



UKRI Policy Fellowships 2023: Fellowship Opportunity Description

Fellowship Title: Scottish Government – Building Resilience in Scotland – Cross-Disciplinary Study – Fellowship

Host Organisation: Scottish Government - [Performance, Delivery and Resilience Directorate - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Host Team: Resilience Division within Performance, Delivery and Resilience Directorate

Summary: Opportunity to use a mix of social science skills to improve domestic and international policy making by enhancing our resilience to risk in Scotland and building risk capability across society

Fellowship Theme: Building a secure and resilient world

Policy Topic: Enhancing resilience to risk

Research Council: ESRC

Academic Discipline/s: Behavioural Science, Sociology, Geography or related social science

Research Career Stage: Early or mid-career

Fellowship Structure

Inception Phase:

Estimated Start Date: October 2023. *Exact date to be confirmed 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: 0.2- 0.4 FTE

Work Arrangements

Location Requirements: Location neutral but would anticipate some attendance at St. Andrews House in Edinburgh and Atlantic Quay in Glasgow at relevant points throughout the fellowship.

Hybrid Working: SG working pattern is not fixed and is dependent on the task with most work being from home but office space available if the individual requires it.

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. Ideally the security clearance process would be completed before the inception phase begins. See [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk).

Fellowship Opportunity Description

Background

Resilience (for Civil Contingencies in Scotland) is defined as the ability at every relevant level to detect, prevent and, if necessary, to handle and recover from disruptive challenges. Adopting a continuous improvement approach, we are always aiming to be better able to anticipate, prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from a wide range of emergencies as part of a safer and stronger Scotland.

[The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#) establishes a consistent level of civil protection activity across the UK. Scotland has developed its own Doctrine and Guidance for emergency planning. Called [Preparing Scotland](#) it is based on the principle of integrated emergency management (IEM), and its five components, of Assessment, Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery.

While the most recent framework has been in place since 2007 our experiences during Storm Arwen showed that the practical application of our plans came under pressure and our capability to implement the plans was constrained - [Storm Arwen review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#). We want to better understand how the IEM principles are applied in practice by those developing policy, those with duties to plan and respond to disruptive events and those communities and members of the public that are likely to be impacted. In particular, we would like to focus on how those developing and delivering policy use and contribute to civil contingencies risk assessment. We're looking for someone with a track record in social science methods, who is able to design and apply relevant research methods to these questions, and translate them into practical insights for the policy team.

Aim: To use social science and economic evidence to improve organisational preparedness for extreme events and response and recovery when these events supporting the a) critical appraisal of the extent to which risk assessment information is used in developing policy and driving risk activities b) development of recommendations for improving how risk information is used and developed and c) building capability within SG and with our co-producers to ensure we are a resilient community.

Method: The researcher will use mixed methods working with government policy officials, stakeholders out of government (such as emergency services, government agencies and local authorities) and members of the public. We expect the project to run over a number of phases.

- Phase One 0-6 months

We're keen to explore how, in practice, risk information is used to address the different components of IEM to inform the policy development process within Government. We would expect the study to also explore how this risk information flows from core central government teams and our co-producers of the policy outside central government, outwards to our key delivery stakeholders and members of the public. We anticipate this will involve desk-based analysis and primary research with different groups across government, responders and the community.

- Phase Two 6-9 months

Following this appraisal, the second part of this fellowship would be the development of recommendations for improving our processes, for SG officials to implement these improvements across the Scottish Government and beyond. This is expected to ensure that national level civil contingencies risk assessment is integrated into the development and delivery of policy initiatives, and we have a more sustainable ability to anticipate, prevent and prepare for risk moving forward.

- Phase 3 (9-12 months)

The third part of this fellowship will include sharing advice and recommendations through a capability-building programme within Scottish Government that enhances our capability to work with the tools and measures. This may include provision of a learning programme delivered through workshops, learning sessions etc on how we build capability with our co-producers, key stakeholders and members of the public to respond to and plan for risky event. We expect the fellowship to open up the SG to wider networks of experience and expertise in this field to begin a sustained and ongoing dialogue of knowledge exchange.

We will work with a fellow to design a programme of work that will help us realise this ambition and enable the fellow to best utilise their strengths. 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.

Benefit to the fellow

The knowledge gained during this fellowship will be invaluable to improve SG policy development and provide an ongoing legacy by building capability so that we build a more resilient country. The fellow will also benefit from their time spent in government by seeing first-hand how governments respond to risk and will work alongside policy teams to advise how we might do that better. They will be able to make connections with policy officials across policy teams in government that can be drawn on long after the fellowship has finished.

Person Specification

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

Essential Criteria:

Experience and knowledge of:

- Mixed methods research
- Behavioural science (inc. Organisational behaviour)
- Ability to draw insights from a range of disciplines e.g. Behavioural Science, Sociology, Geography
- Evidence synthesis and communicating outputs to policy audiences
- Working with research users to implement evidence driven recommendations

Desirable Criteria

- Understanding of Integrated Emergency Management literature
- Experience developing engaging teaching/instruction materials to build capability