



44 policy fellows to work in government and What Works Network



18 October 2023

Forty-four academic fellows will work in 21 government departments and five What Works Centres across the UK.

Following a successful pilot, run by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in 2021, the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Policy Fellowships programme has now more than doubled in scale and expanded the range of research disciplines involved.

Stian Westlake, Executive Chair of ESRC, said:

“ This programme represents a major increase of UKRI’s investment in connecting research and policy. It will put some of the UK’s brightest researchers at the heart of government, to help inform the way policy is made.

We are building on the success of the 2021 pilot by doubling the size of the programme, increasing the range of research and scientific disciplines involved, and embedding policy fellows in almost every UK government department and all three devolved administrations. It will provide a significant increase in the science and research capabilities of government and will boost the positive impact of scientific research on public policy.

The 2021 pilot demonstrated the value of academic fellowships focused on policy challenges. The fellows directly informed the development of government policy in a range of areas, including:

- home energy efficiency
- regulation of digital platforms
- active travel
- security and horizon scanning to support outcomes for future generations

Addressing major challenges

Policymakers need access to evidence and expertise from a range of research and scientific disciplines to address the major challenges facing the UK and to make the most of future opportunities.

Key high-priority policy areas have been identified for the fellowships. These align with UKRI’s five strategic themes, with the addition of data and evaluation.

This alignment will enable the fellowships to contribute to achieving these shared goals, which all tackle large-scale, complex challenges, while giving the fellows access to a broad range of new UKRI research investments:

- Building a green future
- Securing better health, ageing and wellbeing
- Tackling infections
- Building a secure and resilient world
- Creating opportunities, improving outcomes
- Data and evaluation (additional fellowship focus area)

Connecting talent with policymakers

The fellowships, each lasting 18 months, will enhance the relationship between academia, government and research organisations (such as What Works Centres) by improving the flow of evidence, insights and talent.

The aim of the policy fellowships is to help fulfil the potential of research and expertise to inform and shape effective public policy and its implementation. The 2023 scheme is funded by:

- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)

This investment is part of a wider UKRI commitment to facilitate deeper and more enduring connections between researchers and policymakers.

Fellowship benefits

The policy fellowships benefit government and What Works Centre partners by:

- supporting policymakers and practitioners to access and use the best and most relevant research when developing and implementing new policies
- developing strong research, science and technology capabilities within the civil service and research organisations
- improving the flow of knowledge and talent between government, academia and research organisations
- raising government leaders' awareness of the importance of science and innovation

The fellowships benefit the research community by:

- providing an exciting opportunity to work in the heart of government or a What Works Centre and use research to inform the major policy challenges of our times
- upskilling researchers to enable more effective engagement and collaboration with policymakers
- building relationships between academics, research organisations and policy organisations

Supporting researchers, networks and government

As part of the scheme, the fellows are managed as a cohort, connecting them, the partner organisations, and their universities to build new networks and peer support groups.

The 2023 and 2021 cohorts will also connect, providing a network of active and alumni policy fellows which will grow further over the coming years, providing an ever-stronger connection between academia and policy.

This approach complements the exchange of knowledge, insights and evidence across government departments on priority policy areas.

These networks also help to ensure that the policy fellowships have a lasting impact beyond the formal end of the fellowship.

Further information

The [policy fellows](#) web page provides details of the 2021 policy fellows.

Fellowship topic areas

The fellows will define their specific projects over the coming months.

Full list of 2023 Policy Fellowships

Cabinet Office

Data and Evaluation Policy Fellowship: Dr Jack Blumenau, University College London (ESRC)

Competition and Markets Authority

Competition and Productivity Economics Fellowship: Dr Flavio Toxværd, University of Cambridge (ESRC)

Department for Business and Trade

Economy Growth and Productivity Analytical Fellowship: Dr Zachary Kessler, The Alan Turing Institute (ESRC)

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Cultural Placemaking Fellowship: Dr Abigail Gilmore, The University of Manchester (AHRC)

Skills and Diverse Workforce Fellowship: Professor David O'Brien, The University of Manchester (AHRC)

Department for Education

Applying Behavioural Insights to Education Fellowship: Dr Pallavi Banerjee, University of Exeter (ESRC)

Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero

Nature based Anaerobic Digester Solutions Fellowship: Dr Yadira Bajon Fernandez, Cranfield University (BBSRC)

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs

Building a Green Future Data Science and Agriculture Fellowship: Dr Stefan Siegert, University of Exeter (BBSRC)

Embedding Economics into the Fourth UK Climate Change Risk Assessment Fellowship: Dr Harald Heubaum, SOAS University of London (ESRC)

