

research matters



Has the pandemic changed grant reporting forever?

By Ben Cairns, director of IVAR

In March 2020, the [Institute for Voluntary Action Research \(IVAR\)](#) was getting ready to launch a movement to revolutionise grant reporting practices. Charities were spending an estimated [15.8 million hours](#) reporting to funders, and we wanted to create more time for them to focus on providing support to communities.



Over the course of two workshops in 2018, we convened a group of funders and funded organisations to explore what could be done. Together, we developed [a set of principles](#) to make grant reporting a shared, more meaningful and mutually beneficial experience. Our founding group of nine funders then spent a year using, testing and refining more straightforward approaches to reporting. And we collected charities' experiences, to build a case for change. As we prepared to share all of this and bring more funders on board – everything changed, almost overnight.

The Covid-19 pandemic made funders ultra-flexible

In the autumn of 2020, we surveyed 90 funders to understand how they worked differently during and after the first lockdown. They were a mix of sizes, with some awarding under £250k in 2018/19 and others over £10m. Most had a UK focus, and over half were local or regional. Two thirds made five or more adaptations to their practice – and one of the main adaptations, made by 70% of funders, was to relax monitoring and reporting requirements, including:

- ▶ Not having predefined outcomes/ performance targets attached to the grant
- ▶ Only requiring a final report, no interim reports
- ▶ Reducing the frequency of monitoring requirements

Restricted grants became unrestricted, outcome targets were jettisoned, and grant reports waived. There was a laser-like focus on responding to complex, changing and unforeseeable community needs. All of which prompted a fundamental question: if it's possible to monitor grants in this more open, trusting and flexible way, why does it happen in only the direst of situations?

It seems clear that we need to learn from this moment, when complicated processes fell away, grant-making was stripped back to its simplest form – and the world kept turning. Communities need simple, flexible grant-making to become standard practice.

This is the aim of our [open and trusting grantmakers](#) community.

We worked with funders and charities to develop eight commitments that aim to make life easier for applicants and funded organisations, in light of ongoing uncertainty. Our aim is for these to become standard practice in the sector.

Over 70 funders have signed up so far, joining a community of practice which will be held to account by charities, including for proportionate and lighter-touch reporting requirements. Here are a few examples from published commitments of how grant reporting is already changing:

'We jointly agree on the reporting requirements with each organisation, trying to ensure they are proportionate to the grant. We use a combination of verbal updates and written reporting so we do not overburden organisations or create unnecessary work.'

Badur Foundation

'We require little more than a confirmation that the activity etc. happened, and how many people were able to participate. We particularly welcome feedback from participants so that we can have a conversation with the organisation about the outcome as a learning tool for future planning.'

Southwark Charities

'We recognise that impact reporting processes and documentation will vary for each of our partners. In acknowledgement of this, we are happy to review existing reports and reviews rather than insist on bespoke documentation being created in respect of our grant.'

Texel Foundation

We have seen what is possible in an emergency. The challenge now is for funders and charities together to nurture and grow the best of these behaviours into the future. A future that, as far as the eye can see, will be characterised by uncertainty and unpredictability. A future that therefore requires a sustained commitment to flexibility and creative adaptation.

SRA JOURNAL 'Social Research Practice'

Issue 11, summer 2021, is free to download at:
www.the-sra.org.uk/journal

The overall aim of the journal is to encourage and promote high standards of social research for public benefit. It promotes openness and discussion of problems. We welcome offers of articles and research notes for future issues. Read the guidelines for authors and download the article template at the link above. If you have an idea for an article or research note but are not sure if it's suitable, please email Richard Bartholomew, the editor: rabartholomew@btinternet.com



The critical questions

Diarmid Campbell-Jack, co-chair, reflects on the importance of asking critical questions.

Two weeks ago, I should have been checking the financial liability sub-clauses in a couple of tricky contracts. Instead, I was procrastinating, thinking about the upcoming SRA conference, and wondering about the key signs of a healthy social research sector. It struck me at the time that one of the most important signs is our willingness to ask critical questions, something that has never been as vital for society as it is now.



My absent-minded thoughts about crucial questions returned when reading through this edition of Research Matters. The most notable example of asking the right questions is the article by Ben Cairns examining charity grant-funding through the pandemic. The article questions previous approaches, and calls for simple, flexible grant-making and reporting. Those of us who have worked in this area know that there is often a tension between data collection and charity capacity, with Ben's article challenging us to reimagine what is appropriate and achievable.

