The European Social Survey
Round 13 Question Module Design Teams (QDT)

Guidance for Stage 2 Applications - Repeat modules

1. Introduction

This document provides guidance for teams who have been invited by the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) of the ESS ERIC to submit a **Stage 2 application** to design a rotating module to be included as part of Round 13 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 **repeats of previous ESS modules.** At least two-thirds of the items in the repeat module must be administered in an identical format to those in the earlier module[1]. Applications for repeat modules are invited both from teams who designed the original ESS module on the topic and from new teams.

Teams invited to submit a Stage 2 application for a new 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 13.

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.

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[1] ESS will use a fully self-completion (web and paper) approach for data collection from Round 13. This differs with the face-to-face approach used for previous rounds. The use of 'identical' format here refers to question wording and response options rather than the mode of administration.

- 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 repeat 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 repeating an ESS module on the proposed topic. This should include an explanation for why it is important to collect new cross-national evidence on the topic in 2027-28. Teams should explain how the module will build on the evidence provided by the previous module and make a further contribution to our 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, drawing on examples of how the previous module has been used.

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. Teams should explain what parts of the proposed framework are the same as the approach used in the previous module(s) and (where applicable) how and why the proposed framework deviates from the previous approach.

Implementation (c. 4000 words)
Applicants should provide details of how they propose to operationalise their theoretical and conceptual model, repeating at least two-thirds of the items from the previous module and using a maximum of 30 standardised closed survey items.[2] Teams should provide an initial indication of which items from the previous module they think might be repeated and the reasons for these choices. Choices should be supported by evidence on the measurement quality and performance of the items cross-nationally wherever possible.

Where new concepts are proposed, teams should outline how they propose to operationalise these, drawing on existing questions and evidence from other surveys where appropriate. However, please note that the final decision on which repeat items to retain and the development of any new items will need to be discussed with the ESS Core Scientific Team (CST). Any new items will 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. Where appropriate they should

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[2] Note that complex questions that take longer to administer may be counted as more than one item in the final module.

refer to any difficulties uncovered when using data from the previous module. Teams should also note that the geographical spread and institutional and cultural diversity of ESS countries may have expanded since the previous module was fielded and reflect on any additional challenges this may pose in terms of equivalence or translation. Teams should reflect on how these methodological problems might be overcome and any testing or development work that might be required to do so. It is also crucial for teams to consider how the module can be implemented as part of ESS's self-completion approach which will be used from Round 13. This should include ensuring suitability of the module for the paper questionnaire (as well as web), noting any repeat items that may prove challenging n this respect (and noting possible solutions/alternatives).

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, including any engagement in the development or use of previous ESS modules. Applicants should outline how the team's skills and experience complement one another, including how this will help them to develop an updated module that works cross-nationally across a diverse set of 30+ countries. They should describe 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. Applicants should provide evidence of any track record of publication or other dissemination activities using data from previous ESS modules. Please provide details of any plans to apply for additional funding to support analysis and dissemination of the repeat 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 13 module application" in the subject line.

Applications must be received by **17:00 UK time** on **Friday 11th October 2024.**

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 2024 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 SAB within five working days.

Two rotating modules will be selected – either two new modules, two repeat modules or one of each. It is expected that successful teams will be notified by late November 2024. The SAB's decision is final.