

Engaging with Parliament



Parliament: opportunities to engage

1. Forum for debate

- Individual MPs and Peers;
- House libraries
- **All Party Parliamentary Groups**



2. Create and amend laws

- Pre-legislative scrutiny;
- Written evidence on Bills.

3. Hold government to account

- Questions;
- **Select committees**

All Party Parliamentary Groups

Which of the following APPGs are real?

- a. Bingo
- b. Brass rubbing
- c. Cats
- d. Croquet
- e. Decorative fireplace industry
- f. Flags and heraldry
- g. Holy See
- h. Orienteering
- i. Pigeon Racing
- j. Polo
- k. Virtual Reality
- l. Wine and spirits
- m. Wood Panel Industry
- n. Zumba

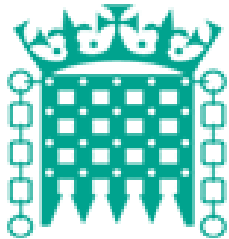
All Party Parliamentary Groups

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What are select committees?

House of Commons



Committee for each government department
e.g. Home Affairs, Defence

Cross-departmental committees **e.g. Public Accounts, Environmental Audit**

House of Lords

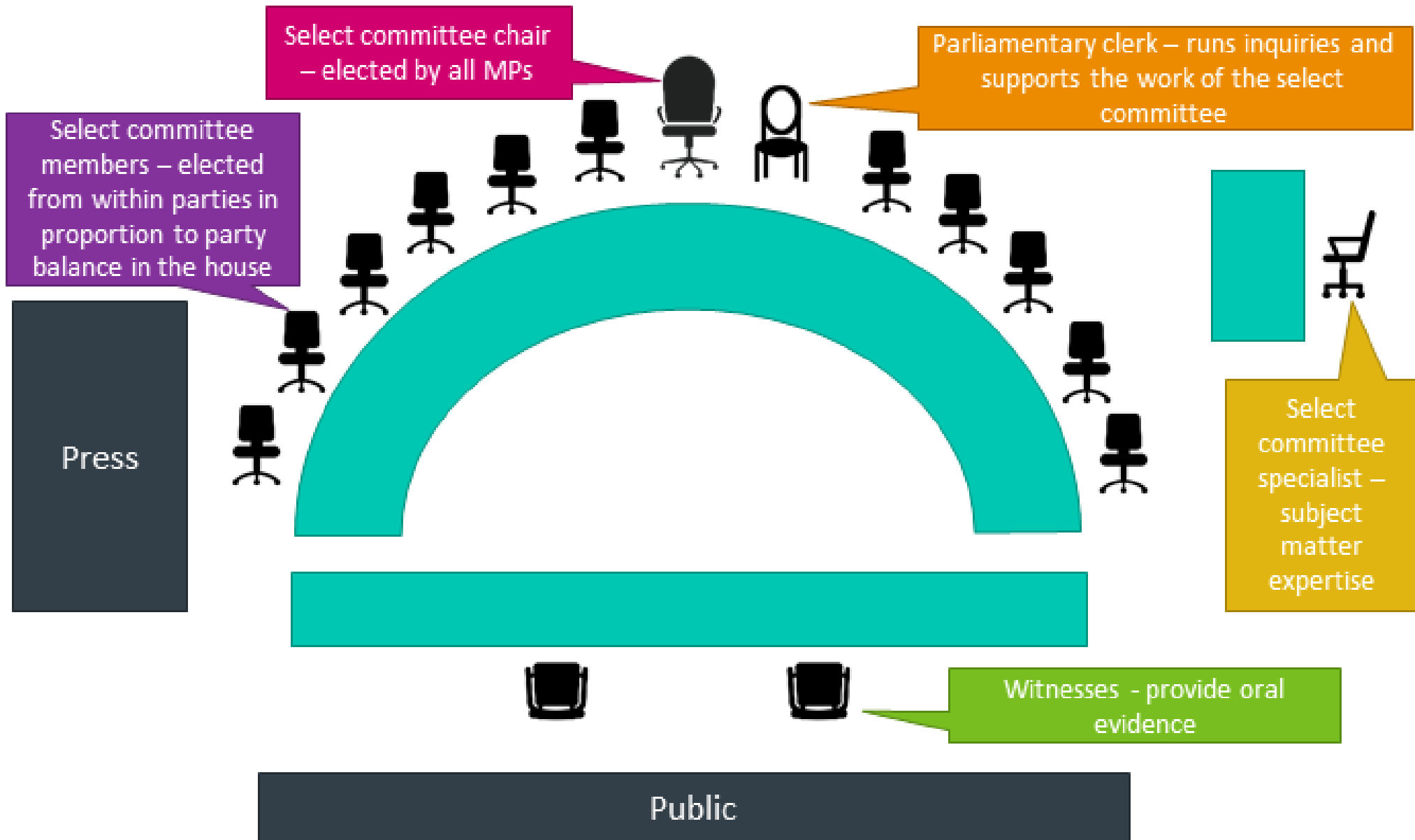


Ad hoc or thematic committees, **e.g. Science and Technology, EU**

Select committees:

- proceed by launching inquiries into particular topics
- have the power to gather written and oral evidence
