



# Fellowship Scheme

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ODI is a leading global affairs think tank. We inspire people to act on injustice and inequality. We focus on research, convening and influencing, to generate ideas that matter for people and planet.

At ODI we lead new thinking and future agendas to deliver transformational change and foster a global sense of resilient, just and equitable prosperity. We work on four overarching global challenges and priorities:

- Shaping the future of global cooperation
- Tackling the climate crisis
- Fostering a more equitable economic order
- Advancing human rights and peace.

For general enquiries, please contact [odi@odi.org](mailto:odi@odi.org).

For all enquiries related to the ODI Fellowship Scheme, please contact [fellows@odi.org](mailto:fellows@odi.org).

# About the ODI Fellowship Scheme

The first three ODI Fellows began their work in 1963. Since then, over 1,300 Fellows have worked with more than 50 governments and international organisations.

The ODI Fellowship Scheme gives early-career economists and statisticians the chance to work as civil servants on two-year contracts in low- and middle-income countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Western Balkans.

The scheme provides host institutions in these countries with high-calibre professionals to fill pressing skills gaps, while offering Fellows the experience of working inside bureaucracies in a different country context to their own.

Fellowships are determined primarily by the needs of the scheme's partners. The continued demand from governments for ODI Fellows, as well as the level of responsibility entrusted to them, is testament to the esteem the fellowship has earned in the 60 years since it was established.

The ODI Fellowship Scheme is open to candidates of all nationalities, and we support and encourage applications from LGBTQ+ and disabled candidates. Postgraduate economists and statisticians with an interest in development are encouraged to apply. Successful candidates are expected to serve for the full two-year contract and be ready to work in any of the scheme's partner countries. For more details on entry requirements, please see the section 'Application information' below.

# The aims of the scheme

The Fellowship Scheme provides host governments with highly qualified, early-career economists and statisticians and offers unique work experience to Fellows.

## How host institutions benefit from the scheme

### Responding to country needs

Fellows are part of a government or international organisation and, together with their colleagues, effectively identify the most pressing needs of the host organisation.

### Tailored solutions

Because Fellows are embedded, they learn the relative strengths of their department and work together with their colleagues to tailor policies, models and ways of working that are practical and in line with the capabilities of the host institution.

### Transferring skills

Fellows are only placed in host institutions where certain technical skills and thematic knowledge are currently missing. Through close collaboration over a two-year period, colleagues learn important skills and acquire knowledge from Fellows.

**“ The ODI Fellowship Scheme has been of immense value and benefit to NBS. We thoroughly enjoy having the Fellows ... (they) contributed a lot to the quality and quantity of our output in NBS over the past two years. ”**

Dr Yemi Kale, Statistician General of the Federation, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

**“ Lack of technical capacity is one of the main challenges facing public institutions in the developing world. They either don't have nationals with the right qualifications and experience or they can't afford them. The ODI Fellowship Scheme fills nicely this gap by providing young professionals to support government institutions at a cost they can afford. ”**

Dr Saad Ali Shire, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Somaliland

# How ODI Fellows benefit from the scheme

## **Personal development**

Fellows gain valuable experience as civil servants. They learn about their host country, its policy landscape, and public sector service delivery in low- and middle-income countries, as well as the challenges of receiving development assistance from bi- and multilateral donors. They gain new technical skills as they work with colleagues to fill skills gaps. Since it is practical in nature, the fellowship is highly valued by participants and their future employers.

## **International exchange**

ODI Fellowships are also an opportunity for international exchange and lesson sharing between civil servants: some ODI Fellows bring experience of another civil service and many more go on to work in large bureaucracies, either at home or in third countries.

## **Future career opportunities**

The scheme enjoys an excellent reputation and Fellows benefit from the prestige associated with the scheme. ODI Fellows have gone on to build successful careers in multilateral institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations), academia, the private sector, non-governmental organisations as well as their own country governments. Many choose to stay on in the country of their fellowship.

