

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Can I be considered for Cara's Fellowship Programme?

In order to be considered for Cara's support, you must fall under our risk criteria; have held a paid post as a lecturer and/or researcher in a higher education institution or equivalent for a minimum of 6 months; and have a minimum Master's degree or be able to show evidence of at least one publication in an internationally peer reviewed journal. All Cara support is contingent upon your competency in English.

We accept applicants from any country and from any academic field. There is no deadline to apply as we accept applications on a **rolling basis**.

Please note that we receive a high volume of applications for support, and therefore we are having to prioritise those who remain at immediate risk and have limited alternative options.

Given the demand for our support, we are not able to respond to all applicants individually. If you have submitted your application before 31st of December 2023, and have not heard back from us since, please assume that we are unable to consider your application for our support.

Can I receive support from Cara if I have been a recipient of the British Academy's Researchers at Risk (RaR) Fellowship?

Unfortunately, we are unable to consider applications from those who have previously received RaR Fellowship funding. Due to unprecedented demand for assistance; we are having to prioritise those who remain at immediate risk in their home countries or who have been recently displaced without alternative opportunities for support.

What type of support does Cara provide?

We serve as a lifeline to academics at risk by providing temporary sanctuary, usually in the form of PhD or Visiting Fellowship research placements in higher education and research institutions, mainly in the UK. The hope is that our Fellows return home once the crisis abates, taking with them new skills and expanded networks that will help the future rebuilding of their homes and countries.

Unfortunately, we do **not** provide standard or partial scholarships, or research grants. We are also **not** able to secure placements for undergraduate studies.

In very exceptional circumstances, we may secure Master's degree placements, however this remains at our discretion.

A Visiting Fellowship offers a one to two-year opportunity for academics, who are experts in their field, to conduct novel research at a higher education institution. Visiting Fellowships are postdoctoral research opportunities, and they are unlikely to involve teaching responsibilities.

PhD placements are research degrees at the highest postgraduate level. The student, with the guidance of a supervisor, will conduct novel research, in their chosen field. Full-time PhD funding typically lasts 3 years, and students will produce a thesis by the end of the PhD, presenting their research findings. A PhD is an essential experience for pursuing an academic career.

Please note that Cara placements are **not** employment opportunities and Cara does not help secure employment opportunities after the end of the Cara placement.

What documents do I need when applying to Cara?

In our application, we ask for:

- copy of **passport** (including pages with a photo and with expiry date),
- copy of **legal status documents** and their official English translation (biometric card, visa, travel documents) if relevant,
- copy of **academic certificates** including their official English translation if relevant,
- **English language certificate** if available (IELTS, TOEFL or Duolingo),
- copy of **CV** detailing academic work history and publications,
- contact details of **3 referees** (at least 2 must provide an academic reference),
- **research proposal** and/or PhD proposal, however, this can also be sent to Cara once we begin processing your application,
- **evidence of academic employment** and its English translation if necessary – this could be a headed letter, a copy of your employment contract, ID card **and** payslips or bank statements that confirm receipt of payments from a higher education institution for a period of six months or longer,
- detailed **risk statement** (a statement detailing any personal risk or threats you currently face).

Can I still apply if I don't have all the documentation listed?

Providing all the necessary documents will help us process your application, so we encourage you to submit as many documents as you can when completing the Enquiries Form. If you are unable to provide any of the requested documents, a member of staff will follow-up with you as soon as your application is being processed.

Please note that all Cara Fellows are required to travel to the UK to undertake their placements at their hosting university. For this reason, we will not be able to assist you if you are unable to provide valid travel documents (passports).

How long should my research proposal be?

A research proposal should describe your intended research in detail. It should be 4-5 pages long, properly cited and have a bibliography at the end. We do not have a requirement for a specific citation style, but we do ask for consistency and clarity of citation. Your research proposal must be submitted in English.

Your research proposal will be used at a later stage when approaching Universities on your behalf, if your application is accepted. For this reason, we require the proposal to show **no signs of plagiarism or use of generative AI**. By plagiarism, we mean parts of texts that would be copied and pasted from other articles without paraphrasing or using quotation marks when using another author's exact words. Generative AI tools such as Chat GPT are not permitted in the writing of your proposal and evidence of their use will result in your proposal being rejected.