Another key question is how we can learn from what we have done in the past. Having recently been reading

about the struggles of government departments and major organisations to record their institutional knowledge, it was excellent to read Phyllis MacFarlane's article on the Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR). A digital archive of market and social research recording the industry's achievements is a fantastic step forward. its site at: <https://www.amsr.org.uk/> is well worth visiting regularly.

Dr Dharmi Kapadia and Professor Natalie Shlomo's article on the Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) is an excellent example of dealing with critical questions at a micro-level. Setting up a survey in the middle of a pandemic is complex. Dealing with the inevitable selection bias is even more complex. How these complex questions were answered shows how researchers can continually learn and develop to meet new challenges.

The article on the upcoming SRA ethics approval service, provides a concrete example of how staff and trustees work with members to not just ask the right questions but get the right answers. Organisations came to the SRA saying they needed clear support and guidance on ethical issues but did not need to go through a full approval process. The SRA working group on

the issue has set up a new ethics service to give researchers confidence that ethical issues have been examined independently, and to increase awareness of ethical issues. Thanks to the hard work of all involved, the service will launch shortly. Look out for further information on the SRA website.

Other articles in this issue focus on the work of the SRA across the country, and embedding accessibility into our reporting. Finally, reading the stories of other social researchers is always compelling. It is good to know social research is so attractive a profession it can drag people away from drumming with Nick Cave. It is also good to know that the social researcher you're speaking to may be an expert on semi-automatic rifles.

Finally, members have been getting in contact about the SRA conference. The conference has always been a highlight of the research year. So, if you haven't heard, the great news is that the SRA will be returning on 25 November with an online conference. Moving online means more people can attend, while maintaining the high-quality content and big names as before. We hope to see you there and, until then, keep on asking those critical questions!

Join the editorial team



The articles in this magazine are developed and reviewed by a lively and friendly group of volunteers from many different sectors and with expertise in a variety of methods.

The team meets (virtually) four times a year to discuss ideas and suggest authors for future articles.

We have space for a few more team members, so if you have worked in research for over two years, and are looking for an interesting role that connects you to researchers beyond your current horizons, do get in touch!

Just email admin@the-sra.org.uk, with a few details about your background and current situation, heading your email 'Interested in Research Matters'.

Join us on Thursday 25 November 2021 for the SRA's online conference

Social research came to an abrupt halt in March last year. Find out how researchers have adjusted, re-worked and re-invented their way through, to put many of the pieces back together again.

Key speakers:

- ▶ **Sir Ian Diamond**, National Statistician, and in conversation with **Jill Rutter**, Senior Fellow at the Institute of Government
- ▶ Deliberative expert **Sarah Castell**, CEO of Involve
- ▶ Qualitative and narratives specialist **Jane Elliott**, Professor of Sociology at the University of Exeter

In conversation:

- ▶ Making research more inclusive – **Marie-Claude Gervais** of Versiti, and **Reema Patel** of the Ada Lovelace Institute
- ▶ Making research organisations more inclusive – **Victoria Boleman** of The Young Foundation, and **Babita Earle**, Chair of MRS D&I Council

Research methods in practice:

A varied mix of topical presentations from those on the front lines of social research. Hear about their innovations and adaptations, what worked and what didn't, and why.

AND:

- ▶ 'The Research Compendium' – a showcase for creativity in research, with video, cartoons, poetry and more
- ▶ 'Meet the software specialists' – presentations on a range of useful products

All these sessions will include live audience Q&A for interactive discussions.

Delegate rates

£35 for SRA members, £65 for non-members

Bookings at: www.the-sra.org.uk/events

Developing a new research ethics appraisal service

RESEARCH

ETHICS

By Jane Evans, independent social researcher and SRA trustee

What do you do when you're an independent social researcher, or working for a small charity, and a funder or journal asks you about the ethical credentials of your planned research? How often do you go ahead with planned research in-house without getting an objective review of the ethics? How often do you rely on guidance you can find online such as the new [SRA Research Ethics Guidance](#) to get the principles right, yet feel you may have dilemmas unique to your work which are left unresolved?



The SRA offers a free service to members in the shape of the [Ethics Forum](#) (chaired by Ron Iphofen), which aims to give peer mentoring about particular ethical issues through a panel of volunteers. The forum does not act as a research ethics committee as it cannot conduct a formal review of the actual research or proposal, although it has offered sound advice on many dilemmas over the years. [Some typical cases and advice](#) are on the SRA website. The responses, while detailed and helpful, are simply advice and not a systematic review or appraisal of a whole project and all the interlinked dilemmas that can arise.

In the spring of 2020, we were approached by some organisations requesting a more formal ethical appraisal process for proposals that they were making to conduct research for a local authority. We had received similar requests in the past.

