



UK Research  
and Innovation



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Public Health  
Scotland

# UKRI policy fellowships 2026

## Fellowship position

### Fellowship title:

Public Health Scotland and Scottish Government gambling harm prevention fellowship

### Fellowship type:

Gambling Policy fellowship

### Host organisation:

[Public Health Scotland](#) working closely with [Scottish Government's Healthy Living Unit](#)

### Host team:

Smoking, Vaping and Gambling Harm Team, Preventing Health Harms, Place and Well-being Directorate. This team leads tobacco, vaping and gambling harm prevention in Public Health Scotland.

### Academic discipline/s:

Behavioural science, social and economic sciences, public health

### Summary:

Opportunity to work in Scotland's national agency for improving health and reducing inequalities and with Scottish Government to enhance and translate the best current evidence on prevention of gambling harm into national policy and practice, ensuring effective and impactful use of resources, and to work with gambling harm levy leads across the three nations to support the GB-wide system.

### Policy topic:

The overall aim of this fellowship is to support the development of policy to prevent gambling harm in Scotland. We anticipate that some key activities to progress this aim will include summarising the current evidence base on the most effective ways to prevent gambling harms and describe how current levy funded projects may (or may not) support effective prevention activity. In so doing, the fellowship will identify gaps that the levy funding should seek to address in the future. The fellowship will support the embedding and improving of the gambling levy use in Scotland, build on learning and approaches being taken in England and Wales, suggesting how these could be adapted for Scotland, where appropriate.

### 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:

There are no location requirements of this post. However, if the post holder wishes to have access to an office base, PHS has [offices in Glasgow and Edinburgh](#). The same applies to Scottish Government.

## Hybrid working:

PHS does not yet have an agreed minimum office working requirement. It would be helpful for the fellow to include one in-person day with both PHS and Scottish Government as part of their inception phase, and to include monthly in person meetings with either PHS and / or Scottish Government as part of their placement phase. A laptop will be provided to enable work from home or office as fellow decides. Eligible travel and subsistence costs are supported in the main UKRI grant.

## Security clearance and nationality eligibility criteria:

PHS adheres to the current guidance published by the UK Home Office to establish, document, and maintain the potential fellow's right to work in the UK. However, given the fellow will also be working with Scottish Government, there will be an additional requirement to pass the [Baseline Personnel Security Standard \(BPSS\)](#). This process takes around six weeks and must be completed before the fellow can access Scottish Government systems. Part of this entails verifying that the fellow meets the [Civil Service Nationality Rules](#) - see the [Annex C flowchart](#) to check eligibility for non-reserved posts. By applying for this fellowship, you are affirming that you have understood these requirements and expect to be able to pass BPSS.

# Fellowship position description

The fellow will support PHS and Scottish Government to develop Gambling Harm policy in Scotland supported by use of levy funding with a specific focus on preventing harm and aligned to the Population Health Framework. The fellow will be fully involved in the shaping and direction of their work programme. The following are a starting point for PHS, SG and the fellow to agree at commencement of fellowship:

- through multi-faceted research approach, identify how the levy system in Scotland should be further evolved to prevent and reduce gambling harms
- retrospectively review bids from 2024-25 onwards to understand patterns in areas of focus against evidence of what works to prevent gambling harms from commercial determinants theory
- assess the scoring process used, benchmark it against best practice and identify improvements for future bid levy calls.
- identify how industry influence has influenced/may continue to influence gambling harm activity and propose how conflicts of interest can be managed robustly in Scotland
- to review how the effectiveness and impact of the Levy funding could be maximised in line with the commitments set in the Population Health Framework and PHS's 10 Year Strategy.
- consider and provide recommendations on how this work can be used to report on progress towards the aims set out under the Population Health Framework

The fellow will collaborate with a range of personnel across PHS; NHS and special boards; across Scottish Government departments; third sector; and academia.

The fellow will have the opportunity to shape the direction of the work and lead the design of research and on project delivery, consulting with a range of partners.

The fellow will have the opportunity to produce and publish original research, ensuring that findings contribute to wider scientific and policy discussions, while adhering to necessary security protocols.

## Benefits to the fellow:

- opportunity to codesign, produce and publish original research, ensuring that findings contribute to wider policy discussions while adhering to necessary security protocols
- being embedded in the PHS/Scottish Government teams and have access to internal systems and processes, gaining in-depth understanding of the Knowledge into Action process and policy development
- the opportunity to inform and influence PHS/Scottish Government and wider government policy on important gambling, gambling harm and public health issues
- access to datasets related to gambling harm being developed in Scotland
- access to a wider network of policy, analysis, other experts and opportunities to engage with Directorates across PHS (Data and Innovation, Strategy) and Scottish Government departments and aligned 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 social or economic sciences or humanities
- demonstrable ability in appropriate research methodologies, statistical and data science methods
- strong analytical skills and ability to synthesise a wide range of data and information

It is expected that all fellows align with the PHS conflict of interest policy and must not have received direct funding from industry for previous research.

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:

- strong communication skills
- knowledge of gambling harm or commercial determinants of health
- ability to work across of range of projects ensuring each is progressed timeously

## 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.