



# ADR UK PhD Studentships 2026: Applicant webinar

12 May 2026



# Introductions

## Presenters:

- **Lizzie Pattinson**, Research Manager, Research and Capacity Building Team, ADR UK Strategic Hub
- **Jenny Kerr**, ADR Liaison Manager, Research Services and Data Access, ONS
- **Marta Stryjniak**, ADR UK PhD Candidate in Education, University of Cambridge
- **Prof Sonia Ilie**, ADR UK Supervisor, University of Cambridge

## Housekeeping:

- Please note that this meeting is being recorded. The recording and will be published with the slides on our website.
- To ask a question , click the Q&A button in the toolbar to send your query to the team.

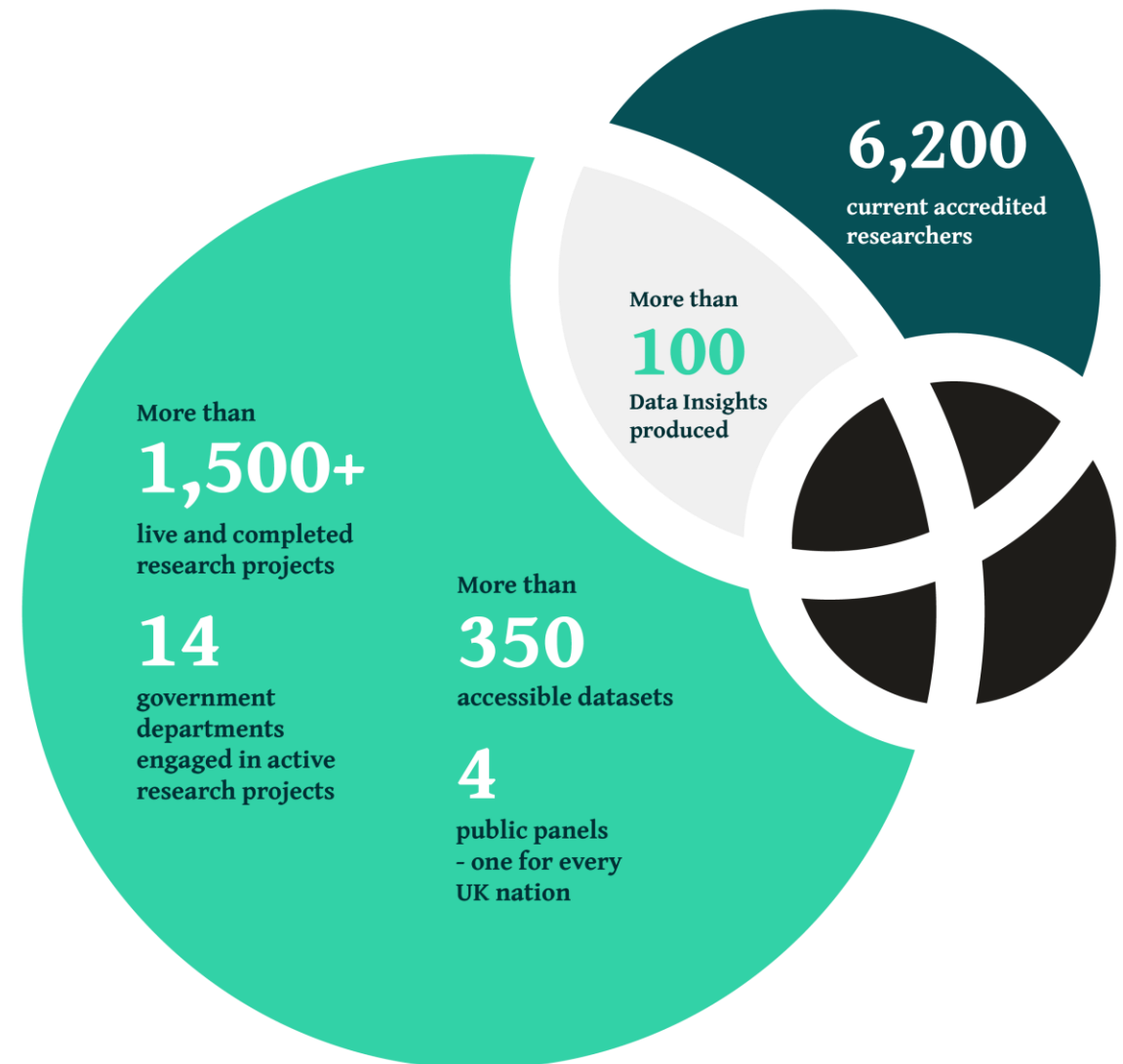
# Agenda

Time	Item
11:00	Introductions and Housekeeping
11:05	ADR UK
