Government Social Research

Government Social Research Strategy 2021-2025:

Social Research In and For Government

Impactful & Influential

Expert & Valued

Diverse & Inclusive

Year 1 Delivery Plan

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Introduction, Vision and Mission

Welcome to the Government Social Research Strategy 2021-2025: Social Research In and For Government Year 1 Delivery Plan. This document sets out our initial plan to implement and deliver on the priorities for GSR over the first year of our strategy. The delivery plan will be reviewed and updated annually and re-published along with the annual progress report for the life of the strategy.   All priorities will be overseen by GSR Heads of Profession via the GSR Strategy and GSR Profession Boards.

Our Vision

People and society-centred research, advice and design at the heart of Government decision-making
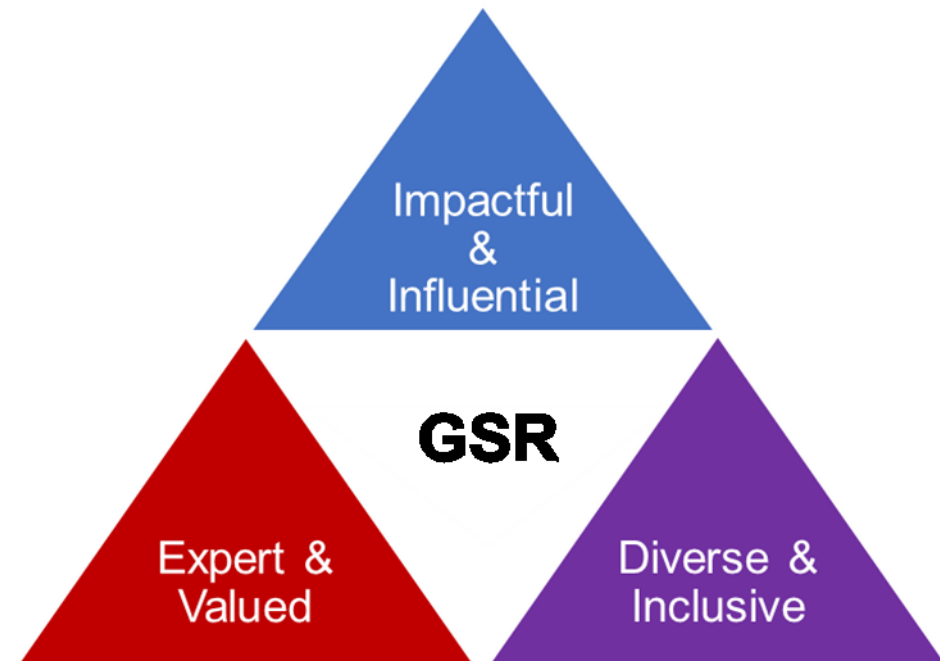
Our Mission

Social and behavioural science is at the centre of influencing government policy debate and decision-making (our work); by

Being the best employer of highly skilled social and behavioural scientists (our members); who

Role model an inclusive and diverse approach in all they do (our values)

Deliver the best social science evidence for government

Impactful & Influential

GSR informs government decision-making and policy debate through impactful and influential input, engagement and collaboration

By proactively contributing and promoting the relevance and use of social and behavioural science in policy, delivery and spending decisions. Achieved through contributing evidence, advice and design, and engaging with relevant stakeholders to create a holistic picture and joined-up response. Diversity and inclusion (D&I) will be championed throughout our work

Impactful & Influential

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	3-4 years
S1. Maintain and promote stakeholder engagement both internally and externally, continuing to build on strong foundations to champion the expertise, evidence, advice, value and reach across the broader social research agenda	a. Define a stakeholder map and explore existing links with internal and external stakeholders and associations to identify opportunities to engage and collaborate. **Delivered by**: – **GSR Working Group 1** – GSR HoPs – GESR – Link up with Analysis Function	Feb-Aug	We have a clear understanding of existing links between GSR and external stakeholders, and have identified areas for improvement	Guidance is published on how departments and academics can work better together; success measured through number of views/downloads and feedback from members
	b. Create guidance on how departments and external experts can work better together **Delivered by:** – **GSR Working Group 1** – Link up with Analysis Function	Sep-Jan		

