This project investigates the role of the Project Management (PM) profession in developing a sustainable economy. Sustainability has acquired a growing strategic importance over the last 10 years, bringing with it a requirement for changes in traditional practices and paradigms of production for its successful implementation. These changes are typically managed as projects and delivered by dedicated project managers, who are assumed to have the knowledge and skills to take into account the social, financial, political, cultural, and environmental sustainability of a project. As such project managers, through their distinctive roles, skills, and competencies, occupy an important position in accomplishing sustainability, but little is understood about how they do this.

Using qualitative methods such as interviews, content analysis, and ethnographic observation, it focuses on how sustainability is incorporated into PM discourse and practice by studying: how the profession makes sense of sustainability, and sustainability in practice.

The topic of the project is very timely as it addresses the sixth point currently on the Horizon 2020 agenda: Inclusive Innovative and Reflective Societies. The expected contributions of this fellowship will be in: (a) explaining the institutionalization of sustainability within PM professional practices; (b) identifying under what conditions project managers adopt sustainability practices; (c) conceptualizing sustainability in PM contexts.

This fellowship is located in the Professionals, Work and Organization (PWO) Research Group at Newcastle University benefiting from the groups’ world-leading expertise on professional occupations and organizations, to enable me to develop theory and knowledge in the field of PM as a profession advancing sustainability as a practice and outcome.