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

Securing better health, Economics and/or Social Research Fellowship: Dr Jo Daniels, University of Bath (ESRC)

Securing better health through prevention, Biological Sciences Fellowship: Dr Chloe Park, University College London (BBSRC)

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Building a Green Future Fellowship: Dr Ed Atkins, University of Bristol (ESRC)

Creating Opportunities Fellowship: Dr Caglar Koksal, The University of Manchester (AHRC)

Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Future of Online Regulation Fellowship: Dr Alexandru Marcoci, University of Cambridge (ESRC)

Research, Development and Innovation Analysis Fellowship: Dr Chris Dimos, University of Bath (ESRC)

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Model Development Fellowship: Dr Patryk Bronka, University of Essex (ESRC)

DWP and DHSC

Work and Health in post-pandemic UK Fellowship: Dr Cristina Sechel, The University of Sheffield (ESRC)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Building a secure and resilient world, arms control and non proliferation fellowship: Dr Lalitha Sundaram, University of Cambridge (BBSRC)

Economics, Data and Evaluation Fellowship: Dr Neave O'Clery, University College London (ESRC)

Geographical Focus Fellowship: Dr James Worrall, University of Leeds (AHRC)

Tackling Infections Epidemiology Fellowship: Dr Lucy Irvine, University College London (BBSRC)

HM Treasury

Macroeconomic modelling and Fiscal Sustainability Economics Fellowship: Ms Rahat Siddique, London School of Economics (ESRC)

Home Office

Criminal Justice System Strategy Analysis Fellowship: Dr Keri Ka-Yee Wong, University College London (ESRC)

National Crime and Justice Lab Policy (NCJL) – Crime Prevention – Crime Data Analytics Fellowship: Dr Eon Kim, The University of Manchester (ESRC)

The impact of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles on Policing service delivery Fellowship: Dr Helen Wells, Keele University (ESRC)

Ministry of Justice

Data and Evaluation Fellowship: Professor Rosie Meek, Royal Holloway, University of London (ESRC)

Improving Outcomes Fellowship: Dr Susie Hulley, University of Cambridge (ESRC)

National Infrastructure Commission

Improving Outcomes Economics and Applied Data Policy Fellowship: Dr Larissa da Silva Marioni, The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (ESRC)

Northern Ireland Executive

DAERA – Building a Green Future – Behaviour Change and Public Attitudes to Climate Change in Northern Ireland Fellowship: Dr Katharine Steentjes, Swansea University (ESRC)

Department for the Economy – Evaluating Innovation Policy Research Fellowship, Dr Ana Manzano, University of Leeds (ESRC)

Department of Health Ageing and Wellbeing Bioscience Fellowship:
Professor Kevin Vowles, Queen's University of Belfast (BBSRC)

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

Improving Outcomes Education Research Fellowship: Dr Laura Outhwaite
University College London (ESRC)

Scottish Government

Building Resilience in Scotland – Cross-Disciplinary Study – Fellowship: Dr
Roxana Ciurean, British Geological Survey (ESRC)

Promoting Economic Prosperity and Improving Outcomes Economics
Fellowship: Dr Angelos Theodorakopoulos, Aston University (ESRC)

Tackling Infections Bioscience Fellowship: Dr Nicola Holden, Scotland's
Rural College (BBSRC)

Welsh Government

Cadw Climate Change Adaptation Pathways Fellowship: Professor
Carolyn Hayles, Cardiff Metropolitan University (AHRC)

Local Government Finance Reform – Local Land Value Tax Data and
Evidence Synthesis for Wales Fellowship: Dr Bryonny Goodwin-Hawkins,
University of Gloucestershire (ESRC)

Sustainable Futures Fellowship: Dr Adrian Kay, Cardiff Metropolitan
University (ESRC)

What Works Innovation Fellowships (all funded by ESRC)

Centre for Homelessness Impact

How Policing Can Add Value to Street Outreach Activities Fellowship: Dr
Melissa Jogie, University of Roehampton

College of Policing

Sexism and Misogyny in Policing Behavioural Change Fellowship: Dr
Katharine Boyd, University of Exeter

Measuring Harm for Violence Against Women and Girls Social Research
Fellowship: Dr Katharine Hoeger, University of Oxford

Education Endowment Foundation

Fellowship on Recruitment and Retention in Social Services Research: Dr
Natthapoj Vincent Trakulphadetkrai, University of Reading

Wales Centre for Public Policy

Lived Experience Policy Fellowship: Dr Rounaq Nayak, Bournemouth University

Youth Futures Foundation

Understanding What Makes for Quality Work Fellowship: Dr Hannah King, Durham University

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