

Scottish Graduate School of Social Science Associate Director

The Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS) are seeking to appoint an **Associate Director (Advanced Methods Lead)** to join our team and contribute to the exciting implementation and delivery of the next phase of our Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP).

Funded by the [ESRC](#), [Scottish Funding Council](#) ("SFC") and 16 partner universities, SGSSS is a cross-Scotland partnership focused on social science excellence, equipping PhD graduates to develop into future research leaders on the national and global stage. This is a fantastic opportunity to contribute significantly to the strategic development of social sciences postgraduate research, and the formation of research leaders in Scotland and beyond.

Associate Director Role Details:

Title:	Associate Director (Advanced Methods Lead).
FTE:	0.3 FTE (delivered through workmodelled hours within existing contract). Variable working patterns for delivery of this time can be agreed, to help support home university commitments and resourcing.
Grade:	These roles are open to academic applicants from lecturer role/level or above, who work within SGSSS partner universities .
Term:	3 years, starting as soon as feasible. SGSSS are open to agreeing a mutually suitable start date, potentially phased and taking into account existing commitments etc. A review will take place after 1 and 2 years, to include a check for the home university's ongoing ability to support the time commitment.
Based at:	The role will be undertaken from the role holder's home university, but in person presence is expected at relevant meetings, training events, student activities etc. These will be planned in advance with the wider Directorate and Professional Services team.
Role Purpose:	The Associate Directors support the Director and Deputy Directors in delivering the strategic and operational objectives of SGSSS. The role holders are part of the team that ensures SGSSS is an inclusive and collaborative consortium, delivering effective and accessible postgraduate funding and training in the social sciences, Scotland-wide.

Associate Director Main Responsibilities:

Supporting the Deputy Director (Training), Dr Katy Keenan (University of St. Andrews), this role will be focused on leading the strategic implementation and embedding of the model for methods training specified in SGSSS' vision for the DTP, which is shaped by the [2022 ESRC postgraduate training guidelines](#). This is an exciting opportunity to shape and deliver significant impact in postgraduate researcher training across Scotland.

Main responsibilities will include:

- Supporting the Deputy Director (Training), particularly in development and implementation of specialist/advanced methods training for PGRs in Scotland and across the UK;

- Working within the SGSSS training team, designing and delivering other training events, with support from the Professional Services team and other academic colleagues;
- Liaising and developing working relationships with the newly-appointed ESRC funded national [capability hub](#) and other training centres such as the National Centre for Research Methods. The role will further include interactions with other DTPs to design, deliver and improve PGR training opportunities;
- Supporting the Development Needs Analysis (DNA) process, including reviewing data to inform training and support needs; and
- Evolving and delivering Research in Practice related training.

General Responsibilities:

All Associate Directors support the SGSSS studentship competitions through application reviews and panel membership. Additionally, all Associate Directors are asked to be responsible for specific leadership tasks: allocation of these will depend on applicants' experience and skills. They are likely to be cross-SGSSS team initiatives responding to emerging UKRI/ESRC or SFC priorities.

Person Specification – knowledge, experience and skills:

- The post requires a member of academic staff on a continuing contract at an SGSSS [partner university](#).
- The role holder should have experience of and a passion for PhD support, student experience and student development, coupled with knowledge of the PhD lifecycle.
- The role holder will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the PhD funding and training environment in Scotland, ideally including an understanding of the ESRC recommissioning objectives for DTPs.
- Experience should include delivering PGR level training and/or PGR cohort development activities.
- The role holder should be able to demonstrate an ability to think and act strategically across a national network, with a strong ambition to enhance social sciences in Scotland.
- The Associate Directors contribute creatively and actively participate in a small and focused team: demonstrable teamworking skills are essential, particularly taking into account the geographical spread of SGSSS colleagues.
- Clear and effective communication skills are essential.
- A strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is required, including the application of practical initiatives to realise this commitment.
- Associate Directors serve as “ambassadors” for SGSSS, therefore relationship and network building skills are important.

Acknowledging resource and financial challenges within universities, this role may be particularly attractive to colleagues whose responsibilities already include advanced methods training, support for PGR training and/or related activities. Such current responsibilities, however, are **not** a pre-requisite for application.

To apply:

Please send a CV and covering letter to team@sgsss.ac.uk (email title: “Associate Director Application”) by 23:59 pm Sunday 23 November 2025.

Interviews will be held in early/mid December.

Your covering letter should explain:

i) your suitability for this role (see Person Specification); and

ii) why you wish to be part of the SGSSS Directorate, including what you wish to achieve during your term.

NB: agreement to undertake the role (including commitment that 0.3 FTE workmodelled hours will be available to SGSSS throughout the term of this role) should be sought from home institution **in advance** of application. SGSSS are cognisant of the current economic and financial challenges across our sector and recognise this Associate Director role is a significant workload commitment. Variable working patterns for delivery of this time can be agreed, to help support home university commitments and resourcing. If you or your line manager wishes to discuss this further ahead of application, please feel free to get in touch with the team via team@sgsss.ac.uk or Professor Graeme Nixon, SGSSS Director, via graeme.nixon@ed.ac.uk.

SGSSS Context:

Established in 2011, SGSSS brings together the expertise of 16 universities across Scotland to provide a world-class research environment for social science PhD researchers. SGSSS is led by the Director, supported by the Deputy Director (Training) and Deputy Director (Studentships and Partnerships), alongside a team of seven Associate Directors and a team of Professional Services staff.

In 2016, the SGSSS ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) was established. Funding was renewed in 2023 for a further five cohorts, and the first group of new DTP PGRs started in October 2024.

You can read more about SGSSS and its activities in [Our Year In Review](#).

SGSSS has a strong commitment to accessibility, equality, diversity and inclusion. We believe a diverse team bring the best range of experience, skills and perspectives. Applications are therefore particularly welcome from groups traditionally underrepresented within Higher Education.

If you believe you would add value to the SGSSS team but do not feel you meet the criteria, please consider getting in touch via team@sgsss.ac.uk or graeme.nixon@ed.ac.uk to talk about the role and your application.

If you would benefit from receiving this document in a different format, please email team@sgsss.ac.uk.