contributions to BioFAIR core infrastructure
 - Input into design, adoption of and feedback on the BioFAIR Data and Methods Commons services
 - Collaborating with other fellows and the BioFAIR Hub
 - Participating in evaluation and reporting activities



Activities considered out of scope...

- Standalone research projects or RA posts
- Development of entirely new software tools
- Infrastructure procurement (outside of coordinated BioFAIR plans)
- Roles with no community-facing activity
- Capacity building that is purely focused within your own institution, and without a component for sharing lessons learned
- Generic outreach activities not focused on data management or analysis workflows



REQUIREMENTS AND PREREQUISITES



Our expectations on skills and attributes



Team-first emphasis



Process for how your application will be assessed

Typical Fellow Attributes

- A demonstrable track record in developing robust, open analysis workflows and/or enabling FAIR data
- Practical experience supporting researchers through training, consultation, or helpdesk-type services
- Evidence of ability to engage and influence peers, including in interdisciplinary and cross-sector settings
- Strong collaborative mindset, with examples of participation in cross-institutional or national initiatives
- The potential to contribute meaningfully to a shared team mission, including shaping the direction of the People Commons
- Early-career, mid-career, and established professionals
- Pursuing both academic and non-academic technical careers



Beyond the typical...

- Fellowship programme is designed to be inclusive for all research technical professionals
- We recognise the pressure of being the “techie person in the lab” and hope to create a culture within the fellowship that brings more recognition to this role and emphasises its importance
- Workflow expertise, but this may not be your only focus
- We want to build a diverse team in all aspects - gender, background, geographic location, employment setting - because we think it is important to share expertise and blend experiences



APPLICATION PROCESS



Timelines



What to provide with your
application



Criteria your application will be
assessed against, and assessment
process

Timeline



What you'll need to provide

- Application Form containing:
 - Applicant information, requested finances, Institutional Support Letter
 - Résumé for Research and Innovation (maximum 4 pages)
 - Proposed Activities Plan (maximum 2 pages)
 - EDI Monitoring Form
 - Submission Agreement
 - (Optional) Supporting testimonials (up to 3)

Complete applications must be submitted by email to opportunities@biofair.uk by Friday 25th July 2025.



Assessment and Selection Criteria

From your R4RI...

40%	Expertise and track record	Experience with workflow development, FAIR data, researcher support
30%	Collaboration and impact	Collaborative working, ability to contribute to distributed teams

From your proposed activities...

20%	Relevance and alignment	Against objectives of the People Commons and BioFAIR
10%	Proposed delivery	Clarity and feasibility of the activity plan, appropriateness of focus areas



Selection and Development Day

- Will take place towards the end of August, in person (location TBC)
- We are aiming to appoint eight fellows in this first round
- We will shortlist up to twenty applicants for a selection and development day
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to share their plans, discuss with their fellow applicants, and work together on planning activities
- Successful applicants will be invited to the fellowship programme after this selection day
- The selection day provides all shortlisted candidates a chance to connect, share ideas, and positively influence the future of the BioFAIR People Commons, no matter the outcome





Wrapping up...



Summary

- BioFAIR is launching a fellowship programme aiming to create a shared space that brings people together to collaborate, learn, and lead around better ways of working with research tools, workflows and data
- Suitable for research technical professionals, especially those with a workflow/analysis background
- A variety of activities are in scope, especially those concerned with reuse of workflows, best practices, and community engagement
- Applications will open on Monday June 16th
- Eight fellowship positions are available this year, with subsequent rounds in future years
- BioFAIR will support you through funding equivalent to 20% of your time (approx 1 day per week)



If you're considering applying...

We recommend that you...

1. Check your eligibility against criteria in the call
2. Discuss as soon as possible with your host institution
 - a. BioFAIR is a new programme and your host institute may want to understand potential terms in detail
 - b. Reach out with any logistical questions to contact@biofair.uk
3. Secure support from your host institution
4. Reach out if you have further questions or would like extra details on specific proposed activities if you aren't sure what might be in scope
5. Take a look in depth at the call text
6. More information about BioFAIR and our goals is available at <https://biofair.uk/>





Contact Information

Email Address

contact@biofair.uk

Website

www.biofair.uk

