



# SEDarC

The South East Doctoral Training Arc

# Summer School Programme Connected Research



University of Surrey, Stag  
Hill, Rik Medlik Building

# Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June

12:00 - 12:50

## Registration and Lunch

Start your day by registering and collecting your materials. Enjoy coffee and sandwiches while networking.

12:50 - 13:00

## Director's Welcome

Our Director, Prof Kathy Rastle, will kick off with an overview of the day's agenda and goals.

13:00 - 14:00

## Keynote with Professor Birgitta Gatersleben

Collaborative working across disciplines and sectors

Understanding complex problems such environment and climate challenges and developing and testing effective, acceptable and feasible solutions to those challenges requires collaborative working, across disciplines, sectors and stakeholders. Environmental social science researchers in [ACCESS](#) are working with [The Institution of Environmental Sciences](#) to co-develop a toolkit to support such collaborative working. The toolkit centres around a series of questions to consider during any project or program of work. In this presentation I will present this toolkit and discuss its development and use in research, policy and practice.

14:00 - 15:15

## Value based Leadership: My Research Journey with Professor Tushna Vandrevela

What does it mean to lead with your values as a researcher?

This interactive session will explore what values-based leadership looks like in practice within academia and research. Drawing on her own career journey, Professor Tushna Vandrevela will reflect on the opportunities, challenges and decisions that have shaped her path as a researcher and leader. Through discussion and reflection, participants will be invited to consider how personal values can inform research, collaboration, leadership, and impact within academic and beyond.

15:15 - 15:30

## Refreshments

15:30 - 16:30

## Keynote with Professor Nigel Gilbert CBE

Policy in a complex world: influence and evidence in policymaking

It is easy to suggest what governments should do. Yet even when there is broad agreement on goals, designing and implementing policy is difficult, uncertain and often prone to unintended consequences.

In this talk, I argue that a key reason for this difficulty is that policymaking takes place in systems that are complex in a technical sense, not simply complicated. I will explain what this means in practice and show how complexity shapes the challenges policymakers face, including uncertainty, unintended effects and limits to control.

I will then outline some practical implications for those working with policy. In particular, I will suggest how researchers and analysts can better support decision-making by framing evidence differently, engaging more effectively with policymakers, and adopting approaches that are better suited to complex policy environments.

16:30

## Closing Remarks

Closing remarks from our Director.

18:00 - 20:00

## Dinner

Hosted at Manor Park.

# Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June

8:00 - 9:45

## Breakfast

For those who have stayed in provided accommodation, breakfast will be available

9:45 - 10:00

## Registration and Refreshments

Start your day by registering and collecting your materials. Enjoy coffee and pastries while networking.

10:00 - 12:00

## Tiger Teams with Tristan Harkcom and Christine Hine

A Tiger Team is a group of experts with different skills and experience brought together to address a complex challenge within a strict time frame. Our Tiger Teams will comprise cross-institutional, cross-disciplinary groups of PGRs working to develop a proposal for research addressing a real-world policy challenge - modelled on the "Request for Proposals" format used by organizations to seek tenders for work that will inform evidence-based policy. The Tiger Teams task captures the "Connected Research" theme of the Summer School, enabling teams to put into practice insights into interdisciplinary working in pursuit of policy-relevant inputs explored in the keynote presentations. The proposals will be presented in the form of posters, and prizes awarded for the most impressive posters in the closing session.

12:00 - 13:00

## Lunch

13:00 - 14:00

## Tiger Teams

Tiger Team session continued.

14:00 - 15:00

### Learn about Culture with Dr Smadar Cohen-Chen - For Cohort 2

In this session we will be engaging in a team-based activity using a card game. No prior knowledge is needed, and we will be learning the rules in the session.

### Grant Writing with Prof. Kathy Rastle - For Cohort 1

Prof Rastle will discuss identifying, finding, and writing successful academic grants for research.

