Leslie is Reader in Social Enterprise at the Open University Business School and a member of co-ordinating committee of the cross-faculty research centre, The Centre for Innovation and Knowledge Development (IKD). He is co-leader of the Knowledge Innovation and Entrepreneurship (KIE) research theme in the Business School and writes The Sceptical Economist blog.

Prior to joining the OUBS in 2001 he was at Brunel University’s Business School, Senior Economist at the West London Training and Enterprise Council and had a long career at London Guildhall University.

Leslie began his career in structural engineering and switched to economics as a mature student. His academic career has been interspersed with research secondments in France and Germany working on the relationship between decentralisation and economic governance. He was formerly Chair of the Regional Studies Association and was made Academician of the Academy of Social Sciences for his contribution to regional studies.

He is an economist who is well known internationally for his work in regional and urban economics in the context of global financial markets. He also undertook the regional economic analysis of the first Outline Spatial Strategy for Iraq. His current interests cover a range of issues including the analysis of eGovernance in combating social exclusion in Europe, based upon the European Commission funded EGOV4U project. He is currently Chair of the Urban and Regional Economics Study Group.