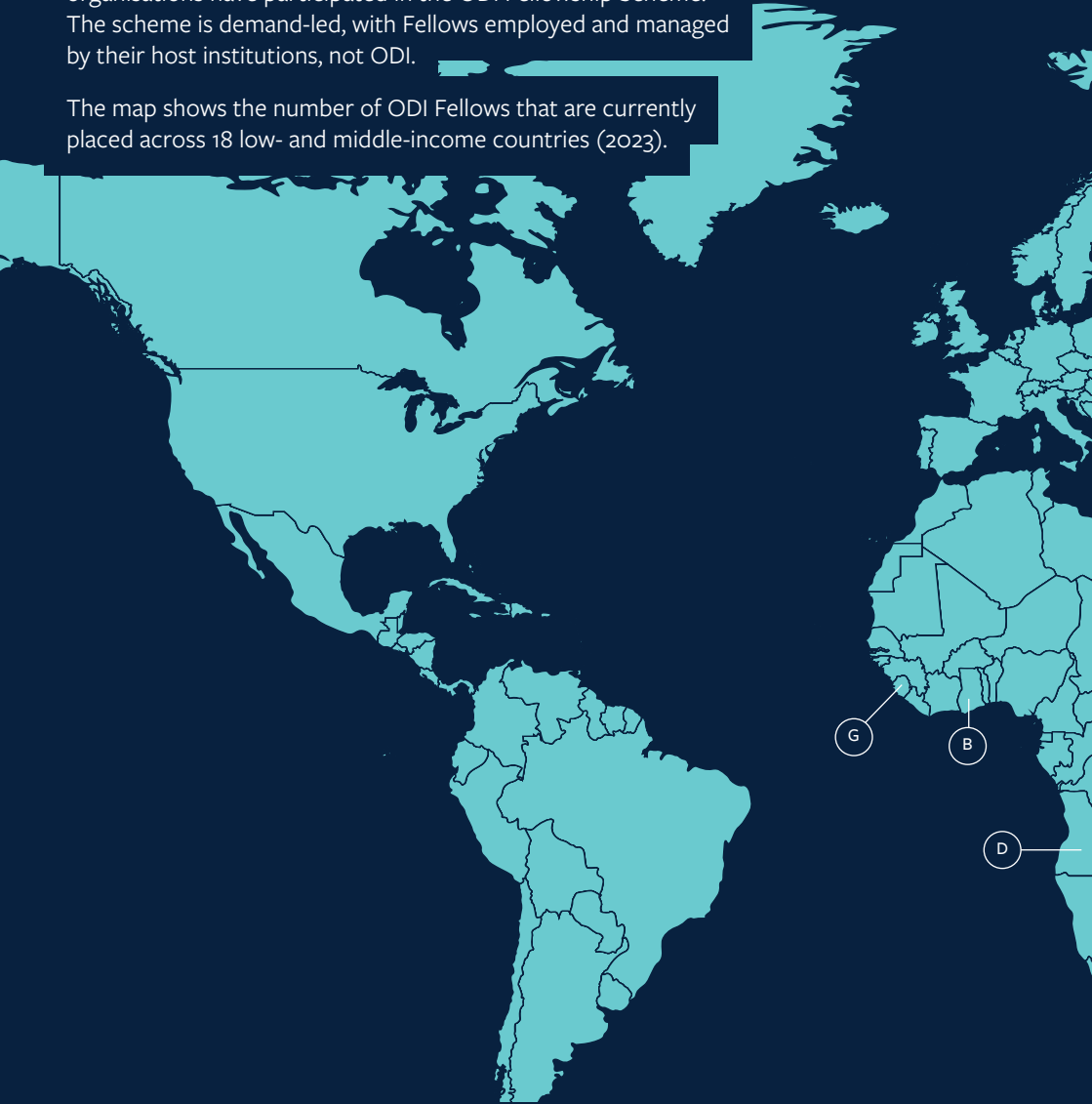
**“ My time as an ODI Fellow taught me an enormous amount about international development and changed the trajectory of my career; my subsequent two decades of development work has all benefited from it. Working directly for the Government of Malawi gave me an inside – and hard to come by – view of how development policy is decided, financed and implemented, experience I still draw on today. And during the course of my fellowship I met many people I still learn from and work with today, not least the other Fellows. It opened my horizons and made me a better economist. ”**

Ranil Dissanayake, former ODI Fellow in Malawi, 2005-2007;  
current Policy Fellow, Center for Global Development

# Where ODI Fellows work

Since 1963, approximately 50 governments and regional and international organisations have participated in the ODI Fellowship Scheme. The scheme is demand-led, with Fellows employed and managed by their host institutions, not ODI.

The map shows the number of ODI Fellows that are currently placed across 18 low- and middle-income countries (2023).



