

UKRI policy fellowships 2025: fellowship position

Fellowship title: Cabinet Office Safer Streets Mission fellowship

Fellowship type: Core policy fellowship

Host organisation: [Cabinet Office](#)

Host team: [Evaluation Task Force](#) (ETF) and Mission Delivery Unit (MDU)

Summary: opportunity to work at the heart of government supporting evaluation and delivery of the Safer Streets Mission, to drive a step change in evidence-based decision-making and public sector reform. Work will cover the breadth of the Safer Streets Mission, including ambitious targets to: halve Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the next decade, halve knife crime in the next decade and restore trust and confidence in the Criminal Justice System

Policy topic: crime and justice, neighbourhood policing, crime reduction, violence reduction, public safety, knife crime, domestic abuse, VAWG

Research Council: ESRC

Academic discipline(s): criminology, crime science, social research methods, behavioural science, impact evaluation, specialist evaluation skills preferably in experimental or quasi-experimental methods and complex or multifaceted evaluations

Research career stage: open to early or mid-career researchers

Fellowship structure

Inception phase:

Estimated start date: February 2026. Exact date to be confirmed by the host depending on onboarding and security clearance requirements

Duration: three months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Main placement phase:

Duration: 12 months

FTE: 0.6 to 1 FTE

Knowledge exchange phase:

Duration: three months

FTE: 0.4 FTE

Work arrangements

Location requirements: fellows will need to regularly work with ETF and MDU teams at Cabinet Office locations in Westminster

Hybrid working: during the main placement phase, fellows will be expected to attend Cabinet Office buildings in person at 1 Horse Guards Road or 70 Whitehall on average two days per week. During the inception phase, fellows should budget for attending up to six face-to-face meetings in London. Eligible Travel and Subsistence costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details

Security clearance: fellows will need a minimum of [Counter Terrorist Check \(CTC\) clearance](#). Security clearance can take up to three months. Please see [National security vetting: clearance levels](#) for further information

Fellowship description

The Mission:

The new government has said it will put Missions at the heart of everything it does as it seeks to achieve long-term renewal, through tackling complex societal challenges that will make a meaningful difference to people's everyday lives. Achieving these outcomes requires a new way of working in government that combines the best of policy development and evaluation. In support of these aims, this fellowship will be hosted by the ETF and MDU. This opportunity is one of five fellowships that will be hosted by the ETF and MDU, creating a sub-cohort of Mission-led policy fellows working at the centre of government.

The teams:

The ETF is a joint Cabinet Office and HM Treasury (HMT) team working to ensure robust evidence on the effectiveness of policies and programmes sits at the heart of spending decisions.

MDU leads on working with departments on the Safer Streets Mission, as well as the other Mission areas. This includes addressing key challenges and blockers for key components of Mission delivery and ensuring that the overall policy package is sufficient for delivering the Mission as a whole.

The Home Office (HO) is the lead department for the delivery of the Safer Streets Mission, but Mission delivery requires a cross-government and cross-sector approach, involving experts in the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Department for Education (DfE), and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to bring together a coherent, system-wide view of how to effect change. MDU is also working with leading technology companies to understand the role they can play in supporting crime detection and online safety.

The work:

Fellows will be embedded in the ETF with dotted line management to MDU colleagues leading work on the Safer Streets Mission. Working across these teams, fellows will demonstrate the dynamic new ways of working necessitated by Mission-driven government, combining the best of academia and outside challenge with government planning. While this opportunity is focussed on the Safer Streets Mission, there may be opportunities for the successful candidates to work at the intersection of different Missions. Fellows will work with ETF and MDU to codesign potential research projects during the fellowship inception phase.

A critical part of Mission delivery is using data and evidence to target resources in the most effective way. The MDU supports departments to develop Theories of Change for the complex outcomes in scope of Safer Streets which strike an effective balance between universal interventions (often in the preventative, early years and educational spaces) with more targeted interventions that can reach victims and perpetrators, who may already be interacting with the Criminal Justice System. Underpinning all of this must be a clear understanding of the available evidence of 'what works', so that policy packages are developed with the greatest likelihood of achieving the outcome metric in the Mission timeframe.

