

RESEARCH STRATEGY

April 2020 - March 2023

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Introduction

Community Justice Scotland (CJS) is an evidence-based organisation. We support community justice activity across the country with an aim to understanding and overcoming challenges and identifying successful practices. While justice-related research in Scotland is plentiful, many organisations and individuals contribute to and lead on research from a range of perspectives that are often informed by competing priorities. CJS and our national and local partners require a robust evidence base, underpinned by effective research, relating specifically to community justice priorities, practices, policies and outcomes. To develop this specific evidence base, we must lead on the research required to underpin it.

Previous research undertaken by CJS has been crucial in informing policy responses and developing a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities with our partners. One example of this is our research in relation to the extension of the Presumption Against Short Sentences from 3- to 12-months. Research designed and commissioned by CJS resulted in reports being shared with our partners, including Scottish Government and academia, that shaped discussions around implications of crucial community justice-related legislation. CJS were the only body in Scotland to perform research of this kind. We must proactively continue to deliver research that fills these gaps in knowledge.

CJS must be ambitious and drive change that improves the lives of citizens across the country. We must strive to understand the challenges that people in our communities face and we must be innovative and deliver new ways of working that lessen or remove the barriers that people who are impacted by the justice system face. Research is the key to this innovation.

To date, the CJS research function has supported operational activity within the organisation to begin to develop an evidence base of effective community justice practices. We must now begin to work strategically to inform our activities, and those of our partners, by developing a robust evidence base that informs strategic decision making. We must lead the development and sharing of knowledge, understanding and expertise to ultimately achieve positive outcomes for people across our country.

Purpose of Strategy

This Research Strategy 2020-2023 is aligned to the CJS Corporate Plan 2020-2023 and outlines our vision and ambition to be a recognised hub of research expertise, leading our partners in the field of community justice research.

Our Partners and Stakeholders

CJS statutory partners are outlined in the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016. They are:

- · each local authority
- · each Health Board
- the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Scotland
- the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Skills Development Scotland
- each Integration Joint Board
- the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service
- the Scottish Ministers (the Scottish Prison Service and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service)

In addition to our statutory partners, the research function within CJS seeks to engage with a wide range of individuals and organisations who can contribute to the development of community justice research:



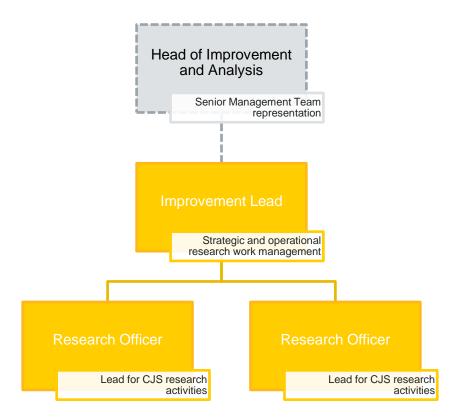
Research Statement

The following statement outlines the CJS ambition to be recognised as experts in the field of research and evidence:

CJS research is the gathering, collation and analysis of data and information through asking the right questions and addressing gaps using a systematic and collaborative process to reach new conclusions, increase shared understanding and improve outcomes for people

CJS Research Team

The current research capacity within CJS is outlined in the diagram below. The Research Team delivers research projects and supports all teams across CJS in the planning, delivery and presentation of research activity.



CJS Research Budget

In addition to the above staff, CJS also hold a centralised research budget. This budget is used to fund internal research activities and external research projects, all of which must be approved by the CJS Research and Ethics Committee (REC) (see Research Governance).

The total research budget for the 2020/21 period is £15,000. This is lower than in previous years (the 2019/20 research budget totalled £37,500) due to the challenging economic climate. We are required by Scottish Government to spend this budget in full in-year and we must proactively plan for this to ensure research work is completed within necessary timescales.

In line with annual budget setting by Scottish Government, we won't know the research budget for the subsequent two years of the lifetime of this strategy (2021-2023) until after each year's Spending Review. Research work plans across the lifetime of this strategy will routinely consider the budget to ensure that research activities achieve best value for money against the research objectives.