We concluded that a more formal process of ethical appraisal was in demand and that an ethics appraisal service should be set up. This would need to be paid for as the complex appraisal and decisions needed would not be reasonable for volunteers to undertake.

Starting in 2021, a working group has met several times to develop a service which will meet the needs of researchers looking for an ethical appraisal, but not approval, using a formal protocol and panel of paid reviewers. The group consists of Ron Iphofen, the independent research consultant who has been the main driver of this project, based on his lengthy experience of the SRA Ethics Forum and through his role at the UK Research Integrity Organisation; SRA CEO Graham Farrant; John Oates, professor of developmental psychology at the Open University; and SRA trustees Martina Vojtkova and Jane Evans.

Following many fascinating and robust discussions, the working group has now developed an ethics appraisal form for applicants to complete and a document outlining the standard operating procedures. The price of appraisal will be based on the complexity of the research proposed.

The aims of the ethics appraisal service as stated in the standard operating procedures are to:

- ▶ Enhance the ethical awareness and conduct of the applicants concerning the research and its consequences, rather than to promote mere rule-following
- ▶ Protect all stakeholders (for example, individuals participating in and associated with the research, and researchers themselves) from undue risk of harm or violation of their rights
- ▶ Determine if the research methods proposed are appropriate to the research aims
- ▶ Increase awareness of the potential harms, benefits and risks of research

The appraisal service cannot give formal ethical approval but we hope that the processes and advice will enable researchers to feel that they have given proper consideration to the ethics of their research, and can satisfy commissioners or journals that their proposal has been given independent, objective expert appraisal.

Currently, the key documents of the service are with other SRA trustees for review before the service is set up. Their views will come to the September board meeting with a view to setting up the service in late autumn/winter 2021.

The time, care and attention taken by all involved in this project should reassure that a robust service will result in a reputable process that all can be confident in.

Do social researchers emerge fully formed? Do they have any other life for that matter? We thought we'd check out the back stories of some of our social research colleagues. And we were in for a surprise! What's your hinterland? Do you have an interesting story to tell? Let us know!

Researcher hinterlands

Emma Dickinson, senior research officer and data specialist, Government Data Quality Hub (DQHub), Office for National Statistics

Current research role

Until recently I was working in a frontline research and design position. For six years my role involved using qualitative research techniques to develop and transform large social surveys. I co-developed a respondent-centred approach, which involves putting the respondent at the heart of the design approach.¹



Earlier this year I moved to a position in the Data Quality Hub (DQHub) as the deputy data collection lead. The aim of the DQHub is to work across the UK Government to establish and maintain world-leading approaches to data quality. For me, this means using my skills in qualitative research, respondent-centred design and data collection, to raise awareness of best practice.

'Hinterland' outside work

Since my teenage years I've always wanted to join the military. I blame ex-naval parents and a brother who made sure I was regularly pelted with mud. Unfortunately, having a degenerative knee condition has meant that a career in the forces hasn't been an option. But back in 2018 I found myself with a few spare hours on my hands and a desire to give back to my local community. So, I decided to join the Army Cadet Force (ACF) as an adult volunteer instructor.

Contrary to some beliefs, the ACF is not about recruiting and training kids for the army. It's simply an army-sponsored initiative designed to give 12- to 18-year-olds new experiences in a safe and encouraging environment. Our cadets come to detachment two evenings a week, and volunteers like me deliver lessons in navigation, fieldcraft, first aid, shooting, drill, history and physical training, which are supported during weekends away and

I decided to join the Army Cadet Force (ACF) as an adult volunteer instructor

an annual camp. And throughout these activities we aim to instil the ACF's six key values: selfless commitment, respect for others, loyalty, integrity, discipline and courage.

The cadets who attend come from a range of backgrounds and join for various reasons. Some have serving relatives, some have seen difficult times and crave a safe and structured environment, and others have just heard about the fun things we do. I attend because it is highly rewarding to see them develop into confident, caring, driven and happy young adults.

Transferable skills

While volunteering with the ACF I've gained skills above and beyond what I imagined. Some are directly related to the military theme. For example, I can now complete a (semi-decent) turn-on-the-march; navigate the Brecon Beacons by night; and strip, clean and reassemble a semi-automatic rifle. But I've also gained skills that are transferable to my day job. For example, moderating a focus group now feels like 'child's play' when I know I can motivate 15 sugar-fuelled kids through a countryside code lesson. And I have perfected the art of using attentive silence to encourage a young person to share their troubles (or reactions to a survey question!). I've also learnt the importance of compromise, and how to collaborate with different people. Most of all, I've learnt to be completely open-minded to the different experiences, viewpoints and opinions of others. This means that I can really listen and react to the needs of the person in front of me, be that a young person in the ACF, a respondent in my research session or a colleague from another government department who wants to improve their data quality.

