

UCD RESEARCH CAREERS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



2ND EDITION (Updated June 2023)

University College Dublin
Ireland's Global University





WELCOME FROM UCD RESEARCH CAREERS

This second edition handbook has been compiled by the Research Careers team and continues to supplement the UCD Postdoc Careers Orientation event. As with the Orientation event, it begins with a welcome from our VP for Research, Innovation and Impact Professor Helen Roche, whose email you will already have received. This note signposts you to the ever-increasing range of career and professional development services in place for you to avail of during your time in UCD.

The main difference in this edition is, based on your ongoing feedback, we have restructured the book into three parts to align with the four competency areas that underpin the professional development programme for Postdocs. The first part integrates two competencies by focusing on both Research Management and Innovation & Transferable Skills. This section provides more information on the Early Research Careers research landscape in Ireland with content about the Research Portal and an introduction from the Research Impact Officer. This section also addresses public engagement across disciplines and making use of the expertise in NovaUCD to explore commercialising your research.

The second part focuses on Teaching, Learning and Mentoring, with original and updated input from academics around the University and a handy cheat-sheet on how to access your online Development Portal to update your one-to-one meetings with your principal investigator (PI). The final part directly addresses your Personal and Professional Excellence, with revised versions of career and professional development worksheets that can help in preparing for grant application career plans, job-applications or one-to-one meetings for career conversations. We've added in contributions from current and previous Postdocs specifically around using the supports to build their careers in the direction they want to go in.

Throughout we have included feedback from Postdocs who've previously participated in the programme to give a richer flavour of the 70+ events we run for Postdocs every year, along with the one-to-one meetings and mock panel interviews and local events we're asked to contribute to. We're really proud that a number of you have told us that this is the first university you've been to where you've had access to this level of development and as ever, we look forward to your ongoing feedback which is ultimately what informs what we do!

THE RESEARCH CAREERS TEAM

The Research Careers Team is made up of a small group of people working between UCD Careers Network and UCD HR People & Organisation Development and working closely with the team in UCD Research. For more information, take a look at our website: www.ucd.ie/researchcareers

YOUR KEY CONTACTS ARE:



Alanna O'Sullivan
Research Careers Manager
alanna.osullivan@ucd.ie



Qiong Zhang
Researcher Development Specialist
qiong.zhang@ucd.ie



Twitter @ucdrscareers



LinkedIn UCD Research Careers (Postdocs)

UCD RESEARCH CAREERS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



Welcome to your new research role in UCD, where we deliver research and innovation at a scale and in areas of national and global significance by prioritising excellence and impact, investing in our people and providing a culture and environment in which you are supported to deliver across the university's [four strategic themes](#).

As a new member of staff, I would like to direct you to our "[Welcome to UCD](#)" website which will provide you with key information to assist you in your first months in UCD.

UCD's story of research, scholarship and innovation is one of diversity and depth and the work would not be possible without the dedication and passion of Postdoctoral researchers like you. It is through supporting your professional development that we further the reach, innovation potential and impact of our research community.

I would encourage you to familiarise yourself with the wide range of career and professional development supports specifically designed and delivered for UCD Postdoctoral researchers by the dedicated Research Careers and Professional Development team. These colleagues bring expertise from the UCD Careers Network and UCD HR People & Organisation Development, working closely with UCD Research, and provide a structured and supportive model based on skills and early-career development. The programme includes a wide range of skills development from grant writing support, career coaching, interview preparation, bespoke training for Postdoc teaching and tailored training across four professional competencies. In addition there are a number of annual events that involve alumni Postdocs and cross-sectoral recruiters.

During your time in UCD, you are entitled to attend three days of career and professional development activities per year and you should use the online Postdoc Development Portal through InfoHub to record at least three career-focused meetings with your PI over the course of your contract. Keep in mind, also, that professional development includes on-the-job learning, attendance at conferences and other professional activities you may be involved in.

To find out more about how to access this programme, please take a look through the [Research Careers and Professional Development website](#).

The Research office has created an [online portal](#) for all research-related services. It outlines the key stages and steps and where supports are available for researchers throughout UCD.

I look forward to meeting you at the next Postdoc Career Orientation Day.

Professor Helen Roche
Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact





WHO OVERSEES POSTDOCTORAL DEVELOPMENT IN UCD

The Research, Innovation and Impact Group (RIIG) chaired by the Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact provides high-level oversight and coordination of UCD's research, innovation and impact activities, systems and supports to build the international competitiveness of research and innovation and enhance the global stature of UCD's scholarship. It provides advice and makes recommendations to the UMT on matters relating to the University's research, innovation and impact objectives.

Membership of the RIIG includes College Vice Principals of Research, Innovation and Impact (VPRII), as well as a Postdoc representative. The list below will allow you to identify your college VPRII.

