



UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: Cabinet Office Data and Evaluation Policy Fellowship

Host Organisation: [Cabinet Office](#)

Host Team: [Evaluation Task Force \(ETF\)](#)

Summary: Opportunity to be part of a reform programme at the heart of government, to drive a step change in evaluation, evidence-based decision-making and outcomes for the public.

Fellowship Theme: Data and Evaluation

Policy Topic: Evaluation, infrastructure, social policy, cross-cutting policy interventions.

Research Council: ESRC

Academic Discipline/s: Social research methods; behavioural science; impact evaluation; specialist evaluation skills, preferably in (quasi) experimental methods and complex/ multifaceted evaluations.

Research Career Stage: Open to early and mid-career researchers.

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: 1 FTE (can be flexible)

Knowledge Exchange Phase:

Duration: 3 months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Work Arrangements

Location Requirements: Remote working available. Regular travel to London (around once a week) is expected.

Hybrid Working: Minimum one day per week in the London office would be expected.

Security Clearance: Security Check. This may take 1-3 months from application. The successful applicant would need to start the SC application process as soon as their Fellowship was confirmed by ESRC, ideally before the inception phase begins. See [UK security vetting levels](#) for more information.

Fellowship Opportunity Description

The Evaluation Task Force (ETF) is a central unit set up to ensure robust evidence on the effectiveness of policies and programmes sits at the heart of spending decisions. The main activities of the ETF are:

- Rapid scrutiny of evaluation plans attached to business cases submitted to HM Treasury spending teams.
- Advising and supporting departments on the design and delivery of robust, proportionate evaluation
- Tracking the delivery of evaluations and their emerging results, and ensuring they are fed back into decisions made by departments and spending teams.
- Creating and maintaining a register of evaluation and trial protocols and encouraging the timely publication of results and programme performance data.
- The ETF maintains a list of [priority areas](#), these are policy areas where there are evaluation challenges and requirements based on: (i) the cost of the programmes, (ii) limitations in evaluation capability, (iii) levels of complexity, and where there is currently (iv) poor evidential/ evaluation coverage. Fellows will have the

opportunity to undertake research in one of these policy areas (ETF can be flexible about which) with the broad aim of improving and developing evaluation in this space.

The main responsibilities for the fellow would be to:

- Support the implementation of the new What Work Network Strategy (to be published Spring 2023). Working to deliver on our ambition for a more visible Network of high performing Centres and programmes, which produce and translate evidence to support decision making across all key areas of social policy.
- Bring subject specific knowledge and evaluation expertise to bear in leading research on a complex cross-department policy area (e.g. net zero/ health and social care/ capital infrastructure projects) or an [ETF priority area](#).
- Research, outline and problem-solve challenges to cross department evaluations or priority policy areas so that programme data addresses outcomes of interest to multiple departments and or/ stakeholders.
- Leading work to explore opportunities for the measurement and assessment of shared outcomes, through advising on the evaluation of datasets where outcomes and spending transect multiple departments.
- Use expertise in evaluation methods to provide rapid advice to HM Treasury spending teams and departments on the most rigorous and proportionate approach to evaluating the impact of specific policies and programmes. Activities to further develop and improve central government evaluation support services.

Fellows would benefit from:

- Unique opportunity to inform the design of government policies
- Gaining an understanding of government policy making; analysis; and funding decisions
- Opportunity to build their network of policy and analytical professionals within government
- Peer mentoring from ETF Evaluation Leads and Senior Evaluation Advisers
- Opportunity to raise the profile of evaluation in government
- Opportunity to author (or jointly author) publications with the Evaluation Task Force on issues such as the state of evaluation in government or in producing tools and guides for evaluation.

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 track record of design and delivery of (quasi) experimental impact evaluation and/or complex theory-based or contribution analysis evaluation
- Subject matter expertise in social research methodology, impact evaluation and process evaluation.
- Experience of working with policy (and/or practice) stakeholders to develop and refine research, monitoring, or evaluation plans.

Desirable Criteria:

- Ability to synthesise existing evidence and make recommendations about policy development and implementation.
- Background in/ awareness of behavioural science
- Background in/ awareness of value for money evaluation/ assessment