

**Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)**

**UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)**

**Application pack  
for the recruitment of  
Strategic Advisory Network (SAN) members**

**November 2020**

**Application closing date: 16:00 (GMT) on Tuesday 19 January 2021**

**Date of appointment: April 2021**

We are seeking to appoint up to 19 additional members to our Strategic Advisory Network (SAN), to provide credible advice and strategic insight into our policy and programme development.

## **Introduction**

ESRC is part of UKRI, a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). UKRI brings together the seven disciplinary research councils, Research England, which is responsible for supporting research and knowledge exchange at higher education institutions in England, and the UK's innovation agency, Innovate UK.

Through our councils we maintain and champion the creativity and vibrancy of disciplines and sector-specific priorities and communities. Our councils shape and deliver both sectoral and domain-specific support.

We work with many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas.

## **About ESRC**

We are the UK's largest funder of economic, social, behavioural and human data science. We support independent, high quality research, training and data infrastructure that has impact on business, the public sector and civil society. At any one time ESRC supports over 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students in academic institutions and independent research institutes who through their research, discover new knowledge, explore new ways of thinking and drive innovation.

We are committed to supporting the very best research, with scientific excellence the primary criterion for funding. All our funding opportunities are highly competitive and only those proposals judged by experts in the field to be of the highest scientific quality are supported.

We expect our funded research to have academic impact, as well as maximising opportunities for societal and economic impact so that the best evidence and academic expertise inform public policy. Building strategic partnerships with academia, the public and private sectors, and civil society is another key aspect of our work.

Researchers require access to world-class data and pioneering research methods to deliver high quality research and maximise impact. We take a strategic lead in driving the expansion of the UK's data infrastructure and supporting cutting-edge methodological developments.

We also play a key role in promoting and supporting training for the UK social science community throughout their careers. We invest in high-quality research training and development opportunities to produce skilled researchers who are able to tackle the most pressing social and economic challenges and have a broader impact on society.

### **Strategic Advisory Network (SAN)**

The SAN is a flexible resource that complements the work of ESRC's Council. It includes public policy professionals from a range of backgrounds, including the civil service, researchers and users of research from the private and charitable sectors, knowledge exchange and impact experts, and academic researchers.

This pool of experts provides advice in various areas to help us identify and take advantage of opportunities to enable impact through our research, training and data infrastructure portfolio.

The purpose of the SAN is to provide the ESRC and its Senior Leadership Team with:

- strategic expert advice in an agile way so that we can respond effectively to new funding opportunities;
- detailed expert support and advice including the design of strategies and schemes, investment management (pre- and post-award), and interventions;
- a broad perspective of advice on issues, proposals and decisions;
- access to a pool of experts to whom the office can turn for ad-hoc advice and advocacy and to test out new ideas;
- provision of input into general policy advice.

For further information please see refer to the SAN terms of reference on our website (<https://esrc.ukri.org/files/about-us/governance-and-structure/strategic-advisory-network-terms-of-reference/>).

### **Role of a SAN member**

Appointments to the SAN will usually be for up to three years with the possibility of extension up to a further three years. Appointments begin with effect from **April 2021**.

Members will be invited to join both formal and informal work streams throughout their time on the SAN. These may include formal 'Task and Finish' groups that bring together particular configurations of experts to help the office address specific research questions; individual participation in panels or reviews; and informal expert

consultations to explore and advise on new possible directions for policies, strategies and programmes.

The time commitment can vary by activity, but it is expected that SAN members will need to commit around four to ten days to SAN work per year. Members are also expected to participate in regular meetings of the entire SAN.

Every effort will be made to support remote participation in SAN activities, if this is appropriate, and to consider flexible and part-time working. **Please note these are non-salaried roles. Members are paid a fee for each activity they are involved with and, when attending meetings in person, are reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses.** To note, civil or public servants are not permitted to receive payment. Please see the SAN terms of reference for further details ([esrc.ukri.org/files/about-us/governance-and-structure/strategic-advisory-network-terms-of-reference/](https://esrc.ukri.org/files/about-us/governance-and-structure/strategic-advisory-network-terms-of-reference/)).

### **Role and person specification**

We are looking to recruit up to 19 members in this exercise, with a diverse range of expertise and experience in the broad spectrum of the social sciences and/or in the use of social, economic and behavioural research with a commitment to UK Research and Innovation's mission and priorities ([www.ukri.org/about-us/what-we-do/](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/what-we-do/)).

We welcome applications from professionals in the public, private and third sectors who are familiar with the use and application of research evidence as well as academic members, including early and mid-career researchers.

We particularly encourage applications from women, those with disabilities, members of minority ethnic groups, and other groups who are currently or historically under-represented on ESRC's groups, networks and panels.

The SAN will include an appropriate balance of expertise from different organisations as well as reflecting a diverse mix of individuals and backgrounds. Appointments to the SAN are made on merit and are informed by the advice needs of the ESRC.

SAN members are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life)) in SAN activities.

### **Essential criteria**

Assessment of your suitability for network membership will be made based on how the evidence you provide in your application corresponds to the essential criteria.

