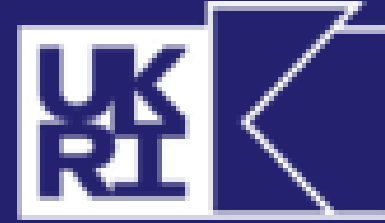**Smart Data Research UK**

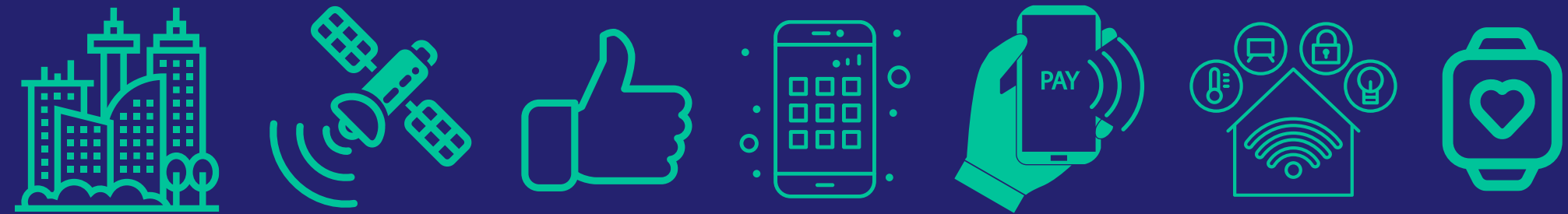**UKRI** UK Research and Innovation

UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

Smart data for research and innovation

There is great potential to use **smart data for good**, but it's difficult for researchers to access and use

Smart data is generated through everyday interactions with digital systems, devices and sensors.
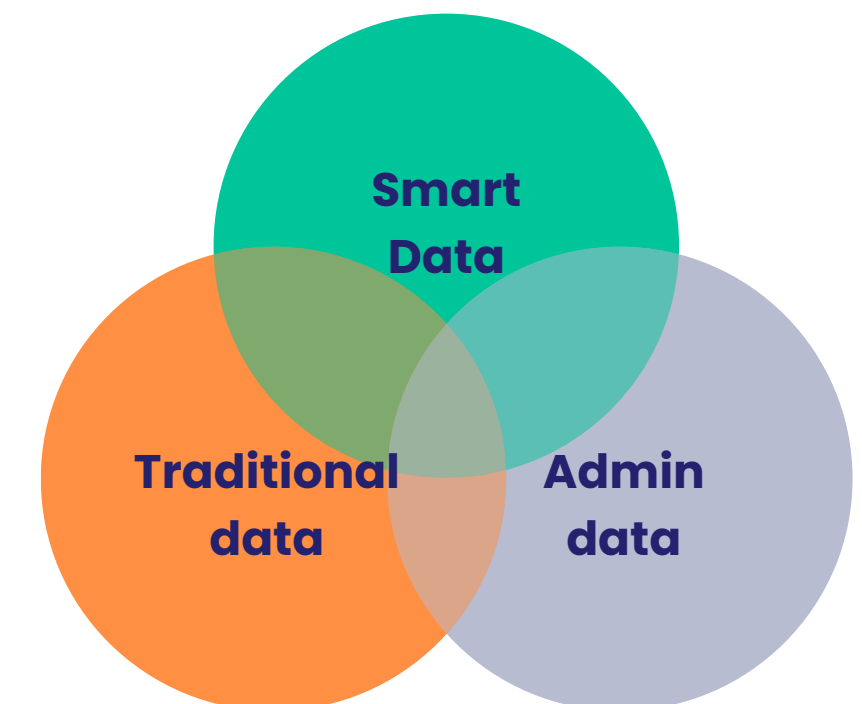
Significant potential

A rich resource for understanding society, improving lives, and sustainable growth.

Significant challenges

Difficult to form data access agreements between private sector companies and researchers. Lack of methods, skills, tools, and reproducibility.

