

**PARLIAMENTARY ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP PROJECT |  
24 MARCH 2021**

**Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology: Parliamentary  
Academic Fellow: global landscape analysis of organisations around  
the world providing science advice to parliaments**

Deadline for submission of application: 23:55, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## **1. About the Parliamentary Academic Fellowship Scheme**

The Knowledge Exchange Unit in the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology runs the Parliamentary Academic Fellowship Scheme. This Scheme gives university-based researchers and staff working in knowledge exchange the opportunity to participate in a fellowship project with an office in Parliament.

The scheme has two streams: a Directed Call and an Open Call. In the Directed Call of the Scheme, Offices in Parliament issue projects which they would like an academic fellow to conduct. These projects include contributing to core work of the office, filling gaps in expertise, building staff capacity and skills, informing parliamentary scrutiny, analysing and evaluating parliamentary practices, or helping to grow Parliament's academic networks.

[More information on the Parliamentary Academic Fellowship Scheme can be found here.](#) More information on the Directed Rolling Call of the scheme, which this fellowship is a part of, [can be found here.](#)

## **2. Overview of this Fellowship Project**

The primary aim of this fellowship is to gather knowledge about legislative science advice (LSA) globally; that is to say, science advice to parliaments around the world. POST is a member of the European Parliamentary Technology Assessment (EPTA) network. Through this, POST is familiar with LSA provision in Europe and associate member countries. But POST knows much less about LSA elsewhere. POST would like to work with a fellow to build its knowledge of LSA provision globally.

POST would like to do this, as it would like to learn from others who are providing LSA. It would also like to strengthen its connections with those bodies, to be able to conduct two-way knowledge exchange.

Beyond this, this fellowship complements and will feed into various ongoing activities in Parliament and the researcher/practitioner community:

- POST collaborates with University College London's department of Science Technology Engineering and Public Policy on a project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The project aims to enhance and diversify the use of research evidence in Parliament.

It also aims to share learnings around good practice with external stakeholders. This includes international organisations.

- In response to the review conducted by the Clerk of the House of Commons, the House will create a new office: the Interparliamentary Relations Office. Part of the remit of this office will include building networks with other Parliaments. Another part of it will include sharing knowledge around good practice. POST will be involved in the development of this office and its activities. The fellowship activity and outputs will support this.
- LSA is also an area of policy engagement that receives increasing attention from the academic community. In 2019, members of the practitioner and research community collaborated on a research paper about LSA. The paper brought together many research questions from both communities. This fellowship will enable the fellow to answer some of those research questions. The fellowship will therefore also contribute to advancing the knowledge of the wider community.

This is an exciting opportunity for a university-based researcher or knowledge exchange professional to work closely with Parliament, have new experiences and develop their skills and networks. The fellow will interact with many different international stakeholders, building important connections for UK Parliament, and generate important, new insights of value to international parliamentary and research communities.

### **3. About the Host Team**

This fellowship will be hosted by the [Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology \(POST\)](#). POST is the in-house science advice mechanism in the UK Parliament. Within Parliament it is the bridge between research and policy.

POST produces impartial, non-partisan, and peer-reviewed briefings. These aim to make scientific research accessible to the UK Parliament. It produces both reactive and forward-thinking briefings. The briefings cover: biology and health, energy and environment, physical sciences and computing, and social sciences. They draw on research from all disciplines.

As well as producing briefings for Members and their staff, POST also provides support to [select committees](#) and Libraries. In addition, it hosts events, which bring together different stakeholders around a policy topic.

POST is one of the oldest legislative science advice mechanisms in the world. POST is also a founding member of the [European Parliamentary Technology Assessment \(EPTA\) Network](#). EPTA is the main network of offices around the world which provide legislative science advice. There are 12 full members of the network, and 11 associate members. Six associate members are not European.

POST is also home to Parliament's Knowledge Exchange Unit (KEU). The KEU works across Parliament. It aims to strengthen and support the exchange of information and expertise between Parliament and the research community. The KEU is the first known unit of its kind globally.

The fellow for this project will be based in POST and supervised by the KEU's Knowledge Exchange Lead.

#### **4. Eligibility**

Applications are open to all UK-based university researchers who already have a PhD and are employed on an academic contract (and, exceptionally, they are also open to those who don't have a PhD but who are employed in a university on an academic contract and have equivalent experience of a PhD), or university staff working in impact or knowledge exchange (including staff working in university libraries).

Applicants must have permission to work in the UK, and will need to receive security clearance from UK Parliament to CTC level. You should be aware that if you have resided outside of the UK for a total of more than two of the last five years, you are not eligible to receive security clearance to work on the Parliamentary Estate. ([see Government webpages on United Kingdom Security Vetting for more information](#) and information on [the security vetting process in Parliament](#)).

Applicants must seek funding to conduct the fellowship, including to cover their time, teaching cover, travel, subsistence, accommodation and any other associated expenses. Funds may be sought from research institutions or research funders. It is expected that funding will mainly come from impact funding sources such as Research Council Impact Acceleration Awards or specific university impact budgets. Applicants may also seek funding from other research organisations or funders, for example research networks, charitable funding, learned society funding, or professional association funding. Fellowships may not be funded with private funding or funding from industry.

Applicants should confirm with their Head of Department at their university/ institution, and with the Budget Holder of the proposed source of their funding, that they have their support to undertake the project and confirmation of approval for funding *before* submitting their application. A condition of the fellowship is that the applicant remains employed at the university/ institution during the period of the fellowship.

