Communications & Engagement Expectations for ADR UK Research Fellowship grant holders

This document sets out the expectations regarding communications and engagement for recipients of ADR UK Research Fellowship grants, issued by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), part of UK Research & Innovation (UKRI). The purpose of this document is to ensure a coordinated and mutually supportive approach. It also sets out best practice approaches to communicating the work of grant holders to the public and relevant stakeholders and facilitating meaningful engagement with relevant publics or demographics.

The following expectations are in addition to the basic minimum requirements set out in an ADR UK grant agreement and conditions specified in data access agreements, where applicable, between a researcher (or their institution) and the data owner(s) for each of our flagship datasets. Any work (data, code and notes) removed from the trusted research environment, for example the **Office for** **National Statistics (ONS) Secure Research Service,** need to successfully pass the output clearance and in some cases be further reviewed and approved by the data owner(s). Adequate time for output clearance should therefore be factored into the production and publication timeline.

To ensure full transparency of our work, and increase impact of our research outputs, all work funded by ADR UK is expected to have a plan in place for communicating the work to the public and relevant stakeholders, and to embed meaningful public engagement in the research. This plan should be agreed between the fellow and the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team.

1. Communications and content deliverables

Communicating the research outputs and impact of the work we enable is critical to ensuring the impact of ADR UK. In line with this, the grant holder will be supported by the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team in undertaking open and transparent communication about ADR UK-funded data curation, linkage, and research. This will be upon agreement between both parties regarding appropriate messaging.

Communications outputs produced by ADR UK Research Fellows and published on ADR UK channels include but are not limited to:

1. **a project page**: This is a mandatory communication output which provides a brief overview and key details of the project, such as background, objectives, and funding details. It ensures ADR UK is transparent about the work it is funding. It targets government, the public, and those with an interest in data privacy and data use.
2. **a Data Explained publication**: This discusses the data used, its limitations, and any recommendations for improvements. It targets researchers and data owners. Where

multiple Data Explained publications already exist for a dataset, this may be optional (in discussion with ADR UK).

3. **a Data Insight publication**: This showcases early research findings with the aim of disseminating research and potentially informing policy or practice with data-led evidence. It targets policymakers and practitioners working in sectors relevant to the findings.

4. **other deliverables suitable for communicating the individual project**. These are to be determined by the fellow in collaboration with the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team. Fellows are expected to produce at least one of these deliverables. We require all researchers to first consult with the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team, to determine the right course of action. The ADR UK cohort update forms and supporting meetings are the point at which to start discussion. Options for these other deliverables that can be considered, include:
   - a blog, for example reflecting on an event, specific learnings, or the fellow's personal motivations and experiences
   - a policy briefing, presenting recommendations informed by the research for policymakers (this could be based on a journal article)
   - a short animation or video, to disseminate the findings to a specific audience in an engaging way (this could be an explainer or insight summary)
   - additional "Data Explained" or "Data Insight" publications where further findings or learnings useful to a specific audience are identified.

1.1 Publication clearance

All outputs for publication by ADR UK, such as project pages, Data Insights and Data Explained, should be fully cleared by both the trusted research environment and the data owners before they reach the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team. Adequate time for output clearance should therefore be factored into the production and publication timeline.

Communications published on grant holder or third-party websites, which may include:

- academic publications;
- podcasts or interviews;
- case studies and reports;
- press releases, statements or blogs;
- features in newsletters and social media; and
- infographics, videos, or other online multimedia.

All published outputs will be considered for promotion on ADR UK's social media (X and LinkedIn) and in the ADR UK monthly newsletter.

2. Stakeholder engagement

Conducting meaningful engagement with the public and other stakeholders is crucial to maintaining a healthy social contract, whereby administrative data research is conducted in a way that demonstrates trust and maximises public benefit. This includes engagement with all relevant stakeholders including academics, researchers, government or other data holders, policymakers, representatives of community organisations or NGOs, and members of the public.

2.1 Public engagement

ADR UK is committed to ensuring public engagement is embedded throughout the research process for all our funded projects. Therefore, all recipients of ADR UK grants must build meaningful public engagement into their research proposals. Engaging with the public can be done directly with members of the public, or through representatives of particular groups of the public, via community organisations or NGOs, or both. Public engagement activities may take the form of:

- public consultation or dialogue with the general public to inform ADR UK-funded work, e.g., focus groups, workshops, or online surveys (note that ADR UK hosts a public panel in each nation which may have available space for engagement related to a fellow's project. Enquire early with the team to identify if this is appropriate for a specific project); and or,

- activities with community representatives, in which members of organisations which represent sub-sectors of society are consulted in the development of ADR UK-funded work.

Meaningful public engagement necessitates two-way engagement of listening and responding. This means building **a public engagement plan** around the intention of seeking and utilising feedback to inform your research. Feedback from public engagement has the potential to inform the contextual and practical applications of your research; ethical considerations related to demographics relevant to your project; plans for dissemination, and more. More information about how to meaningfully engage the public in your work can be found on the Learning Hub, including case studies on meaningful public engagement activities.

2.2 Policy or researcher engagement

Engaging policymakers where findings can be of use for decision making and policy development is a critical way that ADR UK achieves impact through research, while engaging other researchers can help raise awareness of administrative data research and inspire further projects. Engagement activities may include:

- attendance at events as an exhibitor or speaker, in which the ADR UK-funded work is showcased to relevant stakeholders, e.g., academic researchers or policymakers;

- delivery of public seminars and lectures, where attendees can ask questions and speak directly with grant holders about ADR UK-funded work; and

- responding to policy-focused activities such as government and parliamentary inquiries,

consultations and calls for evidence, using evidence generated through ADR UK-funded work.