Smart Data

Traditional data

Admin data

![Smart Data Research UK logo]

£59m
investment
2024 – 2029

1. Data services

2. Central hub

3. Federation

4. Flexible funds

Let's do **good things** with data

Smart Data Research UK

Cooperate, Collaborate, Federate

Let's do **good things** with data

Data services

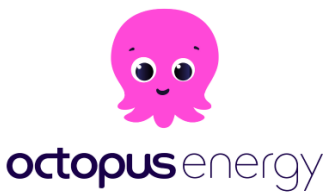Acquire, develop and steward data. Manage secure settings and access.

Smart data sources

Sainsbury's airbnb STRAVA Zoopla octopus energy

Research themes

The public ←→ **Strategic hub**

Our data services

Smart Data Research UK (SDR UK) is investing nearly £30 million in new data services, enabling researchers across the UK to access new forms of smart data.
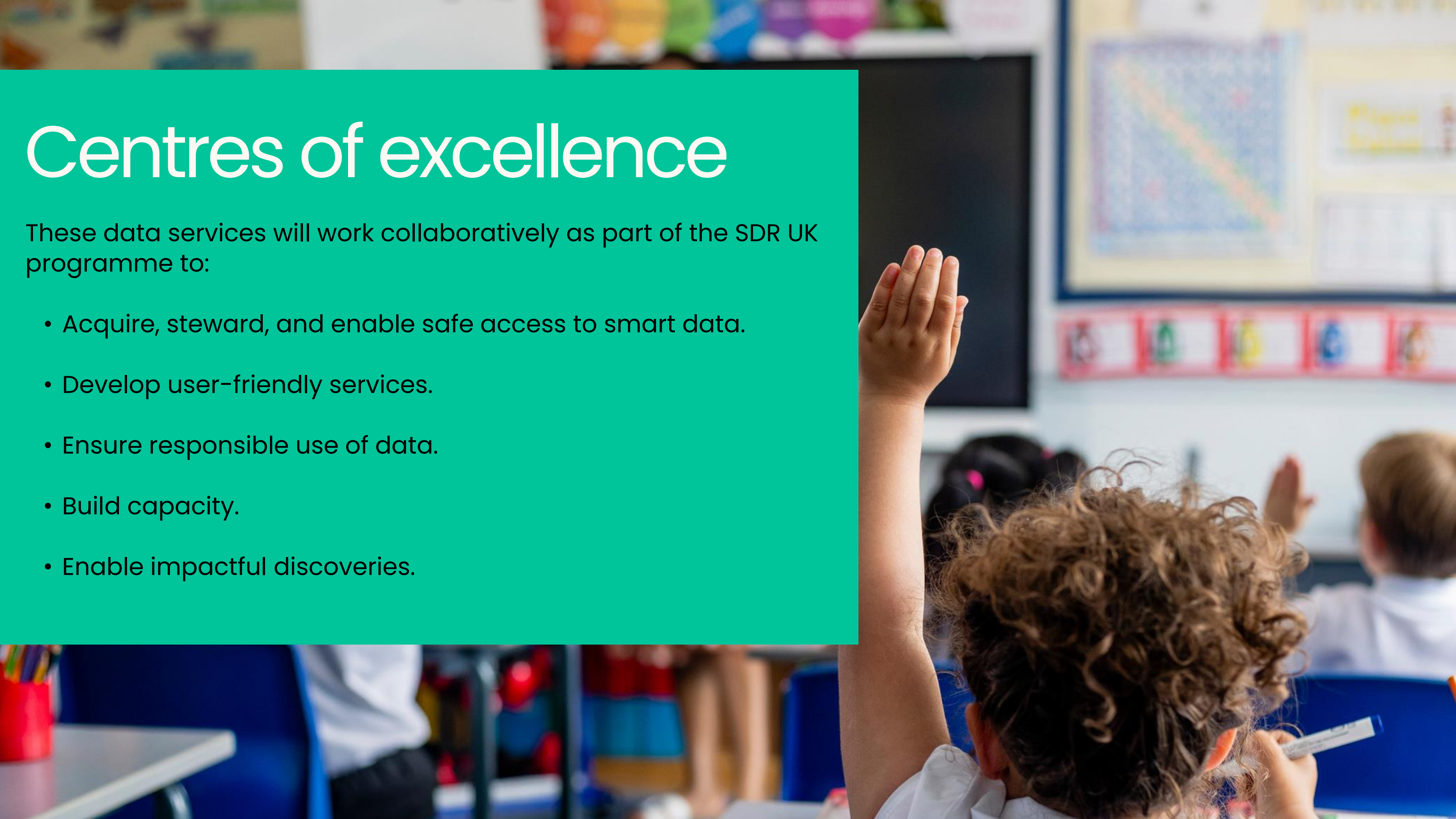
Centres of excellence