11:15	Application Guidance and Assessment
11:30	Q&A: session 1
11:35	ONS Data Access
11:50	Reflections on the ADR UK studentship cohort
12:00	Next steps and Support
12:05	Q&A: session 2



# What is ADR UK?

ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK) is a partnership transforming the way researchers access the UK's wealth of public sector data, to enable better informed policy decisions that improve lives.



# What is administrative data?

Administrative data is information created when people use public services, such as schools, the NHS, the courts or the benefits system.

Government bodies collect this information as part of running these services.

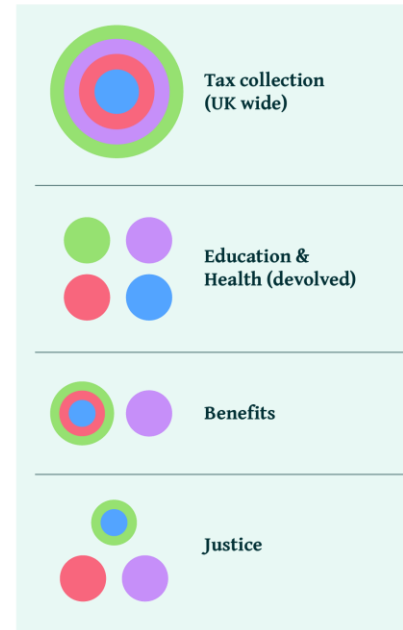
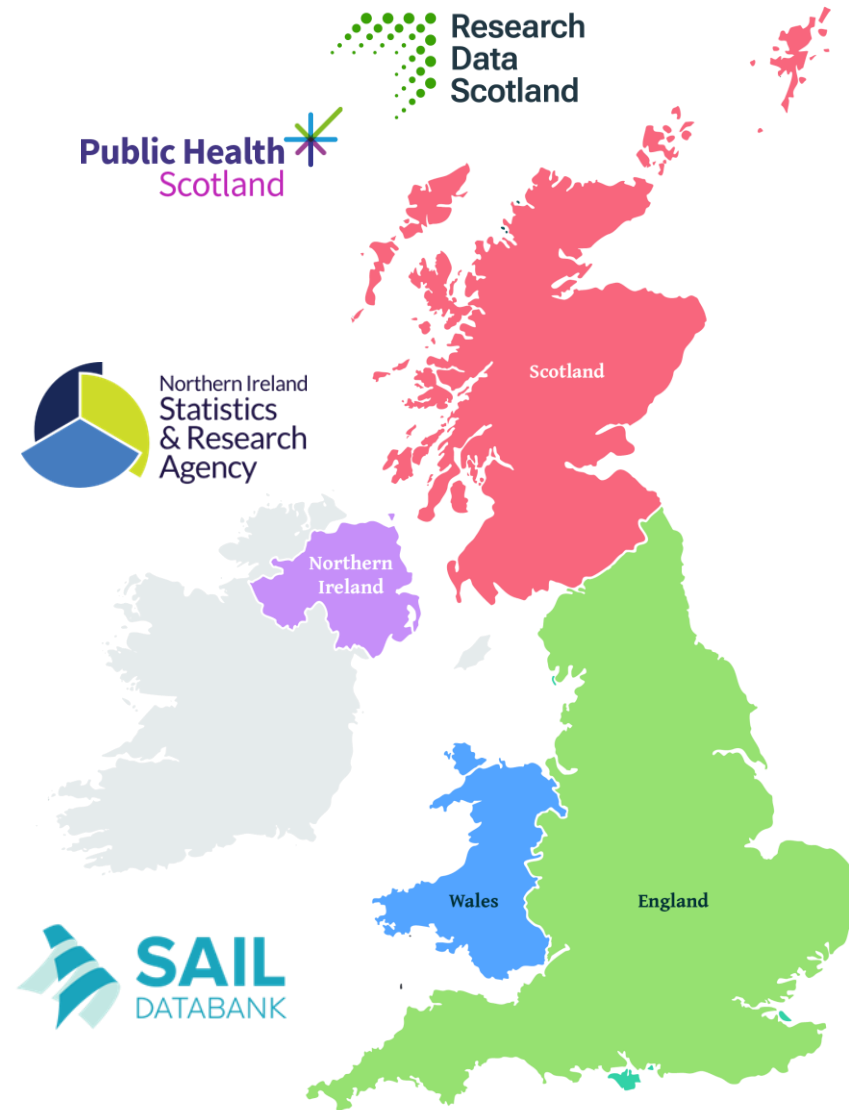


