

# Work in the UK as a leader in digital technology (Global Talent visa)

## 1. Overview

With a Global Talent visa you can work in the UK if you are a leader or potential leader in digital technology, for example in:

- financial technology ('fintech')
- gaming
- cyber security
- artificial intelligence

You can also work in the UK on a Global Talent visa if you've won an [eligible award](/government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list) (</government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list>).

## What you can do with a Global Talent visa

With a Global Talent visa you can:

- choose how long your visa is for, up to 5 years
- be an employee, self-employed and a director of a company

- change or stop doing your job without telling the Home Office
- bring your partner and children with you as your 'dependants' (/global-talent/your-partner-and-children), if they're eligible
- travel abroad and return to the UK

There are no language or minimum salary eligibility requirements.

If you want to stay longer in the UK, you can renew your visa as many times as you like - you'll have to meet the eligibility criteria for extending your stay (/global-talent/extend-your-visa).

You can also apply to settle permanently in the UK (also known as 'indefinite leave to remain') after:

- 3 years if you're applying as a leader
- 5 years if you're applying as a potential leader

You cannot:

- apply for most benefits ('public funds (/government/publications/public-funds--2)')
- work as a sportsperson

If your application is successful, you'll get a full list of what you can and cannot do with a Global Talent visa.

## Eligibility

You do not need a job offer to get the visa. Your background can be either:

- technical, for example you're a developer, engineer or data scientist
- business, for example you have commercial, investment or digital product expertise in a technology company that creates software, hardware or that processes data

Check the full list of eligible digital technology roles (/government/publications/global-talent-endorsing-bodies/technical-or-business-skills-covered-by-tech-nation).

You can also get the visa if you've won an [eligible award \(/government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list\)](/government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list).

If you're not eligible for a Global Talent visa, there are other ways to [work in the UK \(/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas\)](/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas) - for example a [Skilled work visa \(/skilled-worker-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa).

## How to apply

To get a Global Talent visa you need to apply for an 'endorsement', as well as for the visa itself.

You do not need to apply for an endorsement if you've won an [eligible award \(/government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list\)](/government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list). You can [apply for the visa \(/global-talent/apply-from-outside-the-uk\)](/global-talent/apply-from-outside-the-uk) straight away.

### Applying for an endorsement

You need to apply for an endorsement to prove you are a leader or potential leader in your field.

The Home Office will send your application to be reviewed by Tech Nation.

You will usually get a decision about your endorsement within 5 to 8 weeks. If your application is considered to be '[fast track \(/global-talent-digital-technology/eligibility\)](/global-talent-digital-technology/eligibility)', you'll get a decision in 3 weeks.

Tech Nation are continuing to process applications as normal. You can still apply for this visa.

### Applying for the visa

There's a separate guide to [applying for your Global Talent visa \(/global-talent\)](/global-talent), including how your partner or child can apply.

You usually get a decision about your visa within:

- 3 weeks if you're outside the UK
- 8 weeks if you're inside the UK

You may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement).

## When you can apply for the visa

You can [apply for the Global Talent visa \(/global-talent\)](/global-talent) at the same time as you apply for endorsement, or after you have the endorsement confirmed.

If your permission to stay in the UK is about to expire, applying for the visa will extend it until you've been given a decision.

The earliest you can apply for a visa is 3 months before you travel.

### Example

You can apply from 16 March if you plan to travel on 15 June.

## Fees

It costs £716 to apply.

If you're applying based on an endorsement, you'll pay the £716 in two parts:

- £524 when you apply for the endorsement
- £192 when you apply for the visa itself

If you're applying based on an eligible award, you'll pay the full £716 when you apply for the visa.

If you're including your partner or children in your application, they'll each need to pay £716.

## Healthcare surcharge

You'll also have to pay the healthcare surcharge as part of your application - this is usually £1,035 per year for each person applying.

Check how much you'll have to pay (<https://www.immigration-health-surcharge.service.gov.uk/checker/type>) before you apply.

## If your endorsement application is refused

If your application is turned down you can request an [endorsement review \(/global-talent-digital-technology/if-your-endorsement-application-is-refused\)](/global-talent-digital-technology/if-your-endorsement-application-is-refused).

