

How to influence Parliament: University of Liverpool policy impact training with UK Parliament's Knowledge Exchange Unit

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DATE



How to influence Parliament: University of Liverpool policy impact training with UK Parliament's Knowledge Exchange Unit

Timings:

10:00 Welcome

10:15 Session 1: Intro to Parliament, Select Committees and Member Engagement

12:15 Lunch

13:15 Session 2: POST, Parliamentary Libraries and APPGs

15:00 Break

15:15 Session 3: Fellowships, Top tips and Next Steps

16:00 Close

Session 1: Intro to Parliament, Select Committees and Member engagement

Why engage with Parliament ?



Policy Influence

Contribute to Parliament's scrutiny of Government, shape policy and legislation, and influence the policy and legislative agendas

Research Reach

Raise the profile of your research, broaden its dissemination

Get a new perspective on your work, grow professional network

Career Development

Develop new research questions and projects

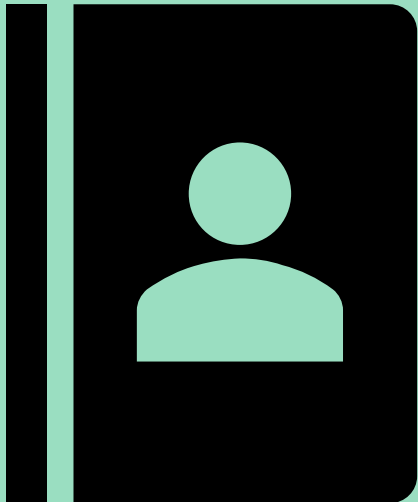
Build your external credibility

Diversify your professional activities, through fellowship and expert advisory roles

Learn new skills and gain insight into how decisions are made

Demonstrate research impact / REF

Getting started



Start a key contacts or stakeholder engagement list now...

Type as we go along...

You'll spot contacts you will want to keep...

POST's Knowledge Exchange Unit



Our work comprises:

- **Connecting** the parliamentary and research communities
- **Enhancing** researchers' understanding of UK Parliament and its use of research
- **Enabling**, increasing and diversifying engagement from the research community
- **Supporting** parliamentary engagement with the research community
- **Contributing** to developments in the wider research-policy ecosystem
- **Sharing** learnings around knowledge exchange
- **Monitoring** and evaluating our work



Understanding Parliament

What is the UK Parliament?



House of Commons



House of Lords



Monarch

What is the UK Government?

The party or parties who can command the confidence of the House of Commons form the Government.

Selected MPs and Peers chosen by the Prime Minister to lead Government departments.

Day to day running of the country



What does the UK Parliament do?



- Represents the people
- Checks and challenges the work of the Government (scrutiny)
- Makes and changes laws (legislation)
- Debates the important issues of the day (debating)
- Checks and approves Government spending (taxes and budgets)

Parliament ≠ Government

UK Parliament



- Commons, Lords and Monarch
- Holds Government to account
- Makes laws
- Enables the Government to raise and spend money

