

What Works innovation fellowships – applications now open

Published on 30 June 2026

Apply to spend 18 months generating and championing evidence that helps the UK tackle violence against women and girls

News 5 mins read

The government published its new strategy, [Freedom from violence and abuse](#), in December 2025. This marked the first step in a transformational approach to tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG). The strategy recognises that addressing this issue requires an equally strategic approach to generating, sharing and using high-quality evidence.

In response, the Cabinet Office and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) have partnered to create a nationally coordinated What Works programme, focused on identifying, testing and scaling the most effective interventions. The What Works VAWG innovation fellowships will play a critical role in shaping and strengthening this programme.

Fellowships available

Each fellowship is funded by UKRI's research and development missions accelerator programme and will be hosted by one of three government-backed [What Works Centres](#).

The three available fellowships are:

- What works in tackling domestic abuse – Foundations (What Works Centre for Children and Families)
- Economic modelling to support effective prevention – College of Policing (What Works Centre for Crime Reduction)
- What works to prevent VAWG perpetration – Youth Endowment Fund

Please consult the specific fellowship descriptions before deciding whether to apply. For more information on how to apply for the Foundations and Youth Endowment fellowships, go to:

- [Foundations fellowship](#)
- [Youth Endowment Fund fellowship](#)

College fellowship description

We will host the fellowship for economic modelling to support effective prevention, working within the research analysis and knowledge sharing team.

The fellow will lead a programme of work delivering economic modelling on interventions designed to prevent domestic abuse perpetration, enabling evidence-informed decisions on when and where to invest for maximum impact.

For more information, go to the [full fellowship description](#).

Who can apply

You must be based at a UK employing organisation eligible for UKRI funding. You can check if your employing organisation is eligible on the [UKRI website](#).

This funding opportunity is open to researchers who hold a PhD or equivalent research experience as well as relevant subject matter or methodological expertise.

This fellowship is open to applicants of all career stages.

Funding available

Fellows can apply for up to £220,000 at full economic cost consisting of:

- £180,000 for the fellowship at full economic cost
- £40,000 for research and collaboration costs

UKRI will fund 80% of the full economic cost. Your employing organisation is expected to support the remaining 20%. Please consult your research office for further advice.

Fellowships should start on 4 January 2027.

Person specification

Applications will be assessed by a selection panel against the following criteria. You must:

- either be a researcher in the remits relevant to the specific position applied for, or be able to demonstrate how you could generate interdisciplinary insights through combining these disciplines with other recognised academic disciplines
- be based at an eligible [UKRI research organisation](#)
- hold a PhD or equivalent research experience
- meet any additional eligibility and person specification criteria for the fellowship you are applying for
- have subject matter and analytical expertise and skills relevant to the specific fellowship position you are applying for
- be able to work effectively at pace to deliver expected outcomes, including working as part of a team on shared goals
- have the ability to communicate complex information and analysis
- have the ability to demonstrate the use of expertise in a non-academic context
- have excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to translate complex information into meaningful narrative that is accessible to a non-academic audience
- possess excellent stakeholder engagement and collaboration skills
- have the ability to co-design work programmes and lead on knowledge exchange activity between research, policy and funder communities

Applicants will also be assessed against some opportunity-specific requirements. For more information, go to the [full fellowship description](#).

How to apply

The closing date for applications is 4pm on Tuesday 8 September 2026.

To apply for the College fellowship, submit a CV and application statement to WhatWorks@college.police.uk.

Your CV and application statement should be no more than three pages each (six pages in total).

The application statement should take account of the role specification and respond to the following questions:

- Vision – what are you hoping to achieve with your proposed fellowship?
- Capability to deliver – why are you the right person to deliver the objectives of this fellowship?
- Approach – how are you going to approach the co-design of the fellowship with your host What Works Centre?

Only online applications are accepted for these fellowships. If your application does not follow the guidance, it may be rejected.

Interviews

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview. We expect these to take place in the week commencing Monday 28 September 2026.

If you have any questions about the fellowship or application process, email

WhatWorks@college.police.uk.

Additional information

Fellows and their employers will need to have a fellowship agreement in place for the start of the fellowship. We will provide this in line with our specific policies and procedures, based on a template provided by UKRI.

Attendance and location requirements are set out in the [full fellowship description](#). By applying for the fellowship, you are acknowledging and agreeing to the attendance and location requirements.

Sharing data with UKRI

Personal information provided in your application will be shared with UKRI for the purposes of supporting the assessment process and administering funding. Further information on how UKRI uses personal data is available in the [UKRI privacy notice](#).

Download full fellowship description

- [College of Policing What Works in Crime Reduction fellowship description \(pdf\) 157.41 KB](#)

Tags

Innovation Violence against women and girls