## 2. Eligibility

You can apply either as:

- a leader (called 'exceptional talent')
- a potential leader (called 'exceptional promise')

Exceptional promise applicants are likely to have less than 5 years of experience in technology, but can have had a longer career in another type of work. You must be able to prove your potential to be a leader through your skills and achievements.

Tech Nation will assess your endorsement application and decide whether you meet the criteria to apply for the Global Talent visa.

You can also apply without an endorsement if you've won an eligible award ([/government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list](https://government/publications/global-talent-eligible-prize-list)).

## Criteria for applying as a leader (exceptional talent)

You need to show you've been recognised by others as being a leading talent in the digital technology field in the last 5 years.

You must also show that at least 2 of the following are true:

- you have a record of innovation as a founder or senior executive of a product-led digital technology company
- you have a record of innovation where you've worked in a new digital technology field or concept as an employee
- you've contributed to the digital technology sector outside of work, for example mentoring or collaborative projects
- you've set up or worked in a product-led digital technology company, and have made technical, commercial, or entrepreneurial contributions in the digital technology sector
- you've had research published or endorsed by an expert

## Criteria for applying as a potential leader (exceptional promise)

You need to show you've been recognised by others as being a potential talent in the digital technology field in the last 5 years.

You must also show that at least 2 of the following are true:

- you can show innovation as a founder of a product-led digital technology company
- you can show innovation where you've worked in a new digital technology field or concept as an employee
- you can show you've contributed to the digital technology sector outside of work, for example by mentoring or through collaborative projects
- you can show you've set up or worked in a product-led digital technology company and have made significant technical, commercial, or entrepreneurial contributions in the digital technology sector
- you have had research published or endorsed by an expert

## How your application will be assessed

When making a decision on your application, Tech Nation will check that you have met the criteria needed for the visa. It will also consider the following factors:

- your career history - for example the international reputation and impact of your work
- the strength of the statements in your recommendation letter and of the evidence in support of your application
- how you'll contribute to UK digital technology by being based in the UK
- personal factors such as your academic track record, salary level and company you're being hired by, or amount of money raised if an entrepreneur
- the commercial impact of your previous work, achievements and experiences

## Fast track eligibility

You may get a faster endorsement decision if you've been accepted onto a recognised UK accelerator programme and can show this on your application for endorsement. The following accelerator programmes are accepted:

- Antler

- Bethnal Green Ventures
- Carbon13
- Collider
- Creative Destruction Lab
- Cylon
- Entrepreneur First
- Founders Academy
- Founders Factory
- Ignite
- SETsquared
- Startupbootcamp
- techstars
- Wayra
- Zinc

Most fast track endorsement applications get a decision in 3 weeks.

### **3. Documents you'll need to apply**

After you submit your endorsement application on GOV.UK, you'll also need to complete the application form on the Tech Nation website. This must include a personal statement explaining the contribution that you'll make to UK digital technology.

You'll need to upload the following documents along with your application form on the Tech Nation website:

- your CV
- 3 letters of recommendation
- proof of your connection to a technology business if you've been a founder or senior executive in the last 5 years
- proof you meet the eligibility criteria (a maximum of 10 documents)



## Your CV

You'll need to upload your CV. It should include your career and any relevant publication history. It must be typed and be up to 3 sides of A4 paper.

## Letters of recommendation

You must provide 3 letters of recommendation. Each letter must provide different examples to show your achievements, skills, experience and contribution to the digital technology sector.

Each person who writes a letter must:

- be an 'established expert' in digital technology - this will be judged by Tech Nation
- have known your work for at least 12 months

Each letter must:

- be about your Global Talent application - you cannot use a letter that was written for another reason
- say how the person knows you
- show your achievements in the digital technology sector, and how you are a leader or potential leader
- say how you would benefit from living in the UK
- say how you would contribute to the digital technology field in the UK
- explain what plans you have for work in the future

The letters must also:

- be typed and dated
- be up to 3 single sides of A4 paper, excluding the author's credentials and contact details
- be signed by the author, or by someone on behalf of the organisation recommending you
- include a telephone number and email address, and the organisation's logo and registered address, if applicable

- come with the author's CV (or other proof of their credentials that the endorsing body will accept)

## Proof of your connection to a technology business

If you've been a founder or a senior executive of a technology business in the last 5 years you must include evidence to prove this.

