

# ENGAGING WITH POLICY MAKERS WORKSHOPS AND SELF-STUDY MATERIALS

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNMENT

The Institute for Government is an independent charity working to increase government effectiveness. We aim to promote efficient public administration of government and public service in the UK by providing programmes of education, training, research and study for the public benefit and on a non-party political basis.

We do this through undertaking original research, developing learning tools and resources, running events for exchange of ideas and providing practical advice for senior decision makers.

## ABOUT THE IFG ACADEMY

The IfG Academy brings together the Institute for Government's expertise on government to provide practical training and support. We help those working in government to improve it, and those outside government to understand and engage with it.

Our expertise on government effectiveness makes us uniquely well-placed to offer practical insights to those inside and outside government:

- We have undertaken extensive research on the experience of being a government minister, and how to operate effectively in that role. This includes in-depth interviews with former ministers, which are publicly available in our Ministers Reflect archive.
- Our years of conversations with ministers and with the civil servants who work closely with them has given us a deep understanding of that crucial working relationship, and the value and frustrations that both sides find in it.
- A key strand of IfG work is on better policy making, including how evidence is used to inform the policy-making process. We believe that policy is made most effectively when policy makers have access to expertise and evidence from across a range of disciplines, but we also know that many subject specialists outside government, such as academics, don't feel confident engaging with policy makers.

We have converted this extensive expertise into a range of resources and tailored workshops for those inside and outside government: for ministers on how to get the most of their time in office, for officials on how to support their ministers effectively, and for subject specialists working in public policy on how to engage meaningfully with policy makers.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ON ENGAGING WITH POLICY MAKERS

We seek to help academic researchers engage effectively with government by helping them understand how policy making in the UK really works, whom they should engage with and how they should go about it. We have provided workshops on engaging with government for the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the British Academy, the Economic and Social Science Research Council, the Royal Society and several Doctoral Training Partnerships and universities.

We offer sessions on the following topics:

- The structures of UK government, including devolved administrations and elected mayors
- The current political and governmental environment
- The policy making process – in theory and practice
- How evidence is used in policy making
- How to engage with Parliament
- How to engage with the Civil Service
- How to engage with local government
- How to engage with intermediaries such as think tanks and NGOs
- Building a digital profile
- Writing for policy makers
- Communicating effectively with different audiences

We can also create sessions on many other aspects of UK government and policy making – for example Brexit, public services, or devolution. Please see our [website](#) for details of our current and previous work.

As well as our own experts, we have excellent networks of speakers from UK government, academia, business and the non-profit sector.

We use learning and development specialists to create workshops that are interactive and encourage participants to apply what they have learned to their own work. Our facilitators are highly experienced in running workshops and creating an engaging learning environment.

We are also able to offer a package of self-study and workshop materials that can be implemented and delivered by organisations themselves.

## OUR SPACE

The IfG Academy benefits from a fully catered, dedicated learning and development space at 2 Carlton Gardens in London, overlooking St. James' Park, in the heart of Westminster. Offering full AV and hybrid facilities, we can accommodate workshops on site as well as hosting sessions partly or entirely online. Alternatively, we can travel to your premises and provide workshops there.

Whether face-to-face or virtual, we can create flexible workshop timetables to suit the needs of your participants. We always allow plenty of time for breaks and seek to build help the participants connect and network with each other throughout the programme.

## SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDAS

Sample agenda – one-day face-to-face workshop

Timing	Session content
09.30-10.00	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>
10.00-11.00	<b>The reality of government</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The landscape of government</li> <li>• Current challenges and preoccupations of government</li> <li>• The impact of the political landscape for academic research</li> </ul>
11.00-11.15	<b>BREAK</b>
11.15-12.15	<b>Evidence and policy making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How policy making works in practice</li> <li>• Understanding the constraints policy makers face</li> <li>• How to maximise the impact of your research</li> </ul>
12.15-12.45	<b>Practical examples of engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice and lessons learned from researchers (to include academics with experience of engagement)</li> </ul>
12.45-1.30	<b>LUNCH</b>
1.30-2.30	<b>Your routes to engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parliament and select committees</li> <li>• Ways of engaging with the civil service</li> <li>• Think tanks and NGOs</li> <li>• Devolved and local government</li> </ul>
2.30-3.30	<b>Raising your profile as an expert</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnose your current profile</li> <li>• Becoming an expert</li> <li>• Plan your profile-raising strategy</li> </ul>
3.30-3.45	<b>BREAK</b>
3.45-4.45	<b>Pitching to policy makers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to communicate with non-academic audiences</li> <li>• Practise explaining your research and its importance</li> </ul>
4.45-5.00	<b>Individual action planning and close</b>

Sample agenda – virtual workshop run over two mornings:

DAY ONE	
Timing	Session content
09.00-09.30	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>
09.30-10.30	<b>The landscape of government</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central, devolved, and local government</li> <li>• Policy from ideas to implementation</li> <li>• Current challenges and preoccupations of government</li> </ul>
10.30-10.45	<b>BREAK</b>
10.45-11.45	<b>Evidence and policy making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How policy making works in practice</li> <li>• Understanding the constraints policy makers face</li> <li>• How to maximise the impact of your research</li> </ul>
11.45-12.00	<b>BREAK</b>
12.00-12.45	<b>Practical examples of engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice and lessons learned from researchers</li> <li>• Planning your routes to engagement</li> </ul>
12.45-1.00	<b>Wrap up and close</b>

DAY TWO	
Timing	Session content
9.00-9.15	<b>Welcome and recap of Day 1</b>
9.15-10.15	<b>Practical tips for engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parliament and select committees</li> <li>• Ways of engaging with the civil service</li> <li>• Think tanks and NGOs</li> <li>• Devolved and local government</li> </ul>
10.15-10.30	<b>BREAK</b>
10.30-11.30	<b>Raising your profile as an expert</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnose your current profile</li> <li>• Becoming an expert</li> <li>• Plan your profile-raising strategy</li> </ul>
11.30-11.45	<b>BREAK</b>
11.45-12.45	<b>Communicating your research and building your profile</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to communicate with non-academic audiences</li> <li>• Practise explaining your research and its importance</li> </ul>
12.45-1.00	<b>Wrap up and action planning</b>

## SELF-STUDY MATERIALS AND WORKSHOPS

We offer a package of materials which can be used flexibly by organisations to deliver their own programme of learning in policy engagement.

The package consists of four self-study guides and four associated 2-hour workshops which build on the materials and encourage participants to apply their learning, practise skills and develop policy engagement plans.

The four modules are:

1. The landscape of government and policy making
2. Policy making, evidence and engagement
3. Developing networks and building your profile
4. Communicating your research

After completing the programme, participants will:

- Be able to articulate the impact their own research could have on policy making
- Understand the landscape of UK government at central, devolved and local level
- Appreciate how policy is made, from ideas through to implementation
- Learn how academic research is used in policy making
- Know the different routes to engagement with policy makers that are open to them, and the benefits and challenges of each
- Map their networks and learn how to expand them
- Get tips on increasing the visibility of their research through use of articles and social media
- Be able to talk about their research in ways that are understandable and compelling for non-academic audiences
- Be able to plan for impact right from the start of research projects

As well as providing workshop materials, we can offer train-the-trainer workshops for those staff who will be delivering the workshops.

## CONTACT

To discuss anything related to engaging with policy makers programmes, please contact [Katie Thorpe](#), Head of Learning and Development