

UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: MoJ Data and Evaluation Fellowship

Host Organisation: [Ministry of Justice \(MoJ\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk); see also [Research at MoJ - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Host Team: Evaluation and Prototyping Hub, Data and Analysis

Summary: Utilising technical expertise in evaluation methodology, using administrative and other data sources, to robustly evaluate justice policy and practices

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: Justice (flexible) – to be agreed with the Fellow in line with their research interests and the [MoJ Areas of Research Interest \(ARI\)](#)

Research Council: ESRC

Academic Discipline/s: Social sciences (any), economics, data science, methodology

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 (flexible – to be agreed with the Fellow)

Knowledge Exchange Phase:

Duration: 3 months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Work Arrangements

Location Requirements: UK only – no specific location requirements (see 'Hybrid Working') – some travel to MoJ offices as required by work. *Eligible T&S costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details.*

Hybrid Working: MoJ offers Hybrid Working, allowing colleagues to work flexibly from their base location, different MoJ sites/offices, and from home – to be agreed with the Fellow.

Security Clearance: Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) is expected to take 4-6 weeks from submission. We 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. The 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Fellowship Opportunity Description

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) are seeking to embed a Fellow within the Evaluation and Prototyping Hub in Data and Analysis. As part of the 'What Works' agenda to support better decisions with better evidence, the Hub rapidly tests ideas and robustly evaluates them.

Data and Analysis is a multi-disciplinary team of around 500 staff that sits at the heart of the MoJ, providing analytical support across a diverse and exciting agenda. The team support policy development and operational delivery with cutting-edge and high-impact analysis delivered by a community of analysts and specialists.

The Fellow will deliver elements of a new evaluation and prototyping strategy, which outlines actions to ensure robust and timely evidence on the effectiveness of policies and programmes sits at the heart of policy and operational decisions, to improve outcomes and deliver value for the taxpayer.

Based in the Hub, the Fellow will be flexibly deployed to a range of teams across MoJ, to provide expert advice and critical review for ongoing evaluations, ensuring all projects utilise proportionate research approaches and suitable analytical techniques, using appropriate data. This is likely to include developing a systematic evaluation framework, to alter and innovate MoJ's testing and trialling approach and culture in policymaking, including supporting a trial to implement and embed the framework.

The Fellow will have the opportunity to work on numerous projects that cut across the Department's policy and operational responsibilities, addressing priority research questions in the [MoJ Areas of Research Interest \(ARI\)](#). Exact topics will be determined by departmental priorities during the Inception Phase, shaped by the Fellow's interests and input.

The Fellow will be supported by the Evidence and Partnerships Hub in the translation, dissemination, and application of their work, including via knowledge exchange opportunities such as seminars, roundtables, and specialist academic advice 'surgeries'.

The Fellow will benefit from wider support, networking opportunities, and learning and development available to colleagues in Data and Analysis, giving them a richer experience during their Fellowship.

Feedback from a past Fellow:

"The ESRC Fellowship has brought a life changing impact for me as it has helped bring a systems approach into my research, making it more relevant for real life."

Person Specification

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

Essential Criteria:

- Knowledge of a range of evaluation methods, from: theory-based methods (process evaluation, logic models, 'theory of change' (ToC), and realist evaluation); experimental (including rapid cycle testing and AB testing), quasi-experimental and pre-experimental methods; value-for-money evaluation (cost-benefit evaluation)
- Practical application of (experimental, quasi-experimental and pre-experimental) methods, to generate, develop and test new policy ideas
- Strong quantitative analysis skills, utilising a range of methods and approaches, using administrative and other data sources
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to operate in multidisciplinary teams, at pace, to tackle complex challenges
- The ability to translate complex information and research findings into meaningful narrative for a non-academic audience, verbally and in writing, to drive decision-making and achieve impact
- An understanding of the challenges and opportunities of co-production and collaboration, including with non-academics and government/its agencies.

Desirable Criteria:

- Previous experience of collaborating with a UK government department or agency.