



SGSSS Pathway Convenor

Role Description

We are recruiting for Pathway Convenors in two pathways: Human Geography, Environment and Urban Planning; and Social Work and Social Policy. This is a key leadership role within SGSSS, involving a time commitment of 0.1FTE from July 2021 (later starts up to September negotiable) for three years.

Applications are invited from colleagues at partner institutions that are [pathway](#) members. You should be a minimum of lectureship (grade 8) level or equivalent and with demonstrable experience of leading and convening academic networks.

SGSSS is the largest of the UK's ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP), funding around 60 studentships each year for seven years, and supporting the training and collaboration needs of all social science research students in Scotland. Behind the scenes, a small core team is supported by a network of dedicated colleagues at partner universities who promote our activities and provide essential input relating to management; administration; disciplinary training design/delivery; supporting staff and students applying for ESRC funding; and, assessing funding applications.

Essential to the success of the partnership is the 15 training pathways. The pathways are crucial to the functioning of the SGSSS and each represents a discipline or cross-disciplinary grouping. Pathways are grouped into three Hubs; Economies, Mind and Technologies, Society and Welfare, and People and Place.

Pathway Convenors provide leadership for their pathway. This involves coordinating representatives at HEIs involved in the pathway to support students and colleagues in developing strong applications for ESRC funded studentships. As convenor of a national network, the role also plays a key part in assessing applications and identifying and delivering disciplinary and cross-disciplinary pathway-level training.

Applicants should send a copy of their CV and a cover letter outlining why they are attracted to the position, along with relevant experience. Applications should be sent to team@sgsss.ac.uk including 'Pathway Convenor (INSERT PATHWAY NAME) application' in the email subject heading.

If you would like to discuss the post in further detail please contact the SGSSS Director, Professor Jamie Pearce (Director) jamie.pearce@ed.ac.uk and/or the relevant Hub lead: Dr Kiril Sharapov (for Human Geography, Environment, Urban Planning pathway) k.sharapov@napier.ac.uk, Dr Richard Simmons (for Social work/Social policy pathway) r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk. You may also want to speak with your HEI representative on the [Deans of Graduate Studies network](#). The successful candidate will require a letter of support from their Dean confirming allocation of 0.1FTE so we encourage candidates to start these conversations as soon as possible.

Closing date for applications: **Friday 7th May** with interviews expected in w/c 24th May and 31st May.



SGSSS Role Description - Pathway Convenors – 0.1FTE

Pathway Convenors provide leadership for their pathway within the Scottish Graduate School of Social Sciences (SGSSS). This involves coordinating representatives at HEIs involved in the pathway to support students and colleagues in developing strong applications for ESRC funded studentships. As convenor of a national network, the role also plays a key part in assessing applications and setting the agenda for Scotland-wide disciplinary training. Role holders are at least lectureship (grade 8) level or equivalent and with demonstrable experience of leading and convening academic networks

For details of the institutions involved in each pathway and current representatives, please see [here](#)

Key Responsibilities:

HEI Pathway Representative (85 hours)

- to represent their pathway within their own institution (see separate Pathway Rep role description in Appendix 1)

Cohort building/Information/Co-ordination (40 hours)

- to act as pathway champions across institutions to ensure that ESRC and other social science research students within a pathway are receiving consistent access to information and opportunities and to highlight problematic issues to Hub leads and to the Deputy Directors for Studentships/Training as appropriate (8 hours)
- to attend Pathway Convenors' group meetings three times a year (10 hours)
- to attend Hub meetings twice yearly or to provide an alternate if non-attendance is unavoidable (7 hours)
- to contribute within Hubs to the development and delivery of the annual Hub festival and other cohort-building activities (15 hours)

Training (5 hours)

- to organise three yearly meetings across their pathway to discuss and report on training needs and opportunities (5 hours)

Studentships (35 hours)

- to organise at least once yearly meetings within their pathway to discuss open competition implementation processes (4 hours)
- to co-ordinate within-pathway application review and ranking (12 hours)
- to submit pathway nominations to SGSSS as per guidance and deadlines (3 hours)
- to contribute within Hubs to the ranking of cross-pathway open competition applications. (16 hours)

Workload contribution and expenses

The Pathway Convenor role is equivalent to approximately 165 hours or 0.1FTE and should be officially work-loaded as per the terms of the SGSSS partnership agreement. Expenses associated with these roles such as travel costs are claimed from the home institution – please discuss which account to submit claims to with the SGSSS HEI Dean.

