



SWDTP Placement Scheme Final Report

Please report back on your placement experience within one month of completion. Your report is vital for helping the SWDTP monitor the effectiveness and quality of placements, as well as helping us to build better links with partner organisations. We may also use your feedback on the website, as a feature in the SWDTP Newsletter, as a full case study or for other promotional work.

You may wish to arrange an informal chat with the Jackson Paterson, Jackson.Paterson@bristol.ac.uk the Collaboration Facilitator, to talk about broader aspects of your placement, to help develop a case study and any thoughts you may have for developing or improving our placements scheme. We may also ask you to help mentor students who are considering placement opportunities themselves.

Student Name	[Redacted]
Placement Organisation	[Redacted] An academic institute with a focus on Digital Futures

Please give a summary of the placement and the work/activities you undertook. Include details of any workshops, talks, presentations, media activity or other public or stakeholder events in which you were involved

- Presentation at the [organisation] This presentation was a summary of the research conducted over the placement period... There was a total attendance around 20 at this hybrid presentation. This foregrounds the research of the academic journal article written during the placement and builds momentum for this research dialogue.
- Academic Journal Article – Ongoing – Listed as a primary output of the placement, the creation of an academic journal article has been the central focus of this placement. Over the course of this placement we co-authored a paper, titled “Twins of Justice? The Role of Data Justice and Energy Justice in Advancing U.K. Aspirations for an Energy Digital Twin.” This paper, submitted to the journal [Redacted], examines how principles of energy justice and data justice are framed in opposition to one another in the advancement of digital infrastructure for the energy digital twin. This article has not yet been accepted—it is possible that it will subsequently be published elsewhere, but that will be facilitated through a joint and ongoing time investment.

Did the placement meet your original objectives and expectations? What were the tangible outputs or outcomes? Where there any unexpected outcomes or opportunities arising from the placement?

The placement did meet my original objectives and expectations. As stated in the original application, the primary focus of the placement has been an analysis of the energy digital twin project in the U.K., known as the Virtual Energy System (VES), through the lenses of data justice and energy justice. This analysis has taken the form of an academic article, the primary output from this placement. Though not written in the original proposal, there was also the unexpected opportunity of presenting this research to colleagues at the [host organisation] which allowed for me to receive feedback on this research and to consider areas for future advancement.



How has the placement developed your insight into working with non-academic partners and the benefits and/or challenges of collaboration?

I have learned a lot about the nuances of framing research so that it can be understood, listened to, and digested by stakeholders outside of academia. Often as academics we use a lot of jargon and technical frameworks for our thinking. Even as this comes with a strength of term precision and theoretical grounding, this can also be confusing for stakeholders who approach problems differently and are less concerned with areas of technical differentiation that academics care about. Because the topic that I engaged with for this placement was one in which there are many non-academic stakeholders in addition to academic stakeholders, this placement was a really strong exercise in practising communications skills across disciplines and areas of work. In particular, my presentation was one that was open to the public and widely available, making it essential that in the advancement of these slides and materials that I was prepared to explain things in a way that could be quickly understood and not interpreted as inflammatory by stakeholders who might feel critiqued by findings from the paper. Working with [the host] taught me a lot about how academic findings can be repackaged and reframed to create applicability to non-academic sectors, increasing the reach of findings and the potential for collaboration.

Has the experience of doing the placement made you think about the potential or the impact of your research differently? If so, how?

Doing this placement definitely provided me with an increased urgency to my work around energy uncertainty. My research for my Ph.D. focuses on understanding the experiences of energy uncertainty with Cape Town as a case study. While that may initially seem unrelated to the work of my placement, the Virtual Energy System that I was researching in this placement is actually what the U.K. is thinking of implementing in order to avoid infrastructural challenges that might result in load-shedding. This link was really interesting because it highlights to me the importance of first foregrounding a recognition of experience with energy and (when applicable) energy uncertainty and using that understanding to shape subsequent policy interventions such as a VES. Indeed, as the VES highlights, as much as a benign desire to prevent instances of energy uncertainty may drive a new technology, it is critical to ensure that there is adequate consideration of all levels of community need and forms of justice, as otherwise such projects can create new problems even as they solve old ones. For my thesis, this work placement has highlighted the need for future research following the completion of my Ph.D. to look into what potential policy solutions are to energy uncertainty in Cape Town for the long term, and how those intersect with other domains of justice.

Are there opportunities for further collaboration with the organisation either for yourself, or for other students, in the future?

[The host] and I will continue to work towards the publication of our paper, as the academic publication process is a long one that entails multiple rounds of submission and revision. With [the host] and the [host organisation], I also definitely see a continued potential for research connection and collaboration, as the topic I focus on, energy uncertainty, has very direct links to the VES, DSI, and their implementation within the U.K.

What advice would you give to a fellow student who is considering undertaking a placement?

I would encourage them to take a placement in a field that they are less familiar with but has some linkage with their research! This was a really new perspective on energy policy and inequality for me, but I realized that it is really important to be considering structures of governance and frameworks of justice in many sectors, not just in the poverty field.

Would you be willing to mentor or support other students thinking about undertaking a placement?



YES ☒ NO ☐

Would you be willing to take part in a full case study based on your placement?

YES ☐ NO ☒

Placement Organisation Feedback

Please provide any feedback regarding the placement student and their contribution to your organisation. How did they 'make a difference'? Did any new ways of working or collaborating emerge from hosting this placement student?

I am grateful to the SWDTP for the opportunity to work with [the student]! I thoroughly appreciate the way she took the initiative in the project, bringing in her knowledge and skills to the original proposal and effectively significantly improving it! In terms of the project, I had a set of interview data and secondary data which were ripe for analysis in a contained, short form of a project placement by a researcher with overlapping interests. I'm glad that [the student], whose background and expertise were already very relevant to our work, expressed interest in the idea. Throughout the project, she's been enjoyable to work with, always prepared for the meetings and happy to take responsibility over the intellectual direction of the project. Her presentation has been a great addition to our seminar series at the Institute and we now hope that this collaboration can be positively received in the peer review process. We hope to stay in touch with [the student] via the [organisation's] Affiliate scheme which offers opportunities for seedcorn funding and events, among others. While over the next few months [the student] will be doing fieldwork and I will be on maternity leave, we will reconnect soon after to discuss next steps. Many thanks again to SWDTP for organising this initiative!

Would you consider taking on another placement student? YES ☒ NO ☐

Academic Supervisor Feedback

Please provide any feedback regarding the student's placement and how their learning & development and their collaborative objectives, have been fulfilled.

The placement achieved its intended aims, with the student producing a substantive piece of research examining the Virtual Energy System through the lenses of data and energy justice. This work formed



the central output of the placement and demonstrates the student's ability to apply critical frameworks to a complex, real-world project.

In addition to this planned outcome, the student made effective use of further opportunities to extend their learning, including delivering a presentation at the [host organisation]. This experience enabled them to engage with a broader audience, reflect on feedback, and refine their thinking. Notably, the student showed clear development in communicating complex ideas beyond academic contexts, adapting their approach to ensure clarity, accessibility, and sensitivity to different stakeholder perspectives.

The collaborative dimension of the placement was also strong. Through ongoing engagement with their supervisor, the student developed a better understanding of how research can be translated into more practical and widely relevant forms. This contributed to enhancing the potential impact of their work and supported their ability to work effectively across disciplinary and professional boundaries. Overall, the student demonstrated meaningful progress in both their research practice and their capacity to collaborate and communicate in applied settings.