- expect Government to reply to recommendations within 60 days

How do select committees work?



How to engage with select committees

- Identify and follow the committees whose agendas are most closely related to your own concerns (monitor websites, sign up for alerts, Twitter)
- Build a relationship with the staff of your most relevant committee
- Engage at the right moment
- Remember committee staff don't always have detailed knowledge about the area of inquiry
- Consider watching some oral evidence sessions
- Present punchy, novel and interesting evidence in written submissions – what is your USP?
- For oral evidence: be informed, flexible and a good communicator

Plan your engagement activities

1. Browse the list of APPGs on the Parliament.uk website
 - a. Which could be relevant to your research area?
 - b. Do groups look well-resourced and/or active? Could this be a route to engagement?

2. Browse the list of select committees (Commons and Lords) on the Parliament website
 - a. Which are most relevant to your research area?
 - b. Is there current or future work you could contribute to?

Engaging with the Civil Service



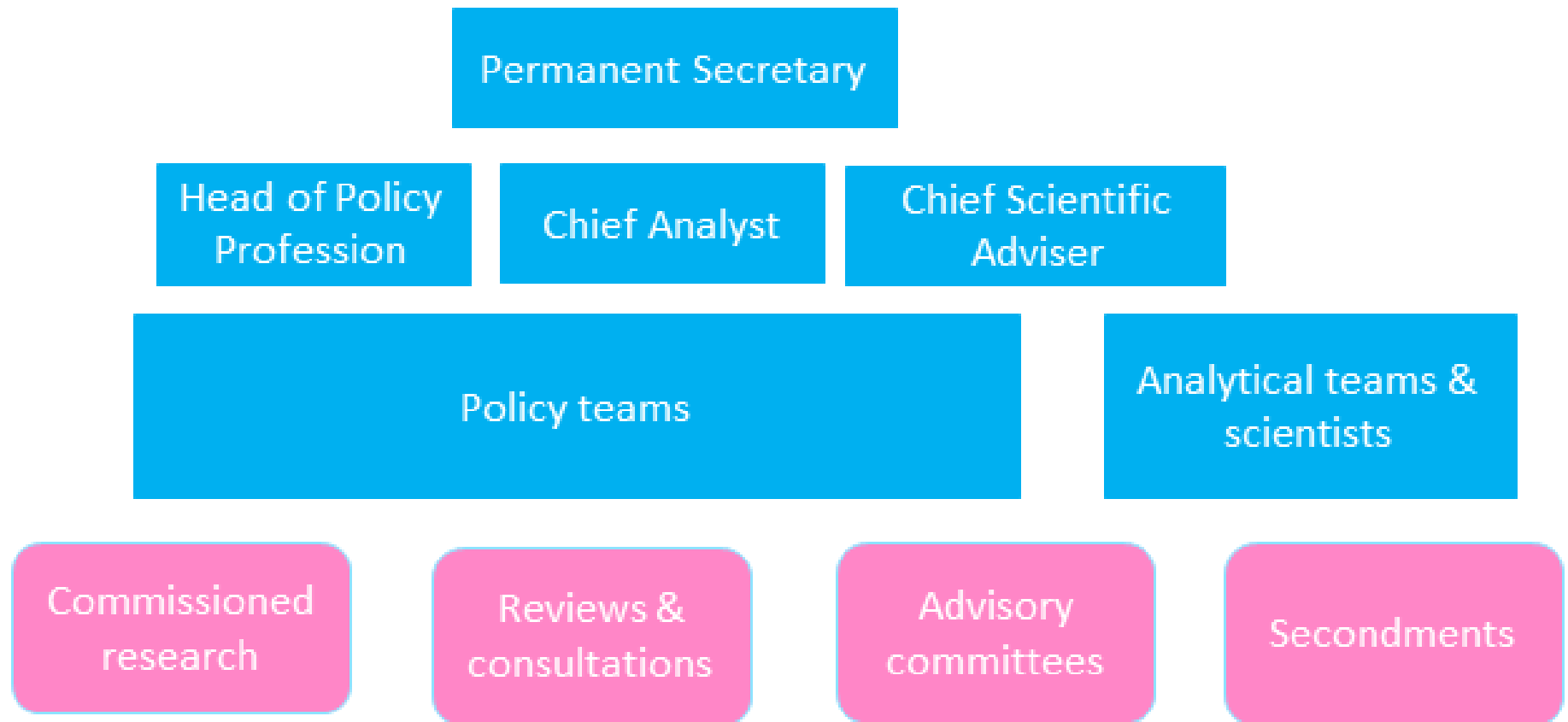
What are the challenges to engaging with the civil service?

