

UKRI policy fellowships 2025: fellowship position

Fellowship title: FCDO Growth Mission economics fellowship

Fellowship type: Core policy fellowship

Host organisation: [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office](#)

Host team: FCDO Economics and Evaluation Department (EED), a part of the Analysis Directorate

Summary: opportunity for an academic economist to work with the FCDO analytical and policy community on international aspects of the Growth Mission and questions on the UK growth's security and resilience

Policy topic: the fellow will work on Economic Growth, the government's central driving mission which the FCDO is a core part of. The two main themes for exploration are identifying further opportunities for leveraging international policy options to drive growth and secondly, assessing where the UK's growth is vulnerable to international shocks in a potentially fragmenting global economic system and where its resilience needs improving

Research Council: ESRC

Academic discipline(s): economics academic background required, alongside interest and aptitude for thinking about politics and international affairs and enthusiasm for teamwork and collaboration

Research career stage: open to early and 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: UK flexible location (FCDO's UK Headquarters, either King Charles Street or Abercrombie House)

Hybrid working: expectation of 40-60% of pro rata time spent in one of FCDO's UK Headquarters. Exceptions to this to be discussed and agreed during application process. Eligible Travel and Subsistence costs are supported in the main UKRI grant. Please see full call text and guidance for more details

Security clearance: Security Check (SC) minimum. Open to discussion about Developed Vetting (DV) if timing and area of expertise suggests there would be value for money. Please see [National security vetting: clearance levels](#) for further information

Fellowship description

This fellowship provides an excellent opportunity to use your economics and analytical skills to advance methodology and thinking related to some of the UK's priority foreign policy areas. Working alongside FCDO's Chief Economist, and as part of the global FCDO economist community, you will develop analysis that will directly shape and impact senior leaders and Ministerial decision making on key government priorities. The Foreign Secretary (FS) has a desire for the FCDO to be the lead department on the international aspects of the UK's growth agenda, including the drive for secure and resilient growth and the fellow's work will contribute to this Mission.

The successful applicant will work within the central EED, which sits within Analysis Directorate and the Director General Economics, Climate and Global Issues cone. EED supports the Chief Economist in leading economic advice to the FS on all the UK's foreign and development policy, on issues ranging from international macro risks to national security issues (including the impact of economic sanctions) and spending development aid effectively. This is an exciting time to work with the analytical professions in FCDO, where there is a huge appetite for economic analysis from both within the FCDO and from our international partners.

The FCDO economics profession is committed to learning and developing both in terms of continuous professional development for staff and also in terms of methodology and approaches to analytical work and research. As a policy fellow in EED you would be central to this goal, progressing our analytical thinking and working collaboratively to share knowledge and develop organisational capability within FCDO. EED is a friendly, highly motivated and inclusive place to work, where respect and kindness is paramount, and work is conducted within an environment that welcomes diversity of thought and approach.

Economic Growth is at the heart of the UK Government's work, and one of the key Missions all HMG departments are tasked with supporting. For the FCDO, growth is one of the FS's core six priorities and it is increasingly at the centre of diplomacy and policymaking across the organisation. This focus has raised the voice and position of economics in the department and the work of economists is increasing championed by senior officials, Special Advisors and Ministers. The policy fellow will have the unique opportunity to contribute to this growth priority. The FS has made it clear that the FCDO is to be the international delivery arm of the whole of government's growth work and there is a strong desire for any international action to be rooted in analysis, where work is driven by evidence and politically grounded.

The exact scope of the work to support this area will depend on the ever-evolving picture of the synthesis between the UK's international levers to drive growth and which partnerships present the most opportunity. The fellow will have the power to codesign their more exact program during the inception phase, and currently the two likely broad areas of potential focus are:

1. Analysis of the key levers the FCDO has to drive UK growth and in which countries they are likely to be most effective. This would build on a suite of existing work but gives the opportunity to provide deeper insight for the department. Particular areas of interest in this space include the way levers are prioritised depending on the timeframe of the growth they help deliver and the combinations of levers which when used together can more effectively drive economic growth
2. How international levers drive not only short-term growth but secure and resilient growth. The global economic context the UK operates in is fast-moving and potentially increasingly fragmented, and therefore any economic growth the FCDO is supporting needs to be resilient to future incidental or potentially deliberate economic shocks. This may also potentially involve work on whether there is any potential trade-off between short-term economic growth and long-term economic resilience and the future growth that brings

Beyond the focus of the specific projects the fellow will be working on, there is a desire for them to support and challenge a variety of other work. The fellow would have the opportunity to comment and feed in on work produced by several other EED teams, increasing the "external" input and scrutiny of the department's analysis. Furthermore, the fellow will be undertaking original research and the FCDO will support the production of academic outputs, including possibly publishing research, subject to data and security requirements.

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:

- Proven academic track record in the field of economics as an early or mid-career researcher
- Previous experience of economic analysis in the fields of economic growth and international economics

- Experience of or potential to apply relevant technical methods (quantitative and qualitative) applicable to the noted topics in fellowship description section above
- Strong interest and aptitude for thinking about policy, politics and international affairs and links to economic analysis
- Experience and enthusiasm to work collaboratively and problem solve with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Enthusiasm for teamwork and collaboration across the department

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:

- Previous policy related experience and insight into working in a governmental context valuable

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 FCDO's privacy notice can be found here: [FCDO privacy notice](#). 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.