¹ A book on this subject co-written by Emma: 'Respondent-centred surveys: stop, listen and then design' will be published later this year.



Nick Allum, professor of research methodology, University of Essex

The transition from professional musician to professional academic is, while not a well-trodden path, not entirely unknown. The best known example is probably Brian Cox, formerly of pop band D:Ream and currently professor of particle physics at the University of Manchester. Brian May retained his day job as guitarist in Queen while completing a PhD in astrophysics, 37 years after starting it. In my own, rather less glamorous, case, I began as a drummer and jazz music educator and ended up as professor of research methodology at the University of Essex. Along the way I was lucky enough to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA before returning to London in the early 1980s to teach jazz and improvised music.

However, like every air-guitar-, air-drumstick-wielding teenager, I really wanted to play in a rock and roll band, make records and tour the world. I managed the transition from



jazz teacher to rock drummer in the London indie music scene, where I was fortunate to be able to perform and record with some of that influential cadre of expatriate Aussie rock artists based in the city during the 1980s – The Apartments, The Triffids and Nick Cave. My longest-standing musical association has been with Irish singer-songwriter Cathal Coughlan. First in The Fatima Mansions and, after that and until the present day, as collaborator on various solo projects.

So, what led to me to throw away the ripped jeans and don my academic robes? Well, typically as a touring musician there is an awful lot of time doing nothing while waiting for the occasional hour of terror/excitement on stage or red-light fever in the studio. I found after a while that I was looking forward to reading Will Hutton's weekly economics column in the Guardian much more than the next edition of the NME. I decided to curtail, at least for the time being, my musical career and took an undergraduate degree in political economy at UEL, followed by a masters and PhD at the London School

of Economics. Survey methodology really caught my imagination for some nerdy reason, and I now teach statistics and survey methods as well as doing research in this and other areas of quantitative social science.

There are some similarities between music and academia. Both involve an element of performance: for 'concerts' read 'lectures'. Both involve putting something out into the public domain where it can be read, listened to or ignored: for 'albums' read 'journal articles'. And teaching is something that I enjoy, whether it is music, research methods or, more recently, as a flight instructor – but that's a story for another time!

Selected discography

Cathal Coughlan: Song of co-aklan, Dimple Discs, 2021

The Apartments: In and out of the light, Riley Records, 2020

The Fatima Mansions: Viva dead ponies, Kitchenware/Radioactive, 1991

SRA REPORTS

SRA Cymru

By Rachel Hughes

We've got some more events planned over the forthcoming months, so please keep an eye out for those on the [events tab](#) on the SRA website. We're keen to re-establish the SRA Cymru committee to support the SRA's work in Wales. If you're interested in helping out or indeed have any ideas, please do get in touch – either at Cymru@the-sra.org.uk or Direct Message us on Twitter [@sracymru](https://twitter.com/sracymru). Diolch.



SRA North

By Jenni Brooks

SRA North members attended the online launch of the SRA's diversity and inclusion research report, and we are planning an event for the autumn to link with this research. We are also planning another event about how social research has shaped the coronavirus response, particularly for education. If you have any suggestions about either of these events, or any other events you would like to see from us, please do get in touch.



We are experimenting with a series of short, informal 'bring your own biscuits' meetings to support members. There are no presenters, no recordings, no agenda – just a space to chat with other researchers as you might do in a workplace kitchen. Please do get in touch if you'd like to join. Email: north@the-sra.org.uk Twitter: [@SRANorth](https://twitter.com/SRANorth)

SRA Scotland

Check latest news from SRA Scotland online or email Scotland@the-sra.org.uk and keep in touch [@SRA_Scotland](https://twitter.com/SRA_Scotland).

Making history: why archiving social research matters

By Phyllis Macfarlane, chair of contents committee, Archive of Market and Social Research

There's a 1982 Charles Addams cartoon that shows a large Viking-like figure with a clipboard asking a poor householder, 'Would you say Attila is doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?'. It makes me smile every time I see it – but then I always think: if only someone had archived the data!



I, for one, certainly didn't realise the interest that modern historians would have in market and social research. And particularly in qualitative projects that show how people – clients and respondents – thought at the time. Every report is a gem of social history: from the housewives talking about their 'housekeeping' money, to children describing how they decide which sweets to buy.

What is AMSR?

The Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR) was established in 2016 by a group of the UK's senior researchers. The charity's volunteers preserve the documents, papers and other research materials of the industry's achievements over the past 70+ years, making them available in digital format on the [AMSR website](#).

