



Overseas Learning Handbook 2026

A warm welcome to our fantastic community of changemakers and we wish you every success on your Fellowship journey.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3
KEY STAFF CONTACTS	4
THE GRANT	5
MANAGING YOUR FELLOWSHIP: TRAVEL LEARNING OVERVIEW	6
MANAGING YOUR FELLOWSHIP: ONLINE LEARNING OVERVIEW	7
PLANNING YOUR OVERSEAS LEARNING	8
Starting your Fellowship.....	8
Making contacts	8
Learning through travel	8
Submitting your Itinerary	10
Booking your travel and accommodation	11
Submitting invoices for reimbursement	12
Travel insurance.....	12
Learning online from the UK	13
CARRYING OUT YOUR OVERSEAS LEARNING.....	16
Step by step guide to managing your overseas learning.....	16
Recording your experiences	17
Case studies and human stories	17
Posting live	18
Staying safe.....	18
Risk and Safety Plan.....	18
Your safeguarding responsibility whilst you are travelling	18
Minimising your environmental impact	19
AFTER YOUR OVERSEAS LEARNING	20
Thank-you emails	20
Writing your report.....	20

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Churchill Fellowship Overseas Learning Handbook

Important: Your Fellowship award is under embargo until 1st July 2026. Please do not share or announce it publicly before this date.

This is your guide to being a Churchill Fellow and marks the start of your journey to bring back new ideas and learnings to help you drive change in the UK in your chosen area. This handbook provides the information you need to plan your learning, understand what is expected of you and help make the most of your Fellowship for both yourself and your field.

The Fellowship programme is designed to support you on your personal journey. You will take the lead in shaping your learning, completing your report, and identifying how your insights can contribute to change in the UK. We provide structured guidance, resources and opportunities to support you along the way.

In addition to this handbook, further guidance and practical tools are available in the [Fellows' Resources](#) section of our website, with more information on how to plan and manage your learning, complete your report, share and apply your insights, and explore funding opportunities and support from other organisations.

Please read this Handbook thoroughly before beginning to plan your overseas learning.

If you still have questions after reading the Handbook, please contact Ellie Smith or Suruthie Thiyagalingam at overseaslearning@churchillfellowship.org. They are your key contacts before and during your overseas learning, after which time, our Engagement team becomes your main point of contact. You can contact details for key staff [on page 4](#).

But first, a word about the Churchill Fellowship. You are now a representative of our charity and our aim is to empower individuals to learn from the world, for the benefit of the UK.

We do this by funding UK citizens from all parts of society to learn from practitioners, innovators and experts overseas and seek solutions for today's most pressing problems. We work to support the sharing of insights from our programmes and connect our Fellows to the people and places that can help drive change at local or national level.

We award around 120 Fellowships each year. Fellows come from all parts of UK society and are chosen regardless of age, background or qualifications. We have awarded over 6,000 Fellowships since 1965, creating a network of knowledge leaders in virtually every field throughout the UK.

A Fellowship is for life. The impact of your experience will develop over time, shaped by reflection, connection and how you choose to apply your learning. We offer opportunities to connect with other Fellows, space to reflect on your learning, and structured support to help you make sense of your learnings, write your report and move your ideas forward but it is your vision and your potential that we are investing in.

We look forward to supporting you on this exciting journey ahead.

The Churchill Fellowship team

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our role

The Churchill Fellowship team is committed to supporting you throughout your Fellowship.

We will:

- Make sure your grant is paid before you commence your overseas learning.
- Arrange your travel insurance.
- Be on hand to provide support and advice before, during and after your overseas learning.
- Provide support after your overseas learning to help you complete your report and apply your learning.

Your role

As a Churchill Fellow, you are a representative for the Churchill Fellowship, the Churchill name and the UK. You will need to:

- Conduct your Fellowship in line with the [Terms and Conditions](#) and the [Fellows' Code of Conduct](#). These can be found in the Fellows' Resources section on our website.
- Aim to complete your overseas learning before **30th September 2027**.
- Plan well, keep up with the paperwork associated with your Fellowship and be well prepared for your overseas learning.
- Keep in communication with the Churchill Fellowship team during the planning and carrying out of your overseas learning.
- Document your Fellowship as you carry out your overseas learning - this could be through photography, notes, a film, a blog or whatever suits you best.
- Submit a report of your Fellowship findings to us within three months of completing your overseas learning and then share your findings.
- Ensure that your Fellowship is used to benefit others in the UK.
- Monitor and evaluate the progress you make in implementing and sharing your findings.
- Encourage others to find out more about the Fellowships through social media and word of mouth.

KEY STAFF CONTACTS

Our office is open 9.30am - 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 9.30am - 4pm Friday. Our email addresses are listed below, however please feel free to write or telephone if it is easier for you: our office phone number is 020 799 1660. In emergencies out of hours, you can email us on emergency@churchillfellowship.org

Fellowship team main contacts

- **Ellie Smith** – Fellowship Manager
Ellie is one of your main points of contact until your overseas learning has finished. In her absence, Suruthie Thiyagalingam will be able to help you.
- **Suruthie Thiyagalingam** – Fellowship Officer
Suruthie works with Ellie supporting Fellows through their overseas learning.

Contact the Fellowship Team at: overseaslearning@churchillfellowship.org

Engagement team main contacts

As you complete your overseas learning, you will be introduced to the Engagement team for the next phase of your Fellowship. This team covers communications, events and everything that we support you with post-learning, including your reports.

