

UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: What Works Innovation Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: College of Policing Measuring Harm for Violence Against Women and Girls Social Research Fellowship.

Available budget: The full economic cost is £210,000 inclusive of additional £40,000 budget for research and collaboration costs, for further details on the additional budget see the 'How to apply' section specific to the What Works Innovation Fellowships. UKRI will fund 80% of the full economic cost of the grant.

Host What Works Center: [College of Policing](#)

Host Team: Knowledge, Research and Practice Unit

Summary: Opportunity to improve the measurement of harm using police data to better evaluate interventions to reduce domestic and other violence against women and girls.

Fellowship Theme: Data and Evaluation. 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: Violence Against Women and Girls.

Research Council: ESRC

Academic Discipline/s: Social research; data science

Research Career Stage: Early or middle 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: Flexible. The Fellow can work at their institution, at the College of Policing London office in Vauxhall, or from home. Meetings may be undertaken at the College of Policing, or remotely via MS Teams.

As the Fellow will be working with police data, there may be a requirement to travel to police premises for meetings and/or to access data. There may also be a requirement to travel to specific consultation or co-production events if these are not undertaken remotely. Eligible travel and subsistence costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details.

Hybrid Working: Flexible. The Fellow can decide how many days they want to be office-based, including how many days they would like to work at the College's London office.

Security Clearance: NPPV level 2. Estimated 3-4 months processing time. Inception phase can begin before the security clearance process is completed, but clearance will be required for the main placement phase.

Fellowship Opportunity Description

The Fellowship will focus on the issue of how to measure and operationalise 'harm' using police data in relation to domestic abuse and other crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls.

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a high-profile area of policy and practice. Police handling of domestic abuse has been the subject of critical reports by the police inspectorate and the National Police Chief's Council VAWG taskforce was established following the murder of Sarah Everard and other notable cases. As a consequence, there is increased interest in monitoring police performance in relation to VAWG, and in evaluating the impact of interventions intended to address VAWG and improve police response.

Measuring outcomes in relation to VAWG is problematic. Police data is limited by inconsistent practice relating to crime and incident recording and a reliance on (further) reporting. Longitudinal follow-up interviews with victim-survivors, while desirable, are resource intensive and logistically difficult meaning many evaluations rely on easily accessible measures of recontact, rearrest or charge. Increasingly, researchers are applying severity scores to evaluate interventions and assess police performance in relation to domestic abuse, in particular. The ONS Crime Severity Score and the Cambridge Crime Harm Index both use sentencing data to produce a sliding scale of 'harm' for discrete criminal offences.

Application of severity score data to VAWG offences has been criticised as much of the harm suffered by victim-survivors is not represented in traditional crime codes such as assaults and on account of the underrecording of course of conduct crimes (controlling and coercive behaviour and stalking and harassment). In addition, some offences associated with VAWG (such as breach of protective orders) do not attract a length of sentence commensurate with their potential impact on victims.

The Fellowship will focus on whether 'harm' can be better measured and operationalised using police data beyond aggregated crime codes. The research will be developed and agreed during the inception phase, with the Fellow able to shape the precise scope of the work. The Fellow will be expected to lead and co-produce the programme of work with the College and other key stakeholders.

The College has identified potential activities that might constitute the work, but the Fellow will be able to determine the exact nature of the research.

- **Research review:** A review of the survivor literature to determine the nature of harm in lived experience.
- **Case studies:** Using police case files to highlight the limitations of severity scores and existing harm indexes.
- **Police data scoping fieldwork:** Work with a force or forces to explore the feasibility of using sources of data beyond crime codes in the measurement of harm (for example, command and control and investigation logs, bodyworn video, risk assessments, witness statements).
- **Design a measurement framework:** Co-production with police practitioners and VAWG sector subject experts and/or victim-survivors as experts through experience.
- **Field testing:** Apply the measure in a real-world setting. Options include replication of existing machine learning forecasting models that have utilised severity scores. There may be scope to recruit, if required, an additional research resource with experience of data modelling.

The key expected outputs for the Fellowship are:

- A measure of harm for VAWG incidents and crimes that can be operationalised and better reflects lived experience.
- A process for co-production of measurement frameworks and machine learning models that can be applied across sectors and policy areas.
- Knowledge exchange with relevant What Works Centres and other key stakeholders.

The Fellow will be line managed and supported by an Evidence and Evaluation Advisor who is able to provide subject expertise and assistance with engaging police and VAWG sector practitioners and national stakeholders. The Fellow will benefit from access to the National Police Library and can also join the Research, Analysis and Knowledge Sharing Professional Community. As a member of the Professional Community, the fellow could be involved in regular meetings with the other members of the community, where College of Policing priorities and strategic decisions are discussed, and presentations are given on ongoing work to allow for shared learning.

Person Specification

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

Essential Criteria:

- Experience of undertaking qualitative and quantitative research.
- Experience of research review/ability to search for and synthesise evidence.
- Ability to critically appraise different sources of data.
- Ability to engage and work with a range of stakeholders including statutory agencies, police and VAWG sector practitioners.
- Ability to lead co-production activity.
- Ability to translate and communicate research, data and analysis to practitioner audiences.
- Ability to lead on knowledge exchange activity between research, policy and funder communities.
- Experience of project management and timely delivery of outputs.

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of working with police data and systems.
- Knowledge of research and policy relating to domestic abuse and/or wider VAWG.
- Knowledge of key debates concerning applying algorithms and machine learning methods to public policy issues.
- Ability to negotiate and influence.