UK Government

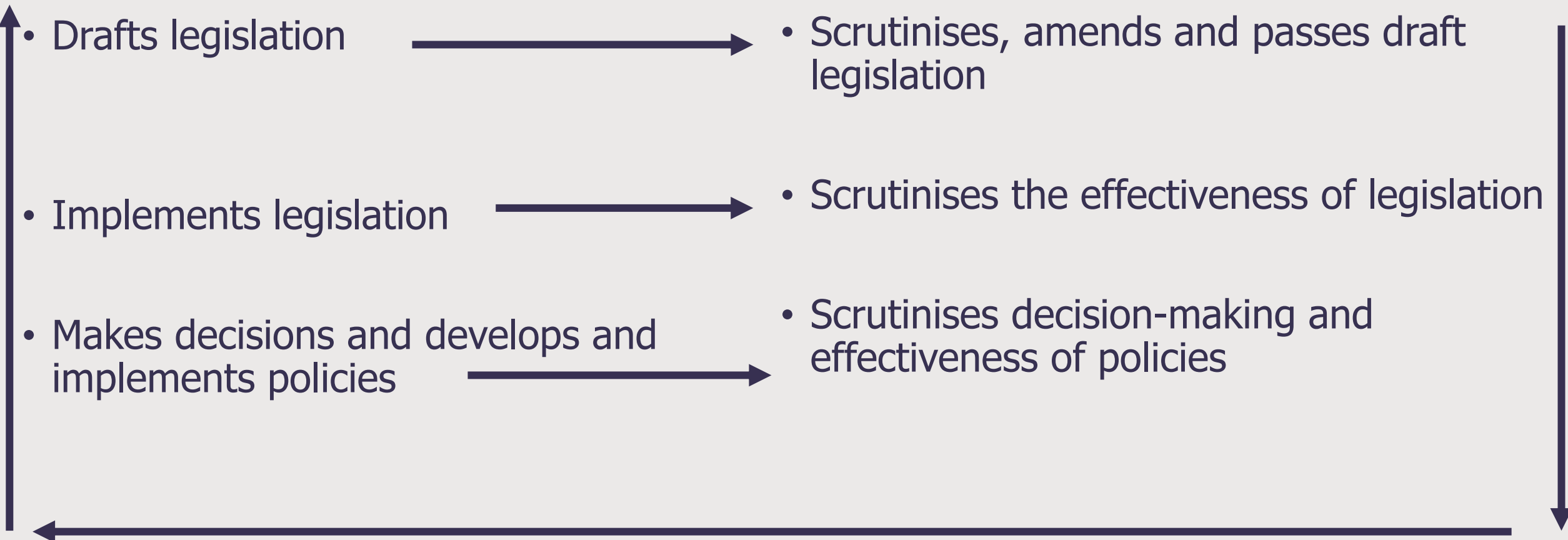


- Some MPs and some Peers, chosen by the Prime Minister
- Runs Government departments and public services
- Is accountable to Parliament

Why does the difference matter to researchers?

Government (policy makers)

Parliament (policy shapers)

- 
- Drafts legislation → • Scrutinises, amends and passes draft legislation
 - Implements legislation → • Scrutinises the effectiveness of legislation
 - Makes decisions and develops and implements policies → • Scrutinises decision-making and effectiveness of policies

Who uses research in the UK Parliament?



House of Commons select committees	House of Lords select committees
House of Commons Library	House of Lords Library
POST	

Individual MPs and their researchers	Individual Peers and their researchers
All Party Parliamentary Groups	



Questions?

Select Committees

Select committees

- Scrutinise wide range of matters – specialist subject areas, Government conduct
- Run [inquiries](#), write reports (response required)
- Invite written and oral evidence from witnesses
- Great, established engagement route for researchers



The process of a select committee inquiry

Background research

Area of Research Interest

Ask Academia

Topic of inquiry decided by Committee, and establish terms of reference (TOR)

Launch TOR and invite written evidence from stakeholders, the public and the Government

Written evidence processed and published

Oral evidence sessions, visits, informal stakeholder events, surveys

Publish report with recommendations to Government, 2 months to respond

Library/research briefings, POST Notes etc

My science inquiry

Select committees: getting involved



1. Respond to ARIs and Ask Academia (via KEU round up)
2. Find committees of interest ([A-Z](#)), follow on X/Twitter, new inquiries listed in [round up](#)
3. Follow the business – ‘Publications’ - transcripts, Parliament TV
4. Offer to host a select committee visit, or to deliver a private briefing for members
5. Provide written evidence – [guidance](#)
6. Respond as a group/institute or as individual niche researcher
7. Provide evidence synthesis or focal research; recommendations
8. Prepare if called for oral evidence – media training (on topic, don’t overtalk, engage on briefing call)
9. Look for specialist adviser roles
10. Look for Parliamentary Academic Fellowships

Digital exclusion and the cost of living inquiry

Relevant research (and underpinning expertise)



Digital exclusion and the cost of living inquiry

Relevant research (and underpinning expertise)



- Adult education and lifelong learning
- Adult loneliness
- Climate change
- Communities of practice
- Devolution
- Digital Skills
- Disabilities
- Economic disparities
- Education
- Employment
- Financial inclusion
- Health and Wellbeing
- Levelling up
- National Security
- Online safety/online harms
- Regeneration of coastal areas
- Regional disparities
- Remote and hybrid work policy
- Remote learning
- Rural poverty
- Skills and upskilling
- Social mobility
- Telehealth and health

Now for one I haven't prepared earlier...

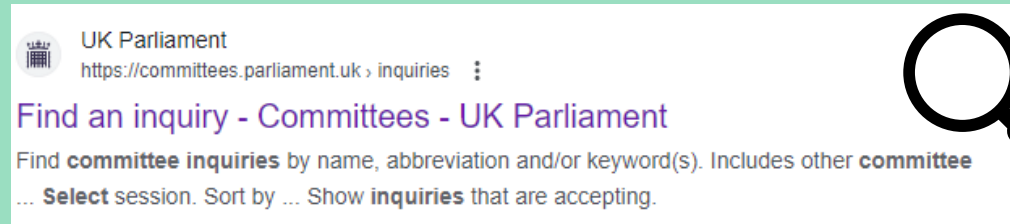
[Select committee inquiries currently accepting written evidence...](#)



Explore an inquiry...