# Why were we formed?

Our mission is to safely open up and link administrative data to provide robust evidence that informs policy and public services.

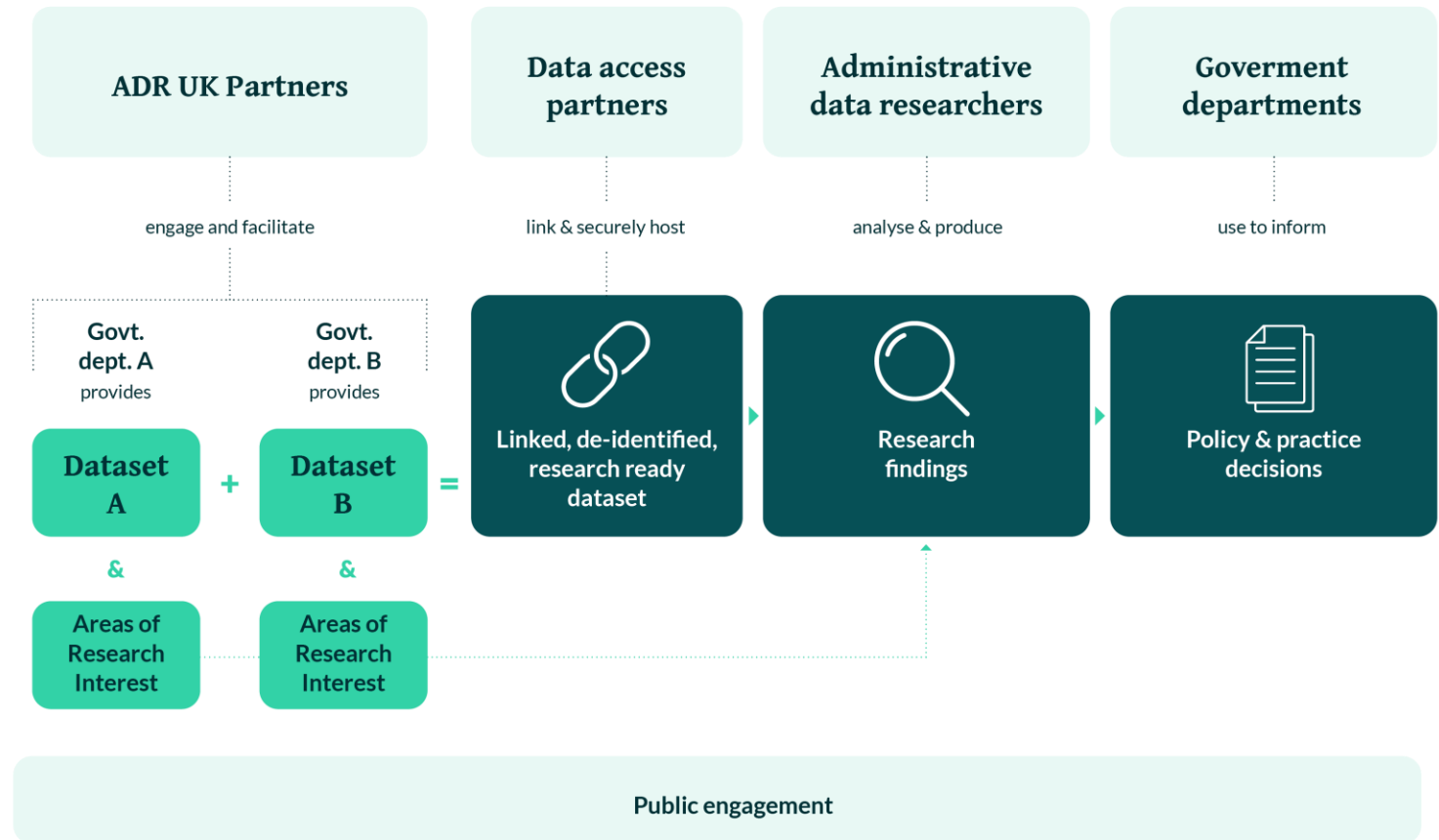
By enabling secure access to de-identified data for accredited researchers, we help build a more complete picture of how people's lives intersect with public services - generating insights to improve lives across the UK.