15:00 - 15:15

## Refreshments

15:15 - 16:15

### Placement Panel with Prof. Emily Ma - For Cohort 2

A placement panel featuring four second-year PhD students reflecting on their completed placements. Hear first-hand insights on experiences, challenges, and key takeaways, with practical advice for your own journey. The session includes an open Q&A, offering a valuable opportunity to ask questions and gain honest perspectives from peers.

### Support, Share and Succeed with Rose Holyoak - For Cohort 1

This interactive workshop for cohort 1 will focus on sharing experiences of research successes and challenges to date and pooling insights on strategies that work when setbacks are encountered. The workshop will both look back on project experiences so far and look forward to the final stages to come, enabling the group to share resources and identify areas for further advice and support.

16:15

## Closing Remarks

Closing remarks from our Director.

# Speaker Information



## Professor Birgitta Gatersleben

Birgitta Gatersleben is Professor of Environmental Psychology. She leads the Environmental Psychology Research Group and associated MSc program. Her research focuses on environmental sustainability and wellbeing, with a particular focus on the role of nature engagement, active transport and consumerism. Her work is applied and interdisciplinary.

Birgitta is co-director of the £6.25m ESRC funded [ACCESS network](#) (Advancing Capacity for Climate and Environment Social Science) that aims to champion environmental social science to tackle environmental challenges.

---



## Professor Tushna Vandrevala

TProfessor Tushna Vandrevala is a Chartered Health Psychologist specialising in health inequalities, health communication and behaviour change. Her research focuses on underserved and marginalised communities, including ethnically diverse and migrant populations, as well as individuals experiencing key life transitions such as pregnancy and ageing. She develops and evaluates tailored health promotion interventions to improve risk communication and reduce health inequalities.

Professor Vandrevala has extensive expertise in inclusive and participatory research and leads real-world interventions funded by the NIHR, ESRC, AHRC and Wellcome Trust, among others. She advises the UK government and holds several national leadership roles, including co-Chair of the Home Office Science Advisory Council and cross-government emergency group.

---



## Professor Nigel Gilbert CBE

Nigel Gilbert has a Distinguished Chair in Computational Social Science at the University of Surrey. He is Director of the [Centre for Research in Social Simulation](#), Director of the [Centre for the Evaluation of Complexity Across the Nexus](#) (CECAN), and Director of the University's [Institute of Advanced Studies](#).

His main research interests are processual theories of social phenomena; the development of computational sociology and the methodology of computer simulation, especially agent-based modelling; and the development, appraisal and evaluation of public policies.

---



## Dr Smadar Cohen-Chen

Smadar believes that social and organizational issues cannot be fully understood without considering psychological factors and phenomena. She asserts that psychology loses much of its relevance if it does not address real questions regarding the dynamics between people and groups. Her research focuses on the role of emotions in decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership and management, and negotiations. This includes both emotional experiences and emotional expressions. Dr. Cohen-Chen's work spans organizational, social, and political contexts, examining how these frameworks influence one another.

---



## Professor Kathy Rastle

Kathy Rastle's research aims to uncover the nature of the mental representations and computations that underlie aspects of language, literacy, and learning. Her work has earned prizes from the Experimental Psychology Society (2017) and the British Psychological Society (2018), and has been supported by grants from the BBSRC, ESRC, Nuffield Foundation, British Academy, and Leverhulme Trust.

She has a strong interest in translating her research to improve policies and practices related to how children around the world are taught to read. She was awarded the ESRC 'Celebrating Impact' Prize for Outstanding International Impact (2020), and her research also formed the basis of a REF2021 impact case study rated as 4\*.

---



## Professor Emily (Jintao) Ma

Emily is a Professor at the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management, the University of Surrey, UK. Her research area includes organizational behaviour, customer experience management and women in leadership. Her most recent research looks at how robots can be applied in hospitality and tourism contexts to enhance employee well-being and customer experience.