Until now we have focused mainly on the collection of paper-based material since this was at the greatest danger of being lost, and we have built up a collection of some 6,000 documents. We are not just building a library. Education is AMSR's key purpose as a charity: the education of the public in the fields of the history and significance of market and social research.

Who are our users?

When we started, we had only the vaguest idea of who our users might be, but once we had a critical mass of documents, we turned our minds to thinking about who might find them helpful.

Firstly, we talked to modern British historians – and found that they were interested in post-war culture, consumerism, changing gender roles, youth, politics... – in short all the things we had in our collection. And we've subsequently had great fun helping them with their teaching materials, PhD theses and coursework. Reports from the 70s and 80s on 'changing eating habits' monitor the decline of the great 'British breakfast', and the move away from set meal times and 'set' tables. Changing attitudes to immigration and race relations can be tracked from opinion polls. All are all invaluable to modern social historians – particularly as they are scientific studies. They demonstrate not only what people thought at the time, but also the attitudes of government to their citizens and businesses to their customers. They are 'gold', as one professor put it.

We're now looking at what we could do for schools – starting with the A-level history curriculum. We can help with coursework on questions such as 'How far did Britain become a 'permissive society' in the 1960s?' or 'Assess the reasons for Margaret Thatcher's downfall in 1990'. We have many relevant surveys. Students have to show that they have accessed a range of sources, and being free-to-access and digital makes us a helpful resource for them. We are also thinking of developing online lessons for GCSE-level to help teach,

not only maths and analysis skills, but also interviewing and data interpretation skills – perhaps encouraging the researchers of the future.

The future?

We are now moving on – to safeguard the future sustainability of the archive – by establishing 'modern' collections. We are starting with three new specialist collections covering all the research done into some current issues: Covid-19; diversity, inclusivity and equality; and Brexit. There is a growth area in histories of the 80s, 90s and 2000s – that is, very contemporary history – so collecting recent material is particularly important.

Could SRA members help?

Yes, if you have reports in your personal 'archive' please do think of contributing them. Remember that the UK Data Archive preserves a lot of data, but not the qualitative context in which the questions were asked, nor always the interpretative reports. As archivists we help shape history – by preserving the materials which will be used by future generations. We should let our work as researchers contribute to an accurate view of social history in the future. Please contact me at info@amsr.org.uk to discuss.

Making research outputs accessible

By Eileen Irvin, research manager, Ipsos MORI

Increasingly, people have been talking about research report accessibility in the public sector. Since 2018, all public sector organisations have been required to meet the global web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG 2.1) for their online content.² This means that their websites and anything uploaded onto them need to meet these standards – including research reports.



Having worked on reports that needed to meet this guidance, it can feel intimidating. If you are building a new website or app, then it's worth working with your web designers to get their expertise in understanding the specifics.³ But even for standard reports, it can be a lot to think about.

Ensuring our data is accessible to as many people as possible shouldn't be a tick-box exercise. We want research participants to be able to engage with our results, so we need to make sure that they can access and understand them. We want our profession to represent the people we are trying to understand, so we need to make sure that we aren't excluding researchers with accessibility needs. We want our research to have an impact, so we need to make sure that those with power to effect change can access the work we've done.

This means taking the guidelines on board, but also thinking beyond them. To make sure that our outputs have impact, we also need to make sure they work for other groups who might struggle with standard online research outputs. These include non-researchers, people who are less comfortable online, and people who speak English as an additional language.

To deliver impactful and accessible reports, we need to embed the guidelines and wider thinking into our ways of working. Here are some tips, drawn from my own experience, to make accessible reporting run more smoothly:

Think about your reporting and accessibility implications as early as you can

Embedding your accessibility requirements from the start will save you a lot of time and heartache. With time, you can think strategically about your reporting as whole. This means you can plan your adjustments in advance and produce outputs that will work better for your audience(s).

Think about your audiences and what they might want to do with your data

Think about the requirements of the specific audience and the reporting formats that will work best. For example, if your audience comprises mainly British Sign Language (BSL)

users, then it may be worth investing in BSL videos. If your audience is likely to print your report, make sure it works in black and white.

Think about a combination of reporting outputs

In most cases, the most accessible option is to offer a variety. HTML reports are good for people using screen readers or who want to automatically change font size. A format that's easy to download and print works better for people without easy internet access. By having both, you can meet both needs far more easily than trying to do both in one.

Check for 'quick wins'

It's worth reading the guidance summaries and picking out the easy habits. For example, use numbers rather than symbols for footnotes and avoid colour coding when you can. Programmes like PowerPoint, Word and Excel all have built in accessibility checkers (by the spell-checker) which are a good starting point.