Administrative data governance operates differently across the UK's four nations. ADR UK was established as a UK-wide partnership that recognises this devolved model, with partnerships and trusted research environments in each nation.



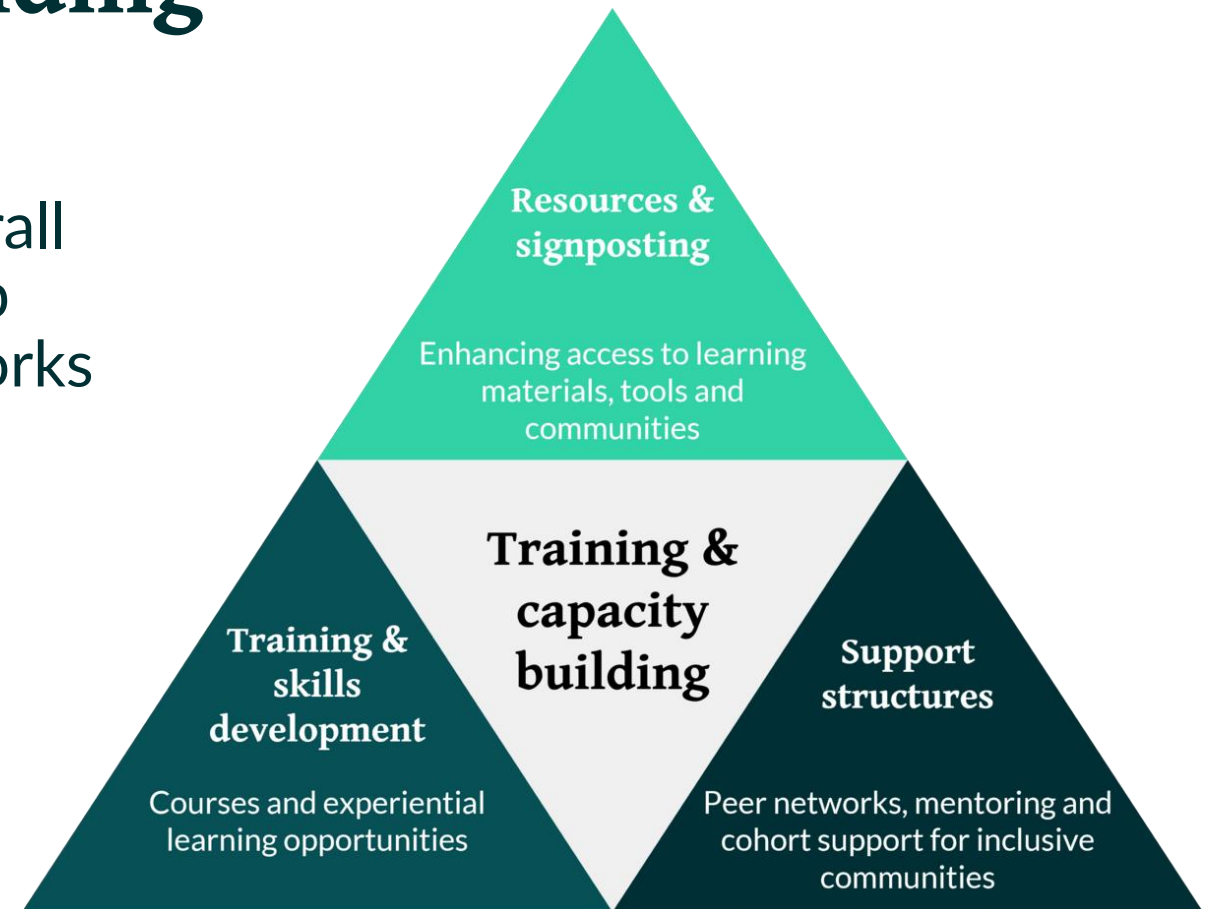
# The ADR UK process

1. ADR UK partners engage data owners across government and the public sector, who provide data and outline policy priorities.
2. Data access partners securely link data across departments to create research-ready datasets, hosted within trusted research environments.
3. Accredited researchers apply to access these linked datasets, analyse them securely, and produce policy-relevant findings.
4. Public engagement is embedded throughout, shaping priorities, informing governance, and ensuring data is used ethically.



# Training and Capacity Building

ADR UK's Training and capacity building strategy is a vital component of the overall mission, enabling researchers to develop the skills, confidence and support networks needed to work effectively with administrative data.



# ADR Studentships 2026: Guidance and Assessment

## KEY INFORMATION

Funding available for up to **30 PhD studentships**, anywhere in the UK, starting October 2027.

- Individual supervisors or supervisory teams can apply.
- Applications must be at least 50% social sciences.
- Studentships must make use of an **ADR UK's flagship dataset**
- Funding will be based on notional cost and length of the studentship.
- Managing the studentship grant will be the responsibility of the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership
- Co-funding is available for this opportunity

## NOT ELIGIBLE:

- Supervisors from institutions not part of an existing ESRC DTP
- Direct applications from students
- Studentships that do not mention the use of an ADR UK flagship dataset

# ADR Studentships 2026: Guidance and Assessment

- Supervisor applications (Form B) must be submitted to their ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership (varying deadlines)
- DTP Directors must submit the 5 chosen applications (5 Form B and 1 Form A), before opportunity closes on the 15th September.
- Panel including experts in doctoral supervision and administrative data will assess application quality in November