Research Priorities and Objectives 2020-2023

Our research will align to the three outcomes set out in the CJS Corporate Plan 2020-2023:

- Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending and provide equal access to services
- Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way
- · There is improved understanding and participation in community justice

To inform each of these outcomes, we are committed to four strategic research objectives:

- We will conduct high quality research to support CJS activity:
 - Enhance the community justice evidence base
 - o Influence policy and legislation
 - o Inform communications team campaign work
 - o Inform the design and delivery of training
 - Support improvement activity across Scotland
- We will communicate research findings to the wider public to promote smart justice
- We will proactively engage with key community justice stakeholders to increase a shared understanding and influence practice and policy
- We will maintain and develop our expertise by exchanging and building knowledge with national and international experts

Research Activities

The following table provides an overview of research activities in CJS and how these aim to fulfil the research objectives previously listed. Each objective is detailed further in Appendix A.

OBJECTIVE 1: We will conduct high quality research to:

- Enhance the community justice evidence base
- Influence policy and legislation
- Inform communications team campaign work
- Develop the design and delivery of training
- Support improvement activity across Scotland

Key Activities	Impact / Ambition
Identify opportunities for research to grow the	High quality research is produced in support of all
community justice evidence base	CJS teams
Design primary research and oversee delivery of	CJS research offers maximum value and impact,
research in support of all teams across CJS	filling gaps in the existing evidence base to increase
	understanding of 'what works' in community justice
Desk-based research using thematic trend data	
and academic sources	This evidence base contributes to the improvement
	of community justice services, interventions,
Implement and monitor the Research Strategy and	practices and policies at national and local levels
strategic research work plans	across Scotland
Deliver and manage the CJS Research and Ethics	CJS adheres to strict and consistent ethical practice
Committee	

OBJECTIVE 2: We will communicate research fin	dings to the wider public to promote smart justice
Key Activities	Impact / Ambition
Compile research reports that are accessible to	CJS is a respected international leader in community
partners and the wider public	justice related evidence
Publish all research reports through the CJS	CJS research portfolio is recognised as expert by all
website and social media channels	partners
Produce regular research bulletins with summaries	Public awareness of, and support for, smart justice is
of recent and relevant research	increased
Identify and utilise opportunities to disseminate	
research findings using innovative methods to	
reach wide activity bases	

OBJECTIVE 3: We will proactively engage with key community justice stakeholders to increase a							
shared understanding and influence practice and	l policy						
Key Activities	Impact / Ambition						
Produce research to inform and influence practice	CJS is a respected international leader in community						
and policy discussions and decision making (in line	justice related evidence						
with objective 1)							
	CJS research portfolio is recognised as expert by all						
Host and attend regular meetings/fora with	partners						
statutory partners and stakeholders							
	CJS research and ambition is aligned to that of our						
Seek opportunities for stakeholder engagement to	key partners and stakeholders						
further the reach of CJS							
	CJS research portfolio is used as an evidence base						
Attend conferences and events to further the scope	to underpin partner improvement activity bringing						
and profile of CJS	greater consistency to community justice approaches						

OBJECTIVE 4: We will maintain and develop our expertise by exchanging and building knowledge with national and international experts

Key Activities	Impact / Ambition
Develop work plans that are aligned with our	CJS are experts in the field of national and
partners to ensure maximum impact and value of	international community justice research with a
research	robust understanding of the ongoing research
	landscape
Support and engage with the CJS Academic	
Advisory Group	
Attend conferences and events to further the scope and profile of CJS	
Develop and maintain research library within CJS	
to further knowledge of current research practices	
and findings	

Research Principles

CJS has an overarching principle of responsible research. As the EU Commission's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme¹ states:

"Responsible research and innovation is an approach that anticipates and assesses potential implications and societal expectations with regard to research and innovation, with the aim to foster the design of inclusive and sustainable research and innovation"

The responsible research approach implies that all parties involved in research should work together to ensure that the research process and its outcomes is aligned to the values, needs and expectations of society.

CJS will underpin a responsible research approach with the following principles:

Our research will...

- ... be informed by people with lived/living experience of the justice system
- ... respect peoples' rights
- ... be led by a trauma-informed approach
- ... ensure the wellbeing of participants
- ... be proportionate and appropriate
- ... be transparent and honest and our results will be communicated openly
- ... provide value for money
- ... be led by Research Officers who are trained and supported to carry out their duties
- ... protect the reputation and integrity of CJS
- ... be governed by our internal Research and Ethics Committee (REC) to ensure these principles are adhered to

¹ EU Commission Horizon 2020 Programme. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/responsible-research-innovation [Accessed 29/10/2019].

