



Scottish Parliament Academic Fellowship Scheme 2023-24

Guidance on applying for an Academic Fellowship

1. STREAM 1 - Online application form for projects proposed by us

Applicants for stream 1 have to:

1. Complete our online application form; and
2. Send a copy of their CV and project details to academia@parliament.scot

Application form - applicant details and funding

This section of the form requests information about the applicant.

It also seeks information about funding for the Fellowship. The Parliament has a degree of funding available to support fellows who are unable to provide their own, (for details see our FAQs document). In this case, applicants should note that they require Scottish Parliament funding on the application form and indicate the amount of funding required.

Various funds are available from within the academic sector for impact-related activities. Applicants are encouraged to seek funding from such sources. If applicants secure funds, the source should be noted on the form.

Details of funding options will be discussed with applicants invited to an interview.

Application form - experience you have of presenting your work in a non-academic context

A crucial part of being a fellow is the ability to present your work orally and in writing to MSPs and staff who may potentially know very little about your field of study.

You should use this section of the application form to outline your experience of your work in a non-academic context, for example work you have published in blogs and policy papers, presentations to a non-academic audience etc.

Application form - working arrangements

We recognise that it may be impossible for many applicants to participate on a full-time basis and that many applicants may wish to work remotely. We also welcome applicants who wish to work on a part-time basis or from their own institutions.

The precise working arrangements for each fellowship will, however, depend on the scope of the project as some projects may need more work in the Parliament than others. We will agree this on a case-by-case basis. Preferred working arrangements should be proposed in your application. We will agree working arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

Application form - support from your Head of Department

This section requires you to confirm that you have sought approval from your Head of Department (or equivalent) at your institution.

Once you have completed and submitted the online form please e-mail a copy of your CV and your project details (see below) to academia@parliament.scot

Project Details

In addition to the application form and cv, applicants also need to email us a separate document outlining the details of their project.

Applicants should provide the following in their project details: aim and objectives, approach, timetable with milestones, risks, outputs, and communication of findings from the project. Please use no more than 2 pages for this section.

What happens after applications are submitted?

After the deadline for applications, the following activities will take place:

1. A panel will assess the applications (where necessary, involving an external expert)
2. Interviews will be held
3. The outcome of interviews will be notified to applicants
4. Individual fellowships will be negotiated
5. Successful applicants must undergo security vetting. Fellowships cannot begin until security clearance has been obtained. This can take up to six weeks.
6. Fellows will be asked to sign the standard Fellowship Agreement which includes details of the project requirements as well as requirements on conduct, health and safety and the use of IT
7. We will provide an induction programme for successful applicants which will include practical training in the style of writing we expect when drafting briefings for SPICe.

Annex A: Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess applicants and projects:

The person

The applicant's experience will be assessed against the scheme's aims and evidence of the applicant's ability to carry out the proposed project. Applicants should:

- demonstrate in-depth and specialised knowledge of the proposed field
- be able to demonstrate delivery of previous research projects and ability to bring the proposed project to completion on time
- be able to demonstrate the ability to write short policy-style papers in straightforward language that lay people can understand
- have an understanding of how to present information using non-written means – e.g. using infographics etc.
- have excellent communication and interpersonal skills for multiple audiences
- show awareness of relevant research in other fields, and appreciation of the importance of working across disciplinary boundaries
- demonstrate an ability or potential to act as an ambassador for the Parliament

The project

The project will be assessed on the following criteria:

1. The extent to which the project is relevant to parliamentary business and the scheme's aims
2. The extent to which the proposal meets the specific aims of the project to which you are applying
3. The extent to which other current research in this area has been considered
4. The appropriateness, effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed approach to the research
5. Whether a realistic timetable, incorporating milestones, is presented which will achieve the project's aims and objectives
6. The consideration, and mitigation, of risks associated with the project
7. The opportunities for the outputs and outcomes of the project to be used in Parliament, the research community and more widely
8. The communication plan for the project

2. STREAM 2 – one page summary plus cv

In previous years, the application process for the open call (stream 2) was the same as stream 1.

As of this year, we have introduced a more streamlined application process for the open call on the basis that it is a more speculative process. We hope this makes it more straightforward for academics to propose potential research projects while still providing us with enough information to assess whether these could, in principle, be of interest.

Applicants for the open call need to e-mail us a one-page document outlining a proposed project, and also a cv. These documents should be e-mailed to academia@parliament.scot

The one-page document should include the following information:

- A short overview of what the project might entail and what its general aims and objectives are.
- Why the project is relevant to parliamentary business and the aims behind the fellowship scheme
- A general feel for the likely timetable of the research and possible outputs

We do not need a statement of support or equivalent from your Head of Department at this stage (although you may wish to consider how any work might fit within your existing commitments). We also do not need information on funding at this stage, although if you have information on this point please include it.

We will then consider whether the project proposed might be of interest to the Parliament and if the applicant has suitable experience.

If a project is of interest, we will contact applicants to discuss further. At this point we will need more information on the scope of the project, likely timing, funding, support from Head of Department etc. in line with the information required for stream 1. The assessment process will therefore follow that outlined above for stream 1 projects.