- Applications selected based on a portfolio approach (e.g. geographical and dataset coverage)
- Funding notification by January 2027

Considerations will be made based on the **application package as a whole**. DTPs and Supervisors should think about:

- **The ADR UK Mission**
- **The Training a Capacity Building Strategy**

*e.g. Does my proposal clearly demonstrate how a student will use linked administrative data to address an important societal or policy issue?*

# ADR Studentships 2026: Guidance and Assessment

## Doctoral Training Partnerships

- DTP Directors will be responsible for coordinating the application process
- DTPs can **apply for up to five** supervisor-led PhD studentships each.
- Complete **Form A** on behalf of the DTP partnership. **One Form A per DTP.**

Information to be provided includes:

- DTP's current strengths in quantitative research, analysis, and training
  - existing experiences using administrative data
  - rationale for hosting studentships using linked administrative data
  - plans for contributing to the growing community of administrative data researchers
- **Collate and submit a completed application package on behalf of the partnership, including**
    - Form A (1) and Form B (up to five).

# ADR Studentships 2026: Guidance and Assessment

## Supervisors

Individual supervisors can apply for multiple studentships. Each application must address different research topics and questions.

Complete **Form B**. **One Form B per studentship**. Submitted to DTP Director.

Information to be provided includes:

- prior experiences supervising PhD students
- supervisory capabilities using linked administrative data
- areas for training for the supervisor, the prospective student, or both
- desired datasets and how they will complement research topics and questions.

Datasets can include a variety of data 'states': consider your own strengths and weaknesses

# ADR Studentships 2026: Guidance and Assessment

## Flagship Datasets:

Our flagship datasets are selected for their substantial potential to provide new data to fill evidence gaps and address pressing policy needs.

## Essential requirements:

- Proposals must include a flagship dataset listed on our webpage.
- Datasets listed in our upcoming document, along with other administrative datasets, can be included to support your application.



