

Senior Research Fellow – “Humanitarian” x 1

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Research Commissioning Centre (RCC) has been established to commission and manage research to enhance development and foreign policy impact. The RCC provides support to FCDO teams for commissioning and delivering high-quality and impactful research. It addresses challenges associated with research bureaucracy, as highlighted by the [Independent Review of Research Bureaucracy](#), by providing a streamlined process for commissioning and delivering FCDO-funded research.

The FCDO RCC is excited to announce several Senior Research Fellow (SRF) placements within RED FCDO. Placements are for roles under the themes of Clean Energy and Innovation (x1), Food and Agriculture (x1), Migration (x1), and Humanitarian (x1).

These placements will be for two years at 0.4FTE, upon successful offer. All placements will be subject to the Fellow successfully passing “[Security Check](#)”(SC) level security clearance.

Please submit applications by **5pm on Wednesday 10th September 2025**, however we will be assessing candidates on a rolling basis and reserve the right to close the recruitment early.

Fellowship title
“Humanitarian” (Recruiting for one fellow)
Host team
Politics, Conflict and Humanitarian Research Team
Summary
Humanitarian preparedness and response is a key priority for FCDO. The SRF will provide evidence-based advice to FCDO and its key partners on humanitarian policy challenges.
Topic
The SRF will provide evidence-based advice to FCDO on humanitarian preparedness and response.
Fellowship structure
Fellowship duration: 2 years Working pattern: 0.4 FTE (~2 days per week) Fellow will remain an employee of their academic institution throughout the placement with FCDO.
Work arrangements
Security Clearance: All successful applicants will be required to complete and pass Security Check (SC) level clearance prior to joining the team. Processing time for this can take 2-3 months.
Location requirement and hybrid working: Applicants may work at either King Charles Street (KCS, London), or Abercrombie House (East Kilbride), at the applicant’s employing institution, or at home. Applicants should be able and willing to travel to an FCDO office at least once per month or more frequently.
Fellowship Opportunity Description
Humanitarian preparedness and response is a key priority for FCDO. The humanitarian system is undergoing a massive transition at the moment, brought on most immediately by significant cuts in funding, but it has been suffering structural and legitimacy pressures for many years. Over 90% of humanitarian funds are spent in protracted crisis and humanitarians are increasingly working with longer-term instruments such as social protection.
The evidence-base is patchy in many key aspects and the system as a whole still struggles with the consistent use of evidence to improve performance.

The SRF will provide strategic, evidence-based input to FCDO policy and programmes on humanitarian issues. They will help us to scope new research investments for the Politics, Conflict and Humanitarian team's research portfolio and input into RED's wider role on humanitarian research.

Synthesis and evaluation of existing and especially new data and research will enhance our capacity to respond to demands for evidence-based advice in country and policy teams by keeping abreast of new developments in the field and improving our influence and impact.

The SRF will work closely with FCDO teams, academia, and FCDO partners in the wider system, helping to link teams to evidence and external expertise in this area, as well as providing strategic advice and challenge within the organisation and for other actors.

The SRF will work closely with other SRFs in the Politics, Conflict & Humanitarian (PCH) research commissioning team, and other teams in Research & Evidence Directorate focusing on other related areas of interest.

Person specification - essential

1. Professorial-level academic with 10 years humanitarian research experience, including a strong track record of publications in high-impact academic journals.
2. Strong communicator, adept at drawing on evidence to provide rapid insight and strategic advice at a leadership level to guide policy directions, combined with an ability to convey detailed information clearly and succinctly to non-expert audiences.
3. Understanding and experience of the role of research, knowledge translation and evidence in shaping strategies, policies and programmes.
4. Desire to work as part of a cross-cutting team, engaging with other parts of FCDO as well as external partners.

Person specification - desirable

1. Strong, up to date, research experience in a sub-sector of humanitarian operations, for example:
 - a. Assessing excess mortality (through, for example, epidemiology, nutrition, public health famine, food insecurity, violence)
 - b. Humanitarian cash and social protection in protracted crisis
 - c. Promoting inclusion
 - d. Forced displacement
2. Experience of engagement with Government, UN, national and/or international research and/or policy advisory bodies.
3. Ability to work effectively in a hybrid working environment.

4. Understanding of the wider relevant evidence-base, for example social protection in protracted crisis.