



UKRI policy fellowships 2026

Fellowship position

Fellowship title:

FCDO energy systems fellowship

Fellowship type:

Core policy fellowship

Host organisation:

[Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office \(FCDO\)](#)

Host team:

Economic Growth Research Team, Research and Analysis Directorate

Academic discipline/s:

Energy systems, engineering, energy economics, policy analysis

Summary:

The fellowship is an opportunity to help steer FCDO sponsored activities on electricity grid infrastructure research and financing, with the aim of supporting an accelerated and equitable clean energy transition globally.

Policy topic:

The international clean energy transition, aligned with UK contributions to the Global Clean Power Alliance, and low carbon economic development per UK international development objectives.

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 role can be based in London or East Kilbride, there will be some requirement to travel for internal meetings, and to participate in external conferences, workshops and events, this would be approximately 6 times within a year.

Hybrid working:

We would be content to agree a flexible working pattern, with the expectation of mutually agreed office attendance (either East Kilbride or London) when beneficial; for example, for onboarding and internal events. A laptop will be provided enabling work from home or other sites, providing access to host systems. It would be useful to budget for travel to either East Kilbride or London around six times in the placement year and for three days in the inception phase. 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 for the applicant 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. SC clearance will be required before the inception phase of the fellowship begins. Please see [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK](#) for more information

Fellowship position description

The policy fellow will collaborate with FCDO energy research programmes, to support the uptake of new evidence and knowledge within FCDO policy teams, overseas posts, and HMG more broadly. The fellow will engage with the Green Grids Initiative, OFGEM, and with International Climate Finance spending teams in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on the Prime Minister's priority area of the Global Clean Power Alliance (GCPA).

The fellow will have some scope for self-directed/co-created research and analysis to address emerging policy and research questions such as (for example);

- how can energy system resilience secure greater volumes of public/private finance in developing contexts
- how can development partners and investors best support the financial sustainability of energy utility companies
- how can local manufacture and supply chains for renewable technologies contribute to domestic green economies in developing contexts
- how should rural off-grid electrification and grid-extension be deconflicted to best avoid stranded assets, and to de-risk investments in extension or off-grid systems
- how can grid-infrastructure bottlenecks to electrification of demand (e.g. transport, cooking, cooling) be managed, and how should mitigation of these bottlenecks be addressed/financed
- what are the most cost-effective measures to support economic development through energy access

Priority research topics will be mutually agreed during the inception period of the fellowship, based on the expertise of the Fellow and alignment with broader policy/research team objectives.

The Fellow will be embedded within the Research and Analysis Directorate, and will benefit from connections to relevant policy stakeholders and research programmes. The Fellow will be line managed

within the Economic Growth Research Team and provided with office space, a laptop, and access to host IT systems.

Benefits to the Fellow:

- opportunity to codesign, produce and publish original research, ensuring that findings contribute to wider scientific and policy discussions while adhering to necessary security protocols
- being embedded in the (host) team and have access to internal systems and processes, gaining in-depth understanding of the policy process
- the opportunity to inform and influence FCDO's research agenda, and wider government policy, on the international clean energy transition
- access to a wider network of policy, analysis, other experts and opportunities to engage with government departments, research programmes and aligned international organisations
- knowledge exchange opportunities, including policy roundtables, cross-government workshops and wider networks

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:

- a proven academic track record in international energy sector policy and economics
- subject matter expertise in energy systems policy options
- strong analytical and communication skills, for example, the ability to synthesise and communicate a range of quantitative and qualitative data for non-technical audiences

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:

- prior experience working with UK and/or international policy stakeholders
- prior experience with research on energy networks in developing country contexts
- demonstrated expertise in energy for economic and social development

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.