

GSR Strategy – Year 2 Review

Fact sheet

Strategic Objective	Progress	Further steps
S1. Maintain and promote stakeholder engagement both internally and externally	Consistent progress on stakeholders' engagement Actions completed	HoPs to represent GSR vis-à-vis external stakeholders
S2. Influence and collaborate	Work started to champion GSR, collecting data across departments and case studies Pending actions	Goal is creating a 'killer' slide on social research in government, and a champion toolkit
S3. Be at the heart of decision-making	Steady progress, new GSR website is live Pending actions	Keep monitoring and improving
S4. Model excellence in the generation and use of D&I data	GSR Guidance on Inclusive Research is live Actions completed	Embed and advertise guidance
S5. Develop skills and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in identifying needs of behavioural science community • Progress in identifying career opportunity models Actions pending	Will work to define relationships between GSR and BS community and drive forward a clear vision
S6. Empower members to achieve a fulfilling career	Updated guidance and frameworks Actions completed	Need to define how we conceptualise and use the GSR Code
S7. Embed a learning culture	GSR Bitesize programme fully delivered Actions completed	New programmes and initiatives will be developed
S8. Confident and capable leading inclusive research	First steps in developing an online tool to complement the Inclusive Research Guidance Actions pending	Finalise tool
DI1. Attracting a diverse profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steady progress on outreach • Degree requirement changed to 2.2 for Social Research Scheme (Main Stream) Actions completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to monitor and evaluate impact of reforms • Drive forward outreach
DI2. Inclusive and fair recruitment and selection	Progress on monitoring and investigating recruitment data Actions pending	Need to finalise recruitment materials to simplify language
DI3. Embedding and retaining an inclusive culture	Progress on accessibility of L&D opportunities Actions pending	Recommendations to improve training and development opportunities to be taken forward
DI4. Accurate monitoring of GSR data	Membership data collected and disseminated through the website Actions completed	More work on the D&I of the GSR community and recruitment into it



Government
Social Research

Government Social Research Strategy 2021-2025:

Social Research In and For Government

Impactful & Influential

Expert & Valued

Diverse & Inclusive

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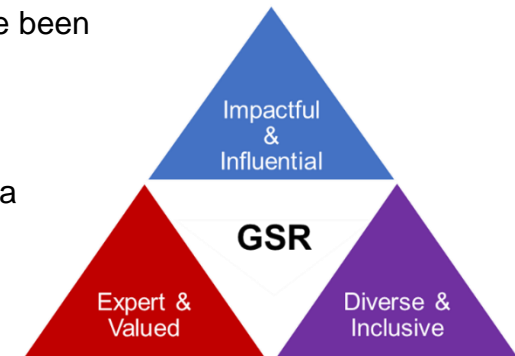
Year 2 Review

Welcome to the *Government Social Research Strategy 2021-2025: Social Research In and For Government* **Year 2 Review**.

The GSR Strategy was launched in early 2021 and we have reached the end of the second year.

This document sets out the outcomes of the year 2 plan, as well as progress made against each objective (Mar 22-Dec 22) by the multiple GSR member working groups, Heads of Professions (HOPs) and the GESR Team. All priorities have been overseen by GSR HoPs via assigned roles and by the GSR Strategy and Profession Boards.

In March 2022, over 70 GSR members, from across 15 departments, volunteered to drive forward the Year 2 Delivery Plan. Members were split across 9 Strategy Working Groups and 5 D&I Working Groups, each with a GSR HoP lead and GESR lead to provide direction and support. Some of these groups had worked in Year 1 and some were new.



Work has focused on a range of topics and new opportunities for the profession, including:

- Developing an approach to improve how we engage with external stakeholders, building on the map previously defined by Strategy Working Group (SWG)1.
- Working to understand how to best nurture development across the range of disciplines we have in GSR – this work is continuing throughout the life of the strategy.
- Informal data collection and mapping across departments to understand how GSR is championed across government, with ad-hoc collection of case study examples.
- Publication of a new GSR guidance for Inclusive Research, to support GSR members working with seldom heard and hard to reach groups.
- Deploying a range of tools to better understand how to develop, support, and retain behavioural science expertise across GSR, such as surveys of GSR members and a repository of BI leads across departments.
- Updated CPD guidance.
- Developing an in-house knowledge test.
- New focused seminar series delivered throughout 2022.
- New GSR Bitesize seminar series – which was an opportunity for GSR members to present and share their work with the membership.
- New GSR members website launched in July 2022.
- GSR 2022 Virtual Conference, with 832 delegates registered. The conference received consistently positive feedback, with more than 75% of delegates being satisfied or very satisfied with the event.

