



**INSTITUTE
FOR
GOVERNMENT**

'Engaging with Government' Programme

Call for Applications

Introduction

There are real opportunities for researchers in the arts and humanities to inform, persuade and build partnerships with policy makers. As part of its commitment to supporting academics in exploring the wider impact of their research, the AHRC is delighted to announce the call for applications for the fourth year of the 'Engaging with Government' programme, in partnership with the Institute for Government.

'Engaging with Government' is a three-day course designed to provide an insight into the policy-making process, and to enable academics to apply this to their own research. It aims to build links between policy makers and the most dynamic new research in the arts and humanities. The course is designed for early career researchers and **we are inviting eligible researchers to submit an application to attend the course**. The deadline for receipt of applications is **5pm on Friday 27 November 2015**.

Aims

The programme will:

- encourage participants to think about ways in which their own research could make a valuable contribution to public policy;
- challenge participants to think in more depth about the policy process, and the role of research within it;
- enhance the influencing and communication skills that participants need to achieve this.

The course will be held on **8, 9 and 10 March 2016** in central London at the Institute for Government, an award-winning think tank using research and engagement to improve the effectiveness of government. Up to 20 people will be invited to attend the course.

The programme will include discussions with a range of senior civil servants, researchers, politicians, and media professionals on the challenges and opportunities involved in engaging with policy makers.

There will be an emphasis on connecting back what participants have learned to their own research and the steps they need to take to engage with the policy-making process.

This is the fourth year of the course, with 45 early career researchers having attended since 2013. The programme has been very well received by participants, who feel they gained confidence in having the knowledge and skills for engaging with

government. These [case studies](#) from previous participants give an indication of the potential benefits of attending the course.

Eligibility

The programme is for early career researchers (ECRs) and is open to ECRs working in any area of the AHRC's subject domain. At the point of application, applicants must be either within eight¹ years of the award of their doctorate or equivalent professional training, or within six years of their first academic appointment.² **Please note that this course is not open to current doctoral students.**

In addition, applicants must be employed in a full- or part-time postdoctoral or equivalent position, which may be either fixed term or permanent, and which lists academic research as one of its main responsibilities. Applicants must be in post at the time of application, and the position must extend beyond the delivery of the 'Engaging with Government' course in March 2016. Further, the position must be held at a research organisation which is eligible to apply to the AHRC. These organisations are:

- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that are directly funded for the research by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, and the Scottish Funding Council.
- Independent Research Organisations (IROs) that have received Research Council recognition to apply to the AHRC in responsive mode.
- Research Council Institutes.

Application process

Entry to the programme is competitive and an application is required. The link to the online application form may be found here:

http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AHRC-IfG_EWG_2015/

The programme is not restricted to ECRs with policy experience, but participants should have a clear idea of what the programme can help them achieve.

¹ These durations should exclude any period of career break, e.g. for family care or health reasons.

² In this context the 'first academic appointment' is defined as a paid contract of employment, either full-time or part-time, which lists research and/or teaching as its primary function.

The course will be held at the Institute for Government Offices in central London on 8, 9 and 10 March 2016, and **applicants will need to commit to attending all three days in full**. The costs of the course, accommodation, travel, and subsistence will be paid for according to AHRC's standard [terms and conditions](#).

Assessment process

The AHRC executive will reject a proposal upon submission where the applicant does not meet the published eligibility criteria or the application has been completed incorrectly (in this instance, there is insufficient time to return applications for amendment). Applications submitted after the closing date will not be considered, whatever the circumstances.

Applications will be assessed and candidates selected by members of the AHRC executive and the Institute for Government. The assessment will be based solely on the information provided in the application form. The UK Research Councils are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations across and between the defined equalities groups in all of their relevant functions.

Accordingly no eligible job applicant, funding applicant, employee or external stakeholder including members of the public should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of: gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins, religion or similar philosophical belief, spent criminal conviction, age or disability. Proposals will be assessed and graded on their merits, in accordance with the criteria and the aims and objectives set for the scheme.

Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

- **Research track record** – successful applicants will help policy makers access the best research in their field.
- **Motivation** – applicants must demonstrate enthusiasm for engaging with the policy-making process and using their research to make a difference.
- **Relevance** - applicants must demonstrate how their research could help inform issues of public policy.
- **Development potential** – that the course will make a difference to applicants as researchers.
- **Commitment** – to promoting the role of the arts and humanities (beyond the applicant's own research) and to helping government make better policy.

With regret, the AHRC is unable to provide specific feedback to unsuccessful applicants in this instance.

Grading scale

Grade	Descriptor
3	The applicant has made a compelling case for their attendance on the course and would clearly benefit from participation. In addition, the applicant has clearly and persuasively demonstrated their research track record, their potential to apply that research in the current context, and has demonstrated good awareness of the manner in which the arts and humanities more generally can make a contribution to public policy making.
2	The applicant has made a strong case for their attendance on the course and would benefit from participation. Their application is, however, weaker in some areas – such as their research track record, their understanding of the potential relevance of their research, or how arts and humanities research more generally can make a contribution to public policy making.
1	The applicant has not made a case for their attendance on the course or shown what added value their attendance would have for their personal or professional development. Or, the applicant does not have a track record which demonstrates research excellence, or the applicant has not demonstrated a good understanding of the potential relevance of their own research, or how arts and humanities research more generally could make a contribution to public policy making.

Timetable

- Closing date: **5pm on 27 November 2015**
- Panel meeting: **18 December 2015**
- Notification of Outcomes: **w/c 11 January 2016**
- Course information sent to participants: **mid-February 2016**
- Course: **8, 9 and 10 March 2016**

There is also likely to be a follow-up with participants between three and six months after the course to evaluate the outcomes of the programme.

If you have any queries about the programme or the application process, please contact us at publicpolicy@ahrc.ac.uk.