



Applications open for Open Innovation Policy Fellowship 23/24

- The first round of applications close on 8 December 2023
- To apply Civil Servants (SEO-G6) should fill out this [application form](#), and include a brief research proposal that aligns with one of the areas of expertise listed below. You should discuss this opportunity with your line manager before applying.

The Open Innovation Team (OIT) has opened applications for the second cohort of its Open Innovation Policy Fellowship. The fellowship provides Civil Servants (SEO-G6 level) with the opportunity to be partnered with an academic mentor from either Brunel University London, University of Essex, Lancaster University, University of Surrey or University of York to help officials answer a specific research question related to their policy area.

Applications open following last year's successful pilot. In 2022/23 three Civil Servants from Cabinet Office, Department for Business and Trade and UK Health Security Agency were partnered with academic mentors from the University of Essex. More information about last year's fellows can be found [here](#).

Benefits of becoming a fellow include:

- Opportunities to learn new skills
- Engagement with academics to build subject knowledge
- Access to data and support with analysis and interpretation
- Networking with academics and other officials

Who is eligible?

The fellowship is open to any Civil Servant at SEO-G6 level. This opportunity may be more relevant to policy officials and analysts, but anyone working on a policy relevant to the below areas of expertise is encouraged to apply. These include:

Education policy

- Education and skills
- Education and ethnic and racial inequalities
- Education and SEND

Health and social care policy

- Ageing and loneliness
- Health and adult social care
- Adolescent mental health
- Well-being and work

Artificial intelligence policy

- Artificial intelligence
- AI governance
- Responsible AI
- AI for society

- Inclusive AI

Intelligence, elections and cyber policy

- Intelligence and security
- Electoral modernisation and integrity
- Cyber security & protection science

Other policy areas

- Immigration and migration
- Creative industries
- Housing
- Social security

What is the fellowship?

The fellowship is a bespoke, flexible part-time mentoring programme. It aims to support officials who need further help in answering a specific policy question, potentially analysing quantitative data or understanding specific or multiple pieces of evidence relating to their policy area.

As a Policy Fellow, you will receive:

- Research assistance support from a PhD student or Early Career Researcher
- Induction and signposting towards relevant training opportunities
- Regular check-ins with your academic mentor and an Open Innovation Team member
- Access to training on specific methods that you need to complete your project

Following the success of last year's pilot with the ERSC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC), University of Essex, we're happy to include a wider range of participating institutions that a fellow could be partnered with. The Open Innovation Team will match an applicant with a university depending on if their research project fits with the institution's specialism.

Institutions that a fellow could be matched with are:

- Brunel University London
- University of Essex
- Lancaster University
- University of Surrey
- University of York

Fellows should ideally commit to a minimum of 80 hours of time over a flexible period, agreed by your line manager. For example, you may wish to dedicate one day per week over three-six months.

At the end of the placement, fellows will draft a research output to present to their team and the institution they are partnered with. Fellows will also be required to complete an evaluation form at the end of their fellowship.

When will the fellowship begin?

The first round of applications close on 8 December 2023, but can explore the possibility of starting earlier if there are tight deadlines for outputs that officials want to deliver. This will depend on the availability of relevant academic mentors.

Applicants will be matched with academic mentors in December, with the aim of starting the fellowship in January 2024.

How do I apply?

To apply, you should fill in this [application form](#), with a brief research proposal that aligns with one of the above areas of expertise. You should discuss this with your line manager before applying, to ensure that you can dedicate enough time to the programme.

We will select proposals that would benefit most from access to a relevant academic. Mentoring will be an integral part of the fellowship, so fellows will only be selected if there is a suitable mentor available.

In preparing your application, you should look at recent research from the institutions listed above, and identify where these align with your team's priorities. You may wish to consider what your policy area is lacking and how it would benefit from specific expertise. For example, last year one Fellow researched "the structural issues that immigrants may face in the UK, and understanding the lessons that the government has learned about policy-making in this area".

There will be a short informal interview with a researcher before any final decisions are made.

The Open Innovation Team would like to thank MiSoC, based in the University of Essex, and ESRC for their involvement in the pilot of the fellowship last year.

For any further information, including the opportunity to discuss potential research questions, please contact: fellowship@openinnovation.gov.uk