- **Claire Hunte** - Research and Engagement Manager
Manages programmes in Economies, Education, Health, Technology
- **Connie Foong** (maternity cover for Naomi French) - Research and Engagement Manager
Manages programmes in Arts, Community, Governance, Climate change and Environment
- **Maram Tabidi** – Research and Engagement Officer
Maram oversees the reports process and post travel funding

Contact the Engagement Team at: engagement@churchillfellowship.org.

- **Victoria Moth** - Head of Communications
- **Cynthia Otote** - Content and Digital Manager
Oversee communications for the Churchill Fellowship.

Contact the Communications Team at: communications@churchillfellowship.org

THE GRANT

What your grant includes

Your grant covers the following:

- Return economy flights or train journeys to and from the UK (Travel/ Hybrid Fellows).
- Internal travel in your destination countries (Travel and Hybrid Fellows).
- Food and accommodation for the duration of your overseas learning (Travel/ Hybrid Fellows).
- Learning from overseas online from the UK (Hybrid and Online Fellows).

The Churchill Fellowship will pay for (in addition to your grant and on presentation of receipts):

- Visa fees.
- Vaccination costs.
- Overseas conference fees. These are limited to one per Fellow (maximum of £500) and are subject to approval.
- Translator and interpreter costs. Please get in touch before making final arrangements as the total amount funded is subject to approval.

We will also arrange and cover your travel and medical insurance.

For Travel phases we will make the final grant payment six to eight weeks before your departure, providing that your itinerary has been approved and your flights or trains are booked.

If you travel in two or more phases, please note that the payment you will receive six to eight weeks before your departure for Phase 1 will be proportionate to the length of your stay and to the cost of living for the country you visit in that phase.

For Online phases, once your itinerary has been submitted and approved, we will release your grant 2 weeks before the start of your online phase.

Managing the grant

When you are making your plans for overseas learning, please make sure your costs fit within your grant. While we want every Fellowship to be sufficiently funded, we are a charitable trust and operate within an annual budget. You may have to amend your plans to fit the grant allocated to you.

Any changes to your plans must be discussed in advance with Ellie Smith.

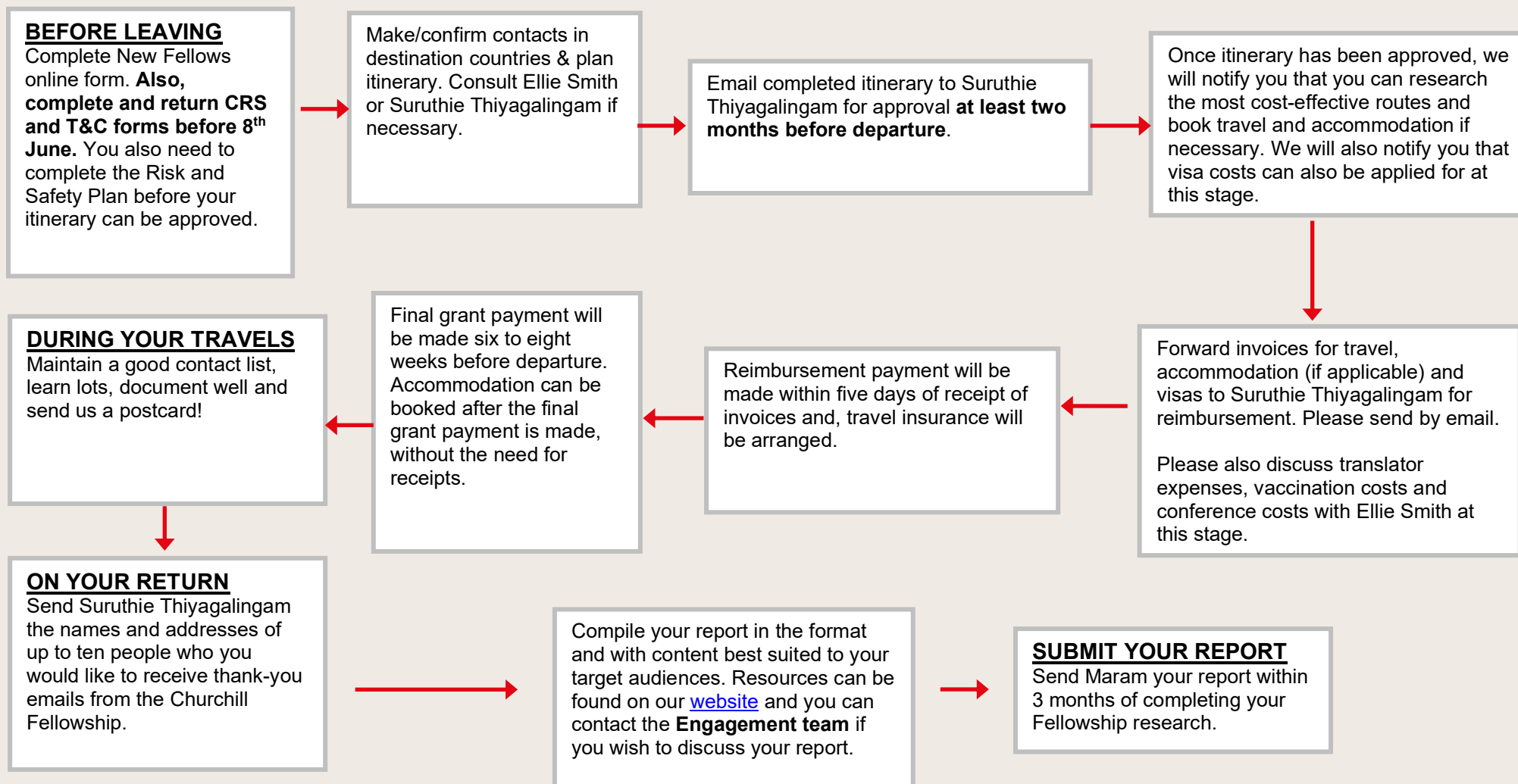
Your grant may be adjusted if your final itinerary is very different from the original plan you submitted in your application and on which your grant is based, for example if the number of countries you plan to visit is reduced.