A Ethiopia 4

B Ghana 2

C Malawi 2

D Namibia 1

E Pakistan 1

F Rwanda 5

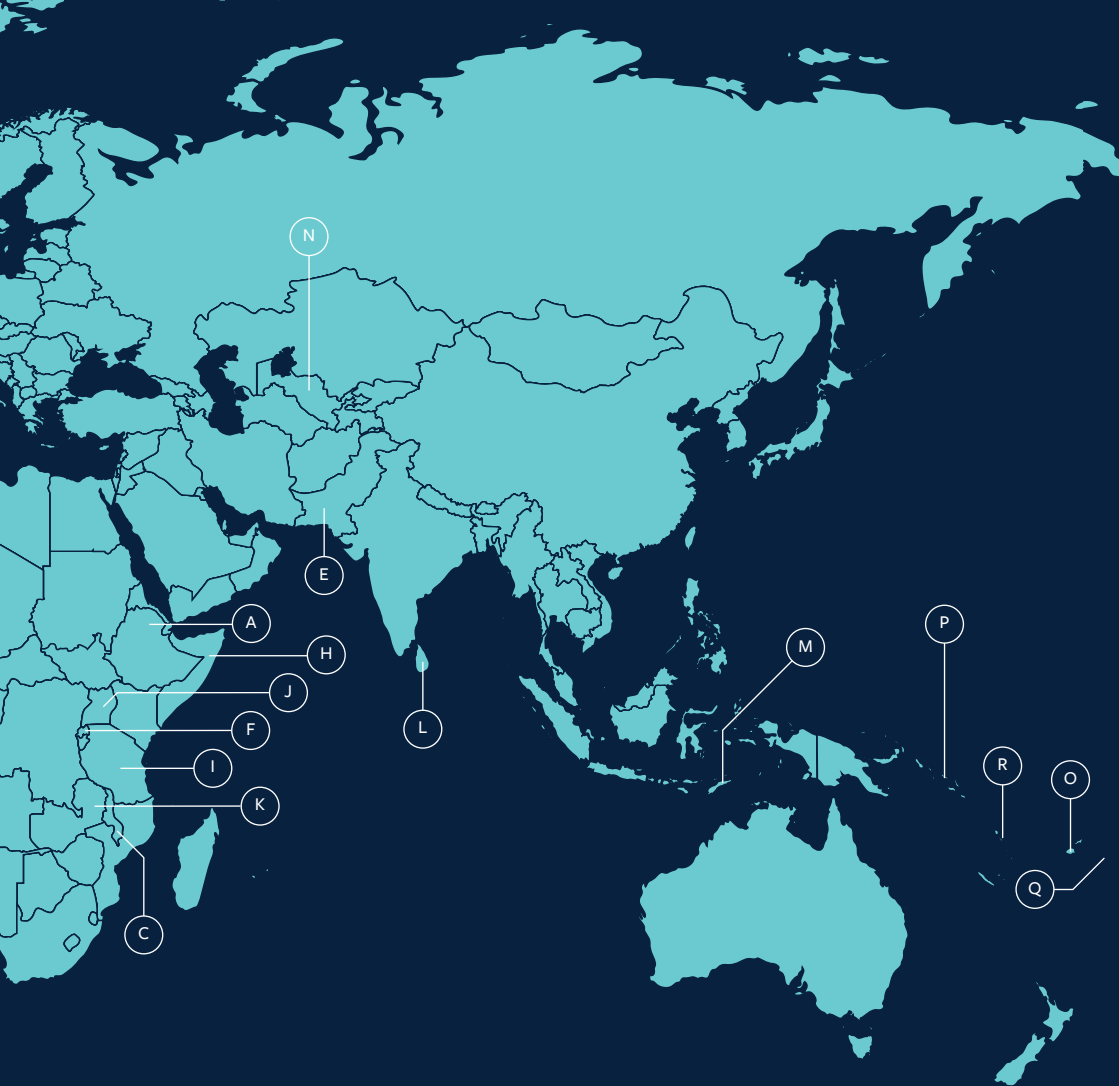
G Sierra Leone 6

H Somaliland 2

I Tanzania 1

# Fellows

## January 2023



**J** Uganda 2

**M** Timor Leste 3

**P** Solomon Islands 2

**K** Zambia 1

**N** Uzbekistan 2

**Q** Tonga 1

**L** Sri Lanka 1

**O** Fiji 1

**R** Vanuatu 4

# What ODI Fellows work on

Most Fellows are employed in government ministries or agencies where they work as economists, planning officers or statisticians. Many Fellows work in the centre of government in ministries of finance or planning, revenue authorities, central banks and statistical offices. Others work in line agencies including ministries of trade and industry, agriculture, environment, health and education. Increasingly Fellows are also being placed in research organisations affiliated to government or regional organisations.