- Use of data derived from a D&I focused survey of over 900 members to develop a map of the GSR profession. This will be shared through the GSR members website.
- D&I focused work on understanding different academic and experiential routes into the profession and the recruitment experience.
- Developing a range of focused outreach materials for use across schools and universities, with a D&I focus on monitoring and evaluation of the cross-profession outreach strategies.
- Tendering, analysing and selecting D&I interventions and project via a newly created D&I Action Fund, with several successful bids now in progress.

Progress has been steady – in some areas we have not achieved our aims yet, but we are continuing to work on these in the coming years of the strategy. More details are provided against each of our priorities in the following pages.

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.



Objectives	Actions	Outcomes
<p>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</p>	<p>a. Define a stakeholder map and explore existing links with internal and external stakeholders and associations to identify opportunities to engage and collaborate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to include workshop & implementation of proposal <p>[Action carried from Year 1]</p> <p>b. Create guidance on how departments and external experts can work better together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Linked to action S1a <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GSR Strategy Working Group 1 - GSR HoPs - GESR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed stakeholder map has been developed to identify the range of stakeholders associated with GSR. • This has followed a workshop to agree a network approach across GSR HoPs drawing on existing relationships, whilst also considering how to bring stakeholders together when helpful. • We now have regular items at the GSR Profession Board and HoPs calls for ESRC, POST and SRA, and invite relevant guests to Boards to build up relationships with GSR. • We also worked with ESRC to develop a series of Actionable Insight Seminars to build on our relationship which have attracted significant interest within the membership. <p>Further progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HoPs have been asked to lead in linking with external stakeholders, defining a stakeholders engagement map. • HoPs will represent GSR vis-à-vis external stakeholders, and promote visibility, relationships, and synergies, reporting back to the other HOPs regularly.

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes
<p>S2. Influence and collaborate with analytical, strategy, policy and delivery colleagues, ensuring analytical insight about 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).</p>	<p>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 [Action carried from Year 1]</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GSR HoPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a strategic objective that will continue to be a focus for departmental HoPs throughout the life of the Strategy.
	<p>c. Develop supporting information to help inform and embed GSR leaders and members to champion the profession and ensure GSR is 'at the table'</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GSR Strategy Working Group 7 – will also cover S3b regarding identifying Champion roles required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SWG7 has collected data across departments in order to understand GSR members' opinions on how GSR is championed in different departments. This covered departments including the Home Office, DEFRA, HMRC, MoD, DWP, FSA. • The SWG7 has also collected case study examples from government departments where GSR has been championed effectively. <p>Further progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action will continue in 2023, with the goal to create a 'killer' GSR USP slide, that will condense the most crucial information from the 'Social Research for Policymakers' slide deck into one slide to advertise the benefits of GSR to stakeholders. • The group will also create a GSR champion toolkit – including case studies from government departments where GSR has been championed effectively. • These two tools will be advertised across departments, within and outside GSR, in order to create a strong 'champion' culture and ensure a GSR voice across key discussions.

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes
<p>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</p>	<p>b. Explore the feasibility of appointing GSR Champion(s) cross-government</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GSR Strategy Working Group 7 – will also cover S2c regarding the broader champion roles of all members 	<p>See above.</p>
	<p>d. Review GSR website requirements considering the use and purpose, and content requirements [Action carried from Year 1]</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GESR (Website lead/Head of GSR Strategy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new GSR website went live in summer 2022 and has received positive feedback by GSR members. • The website covers a wide range of resources for GSR members, including professional development, CPD, guidance, as well as engagement channels such as blog posts, events, and job adverts. • GSR members are engaging consistently with the website, and we plan for it to become the place to go for social research in government (with the caveat of it being accessible to badged members only).
<p>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</p>	<p>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) [Action carried from Year 1]</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GSR Strategy Working Group 3 – Link up with Analysis Function D&I group – Link up with GSR D&I Reps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GSR Guidance on Inclusive Research is now live on Gov.uk and will soon be advertised through the Analysis Function. • GSR members have now a concrete tool to use when conducting research with seldom heard and hard to reach groups. This is a valuable tool for social researchers. • GSR members also have access to the Resources for Equalities Analysis developed by the GES through the member website. <p>Further progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidance is now being advertised across departments by working group members and the GESR Team.