#### **5. Aims and Activities of the Fellowship Project**

The aims of this fellowship project are twofold. The primary aim is to gather knowledge about Legislative Science Advice (LSA) around the world. The secondary aim is to develop POST's networks with organisations around the world that contribute to delivering LSA.

Through the fellowship project, the fellow will draw on Parliament's existing networks, and their own research and networking skills to find out more about the different kinds of LSA going on around the world. Whilst POST is an in-house LSA office, LSA takes place through lots of different mechanisms. These include through provision from learned societies, external organisations, or specific individuals. Therefore the fellow will need to be creative, iterative and open in their approach to gathering information.

Through their information gathering, the fellow will build or strengthen links between Parliament and identified stakeholders.

To achieve these aims, the fellow will design and deliver the project, with support from their parliamentary supervisor.

The activities will include:

- Determining the scope of the project and research questions
- Developing a methodology for conducting the project
- Identifying challenges and risks and planning to mitigate for these
- Obtaining ethical approval from their institution for any data collection where necessary
- Conducting data collection and developing networks
- Analysing and synthesising findings
- Presenting findings in suitable outputs
- Planning to ensure that the project has a lasting legacy and results in lasting relationships for Parliament

## **6. Security**

Successful candidates will be required to complete pre-employment checks. This includes security vetting to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) level. All successful candidates are required to pass these checks before an offer can be confirmed.

You should be aware that if you have resided outside of the UK for a total of more than two of the last five years, you are not eligible to receive security clearance to work on the Parliamentary Estate.

[Click here](#) for further information.

## **7. Location**

The fellow will be based and work remotely on the fellowship. There may be opportunities for the fellow to come to the POST offices in Westminster, London, occasionally. However, this would be dependent on the circumstances during the fellowship.

## **8. Expected Timeline and Working Arrangements**

This project must be completed by the end of September 2022. We envisage this project taking between 2 – 2.5 days a week over a course of 12 months, between September 2021 and September 2022. However, we welcome proposals for different working patterns, including level of intensity and duration of project. Please outline your proposed working pattern in your application.

The dates stated are ideal start and end dates. We encourage flexible ways of working, this should be discussed with the parliamentary host at interview.

We welcome applications from applicants who wish to work part-time on this or to share the project with another fellow. Applicants should outline their preferences on the application form.

## 8. Application and Selection Process

The initial application involves submitting an application form. When you respond to the questions on the application form, please tell us about your skills/ experience by referring to the criteria listed in Section 10 of this document.

Applicants should also submit with their application form a sample of writing for a non-academic audience of between 500–1000 words in the writing sample submission template. The application form and writing sample submission template are available on the [Directed Call Webpage](#). All documents should be returned as electronic copies and in **MS Word format**.

Applicants should then submit their application, including confirming that they have the support for the fellowship from their university/ institution through seeking the required signatures on the application form.

The deadline for applicants to submit their application is stated at the top of this document. Please note that the application will be ineligible if any part of the application documentation is left blank.

Assessment of the applications will take into consideration both the degree to which the applicant meets the assessment criteria: skills and experience, below in Section 10, and the applicant's proposal for delivering the project, as outlined on the application form.

Those successful at the initial application stage will be invited to a phone or MS Teams interview. Further details will be provided at that stage.

If you are invited to interview, we will ask you a combination of competency questions and role specific questions based on the criteria below, as well as questions relating to how you would conduct the project. Any presentation or test requirements will be clearly communicated to you well in advance of your interview.

We may also ask you to complete a test, presentation or other assessment as a part of your recruitment process.

## 9. Our Values

The House of Commons is proud of our organisational values, which will deliver our strategy.

We are looking for people who can bring these values to life:

**Inclusive:** We value everyone equally; We respect each other; We all have a voice.

**Courageous:** We try new things; We own our actions and decisions; We learn from our mistakes.

**Trusted:** We trust each other to do a good job; We are impartial; We build confidence in Parliament with our integrity.

**Collaborative:** We share our knowledge and experience; We work towards a shared vision; We know we work better in a partnership.

## 10. Skills and experiences

When you respond to the questions on the application form, please tell us about your skills/experience in the following areas:

### **Criterion 1**

Ability to identify relevant international stakeholders, using a variety of research and networking techniques, and to initiate positive working relationships with them.

### **Criterion 2**

Ability to build good relationships and have an inclusive approach while working with a diverse range of people from different backgrounds and countries. Show an understanding of the importance of using sensitivity, tact and diplomacy in interactions.

### **Criterion 3**

Excellent written and oral communication skills, with experience in communicating complex information to diverse, non-specialist audiences, in different contexts, and to achieve different goals.

### **Criterion 4**

Research and analytical skills and experience or knowledge of techniques for conducting interviews.

### **Criterion 5**

Experience of planning, managing and delivering a project with engagement with many organisations or people. Experience or confidence to work independently. Evidence of successful collaborative work. Experience of thinking creatively to overcome challenges.

### **Criterion 6**

Experience of researching or working in/with policy. And/or experience of working in/with international bodies. And/or demonstrable experience of adapting to working in new contexts and quickly acquiring knowledge in a new area or sector.

## 11. Contact

For a confidential, informal conversation about the project, please email the project supervisor: Sarah Foxen, Knowledge Exchange Lead, UK Parliament on [foxens@parliament.uk](mailto:foxens@parliament.uk). For further information about the Fellowship Scheme, please email Laura Webb, Knowledge Exchange Manager, UK Parliament on [webblj@parliament.uk](mailto:webblj@parliament.uk).