Work depends on needs, and as such, varies greatly between countries and even ministries. As a result, posts call for a diversity of economic, statistical and administrative skills.

**“ The fellowship allows you the truly unique opportunity to work directly for the government, where you can experience first-hand the challenges and frustrations alongside your colleagues and develop your own beliefs about development without the ideological pressures of a donor organisation. In my fellowship, I had the opportunity to work side-by-side with my colleagues to tackle the daily challenges of economic planning, forecasting and analysis. The most frustrating days (or weeks or months) have been the ones where I have learned the most. Without the frustration, I would not have developed the skills and contextual understanding necessary to make lasting improvements to capacity in my office. ”**

Marina Tolchinsky, former ODI Fellow in Djibouti, 2015-2017; current Associate Director, Social Finance

## Strengthening internal systems

ODI Fellows contribute to the ability of their department, ministry or country to deliver their mandates, through high-quality data management, the construction of macroeconomic models and indices, and setting up systems for organisational management. Examples include:

- Designing National Health Accounts and Client Satisfaction Surveys in Tanzania
- Improving inflation and GDP forecasting models in the Central Bank of Papua New Guinea
- Strengthening the Domestic Resource Mobilisation strategy of Liberia
- Developing metrics to rank all senior high schools in Ghana based on performance



# Improved national and sub-national policies

ODI Fellows often make significant contributions to important analytical pieces of work which cover areas including: the provision of vital public services; analysing and designing regulatory policies; promoting economic development in key sectors; enacting climate adaptation reforms; and negotiating the terms of trade deals. Recent examples include:

- Redesigning Fiji's merger control regime and drafting the National Competition and Consumer Protection policy
- Drafting the Petroleum Natural Resource Governance Regulations in Ghana
- Initiating and moderating follow-up discussions from the President of Uzbekistan's visit to Singapore
- Launching an Economic Research Centre in Sierra Leone
- Preparing a presentation for the Minister of Finance of Timor Leste to deliver in Parliament

# Strengthening networks and building coalitions

There are many examples of Fellows building new networks, establishing new partnerships and co-producing research with international and local partners. Fellows have helped to build the environment for future international investment and supported the membership process of international organisations including Vanuatu's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Rwanda's membership of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

# Improving the work culture of their office

By bringing a diverse set of values, new ideas and fresh perspectives, Fellows can have a positive effect on those around them.

**“ The ODI Fellows that have assisted Timor-Leste are bright, creative and adaptable professionals committed to strengthening the economy and building sustainable institutions. They work closely with national counterparts to transfer knowledge and skills, and make a difference. ”**

Fernanda Borges, former Minister of Finance and current Fiscal Reform Coordinator, Timor-Leste

# Application information

Fellowships vary from job to job and country to country, but all require a combination of the following experience and personal qualities.

**“ My time as a Fellow in Uganda was highly formative. In all my subsequent jobs, including the IMF, BP, and now at Oxford Policy Management, the experience of being an ODI Fellow has always been of exceptional value. ”**

Mark Henstridge, former ODI Fellow in Uganda, 1988-1990; current, CEO, Oxford Policy Management

## Qualifications

The ODI Fellowship Scheme is open to candidates of all nationalities who have a master's degree or PhD in economics, statistics or a related field.

Suitable specialised qualifications at postgraduate level include but are not limited to agricultural economics, environmental economics, international economics, health economics, development economics, and econometrics and statistics.

For those studying for a postgraduate degree at the time of application, the award of a fellowship is conditional upon the successful completion of the postgraduate degree.

## Intellectual ability

- A sound grasp of economic and statistical theory and the ability to apply that knowledge to real world problems
- Data and information analysis to solve problems
- Clear and concise written and verbal communication, especially translating complex technical ideas to non-specialists

# Personal qualities

- Resilience and problem-solving to drive change and to work independently
- Interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity and political acumen to succeed within a diverse team, sometimes on politically sensitive topics
- Patience and humility to learn about new contexts and accept advice
- Adaptability and flexibility to navigate resource-constrained environments

# Management and work-related skills

- Strong organisational skills including prioritisation and delegation of tasks
- Willingness to consult and advocate
- Good time management
- Ability to take initiative and work without supervision
- Project management
- Report writing

Applications are strengthened by a demonstrable interest in public policy, relevant work or voluntary experience and language proficiency (with English essential and French particularly advantageous) and strong IT skills.

We support and encourage applications from LGBTQ+ and disabled candidates. To ensure candidates are not placed in difficult, dangerous or impractical situations, we will ensure that all successful candidates are only offered suitable placements during the matching process. We will discuss this with the candidate directly during the allocation process.

