



# POLICY IMPACT ACADEMY

## Empowering Irish researchers for policy engagement

Join our interdisciplinary policy engagement training programme, funded under the **Research Ireland Discover Programme**. It's designed to enhance the engagement capacity of the Irish research community, focusing on the research-policy interface. Participants will learn to navigate the Irish policy environment, present research in policy-relevant terms, employ a responsible and ethical approach and identify impactful intervention points.

### Why participate?

- Our training leads are **renowned experts** who are highly experienced in policy engagement and research impact, including **Prof. Eric A. Jensen**, **Prof. Mark Reed** and **Prof. Katriona O'Sullivan**. Their expertise and practical experience ensure that you receive the most current and useful training in policy engagement.
- You will hear directly from **policy professionals** via recorded interviews in the self-paced training course, providing real-world insights.
- Join a long-term **alumni network** of over 450 professionals across more than 130 universities and organisations for continued support, collaboration and professional growth post-training.

*This training is offered at no cost to eligible participants.*

## SCHEDULE

This unique training programme addresses the challenge of balancing academic commitments with professional development, offering a flexible approach. It consists of a comprehensive self-paced online training course on policy engagement and eight half-day live virtual training sessions.

While it is encouraged to engage with the self-paced course before the live sessions for each module to gain the most value, it is not mandatory. The live sessions will include brief refresher presentations to cover key concepts from the self-paced course.

Module	Virtual (Zoom) sessions <sup>1</sup> 9:30 am to 12:30 pm (Dublin time)
<b>1</b> How to Strategise, Scope and Plan for Policy Impact	8 September 2025 (Part 1) 11 September 2025 (Part 2)
<b>2</b> How to Navigate the Policy Impact Process	15 September 2025 (Part 1) 17 September 2025 (Part 2)
<b>3</b> How to Make a Difference in Policy	22 September 2025 (Part 1) 24 September 2025 (Part 2)
<b>4</b> How to Evaluate and Evidence Policy Impact	6 October 2025 (Part 1) 8 October 2025 (Part 2)

<sup>1</sup> Each module will be broken into two half-days to avoid digital fatigue. Participants need to attend **both** virtual sessions.

## ELIGIBILITY

You do not need policy experience to be eligible to apply. However, you should meet these requirements:

- You're a PhD candidate or researcher at postdoctoral level or higher (at any postdoctoral career stage)
- You're based at an Irish higher education institution or a recognised independent research organisation

Complete the registration form by **5pm (Dublin time) on June 6, 2025**  
for full consideration to join this training programme.

**APPLY TODAY**

 [shorturl.at/QdMd8](https://shorturl.at/QdMd8)

For queries, contact: [training@methodsinnovation.org](mailto:training@methodsinnovation.org)

# POLICY ENGAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME OUTLINE

## Module 1: How to Strategise, Scope and Plan for Policy Impact

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By the end of this module, participants will:

- Be clear on their intrinsic motivations for engaging with policy, and capable of strategically aligning with extrinsic incentives for impact from funders and research assessments.
- Be able to articulate realistic policy, evidence and impact objectives.
- Be able to adopt an agile approach to policy engagement as an ongoing, career-long process in which research insights can be adapted to align with 'policy windows' of opportunity, reframing as needed to facilitate uptake.
- Have identified and prioritised the most relevant individuals, teams and organisations from policy networks for engagement based on their relative interest, influence and impact (3i) for at least one project/initiative.
- Each participant will understand how to use 3i insights to guide their policy engagement strategies and roles.
- Have practised risk management techniques for policy impact.
- Be capable of balancing personal and professional demands sustainably to be an effective and reliable policy impact contributor.

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## Module 2: How to Navigate the Policy Impact Process

By the end of this module participants will:

- Have an understanding of the policy process at different levels of government - including local, regional, national and international.
- Have an ability to identify the points at which direct interventions have the best chance of influencing policy.
- Recognise what counts as evidence in policy-making and how it is used.
- Use their 3i analysis to identify opportunities and challenges of working with intermediaries beyond central government, including NGOs, think-tanks, professional bodies, learned societies, and knowledge brokering organisations.
- Grow awareness of the pressures which policy makers are often under and empathise with their perspective.
- Understand the unique contexts of working with devolved administrations and policymakers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Succinctly articulate the potential value of their own social and environmental science for specific policy processes.

## Module 3: How to Make a Difference in Policy

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By the end of this module, participants will:

- Understand how to effectively engage and network with policy influencers in a variety of policy settings, based on insights from the latest interdisciplinary scholarship evidence on research-policy engagement.
- Have an understanding of the benefits and challenges of policy fellowships and secondment opportunities.
- Equip participants with an understanding of some key ingredients to enable successful interdisciplinary policy engagement.
- Have a grasp of the range of practical tools and activities for policy engagement and be able to identify those appropriate to their specific engagement objectives and context.
- Have created their own policy brief, policy infographic, or slide deck.
- Understand and be able to apply good practice principles for giving oral evidence.

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## Module 4: How to Evaluate and Evidence Policy Impact

By the end of this module participants will:

- Clarifying their current policy impact priorities in concrete, measurable terms.
- Developing an evaluation plan.
- Understanding the practical and methodological strengths and limitations of major options for evaluating policy impact.
- Selecting an appropriate method to evaluate policy impact, taking into account personal/professional priorities, existing methodological skills, long-term plans for using the evidence generated, etc.
- Integrating EDI-related measurement in their evaluations.
- Efficiently implementing an impact evaluation, using modern technology.
- Capturing convincing evidence that can be used to demonstrate policy impact for a range of purposes.

