

Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research

Leading the way in quantitative social science

The Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research (CMI) is a world renowned centre of excellence.

Our work contributes to advancing quantitative social science (QSS) in three key ways: first, through developing robust methods and complex forms of data to conduct QSS; second, by using those methods and data to address important social and political questions; and finally by delivering high quality training to build the key skills and capacity of researchers to engage in QSS.

Foundational research

CMI provides a focal point for researchers working across the social sciences and humanities to develop and apply advanced quantitative methods to help improve our understanding of these core questions.

We bring together expertise in statistical modelling and survey research methods with a focus on political participation, ageing, ethnicity, health, class, gender and labour. This inter-disciplinarity means that we are able to offer highly original and creative insights into understanding contemporary problems.

CMI develops the skills and capacity of QSS researchers in a number of ways. We are home to the training programme of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) National Centre for Research Methods, and run our own high quality 'short courses' training in advanced quantitative methods.

We are also a hub for several other large ESRC investments in methodological training and data management such as the UK Data Service Manchester and the highly renowned Nuffield Q-Step programme, designed to deliver the next generation of quantitatively skilled social science graduates. Our work in this area is now expanding internationally, with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funded outreach to increase statistical literacy in other parts of the world such as Latin America.

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The CMI is a flagship centre for quantitative social research and research methods, which pushes the boundaries of social science research in Manchester, nationally and internationally.

Professor Brian Heaphy
Head of the School of Social Sciences

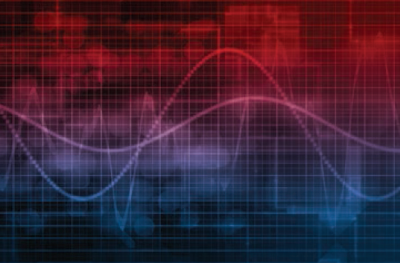
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Working with stakeholders

The impact of CMI research is wide reaching in that it helps to understand both the drivers of social and political change, and how social scientists measure and model these changes. CMI researchers provide specialist advice to local, national and international policy makers including Manchester City Council, the Office for National Statistics, and the US Census

Bureau. We create projects and support policy development with leading organisations such as the Runnymede Trust, Bank of England, Department of Energy and Climate Change, Technology Strategy Board, National Health Service, Human Fertility and Embryology Authority, Vodafone, Oxfam and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.





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New directions

Cathie Marsh Institute researchers work across a range of fields and this creates a vibrant culture of inter-disciplinary research and methodological rigour. We are particularly active in developing the new field of Social Data Science (SDS), which focuses on the curation and analysis of the large scale, unstructured and heterogeneous 'social data' now being generated by individuals' increasing interaction on, and with, new digital platforms.

Our work focusing on the questions of trust, privacy and security that these new forms of data pose has gained increasing attention from policy-makers and is supported by several major national and international grants.

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The distinctive feature of CMI is the combination of application and development of advanced, interdisciplinary and innovative methods to tackle important questions on social and political processes.”

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Professor James Nazroo

Director, Economic and Social Research Council
(ESRC) Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity



Research impact

The work of our British Election Study team has challenged the perception that the 2017 election saw a 'youthquake' in British politics. It has also contributed to changes in the conduct of opinion polls following a surprising series of 'fails' to predict election outcomes here in the UK and the US.

CMI researchers have also used innovative new biomarker data to study the impact of precarious employment on the well-being of workers. The results have informed policy recommendations for increased worker protections within the European Parliament, UK Chief Medical Officer's annual report and the London Mayor's Good Work Standard initiative.



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