



SLS-DSU NEWSLETTER

Christmas 2023

A Year of Change

Change is never easy, but it can bring renewed energy, different opportunities and improved ways of working.

Our biggest change this year, has been our move to New Register House in June. The SLS team have been lucky to relocate to a beautiful, historic building in the heart of our capital city. It has not been without its challenges, but we have been warmly welcomed by our National Records of Scotland (NRS) colleagues. The only drawback is the abundance of tempting cafes and shops nearby!

We thank all our users for their patience during the transition and with the ongoing maintenance work on the roof, and we wish you all a happy festive season.

Staff Change

Our very talented Technical Data Officer/Database Developer, Kellas Campbell, has now moved on in her career development. We were fortunate to have Kellas' expertise during her time with the SLS and she has helped with planning the upgrade to our server. We are currently in the process of recruitment. This will inevitably impact on both the timing of our provision of extracts (including extra variable requests & data extensions) and upgrading the SLS server.

SLS Developments

Safe Setting: We are now able to offer 8 Safe Setting spaces. Please book via angela.fallon@ed.ac.uk (by Wed at 10am the week prior to access). In the new year, all researchers will be able to reset their own passwords to access their project folder in the Safe Setting. Instructions on how to do this will be available when you visit. If you have not been into the Safe Setting for a while, we will carry out a short induction on your return.

Automated Stage 2 Publication Outputs Process: In the new year, we will be launching an automated outputs clearance system for stage 2 publication outputs, via the CALLS-hub website. Researchers will have their own user account to upload clearance requests and output. Some fields will be self-populating for ease and you will have more control over how and when your listing..

Spotlight

Vital Events

Our VE data has been updated to Quarter 1, 2022. Work is also underway to provide an update on education data.

Census 2022

NRS have now released a [Census Output schedule](#) so we envisage work on SLS linkage to commence end of 2024 or early 2025

ONS Safe Researcher Training

A schedule of Safe Researcher Training dates is available on the [SCADR website](#)

SLS Training

We will be running a virtual hands-on lab session in R using SLS synthetic data again in 2024.

We are also planning another Survival Analysis training event. We will keep you posted.



appears on the SLS website. The new system will help us efficiently capture the information required by our funders, as well as streamline the 'submission to web listing' process. Time frames for clearance will remain the same (20 working days), and as always our NRS Project Manager will endeavour to clear requests promptly.

As a reminder, for Stage 1 Pre-publication Output clearance, we expect all stage 1 pre-publication outputs to be publication ready (eg only the tables you wish to use in the slides, papers etc) rather than intermediate outputs. We now offer synthetic data to all projects as an alternative.

Archiving of SLS Projects: In line with our GDPR responsibilities, we are required to delete data at the end of our 5 year retention period from project end date. We will email researchers of historical projects or who are nearing the end of their retention period for permission to delete old data or archive syntax. If you are approaching your project end date, please contact Greg.Blackadder@nrscotland.gov.uk for a project extension request if this is required.

Re-use of Code: A reminder that we have established a 'Code Re-use' repository in GitHub and we include an option in our SLS application form for researchers to opt to share their code. If anyone has code they would like to deposit into the repository for wider use, please let us know. Currently we have some education data code: [tclmens / SLS-DSU_EducationDataCoding · GitLab](#)

SLS Server Upgrade: We are still in the process of upgrading the SLS server, working towards a cloud hosting solution. This should be implemented early 2024 - the impact of which may mean a down week in service to allow us to repurpose the Safe settings PCs in New Register House. We will alert active researchers in due course. Additionally, the new SLS server system will move from a Windows to Linux environment, however, other than a move to Two Factor Authentication (2FA) to log in, along with Libre Office offered, rather than Microsoft Office, user access to SLS projects will remain unchanged with our standard statistical packages (Stata, SPSS and R) available. Following on from this server upgrade, by 2025, we expect remote access to SLS projects by users from the SafePod Network. This will mean the SLS will be available from 21 locations across the UK.



Impact Case Studies & Research Briefs

We would be delighted to hear of any publication outputs that we can distill into a A4 research brief or impact case study. They will be promoted to Scottish Government, at our events & on the SLS website.

And finally...

We wish you a very happy festive break and a successful 2024. Please see the Spotlight section for our holiday dates.

Spotlight

Congratulations on your PhD thesis & Viva to SLS researcher Dr Mary Abed Al Ahad - See [Abstract](#)

Festive Closure Dates

The last Safe Setting day will be Wed 20th Dec (staff working until 21st Dec at 4pm). The Safe Setting will reopen on Thurs 4th Dec (staff contactable on Wed 3rd Dec)