Always be open to learning and challenge

Whatever you do, it won't be perfect. This means you need to be open to people asking for adjustments or telling you ways you can improve. It also means keeping your standard reports under continual review, so you can make them better as you learn more.

² Gov.uk guidance on Accessibility requirements for public sector websites and apps <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps>

³ Gov.uk guidance on the WCAG 2.1 quality standard <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag> and the full WCAG 2.1 accessibility guidelines <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>

Evidence for EVENS

By Dr Dharmi Kapadia, lecturer in sociology, and Natalie Shlomo, professor of social statistics, University of Manchester



From the very start of the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK it emerged that the health of ethnic minority groups was the hardest hit both in terms of the numbers of infections, and the number of deaths (Public Health England, 2020). The Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE) is the UK's largest centre researching ethnic inequalities, and is keen to contribute to contemporary discourses and debates about how and why ethnic minority groups have been so badly affected. CoDE is funded by the ESRC to examine the social, cultural and economic impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on ethnic and religious minority groups (September 2020 to August 2022). As part of this work CoDE is carrying out the Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) in partnership with Ipsos MORI.

This survey is the largest of its kind to document the pandemic experiences of ethnic and religious minority groups living in England, Scotland and Wales. EVENS uses recruitment strategies developed for hard-to-capture populations and is a non-probability survey. Anybody who self-defines as belonging to an ethnic or religious minority group could participate. The survey could be completed by participants online or on the telephone in a choice of 14 languages. It included modules on ethnic and religious identity, experiences of racial discrimination, health and mental health, Black Lives Matter activism, political participation and trust, work, education, finances, and social relationships, among others.

Crucial to EVENS' methodology was a high-profile digital campaign in partnership with 13 voluntary and community social enterprise (VCSE) organisations⁴ in order to reach people from a wide range of ethnic and religious minority groups. Survey promotion and recruitment was done through:

- ▶ Social media channels (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram)
- ▶ Large mailing lists provided by the 13 partner VCSE organisations
- ▶ Appearances by EVENS team members on radio and television programmes, including BBC local radio, Sky News and Unity FM
- ▶ Advertisements in Asian language newspapers and magazines such as Garavi Gujarat and Eastern (in print and digital)
- ▶ The Greater Manchester Research For Futures Health Register
- ▶ Many talks, seminars and presentations given by the EVENS team

In addition, we have recruited community interviewers in partnership with Friends, Families and Travellers in order to reach sufficient sample members from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to enable analysis for these sub-groups. We are also making full use of Ipsos MORI's random probability online panel (KnowledgePanel), which has a substantial number of respondents from ethnic minority groups. EVENS also collected data from a general population sample (mainly within the White British group) through Ipsos MORI's online access panel, in order to make comparisons and understand the extent of inequalities during the pandemic for ethnic and religious minority groups compared to the White British group.

When all the data are collected, EVENS will carry out detailed quality checks with editing and imputation processes to correct for errors. Since EVENS is a non-probability sample, we will create weights to mitigate the selection bias caused by the non-probabilistic recruitment into the survey. First, we will

integrate large-scale probability surveys, for example, Annual Population Survey, The Social Survey, The Crime Victimization Survey, using a statistical modelling framework followed by a calibration step to calculate survey weights by benchmarking to current population estimates. This integrated probability survey will then be used as the reference sample to estimate the probability of participation in EVENS. We use the method of Chen, Li and Wu (2020) to estimate propensity scores. Taking the inverse of the propensity score, we then calibrate to the population benchmarks to obtain final weights for EVENS which will allow for valid statistical analyses. We note that this is one of the first surveys of its kind in the UK that employs these types of recruitment strategies as well as compensation methods for reducing selection bias through weighting. The EVENS dataset will be made available to data users via the UK Data Archive in late 2021 together with a detailed manual on how to use the weights in statistical analyses.

EVENS has been a challenge: setting up and running a survey during a pandemic pushed the EVENS and Ipsos MORI teams to think creatively about how to reach specific population groups quickly and cost effectively, using Covid-19-secure methods. The resulting dataset has great potential to impact debate and interventions to address persistent ethnic inequalities during the pandemic and beyond.

References

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⁴ Business in the Community; BEMIS, Scotland; Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team, Wales; Friends, Families and Travellers; Institute for Jewish Policy Research; Migrants' Rights Network; Muslim Council of Britain; NHS Race and Health Observatory; Operation Black Vote; Race Equality Foundation; Runnymede Trust; Stuart Hall Foundation; and The Ubele Initiative.