Evidence can include:

- domestic or international sales showing customer numbers for each country in which the company is operating
- your last set of audited accounts, signed by the directors of the company, including a balance sheet and profit and loss statement

If you don't have audited accounts, the accounts you provide must cover a period of more than 12 months.

## Proof you meet the eligibility criteria

You'll need to provide a maximum of 10 documents that prove you meet the [eligibility criteria \(/global-talent-digital-technology/eligibility\)](#).

These must include:

- at least 2 documents showing you are recognised as either a leading talent or potential talent
- at least 4 documents showing you have any 2 of the other necessary skills (use 2 documents as proof for each skill)

Each piece of evidence can be up to 3 sides of A4 paper. You cannot use the same piece of evidence for more than one criteria.

Your CV and letters of recommendation do not count toward the 10 pieces of evidence.

Evidence of meeting the eligibility criteria could include:

- starting or contributing to open source projects in a way that peers have acknowledged has advanced the field
- relevant qualifications, or documentation of speaking in a prestigious conference
- an award granted by an organisation of a similar standing and distinction to the Royal Society in the UK

Read more about [accepted examples of evidence on the Tech Nation site \(https://technation.io/global-talent-visa/\)](https://technation.io/global-talent-visa/).

## 4. Apply for endorsement

Once you have the documents, you can [apply for endorsement on GOV.UK \(https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/global-talent-endorsement?\\_ga=2.172158435.138531231.1594031774-1490588999.1578480944\)](https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/global-talent-endorsement?_ga=2.172158435.138531231.1594031774-1490588999.1578480944).

After that, you'll be sent to the Tech Nation website where you'll need to complete the Tech Nation application form. You must complete both parts of the process for your application for endorsement to be considered.

Tech Nation will assess your endorsement application and decide whether you meet the eligibility criteria to apply for the Global Talent visa.



Tech Nation are continuing to process applications as normal. You can still apply for this visa.

If your application for endorsement is successful you'll receive an email from the Home Office with a copy of your endorsement letter. You'll need these for your visa application.

You must apply for your visa within 3 months of receiving your letter of endorsement from the Home Office.

You will not automatically get a visa if you've been endorsed.

## Apply for the Global Talent visa

You can [apply for the Global Talent visa \(/global-talent\)](/global-talent) at the same time as you apply for endorsement, or after you have the endorsement confirmed.

If your permission to stay in the UK is about to expire, applying for the visa will extend it until you've been given a decision.

If you apply for both at the same time and your endorsement is refused, your visa application will be rejected, but you'll get the visa application fee back.

You'll get a response within 3 weeks if you're in the UK, or 8 weeks if you're outside the UK.

### 5. If your endorsement application is refused

You can ask for a review if you do not think your endorsement application was judged correctly.

The review will be done by the endorsing body that looked at your original application.

There's no fee.

### What the review will look at

You can ask the review to look at specific areas, for example if you think:

- a piece of evidence was not properly looked at
- there was a mistake in how your application was processed

If there was nothing wrong with the way the process was followed, your application will not be reconsidered.

You cannot give new evidence as part of the review.

## When you can ask for a review

You need to request the review within 28 days after you get the decision.

If your permission to stay in the UK is about to expire, applying for an endorsement review will not extend it.

## How to ask for a review

Fill in the [Global Talent endorsement review form \(/government/publications/global-talent-and-tier-1-exceptional-talent-endorsement-review-form\)](/government/publications/global-talent-and-tier-1-exceptional-talent-endorsement-review-form) and email it to the Home Office.

Home Office

[globaltalentendorsements@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:globaltalentendorsements@homeoffice.gov.uk)

## When you'll get a decision

You'll be told by email within 28 days if your review has been successful.

### If your endorsement application is still refused

If the endorsing body refuses your application for the same reasons as before you'll:

- get an email
- need to pay the fee again if you make a new application

You cannot ask for another review.

If the endorsing body refuses your application for new reasons:

- you'll get a letter

- you can ask for another review based on the new reasons only



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