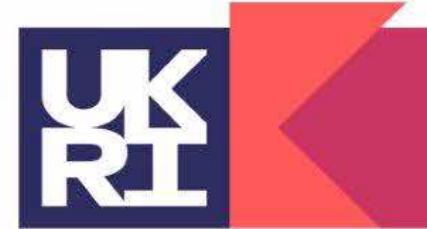


North West  
Social Science  
Doctoral Training  
Partnership



Economic  
and Social  
Research Council

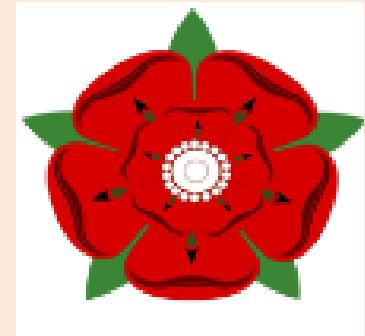


ESRC NWSSDTP Week  
11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Welcome to the NWSSDTP  
Dr Laura Radcliffe

# Welcome

- Welcome & Congratulations!
- Funded by: The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Your Collective 'Home': The North West Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership ([NWSSDTP](#))
  - Getting to know the NWSSDTP
  - Factor in time for interacting & networking
- A review of the [schedule for this week](#)
- Introductions to the DTP Team



# The ESRC: Mission and Aspirations

- One of 7 United Kingdom Research and Innovation ([UKRI](#)) Research Councils
- ESRC PGR mission:

To develop globally competitive social science researchers; able to operate in interdisciplinary, collaborative, and challenge-led environments; across a range of sectors; and that are characterised by diverse backgrounds and experiences.

- Using Social Sciences to address 'grand challenges', producing positive societal impact, encouraging interdisciplinarity
  - UK social science PhDs are prized for their depth of knowledge, critical thinking and research skills.
- ESRC PGR community: +500 students funded per year
- [15 Doctoral Training Partnerships \(DTPs\)](#)
- The National Centre for Research Methods ([NCRM](#))



From the climate crisis, to tackling poverty alleviation and health inequalities...

# The NWSSDTP

Follow us on [@NWSSDTP](https://twitter.com/NWSSDTP)

- From Doctoral Training Centre (2011) to Doctoral Training Partnership (2017) & recently recommissioned (2024) for a further 5 years
- Largest UK ESRC DTP: Circa 60 Postgraduate Studentships Awarded per annum
- Supporting both CASE and Standard Studentships
- 21 Social Science Pathways
- Taking up Opportunities: Training, Events, Networking
- Also check out our [Bending Boundaries](#) [podcast series](#) & [ShowCASE seminar series](#)
- NWSSDTP Key Contacts:  
<https://nwssdtp.ac.uk/contact-us/>

Our vision is to play a central role in enabling diverse cohorts of UK social science PGRs to achieve their potential as future research leaders, by equipping them with the skills & capabilities required to have a transformative impact



# What Next?

What will my PhD *journey* look like?

What are my personal and professional *goals* and how can I achieve them?

(see also the [RDF](#))

What opportunities and facilities are available to me now and in the future?

What is my *commitment* to the NWSSDTP?

What are my *responsibilities* as an ESRC Sponsored Student?





## Training and Development Opportunities

- There is a wide range of training available for PGRs within your department, school, institute, faculty and/or university.
- The NWSSDTP itself offers:
  - [Academia 101](#)
  - Simon Watts Training
  - Writing Retreats
  - Impact training
  - Sharing of modules across universities
- There are also regional and national methodological training programmes like [Methods North West](#) (funded by the NWSSDTP) and the [National Centre for Research Methods](#) (NCRM).

# Wellbeing & Inclusion

The NWSSDTP is committed to ensuring that you have access to all the support you need throughout your PhD:

- Your institution offers wellbeing and mental health support for all PGRs.
- Collaborative NWSSDTP writing retreats/hubs and buddy scheme.
- Our new [wellbeing webpage](#) also includes links to external sites.
- We have student representatives across the NWSSDTP, some of whom have a specific remit for EDI and Wellbeing.
- A new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has been established, which includes the student reps who can (anonymously) share your thoughts/feelings/ideas.
- From early 2025, an **Inclusion & Wellbeing Survey** will be sent out to all students.



# In Summary...

- Make the most of the Opportunity
- Remember the importance of Social Science research and the **collective effort** you are part of.
- Reflect and keep sight of **what you want to achieve personally** by doing your PhD & research
  - Producing Knowledge, Being an Agent of Change, developing as a research leader in your field
- But without getting overwhelmed...a collaborative effort, & ups and downs are normal!