Challenges to engagement:

- Constraints of time, budget, capacity
- Finding the right person
- High staff churn
- Institutional memory poor
- Most policy officials are “generalists”
- “Two cultures” thesis – lack of scientific thinking in govt
- All departments differ in their approaches

However - engaging with the policy team responsible is often the most direct route to influencing policy

Routes into departments




Different routes departments use to engage academics

- Informal engagement – networks
- Areas of Research Interest
- Secondments
- Commissioned research
- Advisory committees
- Policy reviews
- Research and evidence centres



'Areas of Research Interest' tell academia what departments want to know more about

 [Departments](#) [Worldwide](#) [How government works](#) [Get involved](#)
[Policies](#) [Publications](#) [Consultations](#) [Statistics](#) [Announcements](#)

[Home](#)

Collection

Areas of Research Interest

Areas of Research Interest (ARI) give details about the main research questions facing government departments.

Published 28 June 2017
Last updated 5 February 2018 — [see all updates](#)
From: [Government Office for Science](#) and [Cabinet Office](#)

ARI also include information on:

- departmental research systems
- research and data publication policies
- research and development strategies

Related content

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[Research and development](#)

[Ministry of Justice: areas of research interest 2020](#)
14 December 2020 [Research and analysis](#)

[DIT areas of research interest](#)
8 September 2020 [Research and analysis](#)

[FCO areas of research interest \(ARI\) 2020: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) update](#)
2 June 2020 [Research and analysis](#)

[BEIS areas of research interest: interim update 2020](#)
3 February 2020 [Research and analysis](#)

[Home Office: areas of research interest](#)
6 June 2019 [Research and analysis](#)

[DfT areas of research interest](#)
13 May 2019 [Research and analysis](#)

Cabinet Office Open Innovation Team

- Brokering secondments for PhD students/ECRs
- Creating an Economic Policy Network to advise Treasury and other departments and running economic policy conferences with universities and departments
- Some other departments (BEIS, Defra, FCO) have their own secondment schemes but most don't

INSTITUTE
FOR
GOVERNMENT



Open Innovation Team

@openinnovteam

Award-winning @CabinetOfficeUK team helping deepen collaboration between officials and academics. Check out our blog for more details.

openinnovation.blog.gov.uk

Joined January 2018

[Tweet to Open Innovation Team](#)

DfE's approach to commissioning research rapidly

Analytical associate pool

The analytical associate pool is a group of independent academics and researchers that we can commission at short notice to provide services such as:

- a small-scale data analysis
- a rapid literature review (an overview of published research)
- primary research (research of new data)
- a peer review (an evaluation of new research)
- quality assurance (a quality check)
- expert advice
- training



SAGE

Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) provides scientific and technical advice to support government decision makers during emergencies.



indie_SAGE



Fortieth SAGE meeting on Covid-19, 4th June 2020
Held via Zoom

Summary

1. SAGE highlighted the importance of cluster tracing – including location tracing, understanding of environmental factors and backwards contact tracing – to the TTI programme.
2. There is an increased risk from Covid-19 to BAME groups, which should be urgently investigated through social science research and biomedical research, and mitigated by policy makers.