I would like to submit a new application or add other documents to my existing application. How can I do that?

Our Enquiries Form only allows one application per person. If you wish to provide additional documents, update your existing documents, or let us know about any changes in your situation (especially in relation to location, employment and family circumstances), please contact us at info@cara.ngo.

We do not take walk-ins, we mainly communicate via email. If you are a current Cara fellow and a conversation is required, please contact your relevant officer.

Does Cara have an English language requirement?

All Cara support is contingent on our applicants' competency in English. This is because the working language for all our placements is English. Therefore, all Fellows must be able to contribute academically at the host institutions.

Additionally, universities and national immigration agencies will have their own English language requirements.

If you already have an English language certificate, please upload it with your application.

If you are interested in a Visiting Fellowship placement, you may be asked to sit an English language test once we begin processing your application, however, if this is needed it will be made clear to you.

If you are interested in applying for a PhD opportunity, a recent IELTS, TOEFL or equivalent English language exam certificate will be a requirement. If you are able to provide one when you apply, this may help in processing your application.

How does Cara evaluate applications?

When considering applications we take into account factors such as academic ability, risk, and available funding options. Due to the limited capacity of our team and high demand for assistance, we are unable to guarantee support to everyone who meets Cara's criteria.

What type of funding does Cara provide?

Cara Fellows receive an award that covers basic living expenses and relocation costs (including visa and travel expenses). The size of this award depends on factors such as the location and type of placement as well as the family size. Once Cara Fellows have started their placements, they are able to access additional support and services, such as access to our mentoring scheme, English language support, small grants, etc.

Does Cara provide support for family members?

Usually, our fellows come to their placements with their spouses and children under the age of 18. Unfortunately, Cara fellows are not able to travel to the UK with other family members and children above the age of 18, due to immigration restrictions.

I have refugee / asylum seeker status or indefinite leave to remain / permanent residency in a safe third country; can Cara help me?

Due to unprecedented demand for our assistance, we are having to prioritise those facing immediate risk in their home country and those who have been recently displaced, with limited alternative options. We are therefore unable to support applicants with long-term legal status in safe third countries, where they do not face an immediate risk. We are usually unable to support individuals with refugee or asylum seeker status.

Can Cara provide evacuations?

Whilst it is within our remit to find and secure placements in the UK for academics at risk, Cara is unfortunately **unable to provide evacuations**. Prospective applicants must have their own, legal means by which to leave their home country or must have valid legal status if they are resident in a third country, in order for Cara to be able to consider their application. Please note that due to factors beyond Cara's control (such as visa and immigration policies) we are limited in what we can do and how fast we can act.

I have an offer to study in the UK, can Cara help me?

If you have received an offer to study in the UK, please submit your existing PhD or postdoctoral placement offer letter as part of your application. However, please note that we cannot guarantee that if we were able to secure you a placement that it would be at the University for which you hold an offer. In the event that we proceed with your application, we would, of course, try to approach your preferred university in the first instance, but we **cannot** guarantee that we would be able to secure you a place there. This is because the funding for our placement is determined by a number of factors outside of our power, such as the financial budgets of our partner universities.

We do **not** provide scholarships or any form of partial funding, and we are **not** able to secure placements for undergraduate studies.

Please see our [**Funding Directory**](#) for alternative funding opportunities.

I need to improve my English, can Cara support me with this?

Unfortunately, Cara does not provide English language courses, and we are unable to support applicants in improving their English language.

Can Cara secure me an academic job?

Cara is **unable** to secure employment opportunities. Cara is able to provide support in the form of fully-funded Visiting Fellowships or PhDs. Visiting Fellowships are research opportunities and are very unlikely to involve teaching responsibilities.

Does Cara provide risk assessments for other purposes?

We currently only provide risk assessments for applicants for the Philipp Schwartz Initiative (PSI). Once applicants for PSI have found their proposed host university, this host university will need to contact us directly at info@cara.ngo requesting a letter of support from Cara on their behalf. We are **not** able to provide this document directly to applicants, and we do **not** provide risk assessments for any other purposes.

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