These data services will work collaboratively as part of the SDR UK programme to:

- Acquire, steward, and enable safe access to smart data.

- Develop user-friendly services.

- Ensure responsible use of data.

- Build capacity.

- Enable impactful discoveries.

Data services

Smart Data Research UK | UK Research and Innovation

Smart Data Donation Service

Smart Energy Data Service

Imago Data Service for Imagery

Geographic Data Service

Healthy and Sustainable Places Data Service

Financial Data Service

Imago
Data Service for Imagery

Imago will unlock the potential of satellite imagery to provide a much richer understanding of urgent challenges facing the UK.

Led by Professor Daniel Arribas-Bel, University of Liverpool and Professor Rachel Franklin, Newcastle University

Smart Data
Donation Service

Will address a significant gap in understanding of our digital lives by empowering citizens to take control of their own data and share it safely with researchers.

Led by Dr David Zendle and Professor Florian Block, University of York

Geographic Data Service

Will integrate a wide range of data sources to generate new insights into equitable and sustainable growth – bringing focus to geographic disparities, barriers to opportunity and the circumstances of vulnerable populations.

Led by Professor Paul Longley, University College London and Professor Alex Singleton, University of Liverpool

Healthy and Sustainable Places
Data Service

Will help address persistent and pressing challenges that cut across health and sustainability, and discover new ways to understand local economies, health, lifestyles, and transportation patterns.

Led by Professor Nik Lomax, Professor Michelle Morris, Professor Ed Manley, and Professor Mark Birkin, University of Leeds

Financial
Data Service

The Financial Data Service will provide unprecedented insights into the UK's economic health through secure access to de-identified banking and finance data from millions of households and businesses.

Led by Professor Chris Dibben from the University of Edinburgh and Dougie Robb from Smart Data Foundry

Smart Energy
Data Service

Will transform our understanding of the UK's energy system by providing secure access to data from power networks, electric vehicles and energy meters alongside socio-economic indicators.
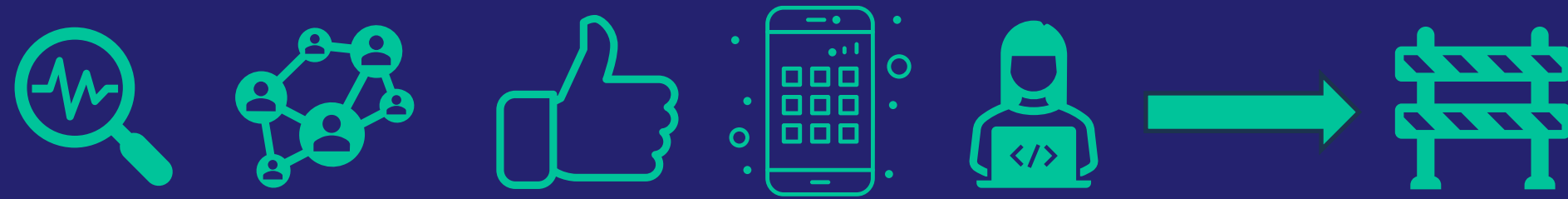
Led by Richard Snape from the Energy Systems Catapult and Professor Peter Grindrod from the University of Oxford.