Once you have completed your overseas learning, you are not expected to present us with an account of how you have spent your grant. However we recommend you keep track of your expenditure, so you can feed back to us whether your grant was sufficient and have the information available if you need to share it with HM Revenue & Customs or other authorities. If there is grant leftover after your overseas learning, this must be returned to the Churchill Fellowship.

Depending on your circumstances, the grant may affect your tax or benefits status. We therefore recommend seeking professional tax advice.

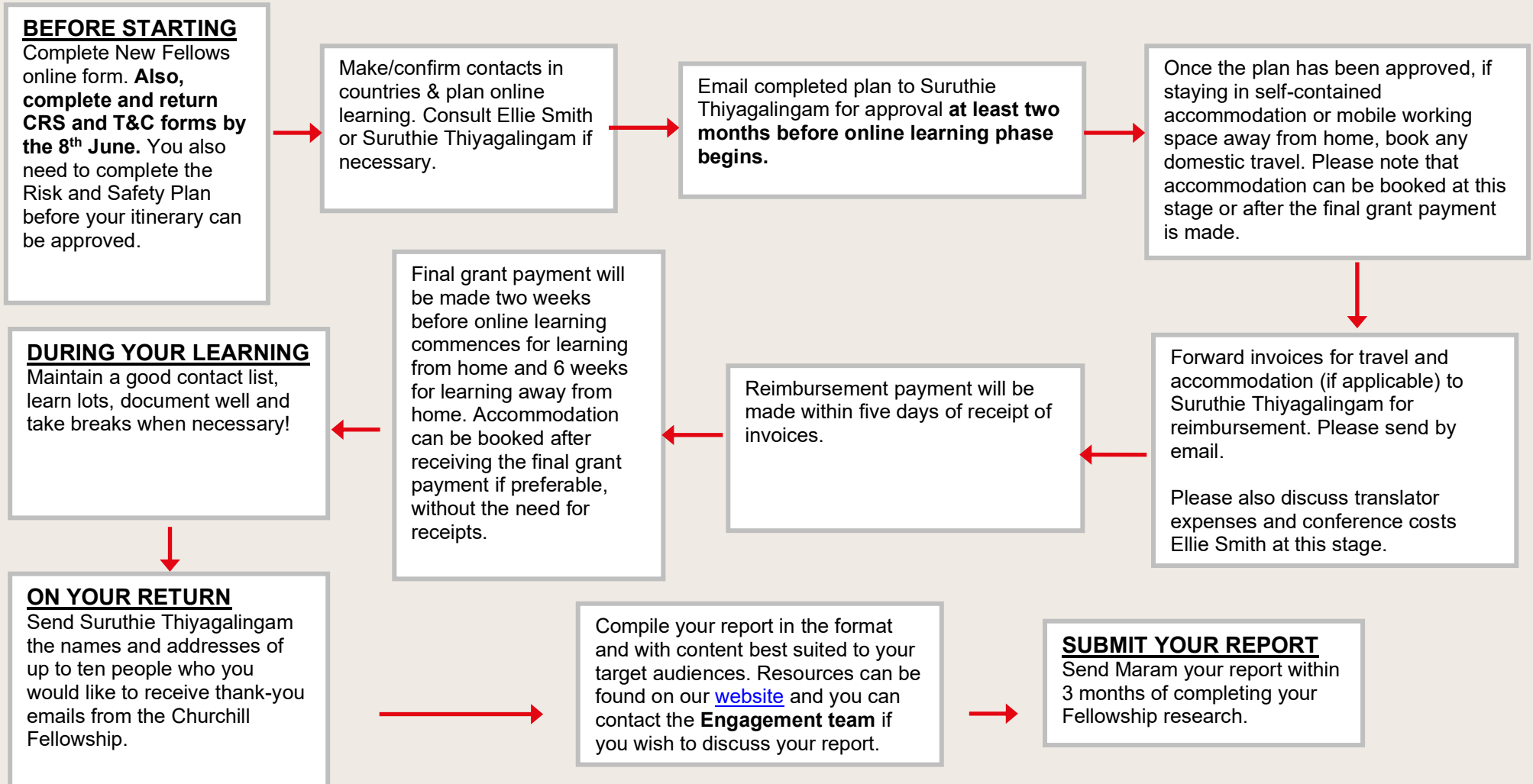
MANAGING YOUR FELLOWSHIP: TRAVEL LEARNING OVERVIEW

Here is a step-by-step guide to planning and carrying out your Fellowship. You'll find more details about each stage on the following pages.



MANAGING YOUR FELLOWSHIP: ONLINE LEARNING OVERVIEW

Here is a step-by-step guide to planning and carrying out your Online Fellowship or the online phase of your Hybrid Fellowship. You'll find more details about each stage on the following pages.



PLANNING YOUR OVERSEAS LEARNING

Starting your Fellowship

- Your Fellowship research should begin **after 1st August 2026**, and your Fellowship should be completed before **30th September 2027**. If you need to leave earlier or delay your Fellowship for any reason, please contact either Ellie Smith or Suruthie Thiyagalingam.
- Suruthie Thiyagalingam will be able to help you with phasing your itinerary if you are unable to complete your Fellowship in one trip.