Lived/Living Experience of the Justice System

CJS research will, where appropriate, be informed by lived/living experience of the justice system: the personal and unique experiences of those people who have been/are impacted on by the justice system in Scotland, including individuals who are accused, their families and friends, and victims and witnesses. People with lived/living experience might be involved in various aspects of the research, including the design, delivery and dissemination of research or as participants in the research itself. The involvement of people with lived/living experience in our research will always be subject to our trauma-informed approach and the safeguarding principles included within our Terms and Conditions of Research.

Phenomenological research methods, underpinned by philosophical theory, illuminate specific experiences of 'actors' in a situation and emphasise the importance of personal perception and subjective interpretation to gain insight into people's motivations and actions. Most commonly, these research methods utilise qualitative methods such as interviews to generate an in-depth account of an individual's experience. By exploring personal experience, phenomenological research findings can challenge structural or normative assumptions and inform, support or challenge policy and practice². Using these methods to explore experiences of the justice system, and specifically of community justice, are relatively emergent and will offer opportunities to challenge current approaches and beliefs about the justice system in Scotland. We will generate measures of lived/living experience of the justice system that will contribute to our evidence and understanding of the impact of community-based approaches and service provision.

CJS Research Series: Lived Experience of the Scottish Justice System

The Research Team has developed a framework for an ongoing Research Series which focuses on lived/living experiences of the justice system. This series aims to address gaps in knowledge related to the range and diversity of factors that can impact on people's experiences of different stages of the justice system through individual, targeted pieces of research that align to the various journeys that people may take. In line with CJS values, in capturing the experiences of people across Scotland we ensure that our activities are informed and shaped by the perspective of people who will be affected by our decisions.

² Lester, S. (1999) 'An introduction to phenomenological research'. Taunton UK, Stan Lester Developments

Research Governance

A research tasking process (Appendix B) is in place to manage the support requested from the CJS Research Team.

The CJS Research and Ethics Committee (REC) considers all research proposals (both internally generated and externally requested) prior to a decision being taken on whether the research should progress or any funding provided. For a research proposal to progress the Terms and Conditions of Research (Appendix C) must be met. All research approved is disseminated by CJS as appropriate upon publication.

The following diagram illustrates the CJS process for both internal research projects from identification to procurement, and external requests for funding of research proposals.

All internal and external research proposals must be submitted to CJS using the Research Proposal Application Form

applications. The group will make the decision whether to approve the research, including the release of funds to external candidates or for research to be externally

CJS REC will feed back decisions in writing to all applicants and will keep a record of all applications and feedback provided

Where appropriate.
contracts will be drawn up
and signed. If necessary, a
Research Officer will liaise
with Scottish Government
Procurement to buy-in
services. The CJS Finance
Team will make all
necessary provisions

The REC publishes an annual report detailing the output of meetings that have taken place, the financial decisions that have been taken throughout the year and what changes, if any, should be made going forward. The most recent REC annual report is available on the CJS website.

Delivering the Strategy and Measuring Success

Responsibility for delivery of the Research Strategy lies with the Head of Analysis and Improvement. This strategy, which will be overseen by a designated Improvement Lead, will inform a strategic research work plan that will be monitored and developed on an ongoing basis.

This strategy will also form part of a wider action plan emerging from the development of a CJS Information and Data Strategy, which will ensure delivery of an Analysis and Research function within CJS that is underpinned by a coherent suite of strategies and in line with the CJS Corporate Plan.

We will monitor progress of the strategy regularly and, thereafter, report annually on the delivery of it to the CJS Senior Management Team and CJS Board. This annual review of our research activities will ensure we are delivering maximum impact and value for money, will identify future development requirements within the CJS research function and will capture our research ambitions, all of which will be in accordance with the identified CJS corporate priorities.