Doing action research in your own organization

David Coghlan

SAGE Publications Ltd, 2019, 5th edition

Reviewed by Ruthi Margulis, independent researcher

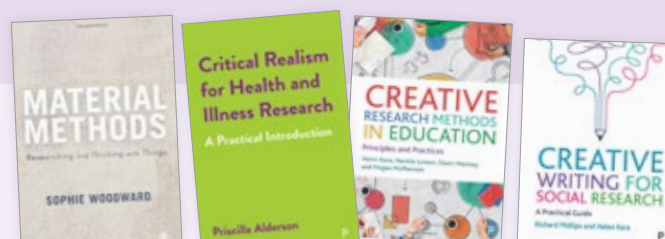
An interesting, well written and comprehensive breakdown of the numerous considerations and factors involved in doing action research (AR) within an organisation. There is a lot to take in here, but the author has achieved his aim of enabling the reader to choose their own approach and methodology, by providing a wide array of background, literature and philosophical references, examples of in-organisation AR projects and experiences, and questions for reflection and discussion. He also gives clear explanations and analogies to help the reader understand the tools

and frameworks useful in this type of research. An AR project is a complex endeavour, so this access to tried and tested frameworks is helpful, and allows for choice and flexibility. The book is divided into three parts. Part one introduces the foundations, including theoretical foundations, of AR, its different forms, and includes the core method of the book. Part two looks at the issues and challenges 'particular to doing action research in your own organisation', including how to remain a dedicated team member, while maintaining the distance needed to undertake the project. This is crucial

for ensuring quality, ethically sound research, and being able to mitigate conflicts if and when they arise. Part three talks about how to construct, design and implement your project, and provides great advice for writing up an AR research dissertation – something many people find challenging. Throughout, the author makes clear the importance of AR, as it is based in real life and aims for real change: 'Action research builds on the past, takes place in the present with a view to shaping the future'. A worthwhile read.



Titles for review



We are always looking for reviewers. Write a short review for us and you get to keep the book. All books up for review are listed below. If you are interested, please email admin@the-sra.org.uk and we'll send you guidelines. Here are a few of the titles on offer:

Material methods. Researching and thinking with things

Sophie Woodward

SAGE Publications Ltd, 2019

<https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/material-methods/book251560>

Critical realism for health and illness research: a practical introduction

Priscilla Alderson

Policy Press, 2021

<https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/critical-realism-for-health-and-illness-research-3>

Creative research methods in education: principles and practices

Helen Kara, Narelle Lemon, Dawn Mannay and Megan McPherson

Policy Press, 2021

<https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/creative-research-methods-in-education>

Creative writing for social research: a practical guide

Richard Phillips and Helen Kara

Policy Press, 2021

<https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/creative-writing-for-social-research>

Training courses in research methods

Currently all courses run online, in live sessions, with small groups of attendees (between nine and 16).

Our courses are designed to help you learn the practical application of research methods, and are led by experts in their field.

Costs: SRA members: half day: £82.50; one day or two part-days: £165; two days or three part-days: £330. Non-members: half day: £110; one day or two part-days: £220.00; two days or three part-days: £440.

Standard courses run over one day or two half days, and extended courses over two full days or three part-days.

If you have any queries, please contact Lindsay:
lindsay.adams@the-sra.org.uk

Full details of all courses are at www.the-sra.org.uk/training

Evaluation

(All with Professor David Parsons)

26 & 27 October (2 mornings):
Theory-based evaluation: options and choices

5 November: Research and evaluation project management

7 December: Impact evaluation (advanced)

20 January: Foundations of evaluation

Qualitative

4 to 6 October (3 part-days):
Analysis of qualitative data, with NatCen

7 & 8 October (2 mornings):
Creative methods in qualitative data collection, with Dr Nicole Brown

13 & 14 October: Analysing data from creative research methods, with Dr Nicole Brown

26 October: Narrative analysis, with Dr Karen Lumsden

28 & 29 October (2 mornings):
Introduction to qualitative research, with NatCen

2 November: Conducting Online Focus Groups, with Dr Karen Lumsden

9 to 11 November (3 part-days):
Designing and moderating focus groups, with NatCen