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	3-4 years
S2. Influence and collaborate with analytical, strategy, policy and delivery colleagues, ensuring analytical insight about	a. Identify and develop relationships with key points of contact for the next spending review and ensure key GSR members are engaged and informing from the outset **Delivered by**: – GSR HoPs	Feb-Mar	GSR will influence the spending review across government	

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
people, society, resources and spending are at the forefront of the consideration of core issues facing government (e.g. Green recovery, Covid-19, UK post transition).	○ *May require involvement from a small working group depending on requirement*			
	b. Build relationships with allied disciplines to inform and guide thinking around making social and behavioural research at forefront of government issues **Delivered by**: − Existing Allied Professions Working Group	Feb 21-May 22	Senior leaders will be able to access the expertise they require	Social and Behavioural community will be at the forefront of core issues

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
S3. Be at the heart of decision-making and advice both internally and externally demonstrating the breadth of knowledge, experience and skills the profession can bring to a multitude of issues	a. Work with the Analysis Function to create an outline for Ministers/ Senior leaders to know why and where to find GSR expertise **Delivered by:** − GESR − Link up with Analysis Function	Feb-Mar	Ministers etc will know what GSR provides and approach early for advice	GSR is the first port of call for social and behavioural science requirements by Ministers etc
	c. Review GSR professional guidance and identify what should be recognised and embedded cross-government to demonstrate the 'gold standard' (e.g. Social research approaches (tbc e.g. qualitative approaches) **Delivered by:** − **GSR Working Group 2** − GESR	Feb-Dec	GSR method guidance will be used across government embedding high quality approaches	Civil Servants will be aware of and know what GSR brings to the table through reliable, relevant and consistent content
	d. Review GSR website requirements considering the use and purpose, and content requirements **Delivered by:** − GESR (Priority Projects/Head of GSR Strategy)	Apr-Dec	GSR website is the go-to place for social researcher professionals	

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
S4. Model excellence in the generation and use of diversity and inclusion data by supporting, advising and improving data collection methods and the use of existing sources across government through effective collaboration and training	a. Develop principles and guidelines on when and how diversity, inclusion and equalities analysis should be embedded in work, to include identifying and developing relationships with relevant stakeholders (e.g. PSED, D&I leads, Chief analysts) **Delivered by:** − **GSR Working Group 3** − Link up with Analysis Function D&I group − Link up with GSR D&I Reps	Apr-Dec	Comprehensive joined-up approach across the Analysis Function and government for GSR related D&I data	GSR will be at the forefront of government advice around D&I activities
	b. Identify and support the development of D&I research leads in departments to provide advice and expertise **Delivered by:** − GESR D&I Lead − GSR D&I Dept Reps	Jun-Dec	D&I departmental leads are confident and capable	

Expert & Valued

GSR supports all members to maximise their personal impact, achieve their individual potential and experience a fulfilling career

By ensuring members are at the forefront of new methodological developments and are equipped with the skills and experience necessary to be effective social scientists, and by providing access to opportunities to be effective in current and/or future roles and grades across the Civil Service

This priority links to the **GSR D&I Strategy priority of 'Retaining and embedding an inclusive culture'** which includes progression pathways, developing with the needs of the profession, equal opportunities – more information can be found in the GSR D&I Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
S5. Develop skills and experience through professional development opportunities, both internal and external, to enable all GSR members the skills necessary to be effective and innovative, and be at the cutting-edge of their profession	No actions on this objective in 2021			