# The Schedule

<https://nwssdtp.ac.uk/current-students/nwssdtp-week/>

- Variety of events and activities
- Balance of informational, practical, skills building and academic sessions
- **Today:** Meet the DTP Team, Meet your Student Representatives, *Methods North West*, start thinking about research in practice placements
- **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>** - How to use your RTSG
- **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>** - How to apply for opportunities: Overseas Visits and Fieldwork Funding
- **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>** - ESRC/AHRC Impact event
- **Friday 15<sup>th</sup>** - 'Well-being, resilience and balanced productivity' Coaching Session with Will Medd



YOU MUST NEVER  
BE FEARFUL ABOUT  
WHAT YOU ARE DOING  
WHEN IT IS RIGHT.

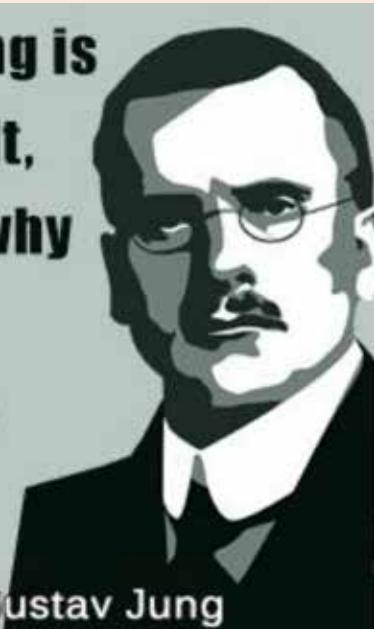
—ROSA PARKS

© www.lovethispic.com



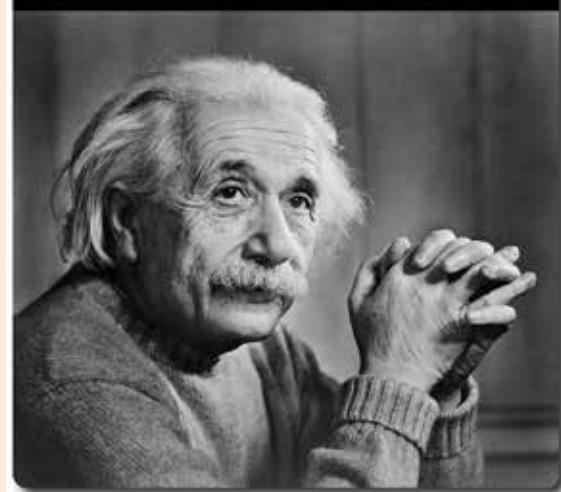
**Thinking is  
difficult,  
that's why  
most  
people  
judge.**

— Carl Gustav Jung



A person **who** never made a  
mistake never **tried** anything new.

— Albert Einstein



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and Social  
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# Training and Development Opportunities

Dr Stuart Shields, Methods North West Director  
Hayley Meloy, NWSSDTP Manager

# Development Needs Analysis

- All NWSSDTP-funded students are expected to undertake an annual Development Needs Analysis (DNA) process, during both their Master's and PhD. This is a requirement of your funding.
- The DNA Form should be completed in liaison with your supervisor.
- You'll be asked to reflect on your confidence and training needs in a range of conceptual, general and specialist skills areas. You will develop a training plan for the coming year and future years of your PhD.

# Development Needs Analysis

The purpose of the DNA Process is twofold:

1. It is a mechanism by which individual students can assess and monitor their training needs, and identify training opportunities, in liaison with their supervisors.
2. The results of the DNA process will be reviewed by NWSSDTP and used to identify recurring needs across the cohort, and thus tailor and expand DTP activities in line with student requirements.

- You will receive a link to complete your first DNA form during November and you will have until February to complete it.

# Coming soon...

- The NWSSDTP Training Catalogue will launch in January 2025!
- This part of the NWSSDTP website will provide as much information as possible about the wide range of training opportunities available (local, regional and national) organised around the structure of the DNA form, so you can use this tool to seek training to match your needs.
- Until then...

# Academia 101

Academia 101 has been created to support you in your professional journey as a researcher both during your PhD and beyond, with a series of introductory sessions on key research topics.

Academia 101 sessions are organised by the University of Liverpool Management School, but they are hybrid and open to any PGR from the NWSSDTP universities.

