

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIP

Grace-Net (Gambling Resilience, Awareness &
Community Engagement Network):
Open Knowledge & Legacy

North West
Social Science
Doctoral Training
Partnership



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Project Outline

Grace-Net (Gambling Resilience, Awareness & Community Engagement Network) is a UKRI-funded research and innovation network based in the North West of England, focused on reducing gambling harm through prevention, protection and recovery (P-Pt-R). Grace-Net has been awarded Phase 1 funding (April 2026–March 2027) and is hosted at Lancaster University.

This placement sits within Work Package 5 (WP5): Open Knowledge & Legacy. WP5 is responsible for establishing the UK's first Diamond Open-Access (OA) journal dedicated to gambling harms, with a remit to foster publications by academics, practitioners and lived experience contributors. The journal is to be titled, Gambling Harm: Research, Policy & Practice. The journal will publish peer-reviewed academic papers alongside practitioner insights and lived-experience contributions, with 40% of the editorial board drawn from lived-experience and practitioner communities.

Placement Key Objectives and Timeline

The student will play a central role in establishing the journal, contributing to:

- Supporting the design and set-up of the journal infrastructure in collaboration with Lancaster University Library, including DOI registration, open-access hosting, metadata standards and indexing on platforms such as DOAJ.
- Assisting in drafting and refining the journal's editorial policies, submission guidelines, author guidance documents and peer-review protocols, with particular attention to making these accessible to practitioner and lived-experience contributors.
- Supporting the design and delivery of a training programme for lived-experience contributors, covering reflective and auto-ethnographic writing, the peer-review process, and editorial roles.
- Contributing to the Call for Papers (Month 10) and supporting the editorial preparation for the journal's official launch at the Grace-Net end-of-project conference (Month 12).
- Producing accessible outputs to promote the journal, including plain-English guides, infographics and short promotional materials for the Grace-Net network and beyond.

The following timeline is based on working 0.5 FTE for 6 months. Other working models are available, see **Duration and Timeframe** section below.

Months 1–2: Induction; review of Diamond OA models, existing gambling and public health journals, and open-science standards (CC-BY 4.0, DOAJ criteria).

Months 2–4 Journal set-up support (infrastructure, policies, author guidance); LE contributor training programme development.

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Months 5–6: Call for Papers launch support; editorial preparation; journal promotional materials; final report to NWSSDTP.

What skills will you acquire from this placement?

This placement offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the founding of a new peer-reviewed journal in a growing field, developing specialist expertise in open-access publishing, editorial processes and inclusive knowledge production.

This placement is ideally suited to students with career interests in academic publishing, research communication, open science, knowledge mobilisation, or policy engagement. It offers an exciting opportunity to be involved at the founding stage of a new peer-reviewed journal, with the potential for ongoing editorial involvement beyond the placement period.

Required and Desired Skills

This placement is particularly well-suited to students from the Society, Culture & Politics or Health, Wellbeing & Social Care pathways, or to students with an interest in research communication, knowledge production, and open science.

DESIRABLE SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

- Strong academic writing skills and attention to detail.
- Interest in open-access publishing, research communication, or science policy.
- Ability to produce clear, accessible content for non-specialist audiences.
- Familiarity with or willingness to learn about open-science infrastructure (e.g. DOI systems, Creative Commons licensing, DOAJ, OSF/Zenodo).
- Interest in co-production and inclusive knowledge practices, including lived-experience contributions to research.

BENEFICIAL EXPERIENCE

- Experience in editing, proof-reading or producing academic or policy-facing written content.
- Familiarity with gambling harm, mental health, public health or adjacent fields (desirable but not essential).
- Experience of working with diverse communities or non-academic contributors.

Duration and Timeframe

This placement is equivalent to 13 weeks full time (1.0 FTE/5 days a week) and can be completed by working between 0.4 FTE (2 days a week) and 1.0 FTE (5 days a week) with the placement duration amended as necessary.

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The preferred timing is July–September 2026, to align with the journal set-up phase and Call for Papers preparation. However, timing can be negotiated to fit the student’s PhD schedule. Ideally the placement would be completed before the end-of-project conference in Month 12 (April 16th 2027) so the student can participate in the journal launch.

The timeline example in the **Placement Key Objectives and Timeline** section is based on 0.5 FTE (2.5 days a week) but can be adapted for other FTEs.

Delivery mode

Primarily remote, with optional in-person engagement. The majority of work (policy drafting, training materials, editorial preparation, accessible outputs) can be undertaken fully remotely. The student will have the option to attend in-person Grace-Net events, including the end-of-project conference, if they wish. Regular supervision meetings will be held online. This placement is well-suited to a student who works well independently and is comfortable in a largely digital working environment, while maintaining close contact with the project team.

Induction process and support you will receive

The student will be welcomed as a named placement researcher within the Grace-Net project team, and listed on the project website as a key contributor to the project. They will have a clearly defined role, responsibilities set out in a job description and a named supervisor.

The student will receive a structured induction in the first two weeks covering: Grace-Net project overview, aims and governance; introduction to the WP5 team and Lancaster University Library colleagues; overview of Diamond Open-Access publishing and the Grace-Net journal vision; health and safety and data protection protocols; safeguarding responsibilities relevant to any contact with lived-experience contributors; open-science standards and Creative Commons licensing frameworks.

Fortnightly supervision meetings with the named supervisor; access to Lancaster University library expertise for journal infrastructure and metadata support; peer support through the Grace-Net project team; access to Lancaster University IT and researcher development resources; participation in Grace-Net network events and relevant training webinars.

Ethics Approval

Grace-Net Phase 1 does not involve primary research with human participants as research subjects. WP5 journal activities are primarily editorial and infrastructural in nature.

Grace-Net operates under Lancaster University’s Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice, with an independent Ethics Review Panel (chaired by Professor Judith Sixsmith, University of Dundee) meeting quarterly. Grace-Net’s GREAT advisory team (Gambling Research

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Ethics Advisory Team) is specifically tasked with producing ethical guidance for gambling harm research, which will inform the journal's editorial policies and peer-review standards.

Any involvement with lived-experience contributors in training activities will follow INVOLVE principles and trauma-informed practice guidelines. The student will be briefed on these frameworks as part of their induction. No additional ethics approval is required for the placement activities, and the student will be expected to adhere to Grace-Net's ethical standards throughout.

Equality and Diversity commitments

Lancaster University and all Grace-Net partners are committed to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. A central aim of the Gambling Harm: Research, Policy & Practice journal is to democratise knowledge production in the gambling harm field by ensuring that practitioner and lived-experience voices are represented at all levels of the editorial process, from authorship to peer review and editorial governance.

We confirm alignment with the NWSSDTP's EDI commitments and are fully willing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students or those facing other barriers to inclusion. This placement is predominantly remote, which substantially reduces geographical, transport and mobility barriers. Students with additional needs are encouraged to disclose these in advance so that tailored adjustments can be made proactively. All digital tools and platforms used will be reviewed for accessibility. Grace-Net's inclusive ethos means the student will join a team that actively values diverse perspectives and lived experience.

How to apply

To apply for this role, please complete the 'Expression of Interest form' available on the [NWSSDTP website](#), using the reference **Grace-Net: Open Knowledge & Legacy** when asked which placement you are applying for. If you are interested in multiple Grace-Net opportunities, please complete one EoI form and list your order of preference for the roles.

Once completed and discussed with your supervisor, return the completed form to Amy Connolly (ripps@liverpool.ac.uk).

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