



UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: DAERA – Building a Green Future – Behaviour Change and Public Attitudes to Climate Change in Northern Ireland Fellowship

Host Organisation: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/>

Host Team: Communications, Stakeholder Engagement & Behaviour Change team, which is part of the Climate Change and Green Growth Policy Division. <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/green-growth-strategy-northern-ireland-balancing-our-climate-environment-and-economy>

Summary: Opportunity to work closely with NI Government and in particular the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to develop a programme of work to support the goal of net zero in Northern Ireland through behaviour change and using a range of behavioural science tools and skills.

Fellowship Theme: Building a Green Future. *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: Climate Change and Green Growth

Research Council: ESRC

Academic discipline/s: Behavioural Science expertise (e.g. Behavioural Economics, Social Psychology), systems research in a climate related area, social science expertise, Human Geography, Environmental Planning or Demography.

Research Career Stage: Open to both early or 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: 0.6-1 FTE

Knowledge Exchange Phase:

Duration: 3 months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Work Arrangements

Location Requirements: Flexible – preference for regular in-person meetings (minimum of six/year) but will depend on project demands and can be negotiated with the successful fellow. DAERA has a number of offices around Northern Ireland and we would be open to flexible working in those following discussions with the successful fellow.

Hybrid Working: Working from home with in-person meetings (minimum four), although the successful fellow will also have an option to work more frequently in a DAERA office if this is preferable to them.

Security Clearance: [Basic Personnel Security Standard checks \(BPSS\)](#), usually takes around 6 weeks. We would expect the successful applicant to start the security clearance application process, with support from the host team as soon as their Fellowship has been confirmed by ESRC. Inception phase can begin before the security clearance process

is completed but will be required for the main placement phase. See [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk).

Fellowship Opportunity Description

The ultimate aim is for Northern Ireland to utilise behavioural science and behaviour change tools to deliver a just transition from a high carbon to low carbon economy. This role will put the fellow at the heart of shaping that future of behaviour change and delivering net zero in Northern Ireland. The fellow will be an integral part of the behaviour change team and will work on identifying behavioural change needs for Northern Ireland, going on to then develop internal capacity and identify external support needs to deliver on this challenge. DAERA has a coordinating role in relation to tackling climate change and as such the fellow will have the opportunity to collaborate with a range of Northern Ireland departments. This identification and collaboration work will build understanding within DAERA to help influence future policy interventions within Northern Ireland.

As well as working on defined areas and projects to assess the feasibility of applying behaviour change tools to maximise the impact and influence of behavioural/social science on climate change and green growth policy, the successful fellow will also have the opportunity to scope out clear tasks based on policy needs and the fellow's interests/skills. We also expect the role will be influenced by existing work, specifically, a DAERA scoping exercise and literature review commissioned to look at the evidence needs and research gaps on public engagement and behaviour change in relation to climate change in Northern Ireland, and how they can best be filled. Examples of activities could include:

- Helping to shape the development of a programme of work for NI departments to support net zero behaviour change and public engagement. This may include helping to develop/oversee research or using behaviour science techniques to gather baseline data for net zero public attitudes and behaviours in Northern Ireland. It may also include helping to develop/design public engagement projects using deliberative methods.
- Engagement with external partners such as the Climate Change Committee.
- Providing a review of areas in Northern Ireland's first Climate Action Plan where behavioural science could best support the delivery of emissions reductions and offering behavioural science advice to policy teams across NI departments who are working on climate change.
- Developing, guiding, or delivering behavioural science work and/or research proposals to support the development of future Climate Action Plans for Northern Ireland.
- Helping DAERA to build better links between the behavioural science academic community and policy making on climate change, such as through establishing a formal expert behavioural science steering group on climate change and identifying how this could best feed into the future development and implementation of Climate Action Plans for Northern Ireland.

The fellow will work in the Communication, Stakeholder Engagement & Behavioural Change (CSEBH) team, which supports the Climate Change and Green Growth Divisions within DAERA. This will provide a unique opportunity to gain in-depth understanding around climate change policy making, interact with senior officials, learn how devolved government works and the important role that evidence plays in shaping policy making.

The role is purposefully kept open for the secondee to scope out clear tasks in conjunction with policy and officials in government based on policy needs and the secondee's interests/skills, but ultimately the secondee will work to maximise the impact and influence of behaviour science on climate and environmental policy making. Through the fellowship we are hoping to gain a deeper understanding of approaches to shift behaviours towards less-carbon intensive consumption and foster support for wider societal and policy action on climate, including understanding synergies, trade-offs and spill-overs from actions, and how to bring climate front of mind within wider society.

The Fellow will benefit from:

- Support and oversight from the CSEBC branch, potentially including a Staff Officer to support research work.
- Opportunity to inform and influence climate change policy development in Northern Ireland.
- Proximity to interesting and topical policy and delivery decisions in a devolved administration.
- Experience of Government ways of working and how policy is made, to help 'land' research more effectively.
- Access to a wider network of policy, analysis, and other experts, and opportunities to engage with other government departments.

We will welcome academic publications and knowledge exchange activities relating to the work as agreed with the Communications, Stakeholder Engagement & Behaviour Change team.

Person Specification

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

Essential criteria:

- Academic background in Behavioural Science (e.g. Behavioural Economics, Social Psychology, Climate Social Sciences, systems research in a climate related area, social science expertise, Human Geography, Environmental Planning or Demography).
- Proven professional experiences in behavioural sciences and their related research methodologies with applied experience, with preference for candidates with behavioural sciences experience in climate change, including analysis on social norms and behavioural drivers and their impact on net zero outcomes.
- Advanced analytical skills, able to capture learning and use it to make improvements in programming and operations.
- Problem solving skills and ability to use initiative to identify solutions.
- Ability to build relationships to develop and participate in internal and external networks.
- Ability to meet travel requirements of this fellowship: travelling to Northern Ireland.

Desirable Criteria:

- Ability to design and lead on knowledge exchange activity between research and policy.
- Knowledge and/or experience of the unique nature of Northern Ireland society and politics.
- Post-graduate experience of working with public policy (research and practice).