Find a live inquiry

Google "select committee inquiries"



Navigate the pages to become familiar with layout

Tabs – Summary, ***Membership**, Events, *Publications, News

- Find the Call for Evidence
- Find the written evidence (expand the list)
- Find the oral evidence transcripts
- Find the contact us
- Bonus: find Guidance on giving evidence to a select committee ([Commons](#) and [Lords/Top Tips](#))



Questions?



Matty McKenna
GO Science Fellow

Experience and insights from a fellowship on the other side....



Engaging with Members

Member Engagement

- 1. To inform constituency work**
- 2. To inform debate**
 - 1. Westminster Hall debate, via ballot**
 - 2. Debate selected by Backbench Business Committee**
 - 3. Adjournment debate, via ballot**
 - 4. Questions for short debate in the HoL**
- 3. To inform Private Members' Bills**
- 4. To inform draft legislation (via backbenchers at second reading and report stage)**
- 5. To inform written/oral questions to Government**
- 6. To inform Early Day Motions**



Over to you...

Search the Early Day Motions database:

<https://edm.parliament.uk/>

Find out who your local MP is:

<https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

Do some key word searches in Hansard to see who talks about your area of research and how:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/>

Find out which members of the House of Lords are interested in your policy area:

<https://members.parliament.uk/members/lords>



Questions?



LUNCH!

Session 2: POST, Libraries and APPGs



Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST)

POST

- Science advice mechanism
- Bridge research and policy
- Parliament's horizon scanning
- Cutting edge, topical themes
- Source and feed reliable and impartial research evidence to Members
- PNs may inform inquiries and library briefings
- International
- Four sections, KEU, Fellows

Sourcing reliable and impartial scientific research for Parliament

Latest research

Read our analysis of new and emerging research areas



Future of Horticulture

This POSTnote summarises the multiple



What is a just transition for environmental targets?



Online Advertising Technology and Competition



POST's sections

Biological
sciences
and health



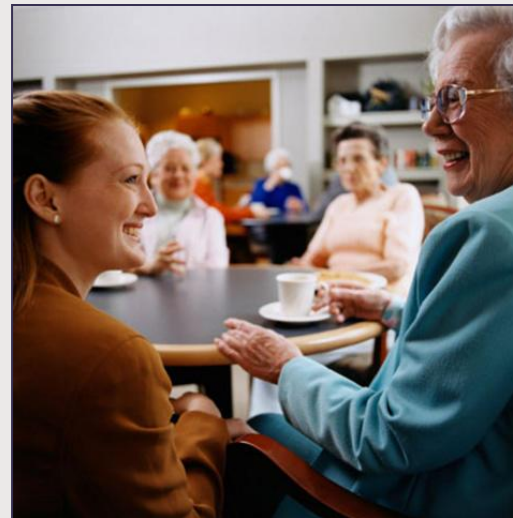
Physical
sciences and
ICT



Energy and
environment



Social
sciences



[Advisers](#)

[Contact us](#)

POST products

Trusted, used extensively by Members

- Horizon scanning
- [POSTnotes](#) (flagship)
- [POSTbriefs](#) (RES)
- [Rapid responses](#)
- [Rapid Evidence Assessments](#)
- [Events](#)

States' use of cyber operations



States are increasingly engaging in cyber operations to support their strategic aims. This POSTnote considers hostile state-backed cyber activities. It looks at how and why states use cyber operations against other nations and the threats posed to the UK. It also considers mitigations, both internationally and in the UK.

Background

'Cyberspace' typically refers to digital networks (such as the internet) used to store, modify and communicate information.¹⁻³ 'Cyber operations' aim to achieve objectives in or via cyberspace. They can include gaining unauthorized access to

Overview

- The UK is routinely targeted through cyber operations backed by foreign states.
- Operations may be conducted for political, military or financial gain, and may lead to loss of important data, disruption to critical services, or the spread of false information.
- The UK Government says China and Russia pose the greatest state-backed cyber threat.
- The UK has world-class strengths in cyber security and intelligence, but has shortfalls in its skilled cyber workforce.
- Mitigations against state cyber operations include improving skills, raising basic cyber security, and developing cyber technologies, standards and offensive capabilities.

