

# UKRI policy fellowships 2026

## Fellowship position

### Fellowship title:

GO-Science misinformation in emergencies fellowship

### Fellowship type:

Natural hazards and resilience fellowship

### Host organisation:

[Government Office for Science](#)

### Host team:

Social science team, Climate, Social Science and International (CSI)

### Academic discipline/s:

Sociology, psychology, anthropology, media studies, history

### Summary:

Opportunity to advise on societal and behavioural evidence to strengthen crisis response in government, focusing on the role of misinformation (false and misleading information) within the context of emergencies.

### Policy topic:

Issues including social cohesion, election integrity, societal resilience as it relates to emergencies ranging from natural hazards, public health and malicious attacks.

### 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 GO-Science office locations are London, Birmingham, Salford, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Darlington and Bristol. We anticipate that the fellowship could be undertaken effectively with remote working and occasional visits to a GO-Science office (as appropriate) to meet colleagues. GO-Science operate a hybrid working model with a mix of office and home working. We will discuss suitable working arrangements with the successful fellow.

## Hybrid working:

Where office-based, to maximise the benefits of the fellowship it is recommended that the fellow would spend circa 40% of their time in a GO-Science office at both the inception and placement phases. Occasional visits to London may be required. 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:

[Basic Personnel Security Standard \(BPSS\)](#) checks, and, if London based, Counter Terrorism Check (CTC). We would ask the person taking up our fellowship opportunity to start the security clearance application process as soon as their fellowship has been confirmed and before the inception phase begins. Please see [national security vetting: clearance levels](#) for more information.

# Fellowship position description

Government Office for Science (GO-S) works at the heart of government, ensuring policies and decisions are informed by the best scientific evidence and strategic long-term thinking.

This role will be based in the GO-S Social Science team, which was set up in 2022 to strengthen use of societal and behavioural evidence and expertise. The successful candidate will work between the Social Science team and the GO-S National Security and Resilience team, which works to ensure that UK national security and resilience policy, preparedness and crisis response are underpinned by robust scientific advice across the full range of risks to the UK.

This fellowship is an exciting opportunity to work at the interface of emergency preparedness, crisis response and social science to strengthen the application of evidence to mitigate harmful misinformation (false and misleading information) during emergencies, a topic where there is considerable policy interest and opportunities for practical impacts. The fellowship will complement the Government Chief Scientific Adviser's current 'Year of Trustworthy Information', meaning that there will be opportunities for collaborations across GO-S and will other partners within and external to government.

There is significant scope for the UKRI policy fellow to shape the role and identify where they can have an impact. At a high level, the fellow will be expected to:

- provide ad hoc expertise in social and behavioural science with a focus on disasters and emergencies and/or information ecosystems/disorder, including for rapid response work
- synthesise evidence on the role of misinformation during emergencies including recovery post emergencies and identify effective interventions
- support resilience and crisis communications teams to apply social and behavioural science evidence on misinformation in real-world situations
- develop evidence-based training or 'toolkits' for government teams working in emergency preparedness and crisis response

Beyond providing advice and input to the team's existing work, and across GO-Science more broadly, we expect the fellow to develop their own discreet work project in the team. This would be co-designed at the

inception phase and would likely involve working with GO-S teams as well as key partners in other central government departments (such as Cabinet Office), devolved administrations and other departments and agencies belonging to the Cross-Government Social and Behavioural Science Group.

The following areas are examples of questions the fellow might focus on:

- understanding how misinformation shapes behaviour during emergencies (including recovery)
- we are particularly interested in case studies of specific types of emergencies which have received less policy attention (for example, natural hazards)
- understanding the impacts of misinformation at local and regional levels
- mapping how misinformation spreads during an emergency and how it is amplified (and how this might differ from 'peacetime' contexts)
- what interventions (both short-term and long-term) have demonstrated effectiveness for mitigating the impacts of misinformation during emergencies
- how policymakers can better distinguish between emergency contexts in which misinformation is likely to play an important role, and those in which its impacts may be less significant (in shaping behaviour, public narratives, etc)
- provide a historical perspective of how the role of misinformation in emergency contexts has changed over time, for example what we can learn from the period before the widespread adoption of social media

The outputs will be disseminated across GO-Science and government, with the potential to publish some aspects on gov.uk. There will be plenty of opportunities for knowledge exchange and feeding expertise through to a range of projects and initiatives across GO-Science.

The GO-Science Social Sciences team has a strong track record of hosting external research secondees, and the fellow will be provided with a 'buddy' to ensure that they have day-to-day support while working in a government department. The fellow will also play a key role in the cross-government Social and Behavioural Science for Emergencies group, providing opportunities to collaborate with departmental Chief Scientific Advisers and social and behavioural science practitioners in other departments and devolved governments. The secondment will involve full exposure to other teams in GO-Science, including the Science Capability, National Security and Resilience and Technology Insights, Futures and Foresight 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:

- proven academic track record and subject matter expertise in social science or humanities research to emergency preparedness and crisis response and/or information ecosystems/disorder
- proven ability to communicate effectively theory and evidence from different disciplines in a policy or other applied context to a variety of stakeholders (such as via teach-ins or presentations) and in written form (such as briefings or research reports)
- experience of cross-discipline or stakeholder engagement and collaboration, including managing a diverse set of views and sensitivities

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:

- previous experience of collaborating with a UK government department or agency
- proven ability to use and communicate evidence in a fast-paced and reactive context
- expertise in conducting evidence reviews

# 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 Hosts' privacy notice can be obtained by contacting [ukripolicyfellowships@ukri.org](mailto:ukripolicyfellowships@ukri.org) and requesting a copy and will be shared with all shortlisted candidates for this position prior to the interview. 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.