Guidance Notes for Applicants

Key dates:

- **Open Call:**
  - Deadline for outline applications (essentially an expression of interest): **midnight 4 September 2017**
  - Applicants notified about decision in principle (e.g. whether they have been shortlisted by parliamentary offices): **Friday 15th September 2017**
  - Deadline for shortlisted applicants to submit a detailed application: **Friday 13th October 2017**
  - Interviews with applicants**: Week commencing 23rd October 2017**
  - Successful candidates will need to be security cleared, which can take up to 3 months so it's unlikely that successful candidates would start before December.
- Directed Call: This call is now closed.

The Parliamentary Academic Fellowship Scheme delivers opportunities for researchers to forge useful and lasting connections with decision makers in Parliament. The Programme has been welcomed in academia as an effective pathway to impact.

The Fellowship provides a unique opportunity for researchers to learn about how research feeds into practice and the challenges faced by decision-makers, as well as increasing opportunities for researchers from all disciplines to engage and connect with people in Parliament.

The scheme has five main benefits:

1. Improve the awareness of academic research within Parliament and more systematically to learn about and benefit from its findings.
2. Support Parliamentary offices to expand their engagement with academic stakeholders in order to enrich and promote law-making, scrutiny and democratic engagement.
3. Promote knowledge and public understanding of Parliament amongst the research community.
4. Create an alumni network of fellows that can feed into Parliament's Outreach and Engagement work.
5. Enable projects identified as important by Parliamentary offices, to be undertaken, that would not have otherwise been possible due to capacity or resources constraints.

This guidance provides further information about five aspects:

1. How to apply

Applicants are required to complete an application form and send a two-page CV to apply for the Parliamentary Academic Fellowship.

Your application will be assessed against the Assessment Criteria. Please take a look at this **BEFORE** making your application.

Completing the application form

There are four sections to the Application Form. **Please note that the application will be made ineligible if any of the four sections are left blank.**

Section 1: Applicant Details

Applicants are required to complete their personal details and indicate which research council their IAA institutional funding comes from (either ESRC or EPSRC).

Section 2: Outline applications for applicants to Open Call only

This section is divided into two parts:

1. Part one: Applicants are required to provide a short summary of their proposed project. This should focus on what topic/issue you propose to cover during your fellowship. It should include the questions you are interested in (no more than 250 words).

Information provided in this section will be referred to the relevant parliamentary offices, who will be asked to indicate if they are in principle interested in hosting your fellowship, based on the degree of alignment between the proposal and their current and upcoming objectives. Those applications deemed to have sufficient relevance by the potential host office will be invited to submit a Detailed Application for Stage two.

2. Part two: Applicants are required to explain how their proposed project is relevant to Parliament (no more than 250 words).

This section should highlight how the project is of relevance to the office or committee that you propose to host your fellowship. We would encourage all applicants to think carefully about the particular added-value that their project would bring to their proposed parliamentary host and what will be gained from them being based in Parliament (for both the academics and for the host office).

The Academic Fellowship is about bringing in research that is both relevant, and will contribute to, the work that people in Parliament do. It is not about funding research projects that academics could and/or would do independently of the Academic Fellowship.

Section 3: Support from your university department

Section 3 of the Application Form requires applicants to confirm support for their proposed project from the Head of Department at their institution. This statement of support is to confirm that the applicant will be permitted to suspend their teaching and/or administrative duties as appropriate for the period of the fellowship should they be successful in their application.

Section 4: Support from your IAA holder (Section 5 of the Application Form)

Section 4 of the Application Form requires the Administrative Lead of the institution's IAA Grant to confirm support for the applicant's proposed project.

Before obtaining this signature, applicants are advised that it is their responsibility to ensure that they agree the requisite level of funding (and any terms and conditions of this funding) with the relevant IAA administrative lead to enable them to undertake the fellowship.

Your CV

Applicants are required to submit a two-page CV (no references are required) alongside their completed application form. This should be emailed to kennyc@parliament.uk

The CV should provide evidence on how the applicant's skills and experience meet each of the assessment criteria. It is imperative that applicants demonstrate how they meet this criteria as this will be what they will be judged against.

2. Ensuring that your fellowship proposal is relevant to Parliament

Many people in Parliament engage with research, not just MPs or Peers. This includes people that undertake research and produce briefings as part of their job, as well as those that can use research to inform the way that they go about their role and/or improve the services they provide.

The House of Commons Library and the House of Lords Library

The libraries provide impartial information for Members of Parliament and their staff to support their work in scrutinising Government, proposing legislation, and supporting MP's in dealing with enquiries from their constituents. Both the Commons and Lords Libraries also offer a confidential, tailored and impartial enquiry service to Members of Parliament and their staff in support of their parliamentary duties.

How could you work with the libraries?

> ➢ Does/will your project link to a piece of legislation?