# ADR Studentships 2026: Guidance and Assessment

\*NEW\* Flagship Datasets:

- Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings linked to 2011 Census – England & Wales (coming soon)
- Population interactions with employment, benefits and pensions – UK (RAPID): [RAPID dataset briefing](#)
- Nursing and Midwifery Council Register linked to Census 2021 - England & Wales, [Nursing and Midwifery Council Register linked to Census 2021 dataset briefing](#)

## Dataset Briefings

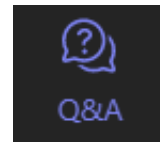
- Scottish Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) University extract – 21 May
- Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection (AD|ARC) 2011 - Northern Ireland – 27 May
- Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings linked to Census 2021 – Northern Ireland – 28 May



# Questions & Answers

Please submit your questions:

- Click the Q&A button in the toolbar
- Type your question and click Send



An FAQ document will be published following this webinar which will address any questions

You can also email us during the working week at [ADRStudentships@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:ADRStudentships@esrc.ukri.org)



# ADR UK Studentships Applicant Webinar - ONS Data Access

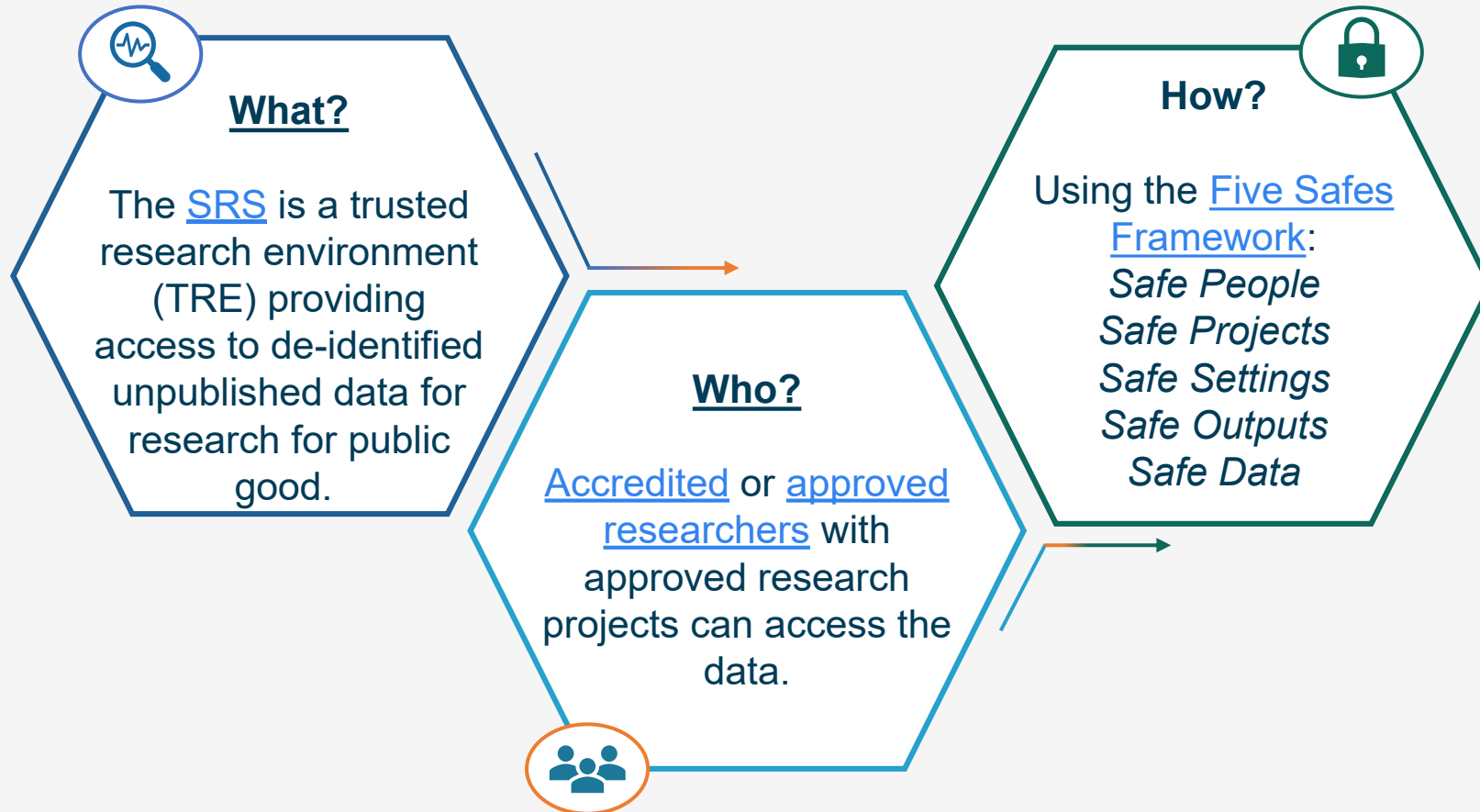
**Jenny Kerr**

ADR Liaison Manager  
Research Services and Data Access

**27 May 2026**



# The ONS Secure Research Service (SRS)



# Researcher Journey

Consider access options and apply early for AOC if required



# Becoming an Accredited Researcher

Approx timeframe: 4 weeks

## Criteria for Full Accreditation

You must have either:

- an undergraduate degree (or higher) including a substantial proportion of mathematics or statistics, at grade 2:2 or above
- or*
- be able to demonstrate at least 3 years quantitative research experience

## And

- undertake Safe Researcher Training (SRT)
- agree to be included on the public record
- sign a declaration

## Provisional Accreditation

For those who do not meet above. Must have a supervisor (see website)

## How to apply

1. Submit an online application via the Hub: [Become an accredited researcher - Office for National Statistics](#)
2. Sign up to a safe researcher training (SRT) session
3. Complete an online assessment

Office for National Statistics

### Apply for an account

Before [becoming an accredited researcher](#) and accessing a Trusted Research Environment (TRE), you will need to apply for an account.

During the process we will ask you to:

- provide the name of your organisation
- provide your name and organisation email address
- read and agree to our terms of access

### Tell us about your organisation - Step 1 of 3

**Organisation**

Start typing to select from our registered organisations or enter your own if it is not listed. Entering a new organisation will delay your application while we review it

[Continue](#)

