

UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: DWP/DHSC - Work and Health in post-pandemic UK Fellowship

Host Organisation: Department for Work and Pensions / Department for Health and Social Care – Joint Work and Health Unit [Work and Health Unit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Host Team: Trialling, Evaluation, Data and Strategic analysis (TEDS)

Summary: Opportunity to analyse survey and administrative datasets to better understand the links between work and health, influencing policy-making at the joint DWP-DHSC Work and Health Unit.

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: Improving health and employment outcomes for disabled people and those with health conditions.

Research Council: ESRC

Academic Discipline/s: Population health, employment studies, health/labour market economics

Research Career Stage: No preference – open to 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: The successful applicant could base themselves in or make use of office space in London (Westminster), Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, or Manchester where JWHU analysts are all present. We anticipate that the Fellowship can be undertaken effectively with remote working + visits to DWP offices (as appropriate) to meet colleagues/teams. *Eligible T&S costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details.*

Hybrid Working: We would expect the successful applicant to combine time working in one of DWP’s sites, to benefit from face-to-face interaction with colleagues, with some remote working, as is the case for most DWP employees. The precise arrangements will be negotiated with the successful applicant. *Eligible T&S costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details.*

Security Clearance: Baseline Personnel Security Standard (expected to take up 4-6 weeks from submission). See [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk). *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. However, some of the inception phase engagement with the Team can commence whilst awaiting clearance, but will be required for the main placement phase.

Fellowship Opportunity Description

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) are seeking to embed a Fellow within the Joint Work and Health Unit's analytical division. The Work and Health Unit aims to improve the health and employment outcomes for disabled people and those with health conditions, by working across government and the wider public sector to develop solutions. The analytical team support this objective through by developing and using evidence – generated through commissioned research, evaluations of various initiatives, analysis of internal and external data sources – as well as engagement with the academic and wider research community. The Fellow will play a crucial role in improving Government's understanding of the relationship between work and health in post pandemic UK, and in identifying potential policy response options.

The Fellow will push the boundaries of survey and administrative data analysis to explore, identify and understand these issues with a particular focus on economic inactivity – a policy area we expect to be the focus of policy making in the months and years ahead. This will require combining sophisticated data analysis with an understanding of the potential links between work and health, on which there is an extensive academic literature. The Fellow will be expected to draw on the wide range of relevant social surveys available, as well as on DWP's rich administrative data. This will include exploring the potential for exploiting the recently developed linkage between DWP records and secondary mental healthcare records described in [Stevellink et al \(2022\)](#). Some specific research questions were previously set out in [DWP Areas of Research Interest 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) but the research need not be limited to those.

The Fellow will have the opportunity to co-design clear research tasks in collaboration with officials in government based on policy needs and the Fellow's interests/skills during the inception phase of the fellowship. We expect the Fellow will draw upon literature and academic networks to identify potential policy responses to the work and health issues identified.

The Fellow will benefit from:

- the opportunity to influence policy thinking in this vitally important area;
- Experience of Government ways of working and how policy is made, to help 'land' research more effectively;
- Access (during the Fellowship) to DWP datasets and information not generally available for academic research;
- Building a network of official contacts in analytical and policy teams in DWP and other Government Departments

The Fellow will also benefit from wider support, networking opportunities, and learning and development available to Government analysts, giving them a richer experience during their Fellowship.

The Fellow will be supported by the Joint Work and Health Unit in the translation, dissemination, and application of their work for policymakers and DWP analysts. This will include knowledge exchange opportunities such as seminars and roundtables, and support for the Unit in developing internal capability to further develop the research in the future e.g. upskilling joint unit analysts in any novel analytical techniques, code or datasets used during the fellowship.

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 a relevant discipline (employment studies, health/labour market economics, public health, population health, etc.)
- Subject matter interest and expertise (work and health, labour market, disability)
- Data analysis skills including with large survey datasets
- Experience of or ability to lead statistical analysis of survey data e.g., regressions, survival analysis
- Access (or skills / ability to access and engage) academic networks of relevance
- A passion for evidence-based policy-making
- Excellent communication skills

Desirable criteria

- Practical application / familiarity with evidence synthesis e.g., systematic review, rapid evidence assessment, meta-analysis, realist synthesis
- Ability to manage others' work and support their development and capability
- Experience of working /familiarity with key longitudinal datasets e.g. Understanding Society