Both libraries are responsible for producing research briefings which provide in-depth and impartial analysis of all major pieces of legislation as it passes through the House. If your project relates to a piece of legislation that is likely to come before Parliament, then potentially, you could work with one of the libraries to support them in producing briefings.

Many different sources of information can be used in the libraries' briefings, including research evidence where relevant. In general library briefings papers on legislation:

- highlight the key issues raised by the legislative proposals;

- provide some policy narrative to explain the genesis of the Bill;
- draw out any themes arising from consultation on the legislative proposals;
- set out how key elements of the legislation will bring the proposals into effect.

There are no Bills currently before Parliament. How do I find out about what legislation is likely to come up before Parliament?

- Look at the Queen's Speech. The Queen's Speech is the speech that the Queen reads out on the occasion of the State Opening of Parliament. The State Opening is expected to take place on Wednesday 21 June 2017. The Queen's Speech will set out the programme of legislation that the Government intend to pursue in the forthcoming parliamentary session.
- Look at Parliament's website. Details of all legislation being considered by Parliament will be listed on the Parliamentary website. This includes Public, Private and Hybrid Bills (more information is on the website about what these are and the difference between them) and draft Bills.
- Look at political party manifestos. A manifesto is a publication issued by a political party before a General Election. It contains the set of policies that the party stands for and would wish to implement if elected to government.

➢ Does your project relate to a constituency issue?

Each MP represents a parliamentary constituency (a specific geographical area). MPs are elected to represent their constituents' interests and concerns in the House of Commons. MPs can assist their constituents in a variety of ways, from making private enquiries on their behalf, to raising matters publicly in the House of Commons.

The House of Commons Library offers a confidential, tailored and impartial enquiry service to MPs and their staff in support of their parliamentary duties, including support with constituency queries. The Commons Library can provide impartial background information on issues raised by constituents and advise on where else they can find help. Examples of issues that the library can assist with include:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Consumer protection
- Direct payments for social care in England
- Insolvency
- Financing care home charges
- Funding requests
- Immigration, nationality and asylum
- Housing in England
- NHS complaints procedures in England
- Planning
- School-related matters
- Social security
- Student support
- Tax credits
- Training

If your project relates to an issue that is pertinent to a constituency (or more than one constituency), then it may be possible for you to work with the library to support their work in providing advice to MPs and their staff about this topic.

Select Committees in both the Commons and the Lords

Both Houses have Select Committees to conduct inquiries and to produce reports on a range of matters, from the work and expenditure of Government to specialist subject areas. As part of the inquiry process, select committees seek written evidence and research is often included. They can call individuals to give oral evidence including researchers. Select Committees can also hire academics as specialists to advise committee for particular inquiries or on a more permanent basis. A list of all select committees is on the Parliamentary website.

How could you work with a select committee?

In the Commons, there is a Select Committee for each government department, examining three aspects: spending, policies and administration. In addition, some Select Committees have a role that crosses departmental boundaries such as the Public Accounts or Environmental Audit Committees. Depending on the issue under consideration they can look at any or all of the government departments. Other Commons Committees are involved in a range of on-going investigations, like administration of the House itself or allegations about the conduct of individual MPs.

In the Lords, Select Committees do not shadow the work of government departments. Their investigations look into specialist subjects, taking advantage of the Lords' expertise and the greater amount of time (compared to MPs) available to them to examine issues. There are currently six major Lords Select Committees (the European Union Committee; the Science and Technology Committee; the Communications Committee; the Constitution Committee; the Economic Affairs Committee; and the International Relations Committee). In addition, Ad hoc committees, such as the committee on Digital Skills, are set up to look at issues outside these subject areas.

➢ Does your project relate to a policy area or issue that is within the remit of a select committee?

Think about which policy area/s your proposed project focuses on. For example, is it examining something to do with crime and policing or looking at educational attainment? Maybe it is focusing on health inequalities or air quality? It may be helpful to think about which Government Department would have responsibility for your project if it were a Government programme (for example would it sit under the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy or perhaps the Department for Work and Pensions?). Identify the select committee/s that has responsibility for this policy area – if it falls under the remit of a particular Government department, then look to identify the select committee that shadows this department (e.g. the Communities and Local Government Committee shadows the Department for Communities and Local Government).

Some projects will focus on issues that are across different policy areas for example, equalities or social cohesion. These types of issues could apply to any policy area. Some committees will be interested in these issues in and of themselves, whereas others might be interested only in how they apply to specific policy areas or sectors. For example, the Women and Equalities Committee are interested in equalities as an issue and how it applies to different policy areas.

➢ Does your project relate to an inquiry undertaken by a select committee?

The parliament website contains a list of committee inquiries that are open for evidence.