Making contacts

- We recommend that you begin contacting individuals and organisations you wish to meet as soon as possible, as it can take some time. We will provide you with an official letter of introduction explaining the reasons why you wish to meet, which you may want to attach to your introductory emails.
- Fellows from previous years who have had similar projects to you or have carried out research in the same country may be able to help with contacts and advice. All Fellows from 2005 onwards are listed on our website, and we can help you identify Fellows prior to this date and provide contact details. This may prove particularly helpful for countries where customs are different from the UK, or where contacts might not respond to an email out of the blue from someone they do not know. Knowing someone that can introduce you (or following up your email with a telephone call) may help.
- When planning your appointments, please be careful not to make your schedule too tight. Leave time to take advantage of further opportunities and contacts that arise once you've started your research.
- We also recommend that you build in a little time for rest, sightseeing, reflecting on your progress and writing up notes.
- Fellows travelling to Australia and New Zealand may wish to contact the Churchill Trust offices in those countries and arrange to visit one of their regional offices. Full details are available on their websites: [Australia](#), [New Zealand](#). (Please note these are separate organisations to the Churchill Fellowship but run a similar programme.)
- Do check these websites to see if a NZ/Australian Fellow has undertaken a similar project, as we may be able to connect you with them, especially if you are travelling to Australia or New Zealand.

Learning through travel

Finding out about your destination

- It is very important to find out as much as possible about the places you will be visiting. Investigate factors such as local laws and customs, climate, high and low seasons, distances and modes of transport – these will make a significant difference to your travel plans. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) [travel advice pages](#) for your destination will provide very useful information and contact details, especially regarding personal safety.
- Make sure travel does not coincide with sporting events, school holidays or local elections, to avoid high fares and ensure contact availability.

- You can download the **Helix Travel Assistance** app which gives you access to videos offering general safety advice and comprehensive safety information specific to the country you will visit. It also offers security advice for female travellers.
- It is a good idea to research the emergency services telephone numbers for each country you visit, in case you need to call the police or an ambulance. You should save these on your mobile phone.
- The FCDO travel advice pages will advise you whether there are any security issues in the places you plan to visit. Please be aware that we cannot support travel to areas where the FCDO advice is not to visit. We will need to discuss your itinerary with our insurer, if the area you want to travel to is an area where FCDO advice is against all but essential travel. It's a good idea to subscribe to their free email alerts so that you are aware of any updates – you can do this through the travel advice pages of the FCDO website.
- Attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community around the world can be very different from those in the UK. However, you're unlikely to have any problems if you prepare well and research your destination before you go. Please see the [UK Government Guidance](#).

Passport and Visas

- Please ensure that you have a valid passport. Most countries require a validity of at least six months from the time of entry.
- It is vital that you confirm the visa requirements for each country you intend to visit, well in advance. Please note that all British citizens travelling to the USA and/or Canada must apply for authorisation to enter the country. The EU is also introducing an Entry Exit System in 2026. For more details see:
 - [USA](#): Please note the ESTA should cost \$40: if you are on a site that is charging more, it is not the official site. ESTA applications will not be approved at the airport. Travellers must apply for an ESTA no later than 72 hours before their flight departs, or they will most likely be unable to board the plane.
 - [Canada](#): Please note that eTA should cost \$7 CAD and can be obtained from their website.
 - EU Entry Exit System (from second half of 2026): [EES - European Union \(europa.eu\)](#) and [ETIAS](#) (from last quarter of 2026) : [ETIAS - European Union \(europa.eu\)](#) Please note that ETIAS should cost 7 Euros and can be obtained from their website.
- When arranging your visas, we would be grateful if you could arrange them online or in person when this is necessary, rather than using an agent which is more expensive. We will only be able to reimburse you for the cost of the visa, and not the agency fees.
- We strongly recommend that you make copies of your passport, any visas obtained in advance and any other official documents and carry them separately during your travels. This will make replacement much easier if any of them are stolen or lost.

Driving licence

- If you intend to drive yourself, please check in advance whether you need an international driving licence. When booking, please check the insurance included, as you might need to make an additional payment to make it fully comprehensive.

Currency

- You are responsible for establishing the reliability and availability of ATMs in your destination countries, and changing currency in advance where possible, if preferred. We suggest you check with your credit card provider regarding any charges for use abroad, as this can vary.

Medical information

- Once you are clear which countries you are visiting and at what time of year, please find out which vaccinations and medical precautions you will need to take. Some vaccinations need to be given over a period of three months and you will need to start taking malaria tablets, if required, before departure, so please start researching this immediately.
- Reliable sources of healthcare advice are The Hospital for Tropical Diseases, your local GP's surgery or independent Travel Clinics. Please note however, that independent clinics are a much more expensive way of having your vaccinations, so please try to use your GP's surgery if possible.
- The Churchill Fellowship will pay for essential vaccinations over and above your grant amount. Please send receipts to Suruthie Thiyagalingam.

Insurance

- We will provide you with general medical and travel insurance. You can find more details [here](#).

Holiday

- If you wish to include a holiday period during your Fellowship travels, please note the dates on your itinerary. This will of course be at your own expense, but we can insure you for a maximum of two weeks of holiday if the holiday is in the same country as your Fellowship. If you wish to have a holiday in a different country, please arrange your own travel insurance.

Sir Winston Churchill

- Finally, since you will be carrying out your overseas research as a Churchill Fellow, people in your host countries may ask you about Sir Winston. Please make sure you have done your research and can answer their questions. You can find out more in the [About Us](#) section of our website and on the [Australian Churchill Fellowship website](#).