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



Expert & Valued

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes
<p>S5. Develop skills and experience through professional development opportunities, both internal and external, to enable all GSR members to have the skills necessary to be effective and innovative, and be at the cutting-edge of their profession</p>	<p>a. Identify and develop resources to identify, support and facilitate the professional and skill development offer for all analysts in the social and behavioural community across the UK (e.g., methods, data science, management skills, interpretation, behavioural science, confidence to influence/demonstrate benefit of work, educating others, accredited courses, leading multidisciplinary teams etc)</p> <p>Delivered by: - GSR Strategy Working Group 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWG 8 have conducted a survey of GSR members to understand the needs across behavioural science resources. • The Group have also gathered existing recruitment materials via the BI network, have created a directory of BI leads across departments, and have compiled a list of behavioural science training resources for induction purposes. <p>Further progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The working group will collect resources from Departments and create a synthesis of existing materials and resources and, potentially, bespoke resources. • In-depth interviews will take place with recruiters to understand the issues when recruiting people with behavioural science skills. • Behavioural science skills will be formally defined. • Connections will be established with BI leads to understand how to best collaborate in focus groups. • Potentially, BI mentors will be identified for GSR staff, and vice versa.
	<p>c Explore options for career opportunity models such as academic placements and private sector secondments, as well as moves into non-analytical roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The working group has created a document listing all the opportunities available for career development across departments. <p>Further progress</p>

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes
	<p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GSR Strategy Working Group 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of recommendations will soon be ready to be signed off, promoted and circulated.
<p>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</p>	<p>c. Update GSR governance – refresh GSR Code</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GSR Strategy Working Group 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The working group has produced a refreshed and updated GSR Professional Skills framework and GSR Technical Framework. • It has also refreshed GSR Award and recognition processes. <p>Further progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Working Group have presented a full re-draft of the GSR Code to the Strategy Board and are in ongoing discussion about scope and format. • The working group will prepare a document to ask HoPs to reflect on and clarify the purpose of the Code, how the use of the Code can best be encouraged, and what the best format for the code is (e.g., visual/graphic vs HTML). • A list of recommendation will be prepared for the same working group (or a newly recruited one) to work on a final version of the Code.
	<p>d Complete GSR skills audit to include review and promotion of AF online skills tool</p> <p>This will look to pilot the AF online skills tool to allow evaluation and a decision as to whether to progress further with it</p> <p>[Action carried from Year 1]</p> <p>Delivered by: GESR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts to develop an online skills tool were made with Comaea. • Existing cross-government Online Skills tools were reviewed but perceived as not fit for purpose in the GSR context. This work was paused and further routes to assess skills across the profession need to be explored. <p>Further progress GESR to consider other routes for Skills Audit and targeted L&D.</p>
	<p>e Review assessments: Development of online test</p> <p>[Action carried from Year 1]</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GESR Team & Working Groups 5 and 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWGs 10 and 5 have worked to develop a GSR online test specification and tendering order to bring the KT in house rather than outsource it. <p>Further progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process is currently on hold.

Objectives	Actions	Outcomes
	f Update GSR governance – CPD guidance Delivered by: GSR Strategy Working Group 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A subgroup of SWG10 has worked to update CPD guidance, creating a new CPD log to be used on GSR website, as well as identifying new options for CPD. The website's CPD section has been rethought and reorganised to be more easily used. Further progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GESR Team will implement changes to the website.
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. GSR Bitesize programme will continue to engage and share learning; this may include development of communities of practice Delivered by: GESR Team Conference Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GESR Team has worked so that all members embed learning in goals and objectives. A GSR Bitesize series has been successfully delivered in 2022. Ideas for event programmes have been developed. New Communities of Practice have been developed. An <i>Engaging with Academics Project</i> has been developed. It has created a new set of online resources and has sparked a well-attended events series. Further progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSR Bitesize series to continue in 2023. Junior Social Researchers Network has been developed and is holding the first meetings in March 2023. GSR Events programme to be delivered in 2023, including a hybrid Annual Conference in June. A new Conference working group has been recruited in December 2022 and will work alongside the GESR Team to support the delivery of the hybrid GSR Annual Conference 2023.
S8. Confident and capable leading inclusive research by promoting and developing inclusive research skills and being the leading voice in	c. Develop inclusive research training for GSR members and the wider analytical community Delivered by: GSR Strategy Working Group 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An e-learning tool to supplement the Inclusive Research Guidance is being developed, addressing gaps and adding more detail. Promotion of the Year 1 report.