Key activities, fellows will:

- Work on a dynamic mix of short-term activities tackling emerging issues in Mission delivery and evaluation, and longer-term projects directly engaging with policy or analytical specialists in departments
- Use their knowledge of Mission areas and evaluation expertise to problem solve delivery and evaluation challenges related to government Missions
- Work to ensure our understanding of Mission areas is informed by the best available evidence, that data and research evidence is used to support Mission delivery, and ensure Missions generate data to enable robust impact evaluations
- Contribute academic expertise to the delivery and evaluation of government Missions through both technical evaluation skills and their specialist policy knowledge of the Safer Streets Mission area. This can include expertise in specific elements within Safer Streets policy rather than expertise across the Mission such as VAWG, knife crime, anti-social behaviour or offender rehabilitation
- Support development and implementation of robust evaluation of government programmes by providing technical advice to departments on complex evaluations and reviewing evaluation plans
- Engage academic networks to collate and share relevant learning between academic and government communities to support Mission delivery and evaluation
- Assist the delivery of the Safer Streets Mission through supporting with aspects of delivery planning, such as by reviewing and synthesising research and evaluation evidence, developing Theories of Change, interrogating analysis from departments to check coherence and alignment with evidence, and providing strategic advice or challenge to senior officials and ministers (both for core deliverables within the Mission, and potentially also for the Mission overall)
- Support the delivery of the Safer Streets Mission through identifying blockers to delivery and helping develop novel solutions to overcoming these challenges in a manner that supports the government's other Missions (such as Clean Energy and Economic Growth)

- Undertake original research and analysis to support delivery and evaluation of the Safer Streets Mission

Benefits to the fellow:

- A unique opportunity to inform the design, delivery and evaluation of the highest priority government policies
- Gaining an understanding of policymaking from the heart of government, as well as the analysis, data and funding decisions that support this
- The opportunity to build their network of policy and analytical professionals within government, from key central departments (No10, Cabinet Office, HMT) and Mission relevant departments including HO, MoJ, DfE, DHSC, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Transport
- Peer mentoring from ETF Evaluation Leads and MDU delivery professionals, all of whom are handpicked experts in their field who make up our small but highly effective central units
- Opportunity to apply academic knowledge and research expertise in the delivery of government Missions
- Opportunity to publish academic outputs (where data and security requirements allow)
- Potential to access new and novel data related to Mission delivery

Example activities and outputs the fellow will be expected to undertake or deliver include:

- Rapid review of policy documents or research evidence to feed into delivery and evaluation planning
- Researching and communicating 'what works' evidence to policy and delivery teams working on the Safer Streets Mission (for example working across the policy lifecycle to pinpoint intervention points and approaches that could have the best impact in: preventing engagement with knife crime; dissuading young people on the periphery of the Criminal Justice System from escalating into more serious offences; and preventing re-offending)
- Analyse and interrogate data to support problem identification and policy development in Safer Streets Mission areas, such as Crime Survey for England and Wales; police records on crime types; data owned by the justice system on reoffending patterns and likelihood
- Rapid scrutiny of evaluation plans attached to business cases submitted to HMT spending teams
- Advising and supporting the HO on the design and delivery of robust, proportionate evaluation of in-flight initiatives
- Communicating research and evaluation findings to ensuring they are fed back into decisions made by departments and spending teams

Person specification

Applications will be assessed by UKRI panel assessment against the following essential opportunity-specific requirements in addition to the generic eligibility and call criteria:

Essential criteria:

- Subject matter expertise related to the Safer Streets Mission, for example: VAWG, knife crime, anti-social behaviour, rehabilitation and reoffending, policing reform and building trust in Criminal Justice Systems
- Experience of design and delivery of experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation, complex theory-based or contribution analysis evaluation
- Subject matter expertise in social research methodology, impact evaluation and process evaluation
- Experience of working with policy or practice stakeholders to develop and refine research, monitoring or evaluation plans
- Understanding of or experience in operational delivery or the levers needed to turn good policy into good delivery

Applicants shortlisted from the panel assessment will be assessed at the host led interview selection process against the following desirable opportunity-specific requirements:

Desirable criteria:

- Ability to synthesise existing evidence and make recommendations about policy development and implementation
- Background in or awareness of behavioural science
- Background in or awareness of value for money evaluation or assessment
- Background in or experience of applied quantitative research methods

Processing personal data

If applicants are shortlisted by the UKRI assessment panel UKRI will need to share the application and any personal information that it contains with the host for the host led interview selection process.

Your personal data will be handled in line with UK data protection legislation and managed securely. If you would like to know more, including how to exercise your Rights, please see the UKRI [privacy notice](#).

The Cabinet Office privacy notice can be found here: [Cabinet Office Personal Information Charter](#). Hosts will delete your data at the end of the selection process unless you are successful, in which case we will retain your data as an independent data controller.