Submitting your Itinerary

- **Please do not book flights, trains or other travel until your itinerary has been approved.**
- Please send us your Itinerary form **at least two months** before your planned departure date, or earlier, if possible. Approval will be normally given within two weeks of receiving your completed itinerary form. All Fellows must complete a Risk and Safety Plan before their itinerary can be approved. The template for this can be [found on our website](#).
- You can download the [itinerary template](#) from the Fellows' Resources section on our website.
- Please also check the travel restrictions in your destination countries using the [FCDO](#) website and [Travel Restrictions Map \(joinsherpa.com\)](#)

- The itinerary should contain: the proposed dates of international travel, the dates and time spent in each city, plus all of the confirmed and unconfirmed meetings. Please note that there should be at least one confirmed meeting in each city for the itinerary to be approved.

Booking your travel and accommodation

Finding the best deals

- Once you have received approval for your itinerary, please book your flights or trains as soon as you can to ensure the best price. We will only fund economy tickets and cannot cover first or business class travel unless this has been previously agreed as a necessary reasonable adjustment.
- We strongly recommend that you research all travel options, including charter flights, trains and find the most cost-effective routes. Please also make sure that whoever you book your flight/train through is a member of ABTA (the Association of British Travel Agents) or a body that offers similar protection.
- If you have applied for travel via train and your grant has been calculated to ensure train fares are affordable, we expect Fellow's to adhere to this mode of transport or if this isn't possible to let us know why the mode of transport has changed.
- Try to be flexible on dates and flight/train timings, as this will often mean lower costs. The best prices can be found by avoiding peak holiday periods and travelling mid-week where possible.
- **Please do not book single international flights/trains** except in exceptional circumstances, as these are almost always more expensive: use the multi-city/multi-stop options on booking websites instead. For complicated trips, it's worth investigating returning to the UK between countries, as this can be cheaper.
- Please be aware that we will not increase your travel grant if your travel costs are higher as a result of late or inappropriate bookings, or if you change your bookings and incur costs. However, if you are booking at least 8 weeks in advance and the grant allocated is insufficient due to current high levels of inflation we may be able to adjust your grant to accommodate this.
- Helpful sites include [Opodo](#) and [Kayak](#) for flights and [Trainline](#) for trains, which regularly offer cheaper options. Another site which gives very competitive fares for flights is [Skyscanner](#). We refer to all these sites to establish whether your travel bookings offer best value for charitable money. Trailfinders will also be able to advise you on the best routes to take, especially if you have complicated plans.
- If booking a layover or transiting through another country, please ensure that all flight legs are with the **same airline** to prevent any issues with delayed or missed flights.

Key Travel

- Fellows have the option to book their flights, trains, car hire or hotels via Key Travel, to be invoiced directly to the Fellowship. Bookings can be made via Key Travels online booking system. Please contact Niels.kroon@keytravel.org, and tell them you are a 2026 Churchill Fellow to set up an account.
- If you do book through Key, you can contact the out of hours 24/7 emergency support through their app. You can also keep track of all your bookings, travel and any delays via the app.

Paying for international flights/trains

- Fellows normally pay for their travel in advance, and we reimburse the costs on receipt of booking confirmation.
- If you would prefer us to pay directly for your travel, please contact Key Travel (see above). They will be able to advise you on the best routes and then invoice us once you have confirmed your bookings. (It's worth doing your own research first though, before contacting them.)

Booking accommodation

- Word of mouth, the internet and travel agents are probably the best ways to book accommodation in advance. We suggest you consider all options, including AirBnB, HouseTrip and other short-term letting sites. LGBTQ+ Fellows may want to use Misterbnb, which provides a searchable database of LGBTQ+ friendly accommodation.
- We recommend that you make advance bookings at least for the first few nights of your trip and then either make bookings as you go, so that you can take advantage of local knowledge and contacts, or before you leave the UK. This will depend on your itinerary, the season in which you travel and the country.
- When booking in advance please ensure that the accommodation is in a safe area and conveniently located for your requirements. Please always check that properties have good reviews before booking - and be aware that there may be some additional charges, especially in countries such as USA.
- We are happy to reimburse advance bookings: please forward receipts to Suruthie Thiyagalingam.

Submitting invoices for reimbursement

When you have booked and paid for your flights, ferry, rail or bus travel, car hire or accommodation, please forward your invoices to Suruthie Thiyagalingam, with full travel details.

We cannot release your grant money until we have received your flight receipts, so please forward them as soon as you've booked. We will insure you as soon as we receive the receipts, which also means you are covered for cancellation or curtailment.

We make all payments online and aim to send out reimbursement within a week of receiving the receipts, although we normally manage to do so sooner.

Travel insurance

Once we have received your travel details and receipts, we will arrange general travel insurance for the whole of your Fellowship travels, including up to two weeks of holiday, through RSA. Please take time to read the policy documents so that you know what is covered. If you would like to read the documents before then, please email Suruthie Thiyagalingam.

Some points to remember:

- The insurance will only cover you if you are fit to travel. If you are concerned about your physical or mental health, please seek medical advice.
- The cost of your insurance does not come out of your grant.

- The insurance will only cover you from the moment you depart on your Fellowship travels to the moment you are back in the UK.
- Make sure you have the insurance certificate in your possession before you depart. If you have not received it three weeks before your departure, contact Ellie Smith.
- The standard insurance policy covers personal effects and baggage. Valuables such as cameras, laptop computers will be covered with an excess of £500 only.
- In case you lose your Passport, be aware that the insurance will only cover you if you report the loss to the consular representative within 24 hours.
- The insurance policy will cover you in the case of Identity Theft.
- Please note that motor vehicle insurance is not included in the standard policy.
- If you consider that you need a variation to the standard package, you should discuss directly with your household insurers (This will be paid at your expense).
- If the standard insurance package is not appropriate due to a reasonable adjustment requirement, then we can cover the cost of the necessary additional insurance. Please get in touch with Ellie Smith to discuss this.
- Please note that our policy is only for Fellows. Family and friends who may be travelling with you will need their own policy, arranged separately.
- If you have dual citizenship, please use your British passport to travel as the British Consulate will not be able to help if you travel on a different passport.
- If you have any queries regarding the RSA insurance, please contact Ellie Smith.

