

# UKRI policy fellowships 2026

## Fellowship position

### Fellowship title:

MHCLG local economic growth and devolution fellowship

### Fellowship type:

Core policy fellowship

### Host organisation:

[Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

### Host team:

Analysis – Communities, Devolution and Growth. A large multidisciplinary team of around 35 professional analysts, embedded and closely working with teams supporting policies across community support, devolution within England, and local and inclusive economic growth.

### Academic discipline/s:

Statistics, economics, human geography and political analysis

### Summary:

Opportunity to build the evidence on what drives local economic growth and the contributions of English Devolution towards this key government priority using a mix of statistical, economic, human geography and political analyses and use this to influence policy.

### Policy topic:

Devolution within England, and the creation of Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs), is a key policy driver for economic growth in our secondary cities and an important plank of the government's public sector reform. Understanding the evidence on what can deliver local economic growth and how devolution has and can support improved economic and policy outcomes will influence how policy is delivered in the UK. These fit within the Kickstarting Economic Growth (primary) and breakdown barriers to opportunity (secondary) priority areas.

### 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:

London, Wolverhampton, Darlington

### Hybrid working:

MHCLG has a 50% office working requirement. However, we would be content for an average of one day a week during their time in the team at one of the office locations outlined above. A laptop will be provided enabling work from home or other sites, providing access to host systems. We will support periodic travel on expenses to London during the placement year if the main office is outside of London to enable join-up and networking for the fellow, this will be agreed between the fellow and the host team – but could happen every few weeks or fairly rarely.

### Security clearance and nationality eligibility criteria:

All Fellows will require Basic Personnel Security Standard checks (BPSS) clearance before they commence the inception phase of their fellowship, this takes approximately a week to process.

Whilst completing the fellowship is not conditional on Counter Terrorism Check (CTC) security clearance, they will not be able to work in MHCLG's London Office regularly or without an escort without completed CTC security clearance. If it is expected that they will be working in MHCLG's London Office regularly, CTC security clearance will commence at the earliest opportunity. The following sites give information on the requirements and processes for checks.

Please review the [National security vetting: clearance levels guidance document](#) and [Civil Service recruitment: nationality rules guidance](#) for further information.

## Fellowship position description

Devolution within England, and the creation of Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs), is a key policy driver for economic growth in our secondary cities and an important plank of the government's public sector reform.

The fellow will use data and evidence to influence how policy is delivered in the UK by identifying how devolution has impacted the economies of MSAs and strengthening the evidence of the impact MSAs have had on economic and policy outcomes. The fellow's work will shape policies and priorities on the way that government considers delivering devolution and influencing local economic growth through providing impactful analysis. The fellow will:

- codesign and develop a research project on to fill key evidence gaps on how MSAs support and enable local growth, collaborating with analytical colleagues to scope, with the question and approach influenced by the fellow's interests and expertise.

- receive support and engagement from the analytical Senior Civil Servants (SCS) in the area to help shape priorities
- identify sources of learning and data in the policy space in combination with colleagues, and engage key outside stakeholders and academics to identify effective approaches.
- strengthen the department's knowledge and evidence base through their work. The fellow will be able to publish work as long as it does not include data we own without permission to publish or contains policy information not in the public domain.
- communicate findings through written reports and verbal briefings to influence analysts, non-analysts and Senior Civil Servants across the civil service and other key stakeholders. We will support the fellow in ways to increase the visibility of them and their work.
- develop colleagues' relevant skills through knowledge sharing and potentially in part by working with the Chief Scientific Advisor's office to deliver a skills session.

The fellow would be expected to become a part of the team. We are a large multidisciplinary team of around 35 professional analysts, so we are in a strong position to welcome and embed a fellow into our team, with a designated line manager as well as opportunities to collaborate with a range of other analysts in the team.

- the fellow would be invited to partake in team and wider work events to understand the context for their, and the team's work, and to see the wider structures they will be a part of
- the fellow will be expected to, in combination with their team, use their work to shape policy and analysis through disseminating their findings and will be expected to take a lead in confirming timescales and processes for receiving approval for their work outputs
- many of our team have backgrounds in academic research and experience of regular engagement with academics and external experts as part of our work here, so we are well placed to help support someone from an academic background into the team through offering mentoring and advice in adjusting to civil service expectations and culture

## 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:

- strong set of skills in statistical, economic, human geography or political analyses fields that could be applied to solving the problem
- ability to contextualise analytical and evidenced findings within the wider economic, political and policy situation
- is confident in using and applying quantitative methods

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 clearly and succinctly communicate findings to non-technical audiences
- flexible and adaptable to working on a fast-moving policy programme

## 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.