The Problem: barriers to accessing **Social Media Data**

Social media data holds **immense potential** for researchers across various disciplines, but accessing this data is challenging.

Inconsistent availability and quality of data	Lack of standardized access protocols and mechanisms	Complex issues of ethics and public trust
Limited engagement with data owners and skills gaps in data analysis	Over-reliance on specific platforms, hindering diverse research	Lack of regulatory leverage for researchers to access data

The **Taskforce** will support in these objectives

Champion improved access to social media data for research

Develop clear policy positions on data acquisition

Cultivate a close relationship with Ofcom and support policy analysis around researcher access

Enhance ethical frameworks for utilizing social media data

The Taskforce will develop their deliverables under the following **Workstreams**

1. Data Access Models and Methodologies

2. Legal and Policy Framework

3. International Landscape and Best Practices

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration

To achieve the objectives, and aligned with the workstreams, the Taskforce will **deliver a range of outputs**, including:

Policy Consultation

(e.g., Ofcom) and policy forums.

Co-produced papers

Think pieces, and other publications to disseminate findings and recommendations.

Reports

Actionable recommendations for improving social media data access for research in the UK

The proposal is aligned with our program **strategic objectives**

Access — Championing and advocating for improved access to social platforms data

Trust — Gathering evidence and making recommendations to enhance ethical frameworks and shape responsible data sharing policies

Capability — Collecting and sharing knowledge, learning, and best practices in social platforms data access and use from around the world

Impact — Expanding the scope of research insights and evidence on key topics under priority themes of Digital Society, Online Safety, and Health and Wellbeing

Support from **renowned experts** in the field

Kate Dommet

University of Sheffield

Expertise: Political communication, social media data access, EU and US policy
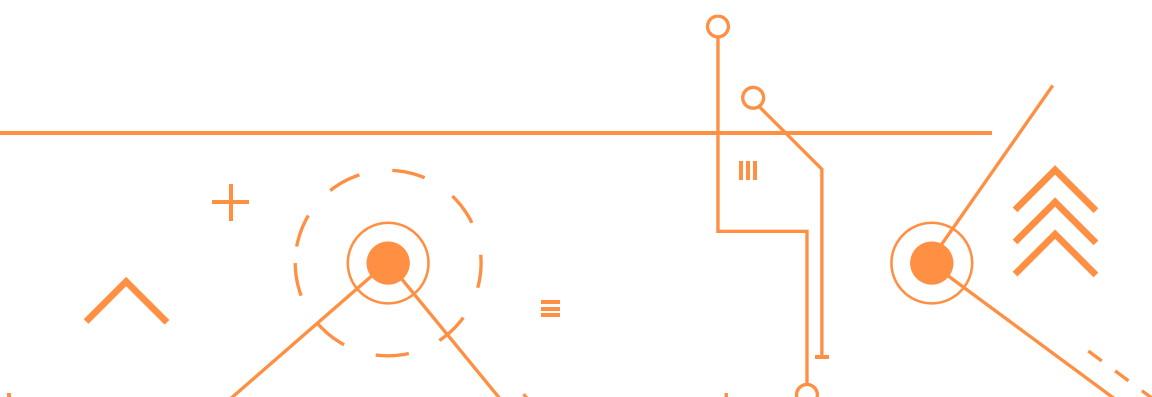
Dr Amy Orben

University of Cambridge

Expertise: Adolescent mental health, impact of social media

Dr David Zendle

University of York

Director of the Smart Data Donation Service

Thank you

✉ smartdataresesarch@ukri.org

in Smart Data Research UK

🦋 @sdruk.bsky.social