Claims should be pursued directly with RSA on claims.accidentandhealth@uk.rsagroup.com quoting **Master Policy PA 10068296**. Claims must be submitted within 90 days from the event to which they relate. Their phone number is: 0330 102 4093.

It might be helpful to have easy access to our assistance providers while you are travelling. You can download the **Helix Travel Assistance App** which can be used on all smartphones. All you need to access the app is your policy number. Once you have entered the details you will no longer require an internet connection to use the app.

Learning online from the UK

Inclusivity is a key pillar of the Churchill Fellowship. We are always looking at ways to increase the inclusivity of the Fellowship and offering Fellows the opportunity to carry out their overseas learning online or through a hybrid of online and travel undoubtedly opens up the Fellowship opportunity to more individuals as this can be tailored to suit each Fellow's individual needs.

The online phase of a Hybrid Fellowship or an Online Fellowship are opportunities for you to spend a period of time immersed in your Fellowship learning through online channels. This is likely to mean conducting your learning, interviews and meetings online with the organisations overseas listed on your short list form and thinking through what you discover.

It can be done from home, in self-contained accommodation or a mobile working space (i.e., WeWork). If you requested support with online research from the UK in your application or we discussed this with you at interview, costs associated with this will have been included in your grant offer.

Learning from overseas online from the UK does not need to be undertaken in one solid block of time and can be over a prolonged period of a couple of days a week. However, before releasing any funds we will require a full plan for all overseas learning to be taken place online during the Fellowship period, including details of contacts that you intend to speak with. Please ensure that any self-contained accommodation that you are interested in booking has WIFI and broadband that is suitable for video calls. If your grant includes a contribution towards IT equipment and software licences during online learning, we will require receipts.

As with the Fellowship travel grant, we do not pay a stipend in addition to the travel and living costs whilst you are immersed in your learning experience, and trust that you have considered the financial implications for you to undertake this experience. However, we are interested to hear what other costs might need to be covered to support learning from overseas online from the UK and we will consider these on a case-by-case basis.

Our offer of Hybrid and Online Fellowships is still new and so we would welcome feedback on what we currently offer to support your overseas learning.

Depending on your circumstances, the grant may affect your tax or benefits status. We therefore recommend seeking professional tax advice.

Free video call services

As the use of video calls is paramount to the success of online learning during your Fellowship, below are two extremely popular video call applications. Please check to ensure which video call platform is preferred by the organisations that you intend to speak with. You may also find that organisations you wish to speak to have their own accounts and are therefore able to 'invite you' to a meeting at their cost.

[Zoom](#): The free version of Zoom offers video calls for up to 40 minutes in length. If a longer meeting time is required, you may purchase the Professional version of Zoom for £11.99 per month, which allows for meetings with a maximum length of 30 hours.

[Google Meet](#): If you are not a Google Suite account holder, Google meet only allows for video calls between Google Mail accounts. This may factor into your decision on which video call service is best suited for your needs.

Free Transcription services

The majority of video call platforms have transcription built in but we have listed a few additional available free transcription services that you may prefer to use during your meetings. There are further free apps available on both IOS and Android for dictation and transcription services so do look through the app store on your mobile device for further options.

Please also check with your hosts that they are happy for dictation and transcription software to be used during your meetings.

- [Otter.ai](#): The free version of Otter.ai grants 300 monthly transcription minutes, 30 minutes per conversation and 3 audio files per user.
- [Google Docs Voice Typing](#): Dictation functionality, available within Google Docs and supports various languages including real-time transcription.
- [Transcribe](#): An open-source transcriber that can be used from your web browser.

Tips from Fellows

This section contains some useful tips from Fellows that conducted their Fellowship online during the pandemic.

Planning:

- Pursuing overseas learning through virtual meetings opens up contacts and organisations from around the world as you are not geographically restricted, so please do explore work in other countries that may be beneficial to your project before submitting your online proposal.
- Ensure that you plan carefully around the time difference you might have with your overseas contacts. This may mean shifting your work and sleep schedule around your new time zone.
- Limit the number of meetings you have per day; this will allow you flexibility if they overrun and the time to write notes and prepare for the next one.

During the online overseas learning:

- As you are not visiting the locations in person, it's even more vital to research the people and the organisations you are speaking to before your meeting.
- You may want to think about particular questions you want to ask all the people you meet with and conduct the meetings as semi structured interviews, although this will depend on the nature of your project.
- If the person you are meeting agrees, you may wish to screen record the interview to allow you to play it back and make notes, however, do note that people might be less inclined to talk about some of the difficulties they face if they are being recorded.

CARRYING OUT YOUR OVERSEAS LEARNING

Step by step guide to managing your overseas learning

Here is our step-by-step guide to arranging your Fellowship learning and release of your Fellowship grant.

1. Return the Terms and Conditions and CRS forms.
2. For both online and travel learning, please make and confirm contacts in the destination countries & plan your itinerary. Feel free to contact Ellie Smith for help and advice. **If undertaking foreign travel, please also check both the travel restrictions in your destination countries using [Travel Restrictions Map \(joinsherpa.com\)](https://www.joinsherpa.com) and the [FCDO website](#) for up-to-date travel advice.**

3. Any queries regarding interpreters must be sent to Ellie Smith for approval.

For interpreter approval please include a quote of the proposed costs and length of time required.

