



University
of Glasgow



Centre for
Public Policy



Economic
and Social
Research Council

The Centre for Public Policy Practice Fellows Information Session

13 May 2026

Dr Sarah Weakley, Research & KE Lead
UofG College of Social Sciences | Centre for Public Policy

Agenda

- **About the Centre for Public Policy**
Professor Nicola McEwen, Director Centre for Public Policy
- **What is the Practice Fellows Programme**
Dr Sarah Weakley, Practice Fellows Programme Lead
- **Building a Strong Application**
Dr Sarah Weakley, Practice Fellows Programme Lead
- **Hear from a Practice Fellow**
*Christina Kopanou, Principal Economist, Glasgow City Region
Intelligence Hub*
- Q &A



The Centre for Public Policy

Where Evidence Meets Practice

- Our Aim: To **build collaboration between the research and policy community**, by sharing evidence, nurturing skills, creating space for fresh thinking and preparing the next generation of policymakers.
- Led by Prof. Nicola McEwen and Prof. Kezia Dugdale
- Cross institutional engagement and delivery



What we do

- **Research**
- **Capacity building**
 - **Policy community** - Executive Education, Practice Fellows
 - **Academics** - Early Career Researchers Network, Affiliated Researchers
 - **Tools** - Evaluation Hub, In-house training on policy
- **Policy Labs** - Convening and facilitating
- **External engagement** - Brokering relationships – government, parliament and civil society
- **Providing a platform** - blogs, insights, podcasts, reports

Executive Education

Transforming Leadership for Productive and Agile Government



University of Glasgow  Centre for Public Policy

Breaking the Cycle
Poverty, Policymaking and Public Debt



FESTIVAL OF POLITICS
AN FHÈIS PHOILITIGS

With the Practice Fellows Programme we aim to...

- Widen our network of policy partners
- Mobilise research insights and expertise from across university to help solve real-world challenges
- Bring expertise to bear in the day-to-day work of your organisation
- Bring new professionals into the university, ideally for future collaborations
- Be useful!

What is the Practice Fellows Programme?

- The Practice Fellows Programme brings policy professionals into the Centre for Public Policy at the University of Glasgow to gain insights into policy questions facing them in their roles
- They engage with researchers across the University one-on-one through a series of structured engagements, spending **approximately 30 hours over a period of eight months** in academic meetings, cohort-wide events and writing
- Initial academic meetings brokered by Programme Lead, dependent upon Fellow topic
- Fellow and academic may choose to have subsequent engagements

Cohort 1 Figures

34

Applications

6

Fellows Selected

32+

Meetings

24

Researchers Engaged
With

Timeline of Practice Fellowship



Who can become a Fellow? (Eligibility)

- **Public policy professionals**
 - Can be in policy, public affairs, delivery, or research roles in policy-facing organisation
 - Public, private, voluntary sectors
- **Minimum 5 years' experience** (mid-career level encouraged)
 - Does not have to be with same organisation, but does have to be within policy field in paid work
- **Based in UK or Ireland**
 - In-person participation expected for some of Fellowship activities
- **Not eligible**
 - Higher education employees or those currently undertaking study
 - Self-employed/consultants. (You must have organisational affiliation)

Building a Strong Application

- **Aims and Objectives need to cover an issue of relevance for your organisation**
 - How do your Fellowship aims and objectives align with your organisation's strategy/mission; ideally reference it
 - Consider how the insights will impact your day-to-day work
- **Framing your Fellowship (What topics?)**
 - CPP is based in College of Social Sciences and cross-cutting; see our Expertise, News and Outputs pages on our site
 - Fellowship connects to all parts of University: what academics/units already work in your topic area?
- **Question types**
 - Conceptual/Foundational: Seeking to understand the state of the evidence in an area (esp for emerging areas)
 - Focussed on specific policy, programme, or law (e.g. What's the best approach to X policy challenge?)
 - Methods questions: (What's a good way to build an evaluation of X; what are techniques to understand Y problem or solution)



Costs, Funding and Practical Benefits

- **Cost:** The University of Glasgow does not charge a fee to participate in the Practice Fellows programme. This is a professional development opportunity provided by the University of Glasgow, the Centre for Public Policy and supported by the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA).
- **Funding** is available via ESRC IAA to cover travel expenses, workshops, consumables during Fellowship period. No funding for staff time buyout.
- **Practical Benefits**
 - **Can use hot desk space at the CPP Hub** at the Advanced Research Centre.
 - **Will be given Affiliate Status** and entitled to a University of Glasgow staff card, IT/email account and access to resources such as the University Library.
 - **Have priority access to relevant CPP events** and knowledge exchange activities.

Selection Criteria

- Must meet all the eligibility criteria (see previous slide)
- Demonstrates a clear rationale for applying to impact your own career and the work of your organisation
- Questions asked are strong: timely to a pressing policy and organisational need, specific, feasible to address in 8-month Fellowship
- Clear link to work of your organisation: reviewers are confident the expertise/knowledge can make an impact
- Demonstrates understanding of research expertise of UofG, and how your work aligns with it (see CPP expertise, outputs and UofG Research Beacons)
- Role is suited to the Fellowship: you have enough time to commit to the Fellowship and you have ability to influence the organisation with your outputs

Hear from one of our Fellows: Christina Kopanou, Glasgow City Region Intelligence Hub

- Used the CPP as an advisory panel or "critical friend" to inform ongoing programme work.
- My objective was to advance knowledge, methodologies and insights relevant to the theme/policy area explored.
- Policy areas explored were business support in the Foundational Economy, economic inactivity due to ill-health and programme evaluation methods.
- Used structured time to receive feedback and guidance for refinement of projects.
- Used time to co-design solutions relevant to a policy problem, drawing on academics' experience.
- Choosing specific topics of discussion/questions was an iterative process (some examples in the next slide)

Hear from one of our Fellows: Christina Kopanou, Glasgow City Region Intelligence Hub

Foundational Economy (GCC Childcare and Early Learning Challenge Fund)

- What ‘innovation’ means for ‘everyday’ businesses and how can this be incorporated into the economic development/policy discourse.
- What policy frameworks can be used to promote inclusive innovation that actively reduces economic and social inequalities?
- How to embed evaluation from design and what methodologies would work best to measure impact.

Key Outcomes from CPP engagements

- **Access to up-to-date, evidence-based research**
Tailored insights on how research applies to a policy context.
- **Enhanced networking and stakeholder identification**
Stronger connections with relevant partners.
- **Specialist expertise to accelerate policy design**
Expert feedback that speeded up development processes.
- **Increased buy-in from policymakers**
Greater alignment, credibility, and support for proposed approaches.
- **Clear direction on best practice and methodologies**
Effective use of suitable frameworks and tools.



Q & A



Deadline Reminder

All applications are due on Monday, 1 June at 5:00 pm BST

Please fill out our Application Form and complete a 2 page CV and attach it to an email by Monday 1 June by 5:00 pm to: Centre for Public Policy public-policy@glasgow.ac.uk

If you have questions you can send an email to the Centre mailbox above – but we do not have time to have individual calls with applicants.

Good luck with your Application!