Migration Advisory Committee



BBC Daily Politics and Sunday Pol...

@daily_politics

Follow

Migration Advisory Committee chairman Prof Alan Manning: Employers are worried about changes to migration rules after Brexit

#bbcdp



Migration Advisory Committee chairman

#bbcdp - BBC

immigration restriction may "very likely" slow growth after Brexit

Share



Catherine Neelan

Catherine Neelan is head of politics and investigations at City A.M.

Follow Catherine



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Home Office to launch 'startup visas' for entrepreneurs looking to come to UK

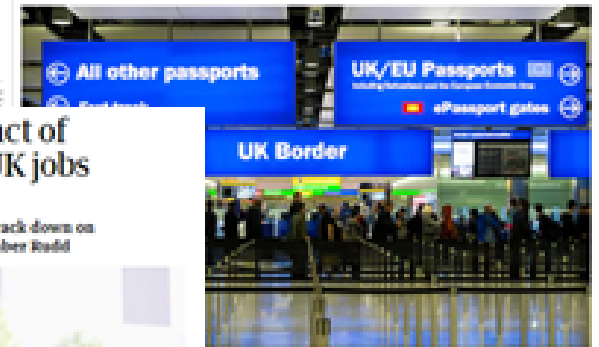
New option designed to use migration system to encourage businesses to set up here

Ben Chapman | @b_c_chapman | Wednesday 13 June 2018 09:01 | 4 comments

The new visa option has been designed following advice from the Migration Advisory Committee and feedback from the tech sector among others.

Cutting EU migration very likely to hit growth - official advisers

Experts predict lower growth in jobs and output if flows of people from EU are restricted



Plans that zero net EU migration post-Brexit could not only halt population falls. Photograph: Andy

Expert panel to assess impact of international students on UK jobs

Home Office's migration advisory committee will crack down on abuse of visas by poor-quality institutions, says Amber Rudd



Visa applications for foreign group universities rose by 6% last year. Photograph: Andy

Migration experts will be asked to examine the impact of international students on the UK job market, in a Home Office review that campaigners warned may lead to tougher restrictions.

Research centres




Welcome to PRUComm

We provide evidence to inform the Department of Health and Social Care's policy on the health and social care systems and commissioning to maximise outcomes for patients.



Evidence centres

 Centre for
Ageing Better

 Centre for
Homelessness Impact

 College of
Policing

 EARLY
INTERVENTION
FOUNDATION

 Education
Endowment
Foundation

 NICE National Institute for
Health and Care Excellence

 TASO Transforming Access
and Student Outcomes
in Higher Education

 Wales Centre for Public Policy
Canolfan Polisi Cyhoeddus Cymru

 what works centre for
local economic growth

 What Works for
Children's
Social Care

 what works
wellbeing

 YOUTH
ENDOWMENT
FUND

 youth
futures
FOUNDATION

How this helps you

- Drops in research budgets mean departments need to find new ways to engage with academia
- There are a range of initiatives that you can benefit from if you know they are there
- ARIs tell you what departments are interested in, but are also a 'way in'
- There are teams in Whitehall working on designing placements that work for academics at different career stages
- Analysts focus more on building networks and knowing what research is out there; policy makers engage in more 'ad hoc' ways
- Civil servants are enthusiastic about finding evidence when it is accessible

Engaging with intermediaries



Consider engaging with intermediaries

- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- Lobbying groups
- Businesses
- Social enterprises
- Think tanks

