



# UKRI policy fellowships 2026

## Fellowship position

### Fellowship title:

Cabinet Office impact economy evidence and evaluation fellowship

### Fellowship type:

Core policy fellowship

### Host organisation:

[Cabinet Office](#)

### Host team:

[Evaluation Task Force](#)

### Academic discipline/s:

Social research methods, specialist evaluation skills, impact evaluation, behavioural science, knowledge translation.

### Summary:

Opportunity to support the government's ambition to build more effective impact economy partnerships, to deliver economic growth, and tackle priority policy problems.

### Policy topic:

Impact economy, social impact, growth mission, local economic growth.

### Research career stage:

Open to early and mid-career researchers

## Fellowship structure

The fellowship is estimated to begin in May 2027. The exact date will be confirmed by the host depending on onboarding and security clearance requirements. The fellowship will have three phases:

- inception: duration is 3 months at 0.4 FTE
- main placement: duration is 12 months at 0.6-1 FTE
- knowledge exchange: duration is 3 months at 0.4 FTE

## Work arrangements

### Location requirements:

The fellow will need to regularly work at Cabinet Office locations in Canary Wharf and Westminster.

## Hybrid working:

During the main placement phase, fellows will be expected to attend Cabinet Office buildings in person at (primarily) 10 South Colonnade, Canary Wharf or (occasionally) 1 Horse Guards Road, Westminster 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 and nationality eligibility criteria:

The level of security clearance needed is Counter-Terrorist Check (CTC), please see [national security vetting: clearance levels](#) for more information. CTC clearance can take up to two months to complete. The inception phase can commence (without access to Cabinet Office systems) before clearance is granted.

This job is broadly open to the following nationality groups:

- UK nationals
- nationals of the Republic of Ireland
- nationals of Commonwealth countries who have the right to work in the UK
- nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities with settled or pre-settled status under the [European Union Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#)
- nationals of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein and family members of those nationalities who have made a valid application for settled or pre-settled status under the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS)
- individuals with limited leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain who were eligible to apply for EUSS on or before 31 December 2020
- Turkish nationals, and certain family members of Turkish nationals, who have accrued the right to work in the Civil Service

Further information can be found at [Civil Service recruitment: nationality rules - GOV.UK](#).

## Fellowship position description

### The teams:

The Evaluation Task Force (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. The [Office for the Impact Economy](#) (OIE) provides a single front door for impact investors, philanthropy and purpose-driven businesses to partner with the government and grow their social impact across the UK.

### The work:

The policy fellow will work with the ETF and the OIE to support evidence generation and use in a key policy area for the growth mission. Impact capital - philanthropic capital, social investment and institutional impact investment – represents over £100bn of funding which contributes to a range of national priorities. However, evidence on both the key mechanisms underpinning successful impact partnerships, and the added benefits of different impact economy approaches are limited. The successful fellow will support the development of a strategic approach to evidence generation and use for impact partnerships across HMG.

The fellow will add value by mapping current approaches to the delivery of impact partnerships, synthesising the current evidence base, and identifying key evidence gaps where further research and evaluation will help the more effective delivery of future impact partnerships. Outputs will help shape a strategic approach to developing evidence, underpinning future work for the Evaluation Task Force and the Office for the Impact Economy.

While this opportunity is focussed on understanding and evaluating the impact economy landscape, there may be opportunities for the successful candidate to work on a broader range of activities linked to the ETF strategy, including capability building in local government, and exploring how we apply 'test and learn' approaches to evaluation in local areas. Fellows will work with ETF and OIE to codesign potential research projects during the fellowship inception phase.

## Key activities:

The successful fellow will have to opportunity to:

- work on a dynamic mix of short-term activities tackling emerging issues, and longer-term projects directly engaging with policy or analytical specialists in departments and local areas
- work to ensure our understanding of the Impact Economy is informed by the best available evidence, and that data and research evidence is used to support policy development and delivery, and robust impact evaluation
- contribute academic expertise to the development and evaluation of policy through both technical evaluation skills and their specialist policy knowledge of the impact economy.
- support development and implementation of robust evaluation of programmes by providing technical advice to departments and local areas on complex evaluations, and through review of evaluation plans
- engage academic networks to collate and share relevant learning between academic and government communities to support policy development and implementation
- undertake original research and analysis to support delivery and evaluation of the government's work across the Impact Economy.
- shape their fellowship to align with specific research aims and areas of policy interest and expertise – e.g. use of philanthropic funding in particular policy or thematic settings.

## Benefits to the fellow:

- 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 and local government
- peer mentoring from ETF Evaluation Leads and the opportunity to apply academic knowledge and research expertise in the development and implementation of policy
- opportunity to publish academic outputs (where data and security requirements allow)

## Example activities and outputs:

- rapid reviews of policy documents or research evidence to feed into delivery and evaluation planning
- researching and communicating 'what works' evidence to policy and delivery teams
- analysis and interrogation of data to support problem identification and policy development
- rapid scrutiny of evaluation plans attached to business cases submitted to HMT spending teams
- advising and supporting departments and local areas 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, local areas, 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:

- 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

Applicants shortlisted from the panel assessment will be invited to a host led interview. At this stage the host will also take into account the following desirable fellowship-specific requirements.

## Desirable criteria:

- ability to synthesise existing evidence and make recommendations about policy development and implementation
- background in or awareness of value for money evaluation or assessment
- experience in other social science disciplines such as behavioural science or economics

## 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](#).

Please see the [Host's privacy notice](#) and they 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.