4. For online and travel phases, the itinerary should contain: the proposed dates of learning, the dates and time spent in each city, plus all of the confirmed and unconfirmed meetings. **Please note that there should be at least one confirmed meeting in each city for the itinerary to be approved for travel phases.**

5. Email completed itinerary to Suruthie Thiyagalingam and Risk and Safety plan to Ellie Smith for approval **at least two months before departure.**

6. Once the itinerary and Risk and Safety plans have been approved, Suruthie Thiyagalingam will notify you that you are now able to research, and price compare the most cost-effective travel routes. Our travel partner, Key Travel, offer a charity fare that is completely amendable and refundable. Useful websites for comparison include Skyscanner and Momondo, which both provide multi-city price comparison tools.

After comparing and contrasting you may book your flights. Please note that if you do choose to book with Key Travel that we will be invoiced on your behalf and make the payment for you.

You are also welcome to book your accommodation in advance, or you may wish to wait for the grant to be released before you do this.

7. Forward the invoices to Suruthie Thiyagalingam for reimbursement. Please send these by email. For receipts that are not in pound sterling, please include a screenshot of your bank statement for that particular payment, so that we are able to reimburse you the correct amount.

8. The reimbursement payment will usually be made within five business days of receipt of invoices and the travel insurance will also be arranged at this time.

9. The final grant payment for your specific travel phase will be made six to eight weeks before departure. This includes both your living costs and your internal travel amount. For online phases where there will be learning from home, this payment will be made 2 weeks before you are due to start.

Recording your experiences

While you are travelling it is very important to make detailed notes and contact lists as you meet new people. These will be the heart of your research. Once you complete your overseas learning it will be difficult to remember accurately everything you have seen and learnt, especially quotes and statistics.

Everyone will have their preferred method of recording information. It might be notes on paper, typed text on a laptop, interviews recorded on your smartphone, photos or film clips. Whatever it is, plan how to keep your notes safe from loss or damage, including everyday risks like rainwater.

If using technology, ensure you have the right chargers and adaptors, and recharge daily (e.g. overnight). If using photos or film, try to upload your files to a laptop each night (or at least have several memory cards so used ones can be kept safely at base). Always have a back-up plan for note-taking, if only a pen and paper, in case all these batteries fail.

If you have already thought about how you will be sharing and communicating your findings, you may have a clear idea of the kind of material you want to record. For example, if you anticipate creating a blog from your trip, you will want photos in landscape format and perhaps some filmed interviews. Or if you will be writing a policy-heavy report, you may want more statistics and impact data. Consider your plan for dissemination and make sure you gather the material that will deliver it.

Case studies and human stories

This kind of material can only be gathered while you're actively learning so it is worth thinking in advance about what you want. Stories of individuals ('beneficiaries') affected by the projects you are visiting or speaking with can be powerful in demonstrating their impact and are much loved by journalists and non-specialists. Likewise, mini-profiles of successful initiatives can be useful to illustrate more abstract reporting. Both these types of material will be invaluable for making presentations to live audiences.

Typically, you need to gather concrete details about the situation before and after an intervention by the project you're studying. Stats for before and after, clear statements of the problem and solution, trends in impact – these all build a picture. For human stories, you'll probably want quotes and life-stories from people involved (those implementing as well as those benefiting), along with photos of them in context (in the place, doing the activity). What did it all mean for those involved? How do they feel about that? Again, ensure that you have consent to use photos and quotes before including them in your report.

One of the main human stories involved in your trip will inevitably be your own. All audiences will be interested to learn what led you to the Fellowship, what you learned, what you'll do next. In this context, it will be invaluable to generate some photos of yourself on the trip, doing the research: this might be meeting people (beneficiaries and implementers), watching activities or doing activities. Ideally have someone else shoot it, with yourself relatively large, face showing, and a background that suggests the location. Ensure the photos are 5-10 MB in size and framed in both portrait and landscape format. In today's media world, photos like this can make the difference between getting coverage or not. If carrying out your Fellowship online, you may wish to ask your overseas contacts to provide you with relevant images that they are happy for you to publish.

If researching or using a case study, you should gain consent from the individuals involved and try to understand any privacy concerns they might have. This is an ethical requirement, and in practical terms will avoid them withdrawing their consent to use their material at some later stage. You may also wish to take their contact details to share your report with them upon completion.

Guidelines on [story-gathering](#) can be found on our website in the Fellows' Resources area. Our Engagement team will be happy to help you with advice on this.

Posting live

You may want to create interest in your learning by posting updates live from your journey or during your online research. This is a useful and effective way to grab people's attention and build a following for your topic. These could be as simple as regular posts on a social platform such as LinkedIn or Instagram or as complex as setting up a dedicated blog for your project and kicking it off with posts from your journey. Easy blog platforms are WordPress, Blogger and Tumblr. Or you could approach your local or specialist media and offer to write them a feature article from the road. All of these will build contacts for when you begin to communicate your findings in the UK. Live posting will also help to encourage others to apply for a Fellowship.

You may want to record how many 'hits' your posts receive or how many new people are following you. It is advisable to measure this 24 hours after the time of posting, for each piece of content you share. This can give you a clear idea of how interest in your project is growing and may provide you with a useful tool for evaluating your impact.

We are always delighted to consider short blogs from Fellows, especially once you have completed your research. We look for a first-person article of 500-600 words, which explains what you're researching, what you've found, and why it is important. Please contact our communications team (communications@churchillfellowship.org) about sending us a blog post.

