



UKRI policy fellowships 2026

Fellowship position

Fellowship title:

MoJ AI evidence fellowship

Fellowship type:

Core policy fellowship

Host organisation:

[Ministry of Justice \(MoJ\)](#)

Host team:

Evidence and Partnerships Hub in MoJ Policy Group's Analysis Directorate

Academic discipline/s:

Computer science, artificial intelligence, mathematical sciences, information systems

Summary:

Opportunity to design and develop AI-based solutions that will advance evidence use and synthesis in MoJ policy and practice decision-making.

Policy topic:

Use of AI for evidence synthesis is a priority area in the [MoJ Areas of Research Interest \(ARI\) 2025](#), aligned with the [AI action plan for justice - GOV.UK](#), and is in support of the Government's [Growth Mission](#)

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:

MoJ welcome applications from researchers based across the UK (Fellows must be UK-based for the duration of the Fellowship and cannot work outside the UK). There will be some requirement to travel to meet other team members based in the [MoJ National Office Network](#). Further travel will depend on specific research projects, for example, travel would likely be required if primary research were undertaken.

Hybrid working:

A laptop will be provided and MoJ offers hybrid working arrangements that allow fellows to work from different MoJ offices, their university, from home, or a combination – subject to adherence to information security at all times. We anticipate the fellow will attend an MoJ office two times per month or more to meet with relevant colleagues during the main placement phase.

In addition to office attendance, it would be useful to budget for travel to London around four times in the placement year and once 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:

[Baseline Personnel Security Standard \(BPSS\)](#) is required as a minimum, which usually takes around 6-8 weeks. Please see [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK](#) for more information.

The fellow will not be able to begin the inception phase of their fellowship until clearance is obtained.

Fellowship position description

The fellow will work as part of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Evidence and Partnerships Hub's [impactful academic engagement programme](#), enabled by the departmental Areas of Research Interest (ARI). The Hub, based in Policy Group's Analysis Directorate, enhances MoJ's strategic research capabilities, to enable evidence-based decisions, by collaborating with academic experts, research networks, and research funders.

The Analytical Community in MoJ consists of multidisciplinary teams embedded throughout the department, providing analysis and research across a diverse and exciting agenda. They provide high quality data, analysis, and research to ensure strategic, policy, finance, corporate and operational decisions are based on robust evidence.

The fellow will explore how emerging AI methods can be responsibly and effectively applied to evidence synthesis within MoJ. They will translate external research and tool development into approaches suitable for the types of evidence MoJ works with, taking account of organisational, methodological and ethical parameters as well as identifying and mitigating inherent risks. The specific area of focus for the fellowship will be co-designed between the fellow and MoJ during the inception phase.

The fellow will develop tangible outputs, for example a prototype AI supported evidence synthesis tool tailored for MoJ analysts and policy professionals and identify solutions for journal access and copyright constraints. They will work collaboratively across the department to design approaches that are robust, transparent and operationally feasible. The fellow will also have the opportunity to connect with [METIUS](#), a UKRI-funded initiative developing AI-driven evidence synthesis infrastructure, as a source of relevant expertise, trusted data repositories, and specialist input.

The fellow will enable MoJ to make informed, safe and effective use of AI in evidence synthesis by translating fast-moving academic and technical advances into methods that work in a justice decision-making environment. They will add value by producing tools, frameworks and guidance that enhance

analytical efficiency and rigour in using AI for evidence synthesis. Their work will clarify what AI augmented synthesis means for MoJ's evidence standards, journal access, licensing and copyright requirements, supporting ethical and responsible practice.

Longer term benefits include strengthening MoJ analytical capability and maximising the use and impact of evidence to shape decision-making and improve justice outcomes. There is also significant potential in the multi-disciplinary approach of the fellowship that will provide mutual foundational learning from the intersection of non-social-science disciplines with public policy. Beyond MoJ, the fellowship approach could inform how AI augmented evidence synthesis for public policy and practice is undertaken more broadly, with applicability globally. It is therefore expected that the fellow will produce and publish original research stemming from the fellowship, to ensure it contributes to the growing evidence base in this area.

The intellectual project ownership given to the fellow will allow them to make the project their own whilst delivering resources that transform how MoJ utilises AI within decision-making processes. The fellow will be embedded in and line managed by the Evidence and Partnerships Hub, working with analytical, policy, practice, and technical experts to support the project. As part of this, the fellow will receive ongoing guidance and support on a regular (one-to-one) basis, and will also jointly participate in team meetings, away days, and training as appropriate. The fellow will also be part of a (growing) network of MoJ fellows from existing and past iterations of the Policy Fellowships Scheme.

The fellow will benefit from wider support, networking opportunities and learning and development available to the Analytical Community, giving them a richer experience during their fellowship. They will be supported by the Evidence and Partnerships Hub in the translation, dissemination and application of their work, including via knowledge exchange opportunities such as seminars, roundtables, and specialist academic advice sessions to maximise the impact of their fellowship.

Testimonial from a past (2023) fellow:

"During the policy fellowship, I really enjoyed conducting empirical research on subjects that were of interest to policy and analysis colleagues, as well as being related to my research expertise. I also developed excellent networks across the Ministry of Justice and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service and through my cohort of fellows. The Evidence and Partnerships Hub team were incredibly welcoming and supportive."

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 the fellow's own discipline
- strong technical expertise in the development and application of AI and machine learning methods, particularly using natural language processing and large language models
- knowledge of evidence synthesis methods and their role in decision-making

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
- knowledge of the justice evidence landscape and specific topics or themes related to the fellowship (within the MoJ ARI)

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 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.