Further Information

For further information about this strategy please contact:

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Appendix A: Research objectives in detail

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1

We will conduct **high quality research** to: enhance the community justice evidence base; influence policy and legislation; inform communications team campaign work; develop and design the delivery of training; support improvement activity across Scotland

CJS CORPORATE OUTCOME(S)

Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending and provide equal access to services

Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way

There is improved understanding and participation in community justice

INPUTS	INPUTS OUTPUTS YEAR OF			YEAR TWO		YEAR THREE		IMPACT &
INPUIS	0011013	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	AMBITION
What we invest: Research Strategy Research Officer posts (2FTE) and part	What we do: Identify opportunities for research to grow the community justice evidence base	An evidence base is developed that informs activity within CJS	Number of research reports completed Subsequent activity resulting from research reports	An evidence base is further developed that informs prioritisation of activity within CJS	Year one measures will continue Evidence of research being used to prioritise CJS activities	Year two outcome will continue	Year one and two measures will continue	High quality research is produced in support of all CJS teams CJS research offers maximum
(0.5FTE) Improvement Lead post Ongoing personal / skills development for research team Existing research base Software	Design primary research and oversee / support delivery of research by all CJS teams Desk-based research using thematic trend data and academic	The research tasking process is used by all CJS teams and research support is increased	Evidence of research tasking process being used by CJS staff Number of requests for research support Number of projects supported by research team	Year one outcome will continue The research tasking process is monitored and developed to ensure it is fit for purpose	Year one measures will continue Review of research tasking process	An appropriate and successful research tasking process is embedded into all CJS project-based work	Year one and two measures will continue	value and impact, filling gaps in the existing evidence base to increase understanding of 'what works' in community justice This evidence base contributes to the improvement of community justice services,
packages / equipment to conduct research Input from CJS staff, partners and stakeholders to inform research	Deliver and manage the CJS Research and Ethics Committee (REC)	All CJS research is subject to strict governance processes that ensure consistent ethical practice and avoid any work that would be detrimental to CJS	Number of REC meetings held Actions arising from REC meetings Number of research proposals supported / rejected by REC, with reasons	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measures will continue	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measures will continue	interventions, practices and policies at national and local levels across Scotland CJS adheres to strict and consistent ethical practice

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2

We will proactively engage with key community justice stakeholders to increase a shared understanding and influence practice and policy CJS CORPORATE OUTCOME(S)

Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending and provide equal access to services

Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way

There is improved understanding and participation in community justice

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	YEAR ONE		YEAR TWO		YEAR THREE		IMPACT &
INPUIS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	AMBITION
What we invest: Research Strategy Research Officer posts (2FTE) and part (0.5FTE)	What we do: Produce research to inform practice and policy discussions and decision making Host and attend	CJS research reports inform practice and policy discussions	Number of research reports in response to policy developments	CJS research reports inform practice and policy discussions	Number of research reports in response to and anticipation of policy developments, used to inform decision making	CJS research reports inform practice and policy discussions	Year two measure will continue	CJS is a respected international leader in community justice related evidence CJS research portfolio is recognised as expert by all
Improvement Lead post Input from and meetings with statutory partners and stakeholders Budget for attendance at, and travel to, key conferences and events	regular meetings/fora with statutory partners and stakeholders to develop research Seek opportunities for stakeholder engagement to further the reach of the team Attend conferences and	Stakeholder engagement and partnership working to discuss and plan research activity is initiated and developed	Number of meetings arranged and attended with key research stakeholders Actions arising from meetings, including further research proposals or recommendation for policy/practice development	Stakeholder engagement and partnership working to discuss and plan research activity is encouraged and strengthened and increases our and our partners understanding	Year one measures will continue Number of invitations to attend research- meetings with key stakeholders and partners Internal / external surveys of understanding pre- and post- research	Stakeholder engagement and partnership working to discuss and plan research activity is a routine practice within CJS research and increases our and our partners understanding	Year one and two measures will continue Number of meetings that are part of routine research practice	partners CJS research and ambition is aligned to that of our key partners and stakeholders CJS research portfolio is used as an evidence base to underpin partner improvement activity bringing greater consistency to community justice approaches
	events to further the scope and profile of the team	Attendance at conferences and events to promote CJS research	Number of research conferences and events attended Evidence of CJS research being promoted at conferences / events	Attendance at conferences and events to promote CJS research	Year one measures will continue	Attendance at conferences and events to promote CJS research	Year one measures will continue	

