



ESRC Policy Fellowships 2021

Fellowship Title: CO National Security

Host department: [Cabinet Office](#)

Host team: National Security Secretariat (NSS)

Summary: Design and conduct a gap analysis across National Security and International Policy with the aim of developing meaningful research questions, contributing to the NSS Areas of Research Interest, and to be effectively engaged with by academics and industry.

Policy topic: National Security and International Policy

Potentially relevant academic disciplines: Social science, security policy, intelligence studies, cyber security, environmental security, international relations

Relevant research career stage: Early career

Practical details

Start of 3-month inception phase: February 2022

Length of core placement: 12 months

FTE for core placement (range): 0.7- 1

Location requirements: Option to work remotely with occasional working in London office required (we anticipate this may be approximately once a week)

Necessary level of security clearance: Security Check (SC) level. This may take 1-3 months from application. We would therefore ask the person taking up our Fellowship opportunity to start the SC application process as soon as their Fellowship has been confirmed by ESRC; and so, ideally, before the inception phase begins. See [National security vetting: clearance levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Detailed description

The National Security Secretariat (NSS) sits at the heart of government security and foreign policy decisions. It supports the National Security Council and the Prime Minister by providing expert advice on a range of policy issues and ensures that all national security activity is effectively coordinated across government.

This Fellowship is an excellent opportunity to contribute to evidence-based decision-making and priority-setting following the publication of the Integrated Review (IR)¹, and to enhance collaboration between government and relevant research communities.

Main responsibilities:

- Utilise expert research skills in literature reviews and critical appraisal to plan, design and conduct a robust gap analysis across key IR policy areas in national security and international policy.

¹ [Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#) (Cabinet Office, March 2021)

- Employing a collaborative and iterative approach throughout, work with policy stakeholders to determine priority areas and shape the project; and identify and engage with academics to inform the work and enhance future government engagement.
- Use findings to design clear research questions to address the identified gaps.
- Support and shape the further development of the NSS's Areas of Research Interest; and contribute to an engagement plan to be utilised following its publication, involving relevant stakeholders within and outside of government.

Key benefits:

- Opportunity to develop a network of policy and analytical professionals through consistent engagement with expert government officials and academics in relevant policy areas.
- Development of a broad understanding of the national security and international policy research needs.
- Opportunity to use individual skill-set and knowledge to shape the project, provided it aligns with the overarching aims.
- Opportunity to build upon existing skills in developing clear and relevant research questions to target pressing policy aims and objectives.
- Opportunity to contribute to the development of the Cabinet Office Areas of Research Interest, ensuring this is informed by evidence-based research.
- Support and mentorship from senior government social science and policy experts.

Opportunity-specific person specification:

Applications will be assessed against the following opportunity-specific requirements in addition to the generic eligibility and call criteria.

Skills/ expertise:

- Strong social research methods knowledge and analytical skills, including proven ability to conduct literature reviews, critically appraise and analyse both qualitative and quantitative evidence and construct meaningful research questions.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills including experience of stakeholder engagement and management, and ability to lead collaboration effectively across both academic, non-academic and government contexts.
- Experience and/or demonstrated interest in policy areas set out across the Integrated Review strategic pillars: science and technology, security and defence, international policy and resilience.