A list of all select committees is on the Parliamentary website. In trying to find out whether a select committee has done an inquiry in your area before, look at former inquiries to see if any overlap

with your project and looking at its reports to find out what issues the Committee identified as important/questions they focused on.

➢ What type of work could you do with a select committee?

As part of your fellowship you could:

- Scope out potential topics that a select committee might choose to do as an inquiry.
- Provide background information and/or data that could inform an inquiry or something that underpins a number of different inquiry areas.
- Contribute to the production of briefing papers for committee members related to a specific inquiry or across multiple inquiries.
- Support the committee's work on public engagement and engaging with hard-to-reach and more diverse groups.
- Offering advice and guidance on ways that the committee can better monitor and evaluate its impact.

Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST)

POST is Parliament's in-house source of independent, balanced and accessible analysis of public policy issues related to science and technology. It is an office of both Houses of Parliament and is the only body with an explicit objective to support and advance the use of research evidence in Parliamentary debate and scrutiny.

How could you work with POST?

➢ Does your project relate to a POSTnote topic that has been approved?

The [POST website lists POSTnote topics that have been approved by the Board but work on them has not yet begun](#).

➢ Do you have experience and/or skills in an area relevant to the work that POST does?

POST provides a number of services to parliamentarians and other offices in both the Commons and Lords. Your proposal might involve supporting POST's work in any of these areas:
- Support POST's horizon scanning work: POST is in the process of developing an expert consultation process to provide advice on emerging public policy issues involving science and technology dimensions that will be of interest to parliament. The outcome of this process will inform the deliberations of the POST Board of MPs, peers and external scientists on POST's future work programme as well as subjects that may be of interest to Select Committee scoping new areas for inquiries.
- Provide advice and support on POST's work to measure and assess the impact of research on Parliament. Parliament, like academia, is keen to demonstrate the impact of what it does. This could be the impact of particular services it provides, the impact of certain offices within it, or its impact as a whole. Possible topics might be: Approaches to monitoring, assessing and evaluating impact; Methods to record and monitor relevant data for assessing impact.
- Assist POST's capacity development work around building skills in understanding and appraising evidence. Parliament provides training on a range of different topics and issues for MPs and Peers, staff working for MPs and Peers as well as parliamentary staff. POST runs courses focused on understanding and appraising research. Fellowships may offer particular expertise in these areas or more broadly, skills and knowledge of effective teaching

methods/approaches in the workplace; Developing training resources; or Software or digital resources.

Other offices which may be interested in hosting your fellowship
We want to encourage academics to think creatively about the potential ways that they might contribute to the work of Parliament. Academics have a lot of subject knowledge that may be relevant, but they also have many skills and areas of experience that are relevant to the types of work done by people in Parliament and the different objectives that people are trying to achieve as part of their work.

Your project may relate to a particular function performed by Parliament, or an activity that it does as part of its role. For example:

- Public Outreach and Engagement and Parliament's Education Service aims to inform, engage and empower the public to understand, and get involved in, the work of Parliament, politics and democracy. Public engagement and/or engaging with hard-to-reach groups – this role is important for many different offices in Parliament including Parliamentary Outreach, Select Committees (in facilitating evidence submissions from a diverse public). Possible topics might be: Digital engagement/using social media, reaching particular groups across society (such as hard-to-reach groups); Methods of public engagement; or Monitoring and evaluating public engagement work.
- Parliament Environment Team is committed to continually improving its environmental performance and to comply with relevant environmental legislation. The team is responsible for reducing its environmental impact, promoting awareness of green issues within Parliament and ensuring legal compliance. Possible topics here might be: Increasing recycling rates; Effective approaches to sustainability.

A number of offices work to help promote understanding of, and engagement with, the work of Parliament and in doing so, connects people across the UK with Parliament and democracy. These offices include:

- The parliamentary art collection which includes thousands of works depicting Parliament and parliamentarians through history and today. Caring for the collection in a working building, where MPs and Members of the Lords are constantly at work can be a challenge. The Curator in parliament is responsible for this.
- Parliamentary Archives. The Parliamentary Archives provides access to the archives of the House of Lords, the House of Commons and to other records relating to Parliament. We also provide a records management service for both Houses of Parliament
- The Palace of Westminster Restoration and Renewal Programme has been established to tackle the significant work that needs to be done to protect and preserve the heritage of the Palace of Westminster and ensure it can continue to serve as home to the UK Parliament in the 21st century and beyond.
- The Parliamentary Estates Directorate is responsible for meeting the needs of all who work within, or visit, the Parliamentary Estate and optimising its use as a healthy, safe, sustainable and effective working environment. This includes everything from dealing with any issues of pest control or rodent problems to routine maintenance.
- Health and Wellbeing service: The Health & Wellbeing Service supports Parliament in developing a healthy working environment and encouraging people to have a positive attitude to health at work. Its objectives are to help promote and maintain a high standard of physical and mental health for all persons working in the Houses of Parliament and to

assist managers in reducing the risks to staff and visitors which may arise as a result of our work.

3. Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed by a panel and the criteria for assessment are:

1. **The person:** The alignment of the applicant's experience will be assessed against the scheme's objectives and evidence of the applicant's ability to carry out the proposed project. Successful applications will demonstrate:
    a. Expertise in the proposed field, including good knowledge of how the proposal fits within the wider literature.
    b. How the applicant's experience demonstrates that they have the requisite expertise and skills to undertake the proposed project. This should include ability to demonstrate delivery of previous research projects and ability to bring the proposed project to completion.
    c. An awareness of relevant research in other fields, and an appreciation of the importance of working across disciplinary boundaries.
    d. The applicant's ability to:
        i. Work effectively in conjunction with a non-partisan and impartial host office.
        ii. Communicate complex information to non-specialists clearly and concisely both in written and oral formats.
        iii. Work with a wide range of stakeholders and ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with a wide variety of people which promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.
        iv. Understand the work of parliament and the process of scrutiny, debate and legislation within a political environment.
        v. Understand the contemporary media environment and the opportunities and challenges which this provides for Parliament.
        vi. Promote knowledge and public understanding of Parliament amongst the research community.

2. **The project**. The merit of the project will be assessed in terms of its originality and the importance of the questions addressed. Consideration will also be given to the degree of alignment between the proposal and the current and upcoming objectives of the host office. The overall approach will be assessed, including the appropriateness of the proposed methodology, risks and alternative strategies, and feasibility of the timescale. Successful applications will demonstrate:
    a. The extent to which the research questions, issues or problems that will be addressed in the course of the research are defined and their importance and appropriateness to Parliament is specified.
    b. Clear explanation of how the proposed project fits with, and builds upon, previous work in this area by the host office and/or its stated objectives going forward.
    c. The extent to which other current research conducted in this area has been considered, and the range of audiences that might be targeted.
    d. Articulation of why it is of benefit that the project be undertaken whilst based in parliament – in other words, the added value, both to the applicant and the host office, of being based in parliament to undertake the work.
    e. The appropriateness, effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed research methods and/or approach.

f.   Whether a realistic timetable, incorporating milestones, is presented which will achieve the project's aims and objectives within the proposed timescale.

3.   **Outputs, dissemination and impact.** The appropriateness and effectiveness of the proposed dissemination methods. Successful applications will demonstrate:
   a.   The appropriateness and effectiveness of the proposed dissemination methods.
   b.   Whether the plans to increase impact are appropriate and justified, given the nature of the proposed research.
   c.   The likelihood that the outputs and outcomes of the project will be highly valued and widely exploited, both in Parliament, the research community and in wider contexts where they can make a difference.

4. Terms and conditions

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a formal agreement that sets out the specific terms governing their Fellowship in Parliament. All Fellows must also undergo security vetting. Fellowship placements are conditional on the Fellowship Agreement being signed and security clearance being obtained.

The paragraphs below are intended to give applicants a general indication of some of the key terms that will apply to the Fellowship; the paragraphs in themselves are not intended to be legally binding, but the Fellowship agreement will be, once signed.

Confidential Information

The Fellowship agreement will set out the terms on which Fellows will be permitted to access and use confidential information. Such information may include:
- any information that relates to the proceedings, business, affairs, personnel and suppliers of either House of Parliament;
- personal information as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998;
- information which has a confidentiality or privacy marking;
- information protected by the Official Secrets Act 1989;
- information protected by parliamentary privilege, including papers and evidence received by select committees, draft committee reports and internal committee papers.

Intellectual Property Rights

The Fellowship agreement will allow for Fellows to retain ownership of the intellectual property rights in material they create through the Fellowship in accordance with the policies of their respective institutions and in agreement with the terms that govern the Fellowship. The agreement will include a term whereby Fellows grant to Parliament a non-exclusive, indefinite, cost- and royalty-free, worldwide licence to use the material they create through the Fellowship in all media and for any purpose.

Publication of Fellowship Outputs

The Fellowship agreement will contain provisions specifying that:
- Publication of material that draws upon or includes confidential information will be subject to the prior agreement of the host parliamentary office.
- Publication of material that includes information gained in the service of a select committee or otherwise protected by parliamentary privilege will be subject to the prior agreement of that committee or either House of Parliament as appropriate. Fellows will be required to keep the material confidential if such permission is denied.

Payment
The placement is unpaid and nothing in the agreement will constitute the status of the Fellow as an employee of the House of Commons/ House of Lords.

Conflicts of interest
Fellows will be required to follow the standard procedures of the House Department for registering any conflicts of interest that may arise during the course of their placement.

5. Contacts and sources of further information
For more information please contact:

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