1 December: Planning and designing a qualitative study, with Professor Karen O'Reilly

3 December: Qualitative interviewing, with Professor Karen O'Reilly

18 January: Digital qualitative interviewing, with Dr Karen Lumsden

20 January: Narratives and storytelling in qualitative research, with Dr Karen Lumsden

25 to 27 January (3 part-days):
Analysis of qualitative data, with NatCen

26 January: Ethnographic methods, with Professor Karen O'Reilly

27 January: Reporting qualitative data, with NatCen

28 January: Grounded theory, with Professor Karen O'Reilly

2 February: Qualitative data analysis, with Professor Karen O'Reilly

3 February: Narratives analysis, with Dr Karen Lumsden

4 February: Interpreting and writing up your qualitative findings, with Professor Karen O'Reilly

17 & 18 February: Depth interviewing skills, with NatCen

Quantitative

24 September: Introduction to sampling for social surveys, with Dr Alexandru Cernat

28 to 30 September: Regression analysis using R, with Dr Pamela Campanelli

1 October: Introduction to R for social researchers, with Dr Alexandru Cernat

12 & 13 October: Introduction to evidence reviews, with NatCen

15 October: Understanding statistical concepts and essential tests, with Dr Valerija Kolbas

22 October: Data management and visualisation with R, with Dr Alexandru Cernat

2 & 3 November (2 afternoons):
Weighting and imputation for survey non-response, with Dr Tarek Al Baghal

10 & 11 November (2 afternoons):
Web survey design, with Dr Pamela Campanelli

1 & 2 December (2 mornings):
Cognitive interviewing, with NatCen

9 & 10 December (2 mornings):
Questionnaire design, with NatCen

1 to 3 February (3 afternoons):
Advanced questionnaire design, with Dr Pamela Campanelli

22 & 23 February (2 mornings):
Introduction to evidence reviews, with NatCen

Other research skills

3 & 4 November: Public involvement in social research, with Dr Louca-Mai Brady and Berni Graham

4 November: Writing effective research reports, with Professor Simon Haslam

5 November: Consultancy skills for social researchers, with Professor Simon Haslam

9 November: Participatory action research, with Dr Karen Lumsden

11 November (1 afternoon):
Making the most of your research journal, with Dr Nicole Brown

12 November (1 afternoon):
Introduction to embodied enquiry, with Dr Nicole Brown

14 & 15 December (2 mornings):
Research with children and young people, with Berni Graham

19 January: Data visualisation and infographic design, with Nigel Hawtin

Spotlight on SRA activity

Training

www.the-sra.org.uk/training

Many qual, quant and evaluation courses are online.

Events

www.the-sra.org.uk/events

An October webinar on inclusion in the research profession and social class.

A virtual conference coming very soon!

Blog

www.the-sra.org.uk/blog

Plenty of topical posts on researching under lockdown – why not consider a contribution?

Journal

www.the-sra.org.uk/journal

Read back issues and find out how to write an article for our free journal.

Resources

www.the-sra.org.uk/resources

Good practice guides, support during lockdown, and more.

Ethics

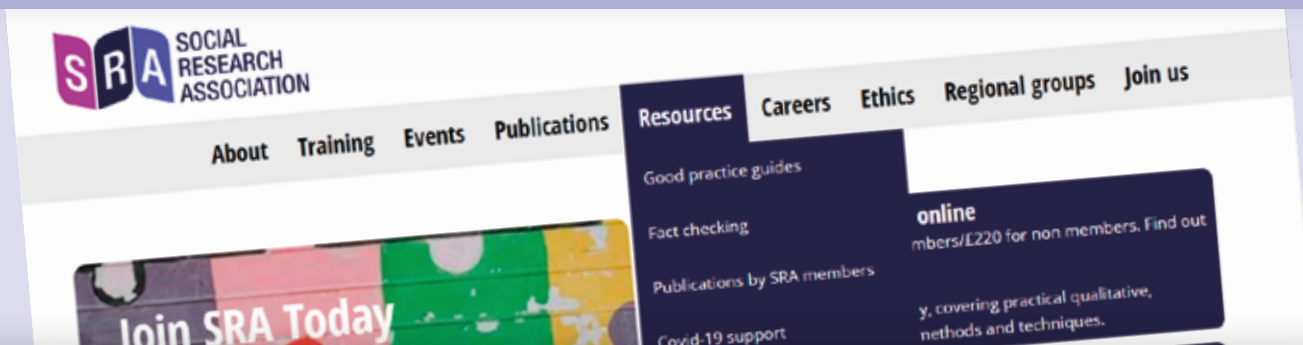
<https://the-sra.org.uk/SRA/Ethics>

An expert forum for members' queries, good practice guides, more resources.

Member resources

Go to www.the-sra.org.uk then see 'members' section.

Free access to 5,500+ social science journals, data science training at a third off, and more.



research matters

Views expressed by individual contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the SRA.

Publication dates 2021

We publish four times a year. Next issue: **December 2021**.
Copy deadlines for 2021: **22 October** (December issue).

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