



*By Email*

October 2024

Dear ESRC student,

### **Welcome to your ESRC-funded studentship**

At the start of this new academic year I would like to welcome you to your ESRC-funded studentship and highlight some of the opportunities available to you. You are now part of a select cohort of students within an engaged academic community of learners and professionals who are available to help you excel both academically and professionally.

As you may know, ESRC is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). UKRI is the UK's largest single funder of postgraduate research students, with about one in four of the UK's approximately 105,000 doctoral students supported directly through our research councils.

ESRC funds over 500 students per year through our network of [Doctoral Training Partnerships](#) (DTPs) and [Centres for Doctoral Training](#) (CDTs). You are the first cohort of students starting under our new wave of DTPs and CDTs that were commissioned following the [Review of the PhD in the Social Sciences](#). The details of our expectations and ambitions for doctoral training are detailed in our [Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines](#) (2022).

### **Your funding guide**

Please familiarise yourself with the [ESRC Postgraduate Funding Guide](#), which sets out our commitments to supporting you and your responsibilities as an ESRC-funded student. We ask that you formally recognise ESRC's contribution to funding your research in any outputs from your research project. From time to time, we may seek your assistance with our activities to ensure that we can continue to fund high-quality training of new researchers.

I recommend you find out the key contacts within your institution's [Doctoral Training Partnership](#) (DTP) or [Centre for Doctoral Training](#) (CDT), as they should be your first point of contact if you have any questions about your studentship.

### **ESRC opportunities**

Opportunities to learn, exchange knowledge and make an impact will arise throughout your studentship and I encourage you to grasp these whenever you can. As an ESRC-funded student you will have access to funding, via your DTP or CDT, to support Overseas Institutional Visits, fieldwork, and to training in broader transferable skills. Our revised expectations also include that all ESRC-funded students have the opportunity to complete a placement in academia, policy, business or third sector organisations.

ESRC plays a key role in supporting the training of UK social scientists and provides a range of resources for the entire UK social science postgraduate community. Additional training courses can be accessed through your DTP/CDT and the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM). Please visit the NCRM website for more information and resources ([www.ncrm.ac.uk](http://www.ncrm.ac.uk)), and see the attached annex for a list of ESRC data and methods investments which support research and study.

We also promote partnership and research collaborations between our postgraduate students and non-academic organisations. Your DTP or CDT has developed a number of opportunities to support this engagement, so if you're interested in finding out more about this then please contact them directly.

## Developing our strategy

The research councils' strategic delivery plans set out the part they will play in delivering the wider UKRI mission and vision described in our ambitious five-year [strategy](#). [ESRC's strategic delivery plan](#), shaped by our community, describes our strategic priorities and how we will use our strengths to sustain the UK's excellence in social, behavioural and economic research. It sets out how we will harness the power of our many disciplines to enable change that makes a difference to all our lives, improving outcomes for individuals, society and the economy. Our next strategic delivery plan will be published in 2025.

## New deal for postgraduate research

The UK government's commitment to a new deal for postgraduate research (PGR) was initially set out in the [UK Research and Development \(R&D\) Roadmap](#) and subsequently in the [R&D People and Culture Strategy](#). This is an ambitious, long-term programme of evaluation and change. UKRI is collaborating with partners to deliver this work and ensure deep sector engagement throughout, including prospective, current and previous postgraduate research students. Please see the [UKRI website](#) for further information.

In addition to the above, you can keep up to date on our work and the opportunities available to you by visiting our website and [signing up for ESRC email alerts](#), and finding us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#). We hope these resources provide you with helpful information, in addition to highlighting the important contributions of UK social science researchers.

I wish you all the very best with your studies,

Yours faithfully



**Stian Westlake**  
Executive Chair  
Economic and Social Research Council

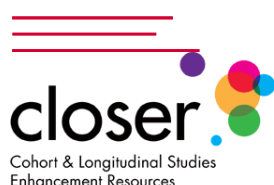
## ESRC Data and Methods Services supporting research and providing training

The ESRC funds a range of data and methods services to support research and study. It provides resources needed to access high quality socio-economic data and to develop research skills. You may also find it useful to register for alerts from ESRC investments relevant to your studies. These services are:



The [UK Data Service](#) provides access to a collection of over 6,000 high quality socio-economic data sets. It supports data users and works to improve data management.

**CENTRE FOR  
LONGITUDINAL  
STUDIES**



The [Centre for Longitudinal Studies](#) (CLS) manages four British cohort studies: the 1958 National Child Development Study, the 1970 British Cohort Study, Next Steps, and the Millennium Cohort Study.

[CLOSER](#) supports the use of longitudinal research. Key resources include reading lists and summaries of findings, and a search portal to help find out what data has been collected across all nine studies in the CLOSER partnership.



[Understanding Society](#) is a major longitudinal survey of around 40,000 UK households. The site contains information on the survey, as well as research articles, reports and policy briefings based on this survey.



[Administrative Data Research UK](#) enables accredited researchers to access securely held de-identified linked administrative data for research that has potential benefit to society. The [ADR noticeboard](#) is intended to support PhD students using administrative data. Here you will find information about relevant upcoming events, training resources, and placement opportunities. provides information on events, training resources and placement opportunities.



[Census and Administrative data Longitudinal Studies Hub](#) enables researchers to access census based longitudinal data selected from census records over time as well as linked material from other administrative datasets (such as health data).



The [National Centre for Research Methods](#) supports researchers in developing their research skills. It hosts an extensive database of research methods training courses.

Each service provides support and delivers training, including joint training and can be contacted if you are interested in bespoke training.