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**Nuffield Foundation Flowers Fellowship**

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) is offering a three month fellowship to a PhD student from a UK university. The opportunity is funded by the Nuffield Foundation in memory of its late Chairman, Lord Flowers of Queen’s Gate. The Fellow will contribute to the activities of POST by working on an area of science or technology policy and may produce a short briefing note (a ‘POSTnote’), other form of report or work with Select Committees. The Fellow will be based at the offices of POST at Parliament in London.

**1. Background**

**POST** is the UK Parliament's in-house source of independent, balanced and accessible analysis of public policy issues related to science and technology.

Its aim is to inform parliamentary debate by:

* Publishing [POSTnotes](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/post/) (short briefing notes) and longer reports.
* Supporting Select Committees with informal advice, oral briefings, data analyses, background papers or follow-up research.
* Informing both Houses on public dialogue activities in science and technology.
* Organising events to stimulate debate on a wide range of topical issues.
* Horizon-scanning to anticipate issues of science and technology that are likely to impact on policy.

**The Nuffield Foundation** is a charitable trust established in 1943 by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, the founder of Morris Motors Ltd. Its aim is to improve social well-being by funding research and innovation projects in education and social policy and by building research capacity in science and social science. The Foundation is financially and politically independent and spends about £10 million on charitable activities each year. More information is available at [www.nuffieldfoundation.org](http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org).

**Lord Flowers** (1924 - 2010) was a distinguished theoretical physicist who became a key figure in UK science and university policy. He chaired the Nuffield Foundation from 1987 to 1998. He played a key role in the establishment of POST and was its Vice-Chair between 1998 and 2005.

Lord Flowers was particularly interested in science policy, in parliament and in promoting the careers of young scientists. As Chair of the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology he said:

“... strategy must, first, leave room for new people who have not yet made their mark and for ideas too novel to have been awarded priority. Secondly, it must be focused on long-term needs and not on the solution of short-term problems.”

**2. Eligibility**

The Flowers Fellowship is open to postgraduate students registered for a PhD in a UK University and in their penultimate or final year of part- or full-time study in 2015 / 2016 in any scientific field.

**3. Details of the placement**

**3.1 Nature of work**

The overall work programme of POST is determined by its Parliamentary Board and successful applicants may be asked to work on a subject **not** directly related to their doctoral thesis. The topic of the Flowers Fellowship will be determined in liaison between the Fellow and POST, depending on the general research interests of the Fellow and the relevance and timeliness of the topic in Parliament.

During the placement, the Flowers Fellow will be expected to produce a POSTnote, contribute to a longer report, or assist a Select Committee in a current inquiry. These activities will involve:

* Identifying and liaising with a wide range of interested parties including industry, academia, regulatory bodies, non-governmental organisations and government.
* Drafting concise briefing materials.
* Responding to comments from internal and external peer review.

There may also be opportunities for the Fellow to organise seminars to inform or disseminate their work.

POST is a strictly non-partisan organisation; Fellows are expected to abstain from any party political activity and generally to uphold the principles of parliamentary service, including a commitment to confidentiality, during their time with the Office.

In all cases, Fellows are encouraged to interact closely with people and activities in the two Houses of Parliament, including Select committees, MPs and Peers, their support services, 'All-Party Group' meetings and the very wide range of other activities at the Palace of Westminster. Access to conferences, workshops and seminars can be arranged.

At the end of the placement the Flowers Fellow will be asked to write a short report for the Foundation, accompanied by a short reflection on the fellowship from POST.

**3.2 Funding arrangements**

The successful applicant will receive a three month extension to their PhD stipend from their university at a rate equivalent to their current PhD maintenance stipend. Please note that this will be capped at £6,000 for the three month period. The Nuffield Foundation will make arrangements to reimburse the university to ensure that the Fellow’s stipend will be paid while based at POST. While a candidate is based at POST, computing, email and other facilities necessary for the project will be supplied by POST.

The Fellow will be responsible for suspending her/his university registration for the duration of the Fellowship. University fees will not be covered by this award.

**3.3 Working arrangements**

The Fellow is expected to spend at least four days a week working in POST's offices in Westminster. The Nuffield Foundation and POST are keen to encourage applicants from all over the UK. For a successful applicant who is based outside reasonable commuting distance of POST in London, the Fellow and POST will negotiate an extra allowance to contribute to travel and accommodation needs. The Nuffield Foundation will reimburse the University for these costs.

**4. How to apply**

**4.1 Applications**

Applicants should submit:

1. A completed application form which has been approved by their PhD Supervisor and Head of Department or Studentship Grant Holder.
2. A two page CV (no referees are required).
3. A two-page POSTnote-style summary briefing that you think could be the subject of an actual POSTnote. The briefing should be in 12 pt font on A4 paper. You may want to use text boxes and graphs to highlight key facts. References should be included. It should also be free of identifying details such as the applicant’s name or affiliation. The briefing does not have to look like a POSTnote, but it should be written in the same style. You should:

* Summarise relevant current research and developments in this field.
* Highlight the main policy issues.
* Demonstrate your ability to write in a style suitable for a parliamentary (rather than academic) audience.

Before preparing your briefing you should examine the 'POST style' of writing, and the type of policy issues that are raised and discussed. POST publications can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/post/>.