The number and sophistication of cyber-attacks on the UK are increasing.^{14,24,25} In 2020/21, the National Cyber Security Centre (NSCS, Box 1) dealt with 777 incidents (from state and non-state actors), a rise of just over 30% in four years.²⁶ The UK Government set out plans for protecting and promoting UK

POSTnotes

- Evidence briefings on topics in science, technology and the social sciences
- Draw on insights, data and evidence from stakeholders
- Balanced, impartial, rigorously verified
- Focus:
 - New and topical issues
 - Research advances and developments
 - Policy developments
 - Related to parliamentary business
- Long list – consult, gather topics - Board

Upskilling and retraining the adult workforce



This POSTnote provides an overview of adult upskilling and retraining in the UK. It outlines the national context of adult education, including issues around supply and demand of skills as well as funding and participation rates. It also discusses the key impacts of adult learning. This briefing focuses on 19+ adult learning and excludes university education.

While there are a range of competing frameworks that define 'skills',¹⁻⁴ the UK Government's Employer Skills Survey (ESS), which in 2019 was undertaken by 81,000 employers in the UK (excluding Scotland),⁵ grouped skills into 'technical and practical skills' and 'people and personal skills'.^{6,7} Technical and practical skills include specific knowledge needed to perform a role, while people and personal skills include time management, task prioritisation and teamworking.^{6,7} Upskilling refers to the improvement of an individual's skillset while retraining refers to developing skills to enable a change in an individual's role.⁸

Imbalance between the skills available in the labour market and those sought by employers creates 'skills mismatches'.⁹⁻¹³ When the skills or qualifications of workers exceed employer demand it can lead to 'skills surpluses'. However, when the type or level of skills that employers need is lacking amongst individuals, it can create 'skills gaps' and 'skills shortages'.⁹ Skills gaps occur when workers within an organisation lack the necessary level of skills to fulfil their roles. Skills shortages occur when vacancies cannot be filled due to a lack of skilled individuals in the economy, however, there are also unfilled vacancies which can also reflect a failure to recruit due to undesirable working conditions.⁹

Overview

- The UK faces a range of challenges that will require workers to upskill or retrain.
- There are mismatches between supply and demand of skills in the UK workforce.
- The Government and the devolved administrations are pursuing a range of policies to strengthen the UK's skills base.
- Participation in adult education (AE) in England has fallen from 4.4m in 2003/04 to 1.5m in 2019/20. In the same period, funding for AE fell by nearly two thirds.
- Participation in AE is less likely for adults who are older, lower skilled or experience educational disadvantages.
- Adult learning is associated with a range of positive economic and wellbeing outcomes.

are currently significant skills challenges within the UK. The 2019 ESS reported that 24% of job vacancies were caused by skills shortages and that 13% of employers thought that some employees were under-skilled for their role.^{6,14} Productivity levels in the UK have remained weak since 2008,^{15,16} and the coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the labour market.¹⁷ Trends such as automation, migration and an extended work life are also likely to influence the type of jobs available in the future. There are 32.5m workers aged 16+ in the workforce,¹⁸ and, according to the Confederation of British Industry, 25.5m will require upskilling and 5m will require retraining by 2030.⁸

The UK Government and devolved administrations are pursuing policies to help boost the UK's skills base (Box 1). In May 2021 the UK Government introduced the [Skills and Post-16 Education Bill](#) to Parliament, which provides legislation for reforms to post-16 education and training in England outlined in the [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#).¹⁹ This includes a Lifelong Loan Entitlement equivalent to four years of post-18 full-time or modular study of higher technical and degree levels, the detail and scope of which will be consulted upon.²⁰ Research shows that the production of training between providers and employers can help create effective training programmes that envisages more employer involvement in the design and delivery of training. The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) will also help to improve the skills of the workforce.

Producing a POSTnote

- [Announce](#) ([subscribe](#))
- Invite contributions
- Conduct a literature review
- Interview 15-30 key stakeholders
- Drafts
- Internal review
- External review (c. 20 experts)
- Published

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However, there

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Engaging with POST: The POSTnote

- Use the weblink (or automate) to follow newly announced POSTnotes (or sign up to the KEU's weekly round up)
- Familiarise yourself with the information style
- Email the contact your (very) short summary
- All (used) contributions are acknowledged
- External/peer reviewer

post.parliament.uk

12. Ghai, R. R. *et al.* (2022). [A generalizable one health framework for the control of zoonotic diseases.](#) *Sci. Rep.*, Vol 12, 8588. Nature Publishing Group.
13. Garcia, S. N. *et al.* (2020). [One Health for Food Safety, Food Security, and Sustainable Food Production.](#) *Front. Sustain. Food Syst.*, Vol 4,

How to frame your introduction...