This year's programme will be launched soon:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/management/study/postgraduate-research/academia-101/>

# Simon Watts (UEA) General Skills Training

- What Should a Literature Review Do? - 27<sup>th</sup> November
- Writing Effectively – 3<sup>rd</sup> December
- Academic Publishing – 12<sup>th</sup> December
- On the job: Securing Your First Academic Post – 16<sup>th</sup> January
- Preparing Impactful Research Proposals and Grant Applications – 23<sup>rd</sup> January
- Preparing and Delivering Lectures – 28<sup>th</sup> January

# Monthly NWSSDTP Writing Hubs

The Writing Hubs provide a safe, supportive environment with dedicated time to progress individual writing. Scheduled discussions between writing slots are an opportunity to generate solutions to writing problems and received feedback on writing-in-progress.

## Upcoming dates:

- 14<sup>th</sup> November (Virtual)
- 6th December (In-person in Liverpool)
- 9<sup>th</sup> December (Virtual)
- 17th January (In-person in Liverpool)
- w/c 27<sup>th</sup> January (In-person in Manchester)
- 14th February (In-person in Liverpool)
- 14th March (In-person in Liverpool)
- 11th April (In-person in Liverpool)
- 9th May (In-person in Liverpool)
- 6<sup>th</sup> June (In-person in Liverpool)

# Auditing Master's Modules

- PGRs are encouraged and supported to audit (i.e. attend but not be assessed on) masters modules from across the NWSSDTP.
- The NWSSDTP Training Catalogue will collate a list of specialist modules which NWSSDTP students may be interested in undertaking.
- Prior to the launch of the catalogue, or if you find a module that isn't mentioned in the catalogue, we recommend reaching out to the module convener to see if they are happy for you to attend.
- Where this requires travel, it can be reimbursed from the RTSG.

# National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM)

NCRM delivers training and resources at core and advanced levels, covering quantitative, qualitative, digital, creative, visual, mixed and multimodal methods.



<https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/training/alltrain.php>

# OVER TO...

METHODS | NORTH WEST



Director: Stuart Shields

[stuart.shields@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:stuart.shields@manchester.ac.uk)

# What is Methods North West?

- Brings together methodological excellence and **innovation** from across the NWSSDTP
- Based on PGR-led communities of practice
- Providing opportunities for interdisciplinary and cross-institutional networking and training
  - Based on core activities at each institution
  - NWSSDTP module exchange programme
  - Working with others
    - National Centre for Research Methods: <https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/>

[About](#)[MethodsX](#)[Methods Labs](#)[Collaborative Innovation Grants](#)[News](#)[Activities](#)

Methods North West aims to become a regional hub for research methods innovation, celebrating the collective strength, depth and breadth of methodological expertise across the participating Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Lancaster and Keele.

[Read more >](#)

Methods North West highlights the depth and breadth of the North West's methodological expertise in the social sciences, within the Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Lancaster and Keele. It promotes and facilitates methodological excellence, innovation and inter-disciplinarity - within and beyond the social sciences. We work closely with [methods@lancaster](mailto:methods@lancaster.ac.uk), [engage@liverpool](mailto:engage@liverpool.ac.uk), [methods@manchester](mailto:methods@manchester.ac.uk) and [links@keele](mailto:links@keele.ac.uk).

[methods@Lancaster](mailto:methods@lancaster.ac.uk)[engage@Liverpool](mailto:engage@liverpool.ac.uk)[methods@Manchester](mailto:methods@manchester.ac.uk)[links@keele](mailto:links@keele.ac.uk)[UCLan](#)



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emma.banister@manchester.ac.uk

METHODS | NORTH WEST

# Thursday Lunchtime Online Seminar 12-1

- Forum to share and discuss latest research methods, techniques and methodologies.
- Pluralist and ecumenical - all innovative methodologies, novel applications of existing methods, fresh perspectives on traditional social science techniques.
- No limits to approach or format
- Seminar doesn't need to take a 'traditional' presentation and Q&A format.
- Previous seminars from PGRs, the private, third and community sector – audience the same
- Speak to institutional lead to discuss your ideas.

# Methods Labs

- Work for concentrated period of time around particular methods or methodologies. Half/full days, flexible formats.
- innovative methodologies, novel applications of existing methods, fresh perspectives. Pluralist!
- PGR access to explore, collaborate and contribute to new developments in, across, and beyond the social sciences.
- Traditional seminars, workshops master classes, hackathons, data fests, datathons exhibits, models, performances and live curated displays of new technologies.
- Collaboration between institutions on the Methods Labs is desirable but not essential.

# Collaborative Innovation Grants

- Funding of up to £6K per grant for activities that support cutting-edge developments in research methods across the DTP
- Proposals must be genuinely **collaborative**, persuasively **innovative**, and meaningfully **inclusive** of PGRs
- Applications are invited from staff and PGRs at UoM but must include **at least one other** of the partner HEIs involved in the NWSSDTP
- Open call throughout the year

# Key Contacts

- University of Central Lancashire: Sarah Kingston  
[SKingston1@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:SKingston1@uclan.ac.uk)
- Keele University: Santiago Amietta, [s.amietta@keele.ac.uk](mailto:s.amietta@keele.ac.uk)
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<http://www.methodsnorthwest.ac.uk>

Any questions ?