Landscape of think tanks

Left-leaning

'Technocratic'/centrist/
non-Political

Right-leaning



class
Centre for Labour
and Social Studies

**FABIAN
SOCIETY**

INSTITUTE
FOR
GOVERNMENT



Institute for
Fiscal Studies

Resolution
Foundation

**Policy
Exchange**



**ADAM SMITH
INSTITUTE**

SMF

The Kings Fund

JRF
JOSEPH
ROUNTREE
FOUNDATION

nuffieldtrust
**The
Health
Foundation**

THE CENTRE FOR
**SOCIAL
JUSTICE**

Tips for engagement

- Profiles and networks are key – make sure you are findable
- Be prepared to provide broad surveys of debates in the area – not just the specific research you are working on now
- Write articles in places policy makers will see them – not academic journals!
- Build links with intermediaries – eg Think tanks, what works centres
- Network to make people aware of your expertise – live and on social media

Communicating your research

Katie Thorpe

01 JANUARY 2017



Consequences of Erudite Vernacular Utilized Irrespective of Necessity: Problems with Using Long Words Needlessly

DANIEL M. OPPENHEIMER*

Princeton University, USA

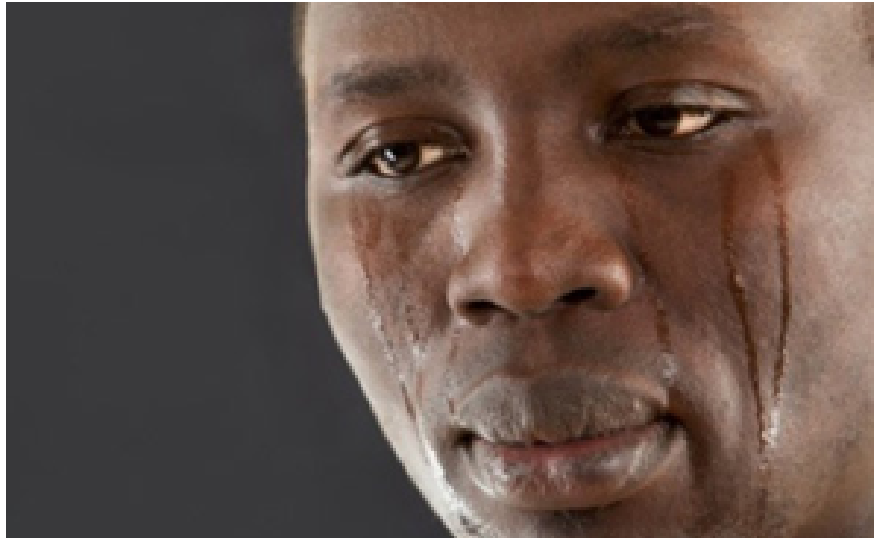
Katie, what are you doing today?

I'm facilitating a programme to help academic researchers engage effectively with policy makers

Katie, what are you doing today?

I'm ~~facilitating a programme~~ running a training
course to help ~~academic researchers~~ experts
~~engage effectively with policy makers~~ get politicians to
listen to them.

Other tips



Engage emotions

Tell stories



Things to think about

- Remember the “Curse of Knowledge”
 - Keep it simple
 - Relate it to what people already know
- Be unexpected
- Be concrete
- Engage emotions
 - Spark empathy
 - Link to what people care about
- Tell stories

Brief for influencing skills session

Imagine you are meeting a policy maker or influencer at an event. As you queue for coffee, they ask you about your work. How do you reply?

Aim for a 2 minute explanation that is suitable for someone from a non-academic background. Try and engage them with your work and show why it's important and/or interesting!

Building your profile

Katie Thorpe

01 JANUARY 2017



What we'll cover

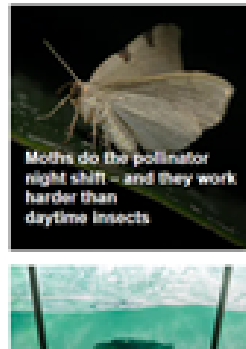
- Articles and blogs
- Social media
- Twitter
- Being an expert
- Questions

Contribute articles

THE CONVERSATION
Podcasts, reports, journalism, books

COVID-19 Arts & Culture Business & Economy Cities Education **Environment & Energy** Health & Medicine Politics & Society Science & Technology

