



# UKRI policy fellowships 2026

## Fellowship position

### Fellowship title:

MoJ justice delivery 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:

Social science, economics, data science, law, health sciences

### Summary:

Opportunity to apply innovative research methods to inform MoJ policy and practice decision-making in support of justice delivery

### Policy topic:

Opportunity to work on numerous justice topics and policies, in line with the successful fellow's research interests and the [MoJ Areas of Research Interest \(ARI\) 2025](#), in support of the following Government Missions: [Safer Streets](#), [Break Down Barriers to Opportunity](#), [Build an NHS Fit For the Future](#)

### 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; however, depending on the specific project, Security Check (SC) level clearance may be required which can take longer. Please see [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK](#) for more information.

It is dependent on the specific projects undertaken as to whether the fellow can begin the inception phase of their fellowship before clearance is given.

# 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 work alongside policy- and practice-facing analytical teams to co-design and deliver impactful research that contributes to the departmental evidence base.

The scale of change underway in the justice system, following publication of the recommendations from the [Independent Sentencing Review](#) and the [Independent Review of the Criminal Courts: Part 1](#) means there is huge potential for research and evidence to inform and impact decisions across a broad range of policy and practice areas, and the fellowships could have generational impact.

Fellows will have the opportunity to work on projects that directly address priority evidence gaps in the [2025 Areas of Research Interest \(ARI\) publication](#). The high-level ARI objectives are:

- protect the public and reduce reoffending with a sustainable and effective prison and probation service

- ensure timely, just outcomes for victims and defendants through a modern and efficient criminal courts system
- uphold the rule of law at home and abroad and promote our world-leading legal services that contribute to economic growth
- deliver accessible and timely civil, family, and administrative justice

Exact topics will be determined by departmental priorities during the inception phase and projects will be co-designed with the fellow and optimised to maximise their input and expertise. A typical project might involve synthesising and translating existing academic research, or designing and delivering cutting edge research, to inform policy and practice decision-making.

Given the complex and interconnected nature of the justice system, the ARI also contains system-wide themes and issues that cut across jurisdictions and policy areas. MoJ welcome fellowship applications proposing innovative and methods-driven research that takes a holistic approach to improving understanding of what works to improve outcomes across the system.

The intellectual project ownership given to the fellow will allow them to make projects their own whilst delivering research findings that directly shape MoJ decision-making in real time. Fellowship findings will add to the future evidence base through delivery of research outputs and academic publications that communicate and consolidate the impact of the fellowship.

The fellow will be embedded in and line managed by the Evidence and Partnerships Hub, whilst flexibly deployed to policy and practice-facing analytical teams on their specific project(s). 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 application of research methods to analyse social policy delivery and outcomes relevant to the fellowship
- deep knowledge of the justice evidence landscape and specific topics or themes related to the fellowship (within the MoJ ARI)

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

## 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 policy](#) 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.