- Your summary:
 - introduce yourself and state which POSTnote
 - briefly outline your area of expertise, relevant research, skills, experience and knowledge
 - Links (profile, open access papers, blogs)
 - Unpublished (share 2 main findings, happy to discuss?)
- Keep it short (a few paragraphs) - will ask if need more

Task: Introducing yourself



Introduce yourself (and your research) to contribute to a (real or fictional) POSTnote
(200 words max)

Or try an oral pitch

(40 seconds)

Introduction: POSTnote example



Hello,

I'm Jane Flowers, a doctoral researcher at Alphabet University.

I would like to contribute my research to the POSTnote on food resilience.

Specifically, my expertise lies within reducing crop failure through engineered rapid root growth even in poor climate conditions (publications: 1, 2 and 3).

I would be happy to discuss my (below) main findings at your convenience:

- Incubating seeds dipped in alpha X substance for 3 days at 40°C before planting creates 50cm root growth within 7 days (usually this takes 2 months).
- Liaising with the Met Office farming officer to determine the best time to plant resulted in a statistically significant higher crop yield for 69% of famers in the sample.

I have written a blog on the impact of challenging climate conditions within farming here.

You can contact me on

Best wishes,

Jane



Questions?



Parliamentary Libraries

Commons and Lords Libraries

- Impartial info and briefing services (Members, Committees, Staff)
- Follow the business
- Wide range of information and analysis on legislation, policy areas and topical issues
- **Contribute to:** Research briefings | Constituency case work briefings | Data dashboards | Debate packs
- Dedicated websites for each Library
- Explore: [Commons Library](#) and [Lords Library](#)



Libraries - What you need to know:

- Fast paced – reactive
- Responsive to Members
- Timescale – introduce yourself in advance
 - Will get in touch when there is a business need for your expertise
 - Turnover – get in touch again when topical
- Different – HoC specialists (big); HoL generalists (small)
- Produce debate packs to brief Members:
 - Monitor business (centrally?)
 - Have a policy brief ready to go



Contact
papers@parliament.uk,
FAO subject specialist,
250 words maximum on
your expertise and its
relevance

Introduction: Library example



Dear Papers at Parliament,

I'm Jane Flowers, a researcher specialising in encouraging rapid root growth within plants grown for food purposes in challenging climates.

I'm emailing because I may be a useful expert for parliamentary library colleagues to call on in the fields of sustainable farming policy and planning for the predicted food crises (2030).

I'm currently working on a project which maps the areas in the UK that are most at risk of agricultural failure.

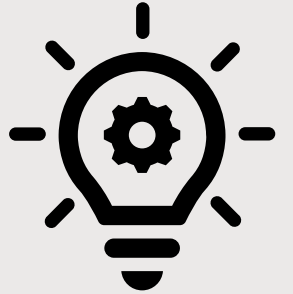
My biography, publications, blogs and media articles can be found [here](#).

My contact details are...

Best wishes,

Jane

Over to you...



<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/>



Questions?



All Party Parliamentary Groups

APPGs

- All party parliamentary groups
- Cross party
- Shared interest
- Less formal in engagement
- Less power than select committees
- Activity levels vary
- Often have external Secretariat



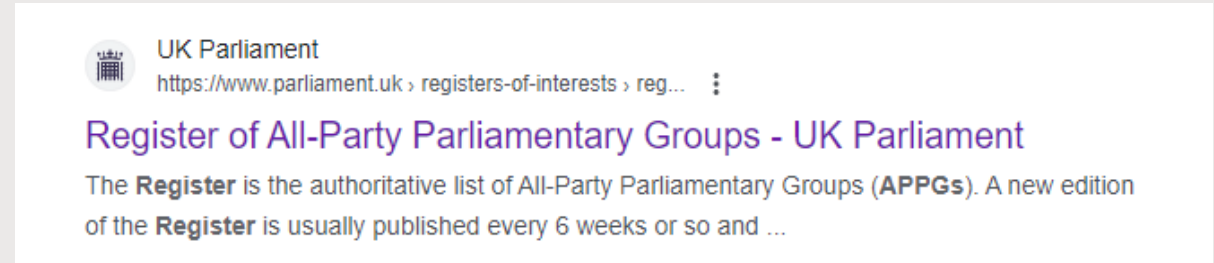
APPGs: Ways to engage

- Present at an APPG meeting
- Find Members with shared interest in your topic
- Collaborate on report
- Provide a briefing
- Respond to a call for evidence (an APPG one)
- Attend a networking event
- Explore closer connections



