

The European Social Survey Round 12 Question Module Design Teams (QDT)

Guidance for Stage 2 Applications - New modules

1. Introduction

This document provides guidance for teams who have been invited by the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) to the ESS ERIC to submit a **Stage 2 application** to design a rotating module to be included as part of Round 12 of the European Social Survey (ESS).

Only teams invited to do so by the SAB may submit Stage 2 applications.

Please refer to the [Call Specification](#) for further information on the ESS, the question design process and Question Module Design Team (QDT) requirements. Full details of the criteria and procedures by which modules will be selected and the application timetable are also available in the Specification.

This guidance relates to applications for **new rotating modules** i.e. modules that either cover a wholly new topic to the ESS or cover a topic or module that has previously been included but using a different approach.

Teams invited to submit a Stage 2 application for a repeat module should see this separate [guidance document](#).

The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) to the ESS ERIC will evaluate the Stage 2 proposals from invited teams and select two rotating modules for ESS Round 12.

2. Format of Stage 2 applications

Applications must be made in English and comprise:

- A completed copy of the [Stage 2 application cover sheet](#).

This sets out the title of the proposed module, a brief abstract (max. 250 words) and the details of the proposed QDT head. It also includes space to declare whether the application is for a new or repeat module.

- The main section of the application (maximum 20 sides A4).

There is no formal application form but please refer to the guidance in Section 3 for suggested sections to include. Applications should be submitted as PDFs. The application should be written in Arial font size 11 pt and include 2cm page margins. All pages should be numbered.

- Bibliographic references (max. 3 sides A4)
- CVs (max. 2 sides A4 each) for up to five QDT members, including contact details. Applications must be submitted as a single document.

3. What information to cover in your application for a new module

Stage 2 applications are an opportunity to expand on the information provided at Stage 1 and provide further details on the theoretical rationale behind the proposed topic, to demonstrate how it is intended to implement the proposed module as part of the ESS and to outline the team's plans for analysis and dissemination.

Sections covered in the main application should include:

Rationale (c. 1,500 words)

Applicants should expand on the justification put forward at Stage 1 for fielding an ESS module on the proposed topic. Please explain why it is necessary to collect new cross-national evidence on the topic, how the module will add to the existing knowledge base and contribute to theoretical and/or empirical understanding of key issues within the European arena. Applicants should make the case for why they expect the topic to have wide appeal and why it is relevant and timely to both academic and non-academic audiences.

Theoretical/conceptual approach (c. 2,500 words)

Applicants should explain the theoretical approach to be adopted and outline the conceptual framework underpinning the proposed module.

If the topic to be addressed is one that has been the subject of a previous ESS rotating module, the application should clarify how the approach to be taken by the new module differs from – and improves upon – that of the previous module.

Implementation (c. 4000 words)

Applicants should provide details of how they propose to operationalise their theoretical and conceptual model using up to 30 standardised closed survey questions.¹ They should outline how they propose to operationalise specific concepts, drawing on existing questions and evidence from other surveys where appropriate. However, please note that any items to be fielded as part of the module will need to be developed in consultation with the ESS Core Scientific Team (CST) and be subject to rigorous pre-testing before being finalised. The CST will take the final decision on any items to be fielded.

Applicants should reflect on any anticipated methodological or practical difficulties in operationalising the proposed module as part of the ESS. These might relate to the geographical spread of the survey, for example, and the potential difficulty of achieving equivalence across disparate countries. Teams should reflect on how these methodological problems might be overcome and any testing or development work that might be required to do so. Consideration should also be given to how the module can be implemented across modes (including face-to-face interviewer-administered surveys, web and paper self-completion).

If the topic to be addressed is one that has been the subject of a previous ESS rotating

¹ Note that complex questions (for example vignettes) that take longer to administer may be counted as more than one item in the final module.

module, the proposal should explain the team's rationale for submitting a proposal for a new module on the topic rather than a repeat of the previous module. Ideally, any explanation should be supported with evidence from the previous module.

The ESS encourages researchers to combine survey data with aggregate level contextual data to explore how different institutional, socio-economic, or cultural factors may influence individual attitudes and behaviour. It has developed a [Multilevel Data Repository](#) for this purpose. Applicants should include details of the subject and source of any contextual data they consider relevant to their proposed module.

Team expertise and experience (c. 1000 words)

Stage 2 applications should provide further details of relevant expertise and experience. Applicants should outline how the team's skills and experience complement one another, how the team intend to work together to develop the module and any previous experience the applicants have of collaborating with one another.

Dissemination (c. 1000 words)

Applicants should outline the team's proposed approach to disseminating findings from the module to academic and non-academic audiences along with an appropriate timeline. Please provide details of any plans to apply for additional funding to support analysis and dissemination of the module.

Please refer to the [Call Specification](#) for a list of the selection criteria the SAB will use to make their decision.

NOTE: Stage 2 applications are intended to expand on proposals shortlisted at Stage 1. Any team proposing changes to the proposed topic or QDT membership (other than additions) compared with their Stage 1 application should discuss these proposed changes with ESS ERIC HQ. Otherwise their application will be rejected.

4. Application submission process

Please submit your application, including the [Stage 2 application cover sheet](#), electronically to ess@city.ac.uk. Emails should include "Round 12 module application" in the subject line.

Applications must be received by **17:00 UK time on Friday 14th October 2022**.

Please refer to the application check list on the cover sheet and make sure that your application includes all the necessary information and is in the correct format.

5. What happens next?

The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) to the ESS ERIC will meet in November 2022 to evaluate all Stage 2 proposals received from invited teams on or before the closing date. Teams may be asked to make a short in-person presentation on their proposed module to the SAB prior to final module selection. The head of each applying team or a named substitute should be available to reply to questions of the Scientific Advisory Board within five working days.

Two rotating modules will be selected – either two new modules, two repeat modules or one of each. Successful teams will be notified by late November 2022. The SAB's decision is final.