3. ADR UK's expectations of ADR UK grant funded Research Fellows

Holders of ADR UK grants from ESRC are expected to:

- Agree a planned approach and outputs for communications and engagement work with ADR UK at the outset of the project including expected outcomes and milestones (noting these may adapt as the project develops).

- Agree key messaging (i.e. a core description of the project and intended outcomes) for the funded work with ADR UK and align with the agreed messaging in all subsequent outputs unless otherwise agreed with ADR UK.

- Where new information is to be included in outputs, messaging should be agreed with ADR UK beforehand. Where no new information is included, pre-agreed messaging may be distributed without the need for further sign-off.

- Carry out planned activities in line with the agreed plan, clearly communicating any changes to the plans.

- Share details of any communications and engagement activities about ADR UK-funded work (including activities by third parties) with the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team as far in advance as possible, to allow the team to have meaningful input and to support dissemination.

- Be open to advice and comment from ADR UK, to help ensure communications and engagement are as effective as possible.

- The Senior Public Engagement Manager should be informed of any public engagement activities from the planning stage of the activity onwards.

- Acknowledge ADR UK and the ESRC as the source of funding in outputs referring to the funded activity with use of the ADR UK and ESRC logos where appropriate:

    a. logos, brand guidelines and more can be found in the ADR UK brand toolkit.

    b. all outputs created through the ADR UK Research Fellowships, for publication on platforms outside ADR UK, should include the following acknowledgement:

    Short version: *This work [was/is] supported by ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK), an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) investment (part of UK Research and Innovation). [Grant number: xxxxxx]*

    Long version: *This work [was/is] supported by ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK). ADR 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 people's lives. ADR UK is an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) investment (part of UK Research and*

Innovation). [Grant number: xxxxxx]

- Align with ADR UK's brand and style when delivering information associated with the funded fellowship, where appropriate. Guidance can be found in our **brand toolkit**.

- Ensure that outputs follow the correct clearance processes, and are written in line with the **ADR UK writing style guide** and template guidance. For outputs using ONS SRS data, use the dataset Digital Object Identifier (DOI) in citations in all publications.

- Keep the ADR UK Communications team informed about significant developments which could be of positive media interest, such as early research findings:

    a. **Proactive press releases:** Give the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team the opportunity to review and provide formal sign-off for proactive press releases and other relevant communications materials with reference to ADR UK or data provided by ADR UK. This includes when shared in advance with journalists. Note that some press releases may also require further data owner or ESRC sign off, so it is advised to share a release as far in advance as possible to mitigate delays in sign off.

    b. **Reactive statements/press releases:** Where these are based upon pre-agreed messaging, these do not require review or sign-off by ADR UK, although outputs should still be shared for information. However, if reactive statements contain significant new messaging, they must be reviewed and signed-off by the ADR UK Communications team. See above on sign off.

- Provide appropriate statements in a timely manner in the event of Freedom of Information requests or other reactive external requests with direct relation to research projects or findings.

- We expect applicants to have considered the potential scientific, societal and economic impacts of their research. The **ESRC's Toolkit** gives advice on achieving maximum impact and we recommend that applicants use the advice in the toolkit to shape proposals. All research proposals need to explain how findings will have demonstrable policy relevance through appropriate engagement.

4. ADR UK grant funded Research Fellows' expectations of the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team

In turn, grant holders can expect the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team to:

- Provide advice, support and where applicable branded templates to support developing and delivering a communications and engagement plan for ADR UK-funded work.

- Agree key messaging for the funded work with the grant holder and abide by the agreed messaging in all subsequent outputs unless otherwise agreed with the grant holder.

- Where new information is to be included in outputs, messaging will be agreed with the grant holder beforehand. Where no new information is included, pre-agreed messaging may be

distributed without the need for further sign-off.

- Share details of planned communications and engagement activities about ADR UK-funded work with the grant holder as far in advance as possible, and be open to advice and comment from the grant holder.

- For outputs to be published on ADR UK channels:

  o Edit these outputs in line with the ADR UK style guide to ensure consistency and accessibility, following clearance from the trusted research environment and data owners.

  o Coordinate final sign off with the grant holder and data owners, following the edits above, before publication. Please note this can take approximately 3-15 working days, which should be factored into publishing plans.

- **Proactive press releases:** Give the grant holder the opportunity to review and provide formal sign-off for proactive press releases as far in advance as possible, including when shared in advance with journalists.

- **Reactive statements/press releases:** Where these are based upon pre-agreed messaging, these do not require review or sign-off by the grant holder, although outputs will still be shared for information. However, if reactive statements contain significant new information, the grant-holder will be given the opportunity to review and sign-off by the ADR UK Communications team.

- Provide materials for grant holder communications and engagement activities when requested and where reasonably feasible, such as basic information for public web pages and quotes from ADR UK representatives.

- Support grant holders in amplifying communications and engagement activities where appropriate, e.g., to stakeholder contacts or via social media.

- Provide appropriate statements in the event of Freedom of Information or other requests with direct relation to ADR UK or datasets curated and shared with the grant holder by ADR UK.

5. Contact

If you have any questions about the above, please contact the ADR UK Communications and Engagement team.

For public engagement support: Shayda Kashef, Senior Public Engagement Manager: shayda.kashef@esrc.ukri.org

For communications support: Laura Mulvey, Senior Communications and Engagement Manager: laura.mulvey@esrc.ukri.org