Please send an electronic copyof the completed application form, including all signatures and your CV and briefing summary to [postfellowships@parliament.uk](mailto:postfellowships@parliament.uk). Receipt of the electronic copies will be acknowledged by email.

**4.2 Assessment**

The fellowship will be awarded competitively and applications will be assessed by POST.

The criteria for assessment are:

* Content (accuracy and breadth of research)
* Clarity of explanation
* Writing style (the type of language and vocabulary used – this should be pitched at a suitable level for parliamentarians)
* Policy relevance
* Balance and objectivity
* Structure and presentation
* Awareness of other relevant work in the area

Applicants that are successful at this stage will be invited for interview in London.

Reasonable travel costs to attend an interview at POST’s Westminster offices will be covered.

**4.3 Timetable**

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| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Deadline for applications | Sunday 18th October |
| Initial sift of applications | 26th October |
| Interviews (at POST) | 3rd November |
| Final decision | candidates told of decision within a week |
| Start date for successful applicant | From February 2016 conditional on obtaining parliamentary security clearance |

**4.4 Start date and length of placement**

The fellowship is for three months and may be carried out from February 2016 onwards, but candidates should try to avoiding starting in the period from late July to the end of September, when Parliament is in its summer recess and no activities occur. The start date is to be agreed between the applicant, POST, the applicant's supervisor and University and the Nuffield Foundation.

**5. Contacts and sources of further information**

To discuss general aspects of the fellowship and of parliamentary activity, or for queries relating to the application process, please contact:

Dr Aaron Goater at POST

Telephone: 0207 219 1159

Email: [goatera@parliament.uk](mailto:goatera@parliament.uk?subject=Flowers%20Fellowship)

For Institutions to discuss funding arrangements please contact:

Dr Vicki Hughes at the Nuffield Foundation

Email: [vhughes@nuffieldfoundation.org](mailto:vhughes@nuffieldfoundation.org?subject=Flowers%20Fellowship)

Please note that neither the Nuffield Foundation nor POST can advise on the strengths or weaknesses of individual proposals.

**For more information on Lord Flowers of Queen’s Gate see**:

The Guardian: (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2010/jun/29/lord-flowers-brian-flowers-obituary>)

**For more information on science in Parliament see:**

POST - <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/offices/bicameral/post/>

House of Commons Science and Technology Committee

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-archive/science-technology/>

House of Lords Science and Technology Committee - <http://www.parliament.uk/hlscience>

Note that many other parliamentary committees of the two Houses often concern themselves with matters that have scientific or technological dimensions, besides the two specific committees.

**For more information on the Nuffield Foundation visit** [www.nuffieldfoundation.org](http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/).

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| **Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology** Houses of Parliament, 6th Floor, 7 Millbank, Westminster, London, SW1P 3JA, United Kingdom | | | | | | |
| **Application for three month Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) placement funded by the Nuffield Foundation**  *Please complete in black ink, typescript or word process in same format.* | | | | | | |
| Surname |  | | Forenames | |  | |
| Title |  | | | | | |
| Year of Study |  | | Studentship Start Date | | |  |
| Studentship Duration (years) |  | | | | | |
| PhD registration end date |  | | | | | |
| PhD Studentship Funding source | |  | | | | |
| Grant Reference Number | |  | | | | |
| University | |  | | | | |
| Department | |  | | | | |
| Preferred Correspondence Address | |  | | | | |
| Personal telephone (Day) | |  | | Personal telephone (Evening) |  | |
| Personal email address | |  | | | | |
| If you need any additional support in order to participate in an interview (and to take up a fellowship at POST), please outline your requirements here. If you would like more information, please contact Dr Aaron Goater at POST goatera@parliament.uk | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| Where did you hear about this opportunity? | | | | | | |
| Nuffield website  POST website Other | | | | | | |
| Other (please specify): |  | | | | | |

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| **PhD Details** | |
| Title of PhD |  |
| Summary of project  **Please do not exceed 200 words.** | |
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| **Information in support of your application** | | | |
| Please provide a brief explanation of why you are applying for this Fellowship and any relevant experience that may support your application.  **Please do not exceed 300 words.** | | | |
|  | | | |
| **I confirm that the above particulars are correct** | | | |
| Signature: |  | Date: |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **This part of the form should be completed by your PhD Supervisor:**  I confirm that the above particulars are correct. If the application is successful, I give my permission for the above applicant to suspend their PhD studies for three months. | | | |
| Name (please print): |  | | |
| Signature: |  | Date: |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **This part of the form should be completed by your Head of Department or Studentship Grant Holder:**  **I confirm that the above particulars are correct. I understand that the Nuffield Foundation will expect the University to continue paying the student their stipend during the placement as well as any accommodation and / or travel costs as agreed with POST and that the Nuffield Foundation will agree reimbursement terms with the University for these costs associated with the Fellowship.** | | | |
| Name (please print): |  | | |
| Signature: |  | Date: |  |
| University Stamp: |  | | |
| **To be completed by your institution’s Finance Officer:** | | | |
| Name (please print): |  | | |
| Signature: |  | Date: |  |
| Official Stamp: |  | | |

Please send an **electronic copy** of the completed application form, including all signatures and your CV and briefing summary to [postfellowships@parliament.uk](mailto:postfellowships@parliament.uk).