



Professor Matthew Johnson.

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The Academy of Social Sciences welcomes Northumbria Professor to its Fellowship

A public policy expert from Northumbria University, who is breaking new ground with his research on addressing inequality and exclusion, has been elected to the Fellowship of the Academy of Social Sciences.

[Professor Matthew Johnson](#) is one of 41 leading social scientists who have today been recognised for their contribution to tackling the varied challenges facing society. He joins an international community of individuals who have been selected, via an independent peer review process, for excellence in their

work and the impact on public life.

Leading a team of multidisciplinary researchers based within Northumbria's [Department of Social Work, Education and Community Wellbeing](#), Professor Johnson works to demonstrate the link between health and income, and has persuaded policy makers and politicians of the health, social and economic benefits of a Basic Income. This is a regular payment made to adults to increase their ability to cover basic needs, such as food and housing, which is not means-tested.

By uniting with other experts working across England to form the [Basic Income Health](#) research group, Professor Johnson and his team have developed evidence-based and fully costed proposals for this method of welfare reform, as a means of mitigating health and economic inequalities. Through this research, as well as informing the design and evaluation of a Basic Income trial for care leavers in Wales, Professor Johnson and his team have also won political support and significant media interest in the development of a Basic Income micro-pilot covering the areas of Jarrow in South Tyneside and East Finchley in London.

Professor Johnson, who is also founding Editor of the interdisciplinary journal of current affairs, [Global Discourse](#), said: "This recognition from the Academy is a real honour for which I am hugely grateful, but our research is group work with so many talented and dedicated colleagues. I'm very proud of everyone involved in making it happen.

"Those I work with are all committed to creating a fair, equal and inclusive Britain by developing common sense policies that redistribute resources to address the inequality and exclusion that has come to define our nation."

As chairman of the Common Sense Policy Group, a team of leading researchers and policy makers committed to championing policy which secures a fair, equal and inclusive future for Britain, Professor Johnson is overseeing the launch of a new book called *Act Now: A Vision for a Better Future and New Social Contract*. Due to be published by [Manchester University Press](#) later this year, the book aims to offer a blueprint for progressive policy on welfare, health, education, housing and more.

President of the Academy of Social Sciences, Will Hutton, said: "At a time when the importance of the social sciences to addressing many pressing

issues cannot be overstated, it's a pleasure to welcome these 41 leading social scientists to the Academy's Fellowship.

“Their contributions have furthered our understanding in tackling a wide range of societal challenges including mitigating health and economic inequalities, understanding the causes and effects of hate crime, the development of inclusive practices in education, and the future of cities. We look forward to working with them to further promote the vital role the social sciences play in all areas of our lives.”✉

The✉[Academy's Fellowship](#)✉comprises over 1,500 leading social scientists from academia, the public, private and third sectors. The new Fellows have been elected from 30 UK organisations, comprising 25 Higher Education Institutions, as well as think tanks, research institutes and nonprofits, and from countries beyond the UK including Australia and South Korea.✉

Professor Johnson is the latest Northumbria academic elected to the Fellowship. Most recently, Professor Gitanjali Nain Gill, of [Northumbria Law School](#), and Professor Alister Scott, of [Northumbria's Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences](#), were [recognised in October](#) last year.

Northumbria University is dedicated to reducing health and social inequalities and improving social, economic and health outcomes for the most marginalised in society. Through its new [Centre for Health and Social Equity](#) (CHASE), researchers will be delivering world-leading health and social equity research and creating innovative, evidence-based policies and data-driven solutions to bring impactful change across the region, the UK and globally.

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

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