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
S6. Empower members to achieve a fulfilling career by ensuring relevant career related support and guidance is accessible and professional communities of practice are available to facilitate individual potential within grade/role or through promotion	b. Develop cross GSR and government recognition schemes to include Departmental/GSR awards/performance awards plus consider collaborations with academia, international groups etc **Delivered by**: – **GSR Working Group 4** – GESR (Talent & Events Branch) – HoPs engagement essential – Link up with Analysis Function and relevant external stakeholders/colleague	Jul-Dec	Successful schemes set up with positive feedback received	Schemes continue to be implemented leading to greater job satisfaction and engagement with the profession
	d. Complete a GSR Skills audit to include review and promotion of the Analysis Function Online Skills tool **Delivered by**: – **GSR Working Group 4** – GESR (Talent & Events branch) – Link up with Analysis Function L&D group	Feb-Jul	Positive feedback on the use of the online skills tool plus clarity over the skills within GSR	
	e. Review assessments: Development of online test **Delivered by**: – **Existing Recruitment Working Group**	May-Dec		

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
S7. Embed a learning culture so that identification of career aspirations and continuing professional development are at the forefront of goals for all members, and achievements are understood, recognised and championed by default to ensure the best social and behavioural scientists are retained in government	a. Embed goals/objective setting within departments that support individual aspirations **Delivered by**: − GSR HoPs − GSR Members	Feb-Dec	All members will make progress towards their career aspirations	

Objectives	Actions	Time	Indicators of success	
			1-2 years	**3-4 years**
S8. Confident and capable leading inclusive research by promoting and developing inclusive research skills and being the leading voice in providing advice and guidance on D&I data collection and analysis across government	No actions for this objective in 2021			

Diverse & Inclusive

GSR is as diverse in our profile and perspectives as the society we serve, across all levels of the profession, through our culture and the careers we offer

To have a diverse membership and culture that is positive for all, where members are supported, developed, respected and appreciated for their unique characteristics and who feel proud to be part of the social research community. This will be achieved through attracting a diverse workforce, ensuring fair selection, and embedding and retaining an inclusive culture. It will be demonstrated and monitored through accurate data and metrics

The first-year delivery plan for this priority can be found on the Gov.uk site – below is a summary of the overarching priorities for the GSR D&I Strategy.

Objectives	Overview of Actions	Indicators of success
Attracting a diverse profession: GSR has a diverse and inclusive population (in the first instance this will prioritise increasing ethnic minority and increasing lower socio-economic representation)	By targeting and developing outreach activities, engaging with cross-government networks and wider research sector, and exploring alternative application routes into the profession: – Visible & attractive – Explores alternative entry mechanisms	Increased applications from ethnic minority and lower socio-economic groups Visibility of GSR in cross-government networks and other professions Non-degree entry route(s) embedded and resulting in positive outcomes for GSR diversity profile
Inclusive and fair recruitment and selection: There is no discrimination within GSR's selection and assessment processes	By ensuring there is no overt or unconscious discrimination during recruitment processes, thereby reassuring potential candidates they are entering a fair and unbiased process, through improved guidance, training, materials, assessments and processes, resulting in a more diverse workforce: • Identifies & overcomes possible sources of bias & discrimination • Selection guidance & processes are clear & transparent	Clear data demonstrating continued fairness of selection processes Increased ethnic minority and lower socio-economic background representation in job appointments
Embedding and retaining an inclusive culture: There is an inclusive and supportive culture within GSR, where all members have the opportunity to develop their career	By providing positive action and tailored support aligned to need, ensuring everyone can reach their full potential without any barriers: • Supports all members • Provides accessible opportunities & diversity • Knows what factors influence retention	D&I is embedded and implemented across all depts Clear L&D opportunities Able to target initiatives to support retention Membership/leadership at all levels are diverse
Accurate monitoring of GSR data: Accurate and timely data with which to monitor and prioritise D&I interventions within GSR	By working with the Analysis Function to ensure relevant and appropriate data are collected and used to monitor career progress and any emerging issues across the protected characteristics: • Knows where relevant GSR D&I data are • Effective & accurate process to monitor D&I related data	D&I profile is clear and accessible Able to demonstrate evidence for improvements in ethnic minority and socio-economic progression and representation within the profession

The delivery plan will be reviewed and updated annually alongside the annual strategy reporting process.