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3

We will maintain and develop our expertise by exchanging and building knowledge with national and international experts CJS CORPORATE OUTCOME(S)

There is improved understanding and participation in community justice

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	YEAR ONE		YEAR		YEAR 1		IMPACT &
INFUIS	0017013	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	AMBITION
What we invest: Research	What we do: Develop work	CJS continue to develop expertise	Work plans consider a range	CJS continue to develop expertise in	Year one measure will continue	CJS continue to develop expertise in	Year one and two measures will	CJS are experts in the field of national
Strategy	plans that are streamlined with	in community justice through	of inter- departmental	community justice through robust	Work plans	community justice through robust	continue	and international community justice
Research Officer posts (2FTE) and part (0.5FTE) Improvement Lead post	our partners, notably Justice Analytical Services, that ensure maximum impact and	robust research	research activity to add value across the organisation	research, with clear value added across the justice landscape	consider activity being developed by our partners to ensure value across the justice sector	research, with clear value added across the justice landscape		research with a robust understanding of the ongoing research landscape
Input from our partners and stakeholders into strategic work plans, notably Justice Analytical Services	value of research Deliver and manage the CJS Academic Advisory Group (AAG) Attend	CJS continues to build and develop relationships within academia to ensure the ongoing development of our knowledge base	Number of AAG meetings held Actions arising from AAG meetings	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measures will continue	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measures will continue	
attendance at, and travel to, meetings with academics and professional bodies	conferences and events to further the scope and profile of the team	Attendance at meetings, conferences and events to develop our knowledge	Number of research conferences and events attended and evidence of the benefits	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measure will continue	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measure will continue	
Budget for attendance at, and travel to, key conferences and events Software and technology to hold a research library	Develop and maintain research library within CJS to further knowledge of current research practices and findings	A CJS research library (digital/physical) is established	Number of entries in the CJS research library Evidence of the use of the research library by CJS staff	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measures will continue	Year one outcome will continue	Year one measures will continue	

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 4

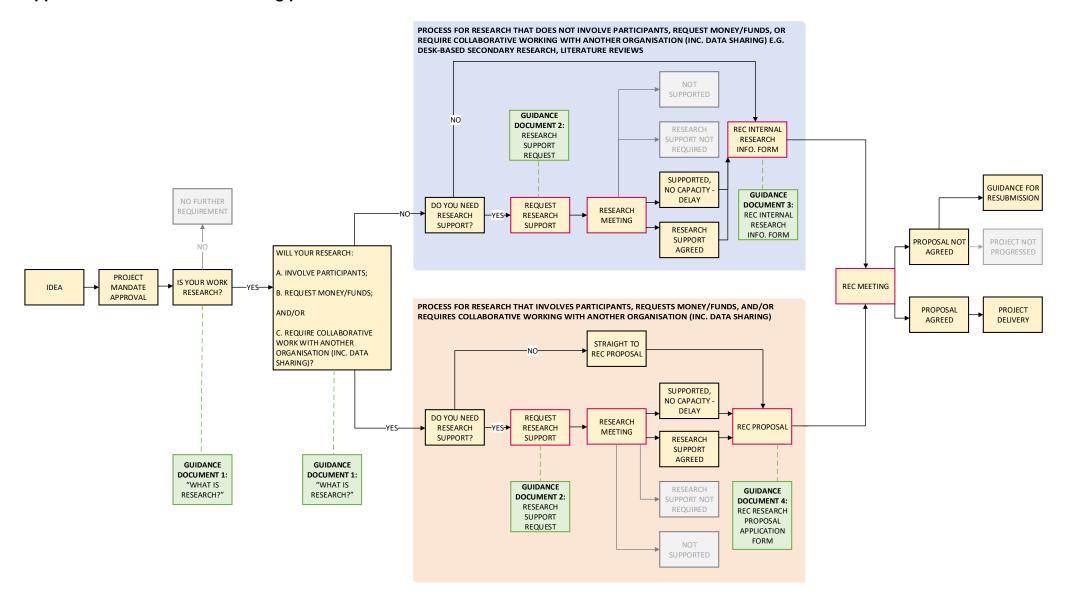
We will communicate research findings to the wider public to promote smart justice

CJS CORPORATE OUTCOME(S)