**“ The two years spent on the scheme represent my happiest professional experience, and have personally been the most satisfying in terms of lasting friendships, continued mentorship and self-fulfilment. ”**

Ian Gillson, former ODI Fellow in Malawi, 2000-2002; current Lead Economist, Global Trade and Regional Integration Unit, The World Bank

# How to apply

Our next application round will open in March 2023. Full details of how to apply online will be made available at [odi.org/odi-fellowship-scheme/](https://odi.org/odi-fellowship-scheme/).

Applications will only be accepted if they are completed correctly according to the instructions available on our website and submitted by the closing date.

Applicants must be willing to commit to a two-year period in any of the countries that participate in the scheme. However, to ensure the safety of all involved, we take personal characteristics into account when placing Fellows – see previous page.

## Timeline

- **Late March 2023:** Applications open for the ODI Fellowship Scheme
- **27 April 2023:** Closing date for receipt of applications
- **Late May/early June 2023:** Short-listed applicants are invited to an interview
- **Week of June 11th 2023:** Interviews take place, after which firm or conditional offers are made to successful candidates
- **March-July 2023:** The ODI team discuss potential roles with all participating governments  
Host institutions submit requests for new Fellows with job descriptions and a short-list of preferred candidates
- **July–August 2023:** ODI and host institutions agree on which candidates are allocated to which openings
- **September 2023:** A briefing session is held at ODI in London to prepare new Fellows for their roles
- **October 2023:** Successful candidates begin their fellowships

# Frequently asked questions

## How are Fellows paid?

Fellows are employed and paid by the institutions that host them and their work programmes are determined and managed by local civil servants. Fellows receive a salary equivalent to what would be payable to a locally recruited national with similar qualifications and experience. In addition, Fellows receive a monthly supplement and housing allowance from ODI.

## How are the posts and the scheme funded?

The cost of each fellowship is shared between the host government and ODI. Funders of the ODI Fellowship Scheme include: the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, the UK Office of National Statistics, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Gates Foundation, UNECA, Namibia Nature Foundation, Comic Relief, the Fleming Fund and the EdTech Hub. Some governments fund the entire cost of Fellows themselves.

## How are administrative and financial responsibilities shared between governments and ODI?

Fellows are selected by ODI, but they then become employees of the governments or public bodies for which they work. The cost of each fellowship is shared between ODI and the local employer.

### The local employer is normally responsible for:

- Paying a salary equivalent to what would be payable to a locally recruited national with similar qualifications and experience
- Furnishing office accommodation and a computer for the ODI Fellow
- Providing conditions of service such as leave entitlement, expense allowances and medical insurance similar to those offered to local staff in similar grades
- Ensuring Fellows receive assistance in obtaining work permits and security clearances where required

### ODI is normally responsible for:

- Selecting candidates
- Identifying fellowship posts along with host institutions
- Preparing a pre-departure briefing
- Overseeing administration – monthly payments, flights, medical insurance, reports to funders
- Providing duty of care (safeguarding, security)

Contracts of employment between host governments and individual Fellows determine Fellows' local salaries and other terms and conditions of service. These vary from country to country according to the post held, the cost of living and other factors. As local employees, Fellows are expected to pay tax on local salaries.

In 2023, total compensation of ODI Fellows net of tax amounted to (on average) approximately £30,600 per Fellow per annum in the first year of the fellowship and £32,600 in the second year. The compensation is inclusive of a housing allowance that varies according to cost of living in the country of question.

### **How can a government become part of the scheme?**

If a new country wants to participate, the ODI Fellowship Scheme team will conduct a detailed scoping visit at the invitation of the government to ensure that conditions are suitable for ODI Fellows. Governments wanting Fellows must make a formal request to ODI, accompanied by a clear job description and a commitment to provide a local salary and other benefits that would be due to an equivalent local employee.

### **How are Fellows matched to placements?**

Representatives from ODI conduct annual placement visits to countries participating in the scheme. These visits provide an opportunity to hold detailed discussions with host institutions about their future requirements for ODI Fellows, as well as monitor the progress of existing roles. Following the placement visits, governments submit their requests for ODI Fellows along with clear job descriptions. Candidates are then allocated to roles to the satisfaction of both host institutions and candidates. The scheme is demand-led and aims to the extent possible to give governments their preferred candidates. Start dates are negotiated according to individual availability and the requirements of the employing institution.





**ODI Fellowship Scheme**

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