



UKRI policy fellowships 2026

Fellowship position

Fellowship title:

FCDO climate resilience and anticipatory action fellowship

Fellowship type:

Natural hazards and resilience fellowship

Host organisation:

[Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office](#)

Host team:

Adaptation and Resilience Team, Climate Resilience Department, Energy Climate Directorate, with shared management with the Research and Evidence Department.

Academic discipline/s:

Climate resilience, early warning systems, anticipatory action, development studies, humanitarian studies

Summary:

Opportunity to support evidence-informed UK policy development at the interface of humanitarian response and climate resilience, with a focus on early warning, early and anticipatory action in fragile and conflict affected contexts and particularly focus linking anticipatory action to long term resilience.

Policy topic:

The fellow will focus on how, in line with the Foreign Secretary's priorities on climate, nature and security, evidence on climate risk, early warning, and anticipatory action can be better translated into FCDO policy processes and country-level programming, in ways that support long-term stability, development and resilience. This includes identifying key evidence gaps that currently constrain policy and programme effectiveness, and examining the policy and institutional barriers, particularly in fragile contexts, that limit earlier action based on forecasts and warnings. The role will also explore how climate, humanitarian and development financing and incentives can be more aligned to support early and anticipatory action.

Research career stage:

Open to early to 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:

London with flexibility across FCDO UK offices (either East Kilbride or London) when beneficial.

Hybrid working:

Whilst FCDO has a three-days a week minimum office working requirement in line with the rest of the UK Civil Service, we would be content for a minimum one day a week office attendance during the main inception and placement phase. International travel may be required. A laptop will be provided enabling work from home or other sites, providing access to host systems. In addition to office attendance, it would be useful to budget for travel to 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:

Security Check (SC) clearance is required, which usually takes around six weeks. The residency requirement for SC is to have lived continuously in the UK for a period of 2 years in the last 5 years. 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 UKRI. Inception phase cannot begin before the security clearance process is completed. Please see [national security vetting: clearance levels](#) for more information.

Fellowship position description

Climate change impacts are experienced now and they will increase. We are already locked into warming to which we need to adapt and build resilience. The evidence is clear that greenhouse gas emissions from human activities have unequivocally warmed the planet by 1.1°C already. Climate related disasters have caused over US\$3 trillion of damage over the last 25 years and up to 3.6 billion people live in places highly vulnerable to climate impacts, with women, young people, indigenous people, and people with disabilities most likely to be affected. The scale of climate impacts to date and those expected with every fraction of a degree of additional warming means that action to adapt and prevent climate change cannot wait. Adaptation progress is unevenly distributed across regions and mostly fragmented and incremental, with adaptation limits being reached in some sectors and regions and increasing evidence of maladaptation. (IPCC, 6th Assessment Report, 2022)

Whilst climate change impacts increase the need for humanitarian response, we will always play catch up if we only focus on responding to humanitarian emergencies. Climate change impacts and socio-economic vulnerability go hand in hand: people in highly vulnerable areas are 15 times more likely to die in floods, droughts and storms; and it is estimated that climate change will push 100m people into poverty by 2030 and 720m by 2050. Tackling climate change and building long-term resilience in fragile and conflict affected state, is particularly challenging, with 10 of the 12 most conflict-affected states highly climate-vulnerable. As such, it is imperative to ensure that humanitarian response as well as early warning and early action contribute to building long-term climate resilience, stability and socio-economic development.

To respond to this challenge, this fellowship will focus on strengthening the use of evidence in Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) policy and programming at the interface of humanitarian response and climate adaptation and resilience, with a particular emphasis on early warning and

anticipatory action in fragile and conflict affected states. Particularly, this fellowship will aim to produce and synthesise policy-relevant research linking anticipatory action and humanitarian response to long-term resilience and adaptation.

The fellow will be embedded across the Energy Climate Directorate and the Research and Evidence Division, working closely with policy, research and programme teams. The role will support the translation of research and analytical evidence into policy development, programming decisions and operational guidance, including ahead of and during natural hazard events. The fellowship will also contribute to shaping FCDO's research priorities by identifying evidence gaps related to anticipatory action, cascading and complex risks, and longer term resilience.

The fellowship will provide an opportunity to co-design, produce and publish original research and analytical outputs, ensuring that findings contribute to wider scientific and policy discussions.

The fellow will have opportunities to engage directly with policymakers within FCDO and across government, as well as with external partners and stakeholders. This may include engagement in key international and multilateral processes relevant to climate, resilience and humanitarian policy, such as COPs, G20.

The role will also offer structured knowledge exchange opportunities across directorates and county teams at FCDO, including participation in policy roundtables, cross-government workshops and wider policy and research networks.

The precise focus and outputs will be co designed during the inception phase, reflecting FCDO priorities and the fellow's expertise and interest. These might include (as an example) one or more of the following:

- synthesis of best practice and gaps in embedding long-term climate adaptation in humanitarian response
- identify evidence gaps and support designing research programmes to fulfil them
- review FCDO programming portfolio, identifying areas where there might be opportunities and gaps to incorporate long-term climate adaptation and resilience into humanitarian and conflict/stability programming
- review policy and diplomatic levers – for example international and multilateral fora, key actors, opportunities – that could support shifting the dial on global practice to embed long term climate resilience in humanitarian response
- provide expert, technical review of draft policy documents or business case documents on the topic
- design and deliver a short programme to strengthen internal FCDO/HMG capacity to embed long term climate adaptation and resilience into humanitarian response and conflict/stability work

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:

- deep subject matter expertise in either climate adaptation and resilience in a development context or anticipatory action in humanitarian response, with a good understanding of the other area and the ability to explore the links between them
- strong analytical skills, particularly including the ability to synthesise diverse qualitative and quantitative evidence to provide rapid insight and strategic advice at a leadership level to guide policy directions

- experience applying research insights to policy or practice in decision-making contexts, with proven ability to understand the political context and the context of the government work, particularly around the need to translate theoretical concepts into practical, implementable actions

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:

- experience working on issues affecting fragile and conflict affected contexts
- familiarity with humanitarian, development or climate programming environments
- champion of highly inclusive and collaborative work environment, being acutely aware on the need for, and strong ally in, overcoming gender, ethnicity, nationality and other biases, within the work environment, in the way research is carried out and with external partners

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 Hosts' [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.