NCRM Annual Lecture

Introduction by Prof. Gabriele Durrant (Director)
Director’s welcome
National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM)

• Provides high-quality training in cutting-edge research methods
• From exploration / horizon scanning activities to delivery of a comprehensive training programme and creation of impact
• Consortium of three core Universities (University of Southampton, Manchester, Edinburgh) and 9 Centre Partners across the UK
• First phase of NCRM was funded in 2004; 4 phases of funding
• Next year 20th year celebration
• www.ncrm.ac.uk
Importance of Research Methods Training

• Application and use of high-quality and appropriate research methods is essential in all ways of research and life; to improve evidence based policy and decision making

• Aim: train researchers to a high standard in using appropriate and often innovative RM - across a wide range of backgrounds (RM areas; career stages; sectors; disciplines; within and beyond the social sciences); in a fast changing environment

• Serving the research community and the common good

• Very experienced, committed, passionate NCRM team
A changing landscape

• Research methods and training landscape undergoing major changes, for example:
  • Technological changes
  • Societal changes
  • Changes in the data landscape
  • New tools/ research methods/ techniques are being developed
  • Changes to teaching and online learning environments
  • ESRC / UKRI / funding landscape is changing
Therefore there is a need for …

- Social scientists to be equipped to lead on cross-science agenda, to work collaboratively and flexibly with other disciplines, and beyond the academic sector with government, business and industry.
- Hence, training social scientists to a high standard in using appropriate and often innovative research methods, and via flexible delivery formats, is of vital / increasing importance.
NCRM successes and highlights

• Wide range of training and capacity building (TCB) activities; diverse set of flexible TCB formats; advocating a much more fluid transition between research and training; creative; innovative; advanced; ambitious
• >7,500 course and event participants; >1m website users; from across all sectors, ESRC disciplines, career lifecourse, within and beyond the Social Sciences
• Achieved all KPIs; more than doubled previous TCB provision
• Impact:
  • More than 14 impact case studies
  • Feedback from participants; high-quality
2020-2023 training highlights

152 courses
3,111 participants

One in five participants from outside the social sciences

92% of participants satisfied

Days of training: 229

More than 4,000 event participants

Feedback from NCRM users:

As a practitioner of social media listening/analytics over the last decade, this video inspired me to structure my own potential academic research proposal.

My knowledge has moved on and I am able to use that enriched knowledge in my teaching and supervision.
NCRM training activities in research methods

• Portal (rich online databases and services; enabling infrastructure)
• A comprehensive programme of cutting-edge training
  • in-person/ online courses
  • online learning resources
• Spring/Autumn schools, Bootcamps
• Series of large-scale training events (e.g. train the trainers/ pedagogy workstream; collaborative events; innovation fora; MethodsCon)
• Research Methods e-Festival (RMeF, Nov 2023)
• Networks, Community of Practice, Methodological Special Interest Groups (pedagogy, DRTN, SDC-Net)
Introducing speakers

• Speaker: Prof. Elizabeth Stokoe
• Discussant: Dr Jon Sutton
Collaboration
Methodological practice
NCRM
Innovation
Impact
Agility
Stakeholders
Interdisciplinarity
Advanced methods
Resources
Training and capacity building
One stop shop
Users
Vision
Strategy
Communication
Synergies
ESRC investments
Cross sector
Social sciences and beyond
Responding to needs
Empowerment
Engagement
Interconnectivity
Pedagogical excellence
Good practice