

The RSE-SGSSS Mentoring Scheme

Student Guidance

The Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS) has partnered with the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) on a mentoring scheme that matches RSE Fellows to support ESRC PhD students keen to enhance their project by exploring (or exploiting) its interdisciplinary potential.

Objectives of the RSE-SGSSS Mentoring Scheme

The mentoring scheme is designed to:

- Awaken and develop sensitivity to the value of interdisciplinarity in research
- Enhance the student experience by supporting professional development and social capital (research impact, developing networks, careers advice)
- Support students' engagement with their own professional development by encouraging them to negotiate the terms of their mentoring needs with their mentor as the relationship develops
- Contribute to the strategic aims of the RSE and SGSSS to create more cross-sector partnerships that support diverse and interdisciplinary research

Mentors and Mentees

- **SGSSS Mentees:** This opportunity is open to all ESRC-funded social science researchers at SGSSS partner universities. Students need to demonstrate in an application how this scheme will support their personal and professional development, in particular enhancing the interdisciplinary potential of their research. [Applications need to be received by 31.07.2020.](#)
- **RSE Mentors:** The RSE will invite Fellows to submit interest in this scheme. The Fellows can come from any disciplinary background. The RSE will also invite mentors from the RSE Young Academy of Scotland, which fosters interdisciplinary activities among emerging leaders from science and humanities, the professions, the arts, business and civil society.

Pairing process

SGSSS will invite applications from PhD students who would like to participate in the scheme. SGSSS and the RSE will then match mentors to mentees based on their mutual interests and disciplinary connections, and facilitate introductions.

If the mentee/mentor choose to continue the mentoring relationship after the first meeting, we will ask you to let us know when the next meeting is planned and will ask for information about the progress of your mentoring sessions to support our evaluation of the scheme.

Structure

The scheme will launch with a welcome event on Tuesday 03 November, which is likely to take place online. The event will introduce mentors and mentees to the scheme, and give you space for an introductory discussion.

We propose a minimum of 4 meetings:

- Introduction and negotiation of the relationship (Meeting 1)
- Sharing experiences across research traditions (Meeting 2)
- Impact of research (Meeting 3)
- Career opportunities (meeting 4)

We expect that the meetings would normally take place at the Fellow's place of work. However, the first sessions may take place online due to Covid-19.

Monitoring and evaluation

SGSSS will send a light-touch check-in email to the mentee and your mentor around 8 weeks after the official start of the mentoring relationship to ensure all parties are getting the most from the scheme.

At the end of the mentoring relationship, SGSSS will invite reflections from both the mentee and the mentor to feed into the evaluation and future development of the SGSSS-RSE Mentoring Scheme.

Measures of success

- Mentees' social capital is enhanced through increased opportunities for research impact, exposure to different ways of thinking, methodologies and approaches, and developing networks and careers advice outside of their discipline.
- Mentees feel engaged in their own professional development through being able to negotiate the terms of their mentoring needs with their mentor as the relationship develops.
- Mentors feel they are contributing to the professional development of the future workforce and nurturing leadership talent.
- Mentors and mentees have a deeper understanding of each other's worlds.

Former Mentees Say

“The perspective and advice offered by an expert from a different academic discipline allowed me to develop new views and approaches, and consider future possibilities in a different light.”

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mentee, 2019/20 pilot