Role Training

There will be a welcome event for all Pathway Convenors to meet each other and the SGSSS Directorate ahead of the new academic year. This is scheduled for 15th September 2021 and is an opportunity to share pathway visions for the coming year and to make plan for involvement in



Pathway Rep induction meeting. The Pathway Rep induction meeting takes place as part of the ESRC funded student induction. In 2021, this will be on Wednesday 3rd November, scheduled to be in Stirling.

Term of role

Pathway Convenors are appointed for a three-year term and are subject to review by SGSSS Hub leads on an annual basis. This duration is seen as the most appropriate to allow Pathway Convenors time to fully realise the vision for the pathway that they bring into the role. In exceptional cases, a convenor may be asked to continue for a 2nd term if they can demonstrate continuation is essential and beneficial to deliver the strategic plans of the pathway.

Key contacts

Other key SGSSS contacts are:

Pathway Representatives: Based at other HEI in your pathways, the reps represent the pathway within their institutions.

Other Pathway Convenors: SGSSS has 15 pathways, divided into three hubs. Pathways are strongly encouraged to collaborate on cross-pathway initiatives (e.g. training), coordinated through Pathway Convenors.

Hub Leads: SGSSS has 15 pathways, divided into three hubs. Each hub lead is an SGSSS Associate Director who is responsible for coordinating and managing the Pathway Convenors in their hubs.

Supervisory Board member: A senior figure (VP level or equivalent) with ultimate accountability for their HEI and oversight of SGSSS strategic direction.

Dean's Group member: Typically, Dean of PGR or equivalent, this role leads the SGSSS operational activities at their institution. Any role-related issues, including workload allocation, should be communicated here in the first instance.

HEI Admin lead: Lead administrative contact for SGSSS. Deals with student admissions and on-programme administration (stipend payments, RTSG, OIV etc) and support.

Student reps: Represent the views, ideas and training needs of social science PGRs in key thematic areas.



Appendix 1: SGSSS Role Description - Pathway Representative

Pathway Representatives provide support to students and colleagues at their HEI in developing strong applications for ESRC funded studentships through the Scottish Graduate School of Social Sciences (SGSSS). As part of a national network, the role also plays a key part in assessing applications and contributing to Scotland-wide disciplinary training.

Information/Co-ordination/Cohort building (25 hours)

- to act as pathway champions within their institutions to help institutions develop and maintain strong systems and processes that support students and supervisors, *including attendance at Pathway Representatives' meetings within institutions* (5 hours)
- to act as student champions within their pathway within their institution, thus ensuring that all ESRC funded and, where relevant, all social science research students receive timeous information on key processes and opportunities associated with their studies (15 hours, *to include administration required to ensure all appropriate students are effectively identified and co-ordinated within their institution*)
- to be a point of contact for students seeking advice on matters relating to student experience and to timeously direct students appropriately within their institution, their pathway and within SGSSS (5 hours)

Training (20 hours)

- to contribute to ongoing discussions and to meet three times per year to discuss advanced training needs/opportunities and applications to the Pathway Training Fund (10 hours)
- to actively contribute to cross-SGSSS collaborations including Advanced Training, Hub Festivals and Summer School (10 hours)

Studentships (40 hours)

- where required, to support supervisors in the development of supervisor-led applications that are fully aligned with SGSSS requirements (6 hours)
- to ensure that applicants that go forward to studentship and fellowship competitions within their institution are eligible and submitting the appropriate documentation (6 hours)
- to meet at least once yearly within their pathway or to provide an alternate if non-attendance is unavoidable (4 hours)
- to review institutional applications to the open competition and then to contribute to the assessment and ranking of applications within their pathway for the open competition and postdoctoral fellowships as per guidance and deadlines (24 hours)