



UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: BEIS Economy Growth & Productivity Analytical Fellowship

Host Organisation: [Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy \(BEIS\), UK Government](#)

Host Team: Economy & Strategic Analysis (ESA) team

Summary: Opportunity to work on key drivers of economic growth and productivity, including Innovation diffusion, competition and scale-up of innovative companies.

Fellowship Theme: Creating Opportunities, Improving Outcomes. *Please see the full call text 'What We Are Looking For' for a detailed summary of the research themes targeted in this call.*

Policy Topic: Economic growth and productivity.

Research Council: ESRC_

Academic Discipline/s: Economics or Data Science or Data Methods expertise.

Research Career Stage: Early or mid-career

Fellowship Structure

Inception Phase:

Estimated Start Date: October 2023. *Exact date to be confirmed by the host depending on onboarding and security clearance requirements*

Duration: 3 months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Main Placement Phase:

Duration: 12 months

FTE: 0.6-1 FTE

Knowledge Exchange Phase:

Duration: 3 months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Work Arrangements

Location Requirements: We are flexible as to location. We can arrange for the Fellow to work in a BEIS office, with most of our team located in central London and Salford

Hybrid Working: We are flexible as to working patterns and hybrid working.

Security Clearance: Necessary level of security clearance: Basic Personnel Security Standard checks (BPSS), usually takes around 6 weeks. Inception phase can begin before the security clearance process is completed but will be required for the main placement phase. Prior to that access the building is still possible, just not IT etc.

Fellowship Opportunity Description

At the centre of economic policymaking in BEIS, this role offers an exciting opportunity to work on the drivers of economic growth and the post-2008 productivity 'puzzle' – a high-profile policy area. The Economy & Strategic Analysis team's current research focus is at the intersection of innovation, competition, and business investment as key drivers of growth. We are particularly interested in the following policy questions:

- why the diffusion of innovation from frontier to laggard firms has slowed globally (and in the UK in particular) and to what extent this is due to the rise of the digital/knowledge economy and ‘superstar’ firms;
- why some of the UK’s most innovative start-ups choose to be acquired rather than scale-up, and what are the barriers faced by the next generation of scale-up firms;
- what makes some firms more likely to invest in tangible and intangible capital? How does this vary across different types of firms (not so much in terms of sector, but stage of their lifecycle, growth ambitions etc.)

We are flexible as to the nature of the project undertaken by our Fellow as long as it relates to economic growth and maximises policy impact. Examples of areas with scope for original research and innovative analytical techniques include:

- **Understanding drivers and patterns of innovation diffusion in the UK using data science techniques.** ESRC recognise this is a major gap in our understanding of how innovation translates into economic growth and productivity, as well as where innovation has the greatest spillovers to the wider economy. A project could therefore explore how different technologies diffuse through sectors, regions, and firms. The Fellow could build on business surveys or use a data science-led approach (e.g., real-time data). There are opportunities to link up with key actors such as the Productivity Institute, the Innovation Diffusion Unit at LSE, the OECD’s AI Diffuse project, the Turing Institute and Government agencies such as HMRC.
- **Exploring links between market concentration and innovation / innovation diffusion in the UK.** The Fellow could explore a range of empirical techniques. There is scope to research different indicators of market concentration and indicators of innovation/ tech adoption to understand the extent to which poor competition is a barrier to innovation and innovation diffusion.
- **Understanding drivers of ‘scale up’ culture in the UK. Understanding the drivers of successful firm scale-up is a key priority of our Secretary of State.** The Fellow could pursue a quantitative or a qualitative approach, or both. For example, the project could explore the behaviour of different ‘types’ of firms in a sector (e.g. rapidly scaling start up, steady-state firms, acquisition vs. scale-up etc.), do they have common characteristics and how do they interact with characteristics of the market (e.g. availability of VC funding. Typology-building could be extended with an econometric approach, linking firm- and investor behaviour to key outcomes such as output, employment, productivity.

These questions can be chosen and refined during the inception phase, based on the Fellow’s interest and input. In collaboration with BEIS, the Fellow is expected to:

- Co-develop a research project relating to economic growth and productivity and linked to the policy areas within BEIS. This could be best achieved by being embedded in the team.
- Develop the evidence and policy recommendations using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods, ideally drawing from the expertise of academics, policymakers, business, etc. (e.g. workshops).
- Apply BEIS quality assurance processes where appropriate.

Person Specification

Applications will be assessed against the following opportunity-specific requirements in addition to the generic eligibility and call criteria.

Essential Criteria:

- A proven academic track record in economics and /or data science.
- Subject matter expertise in specific topics related to the opportunity (e.g. economics of growth and productivity, competition, innovation and entrepreneurial culture)
- Strong analytical skills relating to the opportunity (e.g. ability to synthesise a range of quantitative and qualitative data using statistical and data science methods, economics)
- Strong communication skills for both technical and policy audiences

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience in co-developing and leading policy-focussed analytical outputs for Government departments.
- Ability or willingness to learn about policy development in and working in a government context.
- Ability to design and lead on evidence-gathering and knowledge exchange activity between research and policy communities.