There is improved understanding and participation in community justice

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	YEAR ONE		YEAR TWO		YEAR THREE		IMPACT &
INFUIS	OUIFUIS	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	AMBITION
What we invest: Research Strategy Research Officer posts (2FTE) and part (0.5FTE)	What we do: Compile research reports that are accessible to partners and the wider public	CJS research reports are disseminated to our statutory partners, stakeholders and the public	Number of reports disseminated Number of online engagements with reports (CJS website and social media)	CJS research reports are disseminated to statutory partners, stakeholders and the public, with a wider reach	Year one measures will continue	CJS research reports are disseminated to statutory partners, stakeholders and the public, with a wider reach	Year one measures will continue	CJS is a respected international leader in community justice related evidence CJS research portfolio is recognised as
Improvement Lead post Collaborative working with CJS Communications Team Software and technology required to	Produce regular research bulletins with summaries of recent and relevant research Publish all research reports through the CJS website and	CJS research bulletins are disseminated to highlight research activity in the justice sector to our partners, stakeholders and the public	Number of bulletins disseminated Number of online engagements with bulletins (CJS website and social media)	CJS research bulletins are disseminated to our partners, stakeholders and the public, with a wider reach	Year one measures will continue	CJS research bulletins are disseminated to our partners, stakeholders and the public, with a wider reach	Year one measures will continue	expert by all partners Public awareness of, and support for, smart justice is increased
produce research products	social media channels Identify and utilise opportunities to disseminate research findings using innovative methods to reach wide activity bases							

Appendix B: CJS research tasking process



Appendix C: CJS Terms and Conditions of Research

- All research must involve and take into consideration the experience and needs of people with lived/living experience of the justice system, where appropriate
- All research must inform and support improvement in the practice and delivery of services related to community justice, and for impact beyond academic research
- All research must avoid duplication, either in terms of the purpose, focus, intended primary impact, or work that has taken place previously by CJS or other stakeholders and be addressing an identified research gap
- All research must be aligned with and in support of CJS's strategic aims and outcomes;
- All research must receive approval from CJS Research and Ethics Committee
- Researchers must adhere to the General Data Protection Regulations³ (GDPR)
- Consent must be obtained by all participants prior to inclusion in any research
- All participants must be made aware that they may withdraw their consent at any time, and, as per GDPR, their data can be withdrawn by them prior to publication
- Participants must be informed of the purpose of the study, and the uses that will be made of their data
- Participants must be guaranteed that all information shared will be used confidentially, will be anonymised at the earliest time possible, all data will be held securely
- All proposals must meet the standards described by the relevant codes of ethical considerations?
 (i.e. British Psychological Society Code of Ethics⁴ and Conduct, British Sociological Association Statement of Ethical Practice⁵ and British Society of Criminology Statement of Ethics⁶)
- No research is carried out which may be detrimental to Community Justice Scotland in terms of ethical failings
- All proposals will be considered by a group of professionals within CJS and are marked consistently
- All proposals are considered together at specific periods and must be submitted electronically by the specified cut-off date
- CJS Research Budget will be considered by the Research and Ethics Committee when reviewing any research proposal
- CJS may agree, in principle, to fund research pending approval from any other necessary parties that are relevant to the individual research
- Prior to changes being made to ongoing research (subsequent to initial CJS Research and Ethics Committee approval) this must be raised in writing with the Research Co-ordinator who may require to further raise this with the Research and Ethics Committee

 $^{^{3}\} https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/$

⁴ https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/bps-code-ethics-and-conduct

⁵ https://www.britsoc.co.uk/media/24310/bsa_statement_of_ethical_practice.pdf

⁶ http://www.britsoccrim.org/documents/BSCEthics2015.pdf

- CJS may terminate its involvement with a piece of research at any time with appropriate justification.

 All contractual obligations will be met
- CJS has no liability for loss or damage to researchers' property or personal injury that occurs whilst undertaking funded research
- The researcher must submit updates to research and the agreed final work at dates agreed with CJS. Any changes to this must be submitted in writing to the Research Co-ordinator at the earliest possible time
- CJS will co-own any funded research and may promote this work in its entirety or as a summary and use this work as part of an evidence base for CJS purposes
- All final productions should feature the CJS logo and recognise CJS as co-funders of the work
- Funded research will involve additional contractual obligations



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