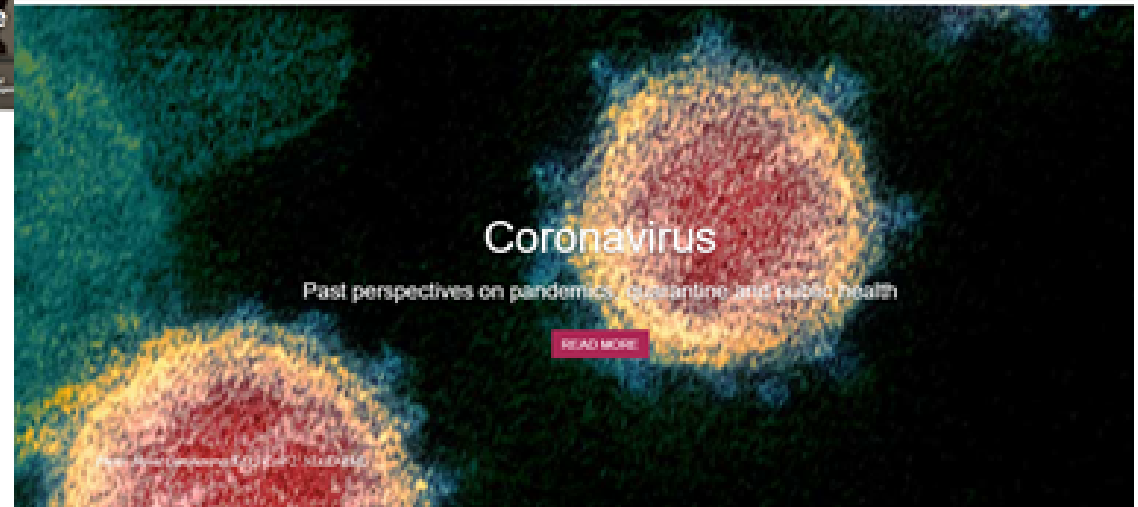
Search articles, reports, academics



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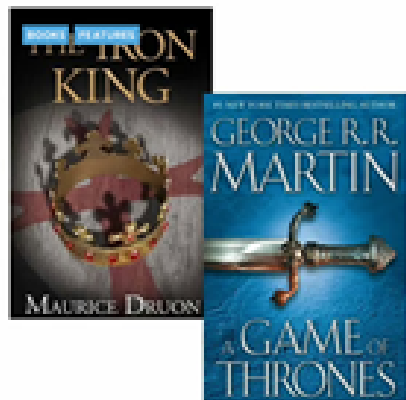


Tips for articles

1. Comment on breaking news
2. Photos and videos
3. Personal stories
4. Interview other experts
5. Share resources and useful tips
6. Listicles (really)

Medievalists.net

Features



**Two
sides
of a
coin?**

**Medieval Reads: Maurice Druon and
George RR Martin – two sides of a coin?**


Latest


 Jules Events in OEN
Sep 4 • 9 min read

Nazi Hippies: When the New Age and Far Right Overlap



Both the New Age and the far right are drawn to conspiracy theories

 6.4K  122 responses

 Jules Events
Sep 1 • 9 min read



Top ten tips for recovering from a mental illness

 11  1 response

Promote your work

- Be findable by search engines – keywords and tags
- Overcome desire to use puns as titles
- Use social media to direct people to new posts
- Create a Twitter poster

I've put together a short explainer video, setting out a rough background to my PhD research, what I'm looking to discover, and why I think my work is important 🙌

Thanks again to colleagues and [@Midlands4Cities](#) for supporting me.



Twitter

Decide your strategy:

- Want to accumulate as many followers as possible? Tweet a lot.
- Want to drive more traffic to your site? Show restraint.
- Join conversations with people interested in similar topics
- Above all, give your followers useful, interesting, re-tweetable content.



- A unique visual
- Statistics
- Popular issues of the day
- Plain language

Being an expert

- Build relationships
- Say yes!
- Consider podcasts as well as radio and TV
- Have interesting/compelling case studies

Review and close



7 MARCH 2018

What does this mean for you?

1. What are likely to be the best routes to engagement for you?
2. How can you get your research noticed?
3. What steps can you take to start engaging with policy makers and influencers?

Your next steps...

Your next steps...

Thank you

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