providing advice and guidance on D&I data collection and analysis across government		Further progress Finalise the e-learning tool.
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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



Objectives	Overview of Actions	Outcomes
<p>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)</p>	<p>Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a monitoring and evaluation process for our outreach. <p>Delivered by: GSR D&I Working Group 1 – now called D&I Outreach/M&E WG (this is now a joint group working across GES and GSR on outreach and, specifically, the M&E of the outreach programme)</p> <p>After the Year 1 review of current and potential entry routes to improve D&I, core recommendations were made to change the core degree requirement from a 2:1 to a 2:2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group to support conversations on mainstream and experience routes <p>Delivered by: GSR D&I Working Group 2</p>	<p>Schools targeted on their D&I characteristics have been visited by an expanded ambassador base.</p> <p>Outreach materials for different school levels and universities developed. Published on the new members website so individuals can use themselves.</p> <p>Further Progress:</p> <p>Feedback forms currently out with school students for return during 01/23.</p> <p>Evaluation forms for teachers/ambassadors approved to go out during 01/23.</p> <p>New D&I Lead in place and to take this forward with Outreach manager.</p> <p>WG 2 presented to Strategy Board who have agreed the lowering of academic eligibility for GSR roles from 2:1 to 2:2. GESR now taking this forward.</p> <p>Trailed options for the mainstream route and considered options on the experience route.</p> <p>To note: GSR Apprenticeship development has continued.</p>

Objectives	Overview of Actions	Outcomes
<p>Inclusive and fair recruitment and selection:</p> <p>There is no discrimination within GSR's selection and assessment processes</p>	<p>Working closely with the recruitment team to monitor and investigate recruitment data in a robust manner.</p> <p>Delivered by: GSR D&I Working Group 3</p>	<p>D&I Recruitment information is clear, captured simply and stored robustly.</p> <p>Focus groups run to understand the experiences of those recruited and those recruiting.</p> <p>Further Consideration:</p> <p>Finalise recruitment materials to simplify language, building on WG recommendations (this action will be implemented by a proposed working group - see Delivery Plan Year 3 - DI4).</p> <p>Finalise recruitment materials design to improve consistency of job/role templates building on WG recommendations (this action will be implemented by a proposed working group - see Delivery Plan Year 3 - DI4).</p>
<p>Embedding and retaining an inclusive culture:</p> <p>There is an inclusive and supportive culture within GSR, where all members have the opportunity to develop their career</p>	<p>Review accessibility of current training and development opportunities available to GSR members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps and opportunities to develop new programmes, or better publicise existing opportunities. <p>Delivered by: GSR D&I Working Group 4</p>	<p>Training and development opportunities delivered by the GSR are accessible and meet development needs of membership.</p> <p>Further Progress:</p> <p>Recommendations made but not yet taken forward during Yr2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The D&I communities of practice membership will be refreshed to ensure the majority of departments are captured. GESR will explore specific initiatives to support those from underrepresented groups. • Ensure D&I is considered when creating central GSR guidance, such as badging guidance. • Support broader strategy work to consider secondment opportunities and reverse mentoring to help members better understand opportunities across government and increase transparency of career paths. • Increase advertisement of the opportunity to share

Objectives	Overview of Actions	Outcomes
		<p>work through blogs, newsletters, and events, to ensure the opportunity is open to all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect data on progression of members through the new GSR website.
<p>Accurate monitoring of GSR data: Accurate and timely data with which to monitor and prioritise D&I interventions within GSR</p>	<p>Disseminate data, comprising membership data collected in year 1 by WG5 who were tasked with producing baseline data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the long-term data collection method through the GSR members website <p>Delivered by: GSR D&I WG5</p>	<p>D&I information is clear, captured simply and is stored robustly.</p> <p>Survey carried out (900+ member) and results shared with HOPs and used to underpin work on the D&I Action Fund.</p> <p>Further Progress Baseline Survey results to be published on GSR members website.</p>