



The Belonging Forum

2026 Samuel Fellows in Belonging Program

Partner Organization:

Good Faith Partnership + Warm Welcome



Project Title:

Exploring Inclusion in Warm Welcome
Spaces across the UK

2026 Samuel Fellows in Belonging Program: Project Proposal

Partner Organization: Good Faith Partnership + Warm Welcome

Founded in 2022, the Warm Welcome Campaign works to provide UK residents with places of belonging through Warm Welcome Spaces. Our bold purpose is to enable a connected society where everyone has access to welcoming community spaces. The Warm Welcome Campaign is part of the Good Faith Partnership. We unite different passions, skills and expertise around a common vision: the power of people working together to bring about lasting change.

Warm Welcome Spaces are unique community-run initiatives that operate in a way that works best for their community, united by the common principles of being warm, safe, inclusive and free to access. They are located in libraries, community centres, faith spaces, and local businesses. They help their guests to combat loneliness, offer support with issues caused by the cost-of-living crisis, and boost wellbeing. These spaces bring people together through the universal language of sharing meals and cups of tea.

We resource, connect and champion a network of more than 6,000 Warm Welcome Spaces and champion a growing coalition of local, regional, and national partners representing charity, faith, business, government, and philanthropy groups. By working together, we can unlock the power of community spaces made by and for everyone, creating a thriving network of hope and reconnection fueled by human warmth.

This work is important as it ensures everyone in the UK has a place they feel truly welcome. This research project will help support Warm Welcome Spaces to strengthen their inclusive practices and share ideas for future research and investment around inclusion for the Warm Welcome Campaign.

Learn more at: <https://www.warmwelcome.uk/> and <https://goodfaith.org.uk/>

Location of the Project: The Warm Welcome Spaces engaged in this project are located across the UK. We are looking for someone based in the UK so they can visit some of the Spaces.

The role will be done remotely for most of the project. We will provide opportunities for the Fellow to meet and co-work with members of the wider team both virtually and in person. With offices in Bristol and London, the Fellow could work from either of these offices occasionally.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Section 1: Description of the Project

The Warm Welcome Campaign has been working alongside an inclusion specialist group called NeuroAdvantage to co-develop an inclusion toolkit with Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK. The toolkit is designed to help Spaces think about ways they can strengthen the inclusive nature of their Space and create a deeper sense of belonging for a wider range of people. The Warm Welcome Campaign network currently has over 6,000 registered spaces and more than 250 of these spaces have engaged in the co-design process of this toolkit. The inclusion toolkit will be shared publicly in April 2026.

We aim to study how Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK begin to implement the findings and tools included in this toolkit. We hope to understand what is going well, what needs work, and what barriers exist to help Warm Welcome Spaces put the learning into practice. Identifying gaps in the toolkit, the fellow will work alongside Warm Welcome Spaces to develop suggestions and strategies for action.

Section 2: Goals of the Project

This research project will draw out and share best practices in strengthening inclusion and belonging between Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK. The project direction is based upon the new inclusion toolkit we are launching in April 2026. The Fellow will explore how Warm Welcome Spaces start to put this into practice, noting any barriers that emerge along the way. This project will provide key recommendations for improving the inclusion toolkit, considering perspectives from Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK.

Section 3: Guiding Questions

The intended audience of the research project is Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK. There is also a secondary audience of partner organisations who are interested in strengthening inclusion and belonging in their community networks.

Key guiding questions to be address include:

- How are Warm Welcome Spaces starting to put the new inclusion toolkit into practice?
- Are there any barriers to using the inclusion toolkit? How might Spaces overcome these barriers?
- Which areas of the inclusion toolkit are the most useful and why?
- Are there any gaps within the inclusion toolkit?
- How might we address the gaps?
- How can we share best practices for using the inclusion toolkit in Warm Welcome Spaces?

Section 4: Research Methods & Dissemination Approach: The 3 Streams

Within the Samuel Fellows in Belonging Fellowship Program, we propose three research streams:

- **Creative**
- **Advocacy**
- **Academic**

The tracks are designed to articulate the possibilities of diverse scholarship on belonging. The program recognizes that creative methods, advocacy-focused research, and academic research are all scholarly. All three tracks have the potential to address similar topics. We encourage Fellows and Partners to explore different ways of asking questions and sharing knowledge that instills belonging for the researcher and participants.