- Experience in one or more areas of relevant domain expertise, such as research, methods development, doctoral training/skills development and capacity-building, knowledge exchange and data and infrastructure; and/or evidence of applying or co-producing social science research within the public, private or third sectors.
- Experience in developing and implementing strategy, policy or programmes in an academic, business, government or other research-intensive environment.
- Experience representing the views of research, innovation and business, public policy, and/or third sector communities and of facilitating two-way communication between communities and organisations, and a willingness to act as an advocate for ESRC and UKRI in its activities.
- A clear understanding of the contribution of multidisciplinary research to society, the economy and public policy.
- Evidence of providing advice at a strategic level, e.g. via policy documents; strategic or peer review capacity; managing R&D and/or research and resource investments; expert groups; liaison roles; panel participation.
- A willingness to dedicate sufficient time to the role.

### **ESRC portfolio and policy needs**

We welcome applications from a range of areas and are looking to recruit SAN members with a diverse range of experience. Expertise in at least one of the following areas is particularly welcomed, although this list is not exhaustive:

- “Net zero”/clean energy/climate change/sustainability
- Security and international relations
- Inequalities
- Health, ageing and wellbeing
- Transformative technologies
- New and emerging forms of data
- Research methods and methodological development
- Commercialisation of social science research
- Research in a public policy, business or third sector context, in the UK or globally
- Knowledge exchange and engagement, impact and/or evaluation

- Doctoral training and skills, research careers, research pipelines
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Official Development Assistance (ODA) and research
- Research policy, research integrity, responsible research and innovation and/or research ethics

## Diversity

UKRI's mission is to convene, catalyse and invest in close collaboration with others to build a thriving, inclusive research and innovation system that connects discovery to prosperity and public good. As an organisation, ESRC promotes and value equality, diversity and inclusion. We recognise the need to recruit employees, advisors, grant holders and students from the widest possible applicant pool and acknowledge the benefits that a diverse population bring. With that in mind, we operate a policy of equality and fair treatment. All applications will be treated fairly, regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin or disability. Through this recruitment exercise, we have a particular aspiration to improve the diversity of the Network in accordance with ESRC's equality and diversity policy (<https://esrc.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/>).

The information provided in the Equal Opportunities section of the application form will help us monitor the effectiveness of our policy. The equal opportunities information will not be used to determine an applicant's fit to the essential criteria but may be used when considering the breadth of SAN membership from an equality and diversity perspective at the final decision-making stage.

## Application process

Applications should be made through the application form on the ESRC website before **16:00 (GMT) on Tuesday 19 January 2021**.

Applications are sought from individuals who feel they meet the criteria set out above. There are four sections to the application, which are detailed below:

1. Applicant details: basic information and contact details, including title, name, current position, organisation, sector, telephone number and email address.
2. Skills, knowledge and experience.
3. Curriculum Vitae: a CV (pdf, no longer than 2 sides of A4) containing details of the most relevant professional qualifications, experience, research, and/or other

relevant experience to date. The CV must be tailored to best highlight how your experience matches the essential criteria and areas of expertise.

4. Equal opportunities information: individuals are asked to supply equal opportunities information. Completing this section is optional.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (EU) (GDPR), the personal information provided on this form will specifically be used for the purpose of administering this form and aggregated anonymised data will be used for the purposes of monitoring our advisory and decision-making bodies. Analysis of the information will be viewed by ESRC staff only and personal information will not be used for any other purpose without your specific consent.

For further information on how your information will be used, how we maintain the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold on you, please contact the UK Research and Innovation Information Rights Team (<https://www.ukri.org/about-us/contact-us/freedom-of-information-request/>).

Please note, we will not be holding interviews. Applications will be assessed solely on the information provided in the application. It is very important that the information given in the application form and CV is accurate.

### **Selection process**

Eligible candidates will be assessed against the essential criteria to ensure diversity of membership, with a balance of expertise across different roles, career stages and institutional representation across academia and the public, private and third sectors. The outcomes of the selection process will be announced in **March 2021**.

### **Contact**

If you require further information on the vacancies or the work of the SAN, or have any problems completing the application form, please contact:

- Strategy Team  
Email: [strategicadvisorynetwork@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:strategicadvisorynetwork@esrc.ukri.org)

### **How to apply**

Applications should be made via the ESRC website.

## Testimonies from SAN members

Professor Simin Davoudi, Newcastle University. Director of the Global Urban Research Unit (GURU) and Co-Director, NU Cities. SAN member since 2019.

*“I became a member of SAN in April 2019 in order to contribute to the ESRC’s vision and values, influence its future direction, and support its track record of championing high quality and impactful social science research. Being involved in SAN has been an enjoyable and stimulating experience. It has given me the opportunity to work with amazing colleagues beyond my own areas of expertise and learn from the rich diversity of knowledge and disciplines in social sciences in both the academic and professional communities. For example, as a member of SAN, I recently served on a number of multidisciplinary assessment panels which were established by the ESRC to enable social science research responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, in an agile yet rigorous way. The commitment of the SAN members and the ESRC professional staff to the process was exemplary and I feel privileged for having the opportunity to make a modest contribution to it.”*

Professor Irene Hardhill, Professor of Public Policy at Northumbria University.

*“The work I undertook as a member of the ESRC Strategic Advisory Network was a challenge but crucially a tremendous opportunity. This involved thinking holistically about the social sciences and the role of Interdisciplinarity. My work on SAN was diverse and included working with research users, and reviewing social science skills and training undertaken by the DTP network. Through my involvement in such schemes as Transformative Research I witnessed the powerful role the social sciences play in advancing scientific knowledge, and with the COVID-19 scheme, how social science research is making a difference to the UK economy and society”.*