

Call for an Independent Researcher (Consultant)

Project: Mapping UK and International Definitions of Parentage and the ELSI of Ectogenesis

Organisation: Center for Bioethics and Health Policy (UK)

Contract: Part-time consultancy, remote

Application deadline: 5 January (we reserve the right to close the vacancy early)

Intended Start date: Week commencing 19 January 2026

About the Project

The Center for Bioethics and Health Policy is launching a new project examining how definitions of parentage in the UK and selected international jurisdictions may shift if ectogenesis or artificial womb technologies become available. The project will involve mapping current legal frameworks, identifying areas of uncertainty, and synthesising key ethical, legal, and social implications (ELSI) from existing academic and policy literature.

Role Overview

We are seeking an independent researcher to conduct a structured mapping of parentage definitions and analyse how these frameworks may be challenged or reshaped by ectogenesis. The role involves desk research, legal and policy analysis, and production of a clear written summary of findings. This consultancy is suitable for an early-career or mid-career researcher with expertise in reproductive law, ethics, health policy, or related fields who is comfortable working independently.

Key Responsibilities

- Map UK definitions of parentage using statutory and case law sources.
- Map parentage frameworks in selected international jurisdictions.
- Identify areas of ambiguity or legal uncertainty that ectogenesis may expose.
- Review academic and policy literature on the ELSI of ectogenesis and reproductive innovation.
- Produce a written overview summarising legal approaches, key themes, and potential implications for governance.
- Participate in brief check-in meetings with the project lead.

Essential Qualifications

- Background in law, bioethics, health policy, STS, sociology of reproduction, or a related field.
- Experience in desk research, legal analysis, or literature synthesis.
- Ability to summarise complex material clearly and systematically.
- Familiarity with reproductive ethics, ART, or family law.



Desirable Experience

- Comparative or international legal research.
- Prior work on ELSI topics or emerging technologies.
- Experience writing for interdisciplinary or policy audiences.

Deliverables

- Mapping document outlining UK and international parentage definitions.
- Synthesis of key ELSI themes from the literature.
- Short report summarising implications of ectogenesis for future policy.

How to Apply

Please send the following to enquiries@centerforbioethics.co.uk with the subject line **Independent Researcher Application: Parentage and Ectogenesis:**

1. **An Expression of Interest of no more than 500 words**, which must include:
 - your motivations for applying
 - your relevant experience
 - your proposed consultancy day rate
 - your proposed start date
2. An up-to-date CV (2 pages maximum).
3. A brief summary of how you would approach the task.
4. **Optional:** One relevant writing sample

Please upload all documents as one PDF.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until **5 January**, and we reserve the right to close the vacancy early if strong applications are received.