The methodological approach for this research project will be co-designed with the Fellow to ensure their skills and ideas are centrally placed within the final research design.

The research information will be learned by working with as wide a range of Warm Welcome Spaces across the UK as possible. These are some of the possible approaches that might be developed and included.

We suggest a lighter touch survey to be delivered to the whole Space network, opening opportunities for spaces to be included. Then a group of Warm Welcome Spaces could be selected for in-depth interviews, which could take place both virtually or in person. This could allow Spaces that have more capacity and interest in the subject matter to opt in to being involved.

We'd like to explore a creative output for this Fellowship. We imagine a series of short videos to foster a sense of connection and belonging across Warm Welcome Spaces to share best practices. We hope the final output is user-friendly as the key audience is people working and volunteering in Warm Welcome Spaces.

Section 5: Key Deliverables

- **Work plan:** A co-created, phased work plan outlining research activities, community engagement, and dissemination of milestones.
- **1 blog post (500 – 1,000 word):** related to the project the Fellows are working on, posted to the Belonging Forum's website.
- **Final Output:** Based on one, or a combination of research approaches chosen. **Examples:**
- **Academic stream:**
- Mandatory output: 20 – 35-page publishable scholarly contribution supported by primary or secondary source data.
- This is a mandatory output of the academic stream, however, Fellows are welcome to adopt creative methodologies or produce alternative outputs that encompass components of the other streams.
- **Advocacy stream:**
- Mandatory output: 10–15-page piece to document & advance policy/organizing impact.
- Proposed policy
- Advocacy toolkit
- **Creative stream:**

- Mandatory output: A creative or practical output coupled with an accompanying written component.
- Curated exhibition
- A series of webinars
- A photo journal, etc.
- **A Final Presentation**: A presentation to the Samuel Fellows cohort to share findings, community perspectives, and actionable recommendations.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

[About the Program/What the Program Offers](#)

The Samuel Fellows in Belonging Program empowers young people, recent graduates, and people with lived experience to engage in meaningful research and community action. At the Belonging Forum, our mission is to build connectedness within and between communities through partnerships, research, programming, learning initiatives, and advocacy. At the Belonging Forum, fostering belonging is central to our work. The Belonging Forum approaches the definition of belonging as connection to the 4 Ps: people, place, power, and purpose. This is to say that belonging comes through our relationships with other people as well as through our rootedness in nature, our ability to influence social, political and economic decision-making, and our capacity to find shared meaning and purpose in our lives. The program offers a unique opportunity to apply the lens of belonging to issues that matter, to think intersectionally, and holistically about the problems of the 21st century – while working alongside experts and community leaders.

This is a paid opportunity from June 2026 – February 2027. Fellows will carry out the research part-time on a schedule agreed between the scholar, the partner, and the Belonging Forum. The Fellow will receive a bursary to support their work.

The Program offers:

- A flexible, part-time research opportunity.

- A bursary to support your research calculated based on cost of living where the Fellow is based and number of hours committed.
- Work with national & international community partners.
- Capacity building, skills development, & mentorship.
- Network and team building opportunities.
- All works produced by the Fellows are published on the Belonging Forum website and promoted on our social media channels.

Equity Statement

We encourage all equity-seeking groups such as immigrants, Black and Indigenous communities, people of color, women, young people, 2SLGBTQ+ community members, and people with disabilities to apply. Please let us know if you need any accommodation throughout the application and interview process and we will be happy to support you.

Thank you for your interest in the Samuel Fellows in Belonging Program. We thank all applicants for their interest, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Key Attributes and Skills in the Applicant

Some of the key skills that would be required for the project include:

- Fluency in English (both spoken and written)
- Attention to detail
- Planning and organising skills
- Survey and research design skills
- Experience and understanding of community work
- Commitment to developing inclusive practice and spaces
- Communication skills to develop positive trusting relationships with a wide range of people
- Video filming and editing skills (or the interest and willingness to learn these skills)