**Fit for the Future – Leadership and Social Sciences - call for evidence**

**Feedback form**

**Overview**

Developing social science leadership capability is one of ESRC’s strategic priorities. The funding landscape is going through a period of rapid change and ESRC wants to support social scientists to take advantage of the opportunities that are now available to them. There is a clear shift toward larger collaborative and challenge-orientated projects that reach across traditional disciplinary and professional boundaries and are often international in scope.

The ‘Fit for the Future’ project was announced in 2018 in the light of this rapid change and recognises that this creates a specific leadership challenge for the social sciences. Designing, leading and delivering, and simply working within large, complex ‘team-science’ projects demand skills that have often not been required or incentivised within the social sciences. This leadership challenge has implications for how the social sciences think about researcher development more generally; how it nurtures and sustains intellectual curiosity and creativity throughout the full professional journey; how it cultivates and rewards ambassadors for the social sciences and how it might combine a fresh approach to talent management and building research leadership capacity with UKRI commitments in relation to inclusion, diversity and equality.

Led by Professor Matthew Flinders from the University of Sheffield, this project aims to design an ambitious and agile new research leadership and talent management strategy. This strategy will seek to achieve institutional and cultural change, placing the social sciences at the forefront of professional excellence within UKRI and within the international scientific community more broadly.

The ESRC has published the [evidence review](https://esrc.ukri.org/files/research/fit-for-the-future-researcher-development-and-research-leadership-in-the-social-sciences-review/) completed by the project team. The ESRC wants to work collaboratively to respond to this and seeks input from researchers at all career stages, staff working in ROs to develop research capability, senior university leadership teams together with other organisations interested in building leadership capacity to inform the next stages in development. They particularly welcome responses to questions raised within the [consultation paper](https://esrc.ukri.org/files/research/fit-for-the-future-research-leadership-in-the-social-sciences/) which accompanies the review.

Please provide evidence and feedback in relation to the following areas of interest and return to **Amanda Lazar by Wednesday 24th July 2019:**

1. Do the challenges presented in the [consultation paper](https://esrc.ukri.org/files/research/fit-for-the-future-research-leadership-in-the-social-sciences/) around researcher and leadership development fit with your understanding or not? If not please explain why.

a. Is there further evidence that should be considered?

b. Are there alternative interpretations in need of review?

1. Would the creation of a national framework for researcher and leadership development be useful or not?

a. Are there alternative solutions you would favour over this suggested approach?

b. Are there gaps or opportunities missed with this proposition?

1. What is the priority for immediate action?
2. Are early career researchers the key target audience or is there a more pressing need at other career stages?
3. Which bodies should be responsible for taking the development of research leadership forward?

a. Who would you want to see involved/represented in any new governance arrangements?

**Information provided in responses to this call for evidence may be subject to release to the public or other parties in accordance with the access to information law (these are primarily the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs), Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)).**