

## ESRC Policy Fellowships 2023: Opportunity Description

**Fellowship Title:** *Scottish Government Promoting Economic Prosperity and Improving Outcomes Economics Fellowship*

**Host Department:** *Scottish Government*

**Host Team:** *Directorate for Chief Economist, DG Economy working with policy colleagues in DG Scottish Exchequer and other policy and delivery areas in Scottish Government.*

**Summary:** Opportunity to use a mix of economics and social science skills to enhance the understanding of the role of capital investment in promoting economic prosperity and improving outcomes. The fellowship will support the development of the approach and the evidence base for prioritising decisions on future capital investment.

**Fellowship Theme:** Creating opportunities, improving outcomes; 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:** Creating opportunities, improving outcomes; Data and Evaluation

**Relevant academic disciplines:** Economics and other social sciences

**Relevant research career stage:** Early or mid-career

### Practical details

#### 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

This phase will involve (i) an evidence review and (ii) engaging with a wide range of policy areas and delivery bodies across Scottish Government and public sector to focus the fellowship on the most promising areas and case studies.

##### **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:** Location neutral but would anticipate some attendance at St. Andrews House in Edinburgh and Victoria Quay in Edinburgh at relevant points throughout the fellowship. *Eligible T&S costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details.*

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

### **Fellowship Opportunity Description**

The Scottish Government's recent Capital Spending Review <sup>1</sup> was Scotland's first multi-year capital settlement for around a decade. It set out plans for more than £33 billion of funding to deliver the National Infrastructure Mission <sup>2</sup> - to increase annual investment in infrastructure by 1% of 2017 Scottish GDP by 2025-26.

Around 90% of the Scottish Government's capital budget supports infrastructure - from the homes we live in and the water, energy and telecommunication we consume, to how we travel to the places we work, shop and learn.

The economic rationale for the National Infrastructure Mission was supported by a paper produced by Scottish Government analysts, which set out the important role that infrastructure investment plays in improving the productive capacity of the economy and delivering long-term economic benefits as well as the critical role it plays in supporting the foundations of economic activity. <sup>3</sup>

Our capital funding also goes beyond infrastructure by investing directly in businesses to boost innovation and employment, funding research and development, and capitalising the Scottish National Investment Bank.

Capital investment crucially supports economic prosperity in its broadest sense <sup>4</sup> and will help to deliver the vision in Scottish Government National Strategy for Economic Transformation <sup>5</sup> to build a wellbeing economy - a society that is thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions.

The Scottish Government is now planning for its next programme of capital investment and this fellowship will help inform how to prioritise future investment to deliver economic prosperity and a wellbeing economy to create opportunities and improve outcomes for all of Scotland's people and places.

### **Aims**

- To synthesis evidence on the role of capital investment in supporting the foundations of economic activity, promoting economic prosperity and delivering a wellbeing economy. This should identify similarities and differences by the types of capital investment.
- To develop innovative analytical / modelling techniques or metrics to assess and measure the wider economic prosperity from capital investment that could be used to inform prioritisation.
- To select and develop case studies from specific types of capital projects to demonstrate the contribution to a wellbeing economy from capital investment. This could be, for example, transport, health or housing projects or capital funding on research and innovation.
- To work with policy makers to develop the evidence base necessary to prioritise Government decisions on future capital investment to deliver a wellbeing economy and improve outcomes that delivers prosperity for all of Scotland's people and places.

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<sup>1</sup> [Investing for jobs: Capital Spending Review 2021-2022 to 2025-2026](#)

<sup>2</sup> [A National Mission with Local Impact: Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-22 to 2025-26 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Infrastructure investment: evidence summary - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [ekosinclusivegrowthandinfrastructurereportjune22.pdf \(scottishfuturetrust.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

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 understanding of infrastructure investment and the evidence base for prioritising decisions on capital spending.

The fellow will also benefit from their time spent in government by seeing first-hand how governments make decisions on spending and capital investment; and will work alongside policy teams to advise how we might do that better, including improvements to business cases for infrastructure improvements. 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.

### **Opportunity-specific 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 applied economic research.
- Expertise and interest in applying economics to areas such as innovation, research and development, public finance, public policy, infrastructure and as well as wellbeing.
- Experience of the design, development, management and timely delivery of economic research.
- Proven ability to deliver knowledge exchange activity, communicating and presenting complex economic analysis to non-technical audiences, both orally and in writing.

#### **Desirable Criteria:**

- Experience of economic modelling and modelling techniques.
- Experience of economic appraisal, business cases, evaluation and measuring outcomes.