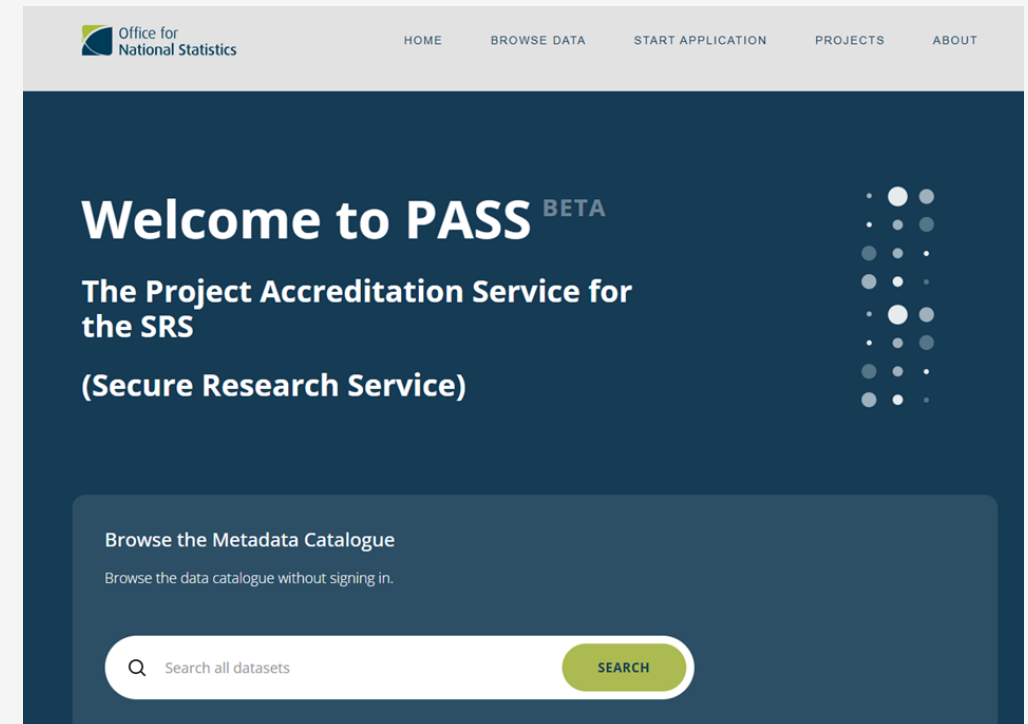
# Submit a Project Application

Approx timeframe: 8 -10 weeks

- **Dataset Basket**
  - Select from the SRS [catalogue](#), fill your basket and apply
- **Section 1: Project Details**
- **Section 2: Datasets**
- **Section 3: Methods**
- **Section 4: Research sensitivity**
- **Section 5: Public benefits**

Supervisors who wish to access the student's project space MUST be accredited researchers and should be included in the PASS application

Submit a project application through the Project Accreditation Service for the SRS (PASS)



Visit the [UKSA website](#) for guidance and examples

# The Research Accreditation Panel (RAP)



- The Research Accreditation Panel (RAP) provides oversight of the framework that is used to accredit research projects, researchers and processing environments.
- The research framework is underpinned by the [Research Code of Practice and Accreditation Criteria](#)
- [Research Accreditation Panel – UK Statistics Authority](#)

# Accessing the Data within the SRS

LEVEL 3 ACCESS

LEVEL 2 ACCESS

LEVEL 1 ACCESS

## SRS Safe Rooms

Bookable terminal in  
ONS Newport

Bookable terminal in  
ONS Titchfield

## SafePod Network

25 small self-  
contained secure  
rooms with a single  
workstation

LSE SafePoint Hub

## Assured Organisational Connectivity (AOC)

Office access from  
your organisation's  
approved office  
network

Remote access from  
home using your  
organisation's  
secure remote setup



Please contact [srs.connectivity@ons.gov.uk](mailto:srs.connectivity@ons.gov.uk) to check your organisation's AOC status or to apply for a new AOC agreement

[Home - SafePod](#)

# Get in touch

- Customer Support: [srs.customer.support@ons.gov.uk](mailto:srs.customer.support@ons.gov.uk)
- Connectivity: [SRS.Connectivity@ons.gov.uk](mailto:SRS.Connectivity@ons.gov.uk)
- ADR Liaison Team: [ADRLiaison@ons.gov.uk](mailto:ADRLiaison@ons.gov.uk)



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CAMBRIDGE

# Reflections on being part of the ADR UK studentship cohort

Marta Stryjniak & Sonia Ilie

# A community

ADR student community: people often encountered similar data issues; and they were happy to give each other tips. We also shared career advice since we all have similar interests

Three ADR gatherings: see how our projects evolved over time and exchange experiences

Contact with other ADR PhD students essential: most PhD projects in my institution very different to my own

# Data access practicalities

Engage early with potential datasets to understand which research questions are feasible

Ask for and work with synthetic data while waiting

Spend time engaging with the real data once access granted: substantial early preparation = much easier later analysis

Set up home access if/where allowed!

Not knowing data access timelines was stressful! Different time estimates from different sources. Prepare to wait and assume it will take at least a few months!

# Data challenges

Working with the data can be challenging depending on the initial skillset and taking the time in the first year to take courses and do training might be a good idea

Sometimes necessary to adapt one's working schedule to when the data becomes available, day-to-day and over the course of the academic year

Any changes in the output = new disclosure check!

It takes time to establish working patterns to plan early and triple-check output before asking for disclosure checks

# Studentship benefits

Experience working with large datasets and develop research questions directly connected to policy

Independence in data analysis alongside communication with ADR UK, data owners, etc. → engagement with non-academic partners and research communication experience

Opportunities to network: presenting research to policymakers and GOV representatives during ADR gatherings and were encouraged to contact them

Options to do a work placement (limited for international students in our cohort due to visa restrictions)

# Next Steps and Support

Register for **peer support** and **Dataset briefings** on the **Opportunity page**



Access **Dataset Guidance, Videos and Documentation**



Learn more about **administrative data** on the **Learning Hub**