Staying safe

We make every effort to support Fellows and ensure their safety, but Fellows do travel at their own risk. In order to travel safely, please note the following:

- Check the FCDO website and the RSA travel app regularly for any change in travel advice for the countries in which you are travelling or subscribe to email alerts (see p.8 for details).
- While abroad it is likely you will spend much more time than usual on your own, in a different environment. Though this is exciting, it could also be challenging at times. Please do not underestimate the effect this may have on yourself, and make sure you have a support system in place, such as family and friends with whom you can talk and relate.

Risk and Safety Plan

All Fellows must complete a Risk and Safety Plan before their itinerary can be approved. The template for this can be [found on our website](#).

If anything happens to you, or there is something we can do from here to help you, please do get in touch with Ellie Smith (overseaslearning@churchillfellowship.org). In the case of an emergency, please contact emergency@churchillfellowship.org.

Your safeguarding responsibility whilst you are travelling

If you need any advice, guidance, or to report safeguarding concern, please contact our safeguarding team: safeguarding@churchillfellowship.org Please note, this inbox is monitored only during working hours.

TCF takes safeguarding extremely seriously and requires Churchill Fellows to observe best practice regarding proactively ensuring the safety and wellbeing of any Children and Adults at risk they interact with during their Fellowship; and complying with all relevant local and UK laws and regulations.

Churchill Fellows must ensure that all required safeguarding documentation (DBS, Risk and Safety plan, etc.) is fully completed to a satisfactory standard and submitted to TCF in accordance with any requirements notified to you in writing as a condition of their grant funding. No grant monies shall be disbursed, nor shall any overseas learning activities commence, until such documentation has been reviewed and approved by TCF, and TCF reserves the right to require additional safeguarding information at any stage of the Project.

Churchill Fellows must contact their hosts to learn of any safeguarding policies in place and ensure that these are adhered to.

While travelling, if you have a safeguarding concern, you should ensure you are aware of local laws and regulations and seek advice from the local Foreign Office representative (such as the British Consul) before taking action.

If you have any queries about your safeguarding obligations whilst carrying out your Project, we strongly advise that you seek your own independent legal or professional advice.

Minimising your environmental impact

We encourage all Fellows to consider and minimise the environmental impact of their overseas learning in the following ways:

Calculate your carbon emissions

49% of Carbon emissions from tourism come from transport. Tracking your emissions and energy consumption can help you to identify how areas where you can reduce your impact.

- [ICAO carbon calculator](#): calculator for emissions associated with air travel.
- [Ecopassenger](#): calculator to compare the energy consumption, CO2 emissions and other environmental impacts for planes, cars and trains in passenger transport. You can then choose the mode of transport with the lowest carbon emissions.

Choosing more ecofriendly methods of transport

Here are some more ecofriendly modes of travel:

- **Walking and Biking** - for which you can plan your travel through [Komoot](#) or [Strava](#).
- **Public Transport** (Bus, Tram and Train).
- **Long distance trains and ferries** - you can find specialist information on trains and ferries through [Seat61](#).

[Night-trains](#): provides an interactive map of night train lines around the world and promotes overnight sleeper trains.

- **Carpooling** - you can plan trips ahead through [BlaBlaCar](#).
- **Electric and Hybrid cars** - an eco-friendly alternative to gas cars to find Electric Vehicle for hire you can use [Ecopassenger](#).
- **Plane** - To plan out ecofriendly air travel you could use [Skyscanner](#).

Eco-friendly Accommodation:

Eco-friendly accommodation should be used if possible as they optimise environmental and waste management. They also reduce energy consumption, waste consumption, transport emissions and food waste. Below are links to resources to find eco-friendly accommodations.

- [Ecobnb](#): worldwide marketplace for booking eco-certified accommodation.
- [Wayaj](#): worldwide sustainable travel platform that provides tools and resources for travellers to make environmentally friendly choices.
- [Fairbnb](#): worldwide sustainable home-sharing platform which supports social and ecological projects for local communities.
- [EcoHotels](#): represents hotels worldwide that are committed to sustainability.
- [Bookitdifferent](#): provider of eco-friendly accommodation worldwide.

AFTER YOUR OVERSEAS LEARNING

Thank-you emails

If there is anyone who you would like particularly to thank for their support during your Fellowship, please email Suruthie Thiyagalingam with their name, title and email address and we will send them a short, formal email of thanks from our Chief Executive Julia Weston on behalf of the Trustees. We can send these to a maximum of ten people or organisations.

Writing your report

Your Fellows' Report is intended to be a resource that you can use to share the learnings and ideas you've gained from your travel. It must be submitted within 3 months of completing your Fellowship research. This marks the end of your Fellowship research and means you'll be eligible to attend the Award Ceremony.

It is crucial that the format and content of your report is suited to your target audiences, and we encourage you to present the information in whatever format you think is most appropriate. Past Fellows have produced PowerPoint decks, websites, video documentaries, podcasts, or traditional written reports.

The purpose of the report isn't to detail every aspect of your trip, but to capture your learnings and your recommendations for how to change things in the UK. Its audience is the people and organisations that you want to influence, not the Churchill Fellowship as a funder.

We know writing a report (regardless of format) can be daunting and it can be challenging to create the time to do it in so we strongly encourage you to think about what format you might use during your overseas learning. More resources can be found on our [website](#), we also run report guidance webinars and can offer a copy editing service.

Please contact engagement@churchillfellowship.org if you wish to discuss your report.

“Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb.”

— Sir Winston Churchill