Navigating APPGs: Key information

- [Register](#) - “APPG Register”
- Select most recent
- Note country and subject groups
- Keyword search e.g. Assistive Technology
- Note: Purpose, Officers, Contact / Secretariat
- Web links (variable) - [example](#)
- Review business and reports – [example](#)
- Events and meetings



UK Parliament
https://www.parliament.uk › registers-of-interests › reg... ⋮

Register of All-Party Parliamentary Groups - UK Parliament

The **Register** is the authoritative list of All-Party Parliamentary Groups (**APPGs**). A new edition of the **Register** is usually published every 6 weeks or so and ...

Title	All-Party Parliamentary Group for Assistive Technology
Purpose	To disseminate knowledge, generate debate and facilitate engagement on assistive technology amongst members of both Houses of Parliament.

Task: Find an APPG relevant to your research

- Google APPG Register 2023
- Select most recent
- Keyword search (ctrl+F)
- Read through the key information (purpose, officers, contacts)
- Follow the weblinks
- **Notice the gaps or elements your research could enhance**
- What next?
- REPEAT!





Questions?

Session 3: Parliamentary Fellowships, Top Tips and Next Steps

Parliamentary Fellowships

Fellowships



PhD Fellows



Parliamentary Academic Fellows



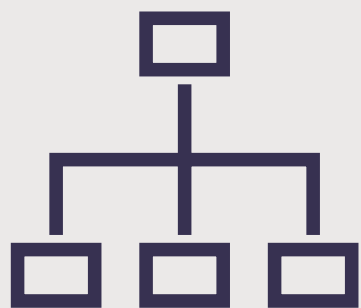
Thematic Research Leads

More info: [Fellowships](#)

“It became obvious very quickly that my goals were not only being met, but were being surpassed the more I became embedded into UK Parliament and its activities” John Oliver, [PAF](#)

Thematic Research Leads

Mid-career researchers who bring their academic expertise and experience of working with research evidence to the policy, research and analysis work that is carried out across Parliament



**Policy, Public
Administration
and Constitution**
Prof Rick Whitaker



**International Affairs
and Defence**
Dr Kristin A. Harkness



**Climate and
Environment**
Prof Tamsin Edwards



Thematic Research Leads - expansion

- ❖ AI and digital
- ❖ Arts and humanities
- ❖ Business, economics and trade
- ❖ Climate and environment
- ❖ Crime and justice
- ❖ Health
- ❖ International affairs and national security
- ❖ Transport

Sept 2024 – Summer 2026

www.parliament.uk/trls

Hear from others



[Fellowships](#)
[Stories](#)



[What it's like to engage with Parliament as a researcher](#)



Questions?

Top Tips

Top tips

Begin

Hook / timely

Say why

Content

Less is more (links)

Clear language (avoid academic, acronyms, methodology)

Intelligent and informed non-expert audience

Focus – different content for different audiences

Top tips

Interesting

Worked examples

Recommendations

Visual content

Always

Readable – size and spacing

Contact details

Review partisan content



Questions?

Next Steps

Next steps...

Provide	written evidence to a Select Committee inquiry
Contact	an APPG
Introduce	yourself to the Parliamentary Libraries
Participate	in a POSTnote
Approach	a Member
Apply	for a Parliamentary Fellowship
Brush up	on the latest news
Watch	for opportunities
Sign up	for www.parliament.uk/keunews

Useful links

- [Research key word search / contacts](#)
- [Parliamentary business](#)
- Follow the [progress of Bills](#)
- [Hansard](#)
- [Petitions](#)
- [Parliament TV](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- Engage with wider networks – [UPEN](#)
- [KEU web resources](#)
- [POST](#)
- [Subscribe to POST alerts](#)
- Commons Library [briefings](#), [subscribe](#)
- [Lords Library](#)
- [Select committee / inquiry](#)
- [APPG Register](#)

Email us for help: keu@parliament.uk



Questions?



UK
Parliament

Thank you!

Dr Sarah Foxen
Knowledge Exchange Lead
keu@parliament.uk