North West  
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Doctoral Training  
Partnership



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# Research in Practice Placement Scheme (RiPPS)

Professor Bethan Evans, NWSSDTP Deputy Director  
Hayley Meloy, NWSSDTP Manager

# What is 'Research in Practice'?

'Research in Practice' is the ESRC's approach to developing students' core employability skills including:

- Ability to apply research skills in different research contexts
- Ability to collaborate across sectoral and disciplinary boundaries
- Communication with impact, developing networks, entrepreneurship and leadership skills
- Ability to proactively engage in their own personal development and career direction, while increasing awareness of the breadth of career opportunities available

# NWSSDTP Students thoughts on placements...

“I think that having the chance to relocate and put oneself in the deep end of acclimatising oneself into a new professional environment that’s outside of academia is really valuable and of benefit to helping researchers think about the potential connections that can be made between their research and present practice.”

“Internships provide a strong reminder that there is a world outside of academia, and that the products of academic research must very often be directed towards that world.”

# Development Needs Analysis and Placements

The DNA includes a section where students will be asked to reflect on their individual needs and priorities with regards to their placement. Students should discuss with their supervisors:

- the kind of placement they think will most benefit them
- what kind of organisation or university would be most appropriate
- what training they feel they may need to prepare

This discussion will help students prepare for their own placement and the content of this section of the DNA will be collated across the cohort to inform the suite of placement opportunities the NWSSDTP develops.

# What counts as a 'Research in Practice' Placement?

Placements will generally take the form of either:

a) A non-academic internship with a non-HEI (i.e. a non-university) partner.

OR

b) An academic placement – either a research assistantship or a professional services project – within a university.

Normally students will be expected to complete one 13-week placement or two shorter placements which total 13 weeks. Placements can be undertaken on a part-time or full-time basis and can be physical, virtual or hybrid.

# How do I arrange a 'Research in Practice' Placement?

NWSSDTP students may choose to:

- a) develop their own placement opportunity, with the support of their supervisor.
- b) apply to one of a suite of opportunities the NWSSDTP organises and publicises.
- c) apply for an internship from an approved external scheme (i.e. the Open Innovation Team or UKRI Policy Placements).

# What are the deadlines to be aware of?

You will be expected to have completed a three-month placement by the end of your third year of your PhD. For those of you who have started your PhD on the 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2024, this will be the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2027.

If you wish to arrange a placement for yourself, there will be a deadline every two months for submitting a proposal for approval (starting 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025).

OR

There will be a series of placement opportunities announced every two months (starting 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) which you will have four weeks to apply to (i.e. first deadline 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025).

# What support is available?

- All NWSSDTP Studentships awarded from 2024 onwards include three months funding (stipend and fees) to support you financially throughout your placement. No additional salary is paid. Any student who doesn't complete a placement will have those three months of their studentship withdrawn.
- There is a small additional budget (typically up to £1000 per student) to fund travel associated with the placement.

# What support is available?

- Your Supervisor will be best placed to advise on the kind of placement that will be suit your interests and future aspirations
- The Placement Provider will be asked to confirm in advance the arrangements for induction, health and safety expectations, and EDI/HR policies. They will be your primary support during the placement.
- The DTP Placement Coordinator Ellie Sandman – starting 18<sup>th</sup> November! – will be on hand four days a week to support you throughout the whole process. [ripps@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:ripps@liverpool.ac.uk)

# ANY QUESTIONS?

## Question 1:

**What are your initial thoughts on the type of placement you might like to do?**

**Add your thoughts to the sticky wall!**

# SWAP TABLES

## Question 2:

**What would you want to get out of a  
Research in Practices placement?**

**Add your thoughts to the sticky wall!**

# SWAP TABLES

## Question 3:

**What support or training do you think you might need to successfully complete a placement?**

**Add your thoughts to the Padlet:**  
[www.padlet.com/nwssdtp/rippsQ3](http://www.padlet.com/nwssdtp/rippsQ3) or  
use the QR Code...



# SWAP TABLES

## Question 4:

**Do you have any outstanding questions about the Research in Practice Placement Scheme?**

**Add your thoughts to the Padlet:**  
[www.padlet.com/nwssdtp/rippsQ4](http://www.padlet.com/nwssdtp/rippsQ4) or  
use the QR Code...

