



## Guide for Researchers and their departments: Scoping and Hosting a Fellowship for Parliamentary Staff during the Pre- and Post-Election Period

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### Background

The next UK General Election will be held on the 4 July 2024. The pre-election (previously known as purdah) and post-election periods simultaneously present opportunities for collaboration. During the pre-election phase, due to restrictions on the formation of new policies, parliamentary staff are freer to devote time to other activities, such as academic-policy engagement. The post-election period provides parliamentary staff reason to engage academic researchers in the business of scrutiny.

### How to get involved:

- UCL Public Policy invites individual researchers and UCL departments to submit an **Expression of Interest** for hosting parliamentary staff by **28 May 17:00 BST**. Submissions should include a brief outline of the research project and activities the fellow will work on.
- Fellowships will be awarded depending on a suitable match between policy interest and research areas. Applicants will be notified week beginning **3 June** if they have been allocated a host and will be introduced via email.
- Fellows are due to start their fellowship week commencing **10 June** for a **3-week period**.
- We particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic, female and disabled/neurodivergent candidates.

### Proposed Structure of the Fellowships

UCL Public Policy is preparing to host a cohort of parliamentary fellows (fellows), from the House of Commons Library, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) and House of Commons Select Committees during the dissolution period. Each fellowship is expected to last three weeks, on a flexible basis (part- or full-time) to meet both fellow and host needs. Fellows will spend time working on a UCL defined knowledge exchange project/s, embedded within a research department/centre or undertaking a series of meetings with UCL staff to gain new perspectives and insights relevant to their work.

Fellowship activities will likely include but are not limited to: meetings with academics and professional services; research time; visits to labs; organising and taking part in round-tables, contributing to seminars and lectures; and producing outputs such as frameworks, and synthesis reports.

UCL Public Policy will provide end to end support through a range of methods to ensure fellows and hosts can take full advantage of the programme and to maximise the potential for shared learnings and collaboration.

### Benefits

- Culture: Increased understanding of both university and parliamentary culture can lead to more efficient and effective academic- policy engagement.
- Research: Better collaboration and understanding between UK Parliament and UCL researchers can lead to more policy informed research.
- Relational: Relationships developed during the policy professionals fellowship scheme have the potential to be long lasting leading to additional academic-policy engagement between the fellows and their hosts beyond the fellowship period.

## Arrangements

No funding is required to take part in this programme. This fellowship model is acknowledged as a valuable career development opportunity. The employer (Parliament) enables the fellow to be hosted by UCL at no expense to the host and reduces their workload, reflecting a mutually beneficial arrangement.

The fellowship is offered on a flexible basis with remote, hybrid or campus-based working included. If on campus, a desk and access to UCL estate will be required.

Some funding may be available to cover fellowship related activities or outputs. This can be discussed with UCL Public Policy prior to the fellowship commencing.

## Process

Before the election period is announced, UCL Public Policy will seek to match parliamentary staff (the fellows) with UCL host departments and prepare any administrative tasks such as secondment agreements.

Once accepted to the programme, UCL Public Policy will host a welcome session for fellows and research hosts to enable smooth onboarding.

Fellows and their host supervisor will meet to: define ways of working i.e. remote, hybrid, in person; define aims, objectives and outputs, and timeline of the fellowship; identify training for the fellow; and schedule weekly meetings.

## Fellowship support and supervision

During the fellowship period, the fellow remains an employee of their own organisation. Their employer maintains responsibilities such as line management, approving leave, managing pay and pensions, and overseeing other organisational processes and policies. UCL is **not** their employer, but instead the fellow is allocated a supervisor and a sponsor.

- The **UCL supervisor** is responsible for arranging meetings between the fellow, their research team, and relevant research centres and academics. The supervisor is responsible for providing comprehensive support for the fellowship, overseeing various aspects including induction of their department, conducting regular meetings, performing progress reviews, and closely monitoring the achievement of the fellowship's aims and objectives.
- The **sponsor**, a senior UCL academic, will be assigned to support the fellow's visibility during the fellowship.
- The **UCL Policy Fellowship coordinator** provides centralised support and leadership for this programme, working with internal and external partners to scope projects as well as coordinating the administration and recruitment and support of fellows. The Fellowship Coordinator will also be responsible for:

- Conducting exit interviews and follow up surveys
- Collating and sharing feedback
- Supporting fellow with follow up activities
- Supporting the production of outputs (blogs, seminars etc.)
- Provide convening opportunities for fellows, hosts and researchers.