More information on the RIIG can be found [here](#).

Current Vice Principals of Research, Innovation and Impact

- Professor Catherine Cox, College of Arts and Humanities
- Professor Dympna Devine, College of Social Sciences and Law
- Professor Donna Marshall, College of Business
- Professor Aoife Gowan, College of Engineering and Architecture
- Professor David MacHugh, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences
- Professor Gareth Redmond, College of Science

PROFESSOR COLIN SCOTT

VICE PRESIDENT FOR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AND PRINCIPAL, UCD COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW



As a leading global university UCD is committed to offering all members of the community an environment which promotes equality, celebrates diversity and fosters inclusion. This commitment is reflected in the University Strategy 2020-2024. A central focal point for promotion of equality in research has been the adoption of a Gender Equality Action Plan for which UCD received its first Athena Swan Bronze Award recognition in March 2017. This plan commits the University to better understand the data around progression of women in research and academic careers and to devise and implement measures which are effective in tackling barriers to progression for women which have been seen in UCD and in many universities. Other strands of policy work focus on gender identity, provision for those seeking refuge or asylum in Ireland, and on ensuring processes and facilities which provide equal access and support for those with disabilities. To celebrate diversity and foster inclusion.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group of the University Management Team works with groups across the campus to develop inclusive events and activities, including a range of seminars and speaker events, the marking of key equality days and events, and the sponsorship of the very successful UCD Community Choir (which rehearses weekly, 1pm, Tuesdays on the fourth floor of the O'Brien Science Centre). Our overall ethos is that equality and diversity are the business of everyone on the campus and I hope that all in our research community can contribute to and thrive within this inclusive environment.



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, HR

UCD ATHENA SWAN

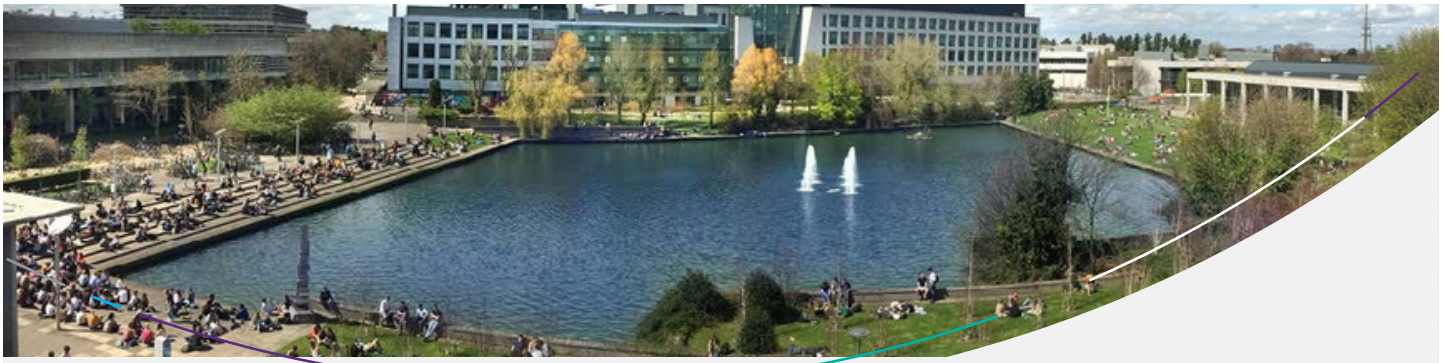
Our University community is made up of a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds and circumstances, which we value and regard as a great asset. As part of our continued commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we strive to create an environment in which all members of our community should expect to be able to thrive, be respected and have a real opportunity to participate in and contribute to University activities so that they can achieve their fullest potential. This is reflected in strategic objective five of UCD's strategy is to attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff. The University has further outlined this commitment in the EDI Policy and Strategy and the UCD Gender Equality Action Plan.

UCD has received its second Athena SWAN Bronze institutional award in recognition of the university's work towards gender equality.

Learn more about UCD's equality, diversity and inclusion policies, and supports and list of Postdoc representation on School Athena Swan panels on this webpage: <https://www.ucd.ie/equality/>

[UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy](#)

[UCD's Gender Equality Action Plan](#)



PROFESSOR CECILY KELLEHER, COLLEGE PRINCIPAL, HEALTH & AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND CHAIR, TOP MED 10 MARIE SKLODOWSKA-CURIE ACTIONS COFUND PROGRAMME

We are very fortunate here in UCD to have a wealth of institutional research supports in place. These supports and resources have been developed to give you the research and transferrable skills you'll need for your future career, whether that's in academia, industry or beyond. Indeed, UCD is unique in Ireland and competitive internationally in this regard – our framework for research staff is the basis for our success in securing funding for a number of Marie Skłodowska Curie

training and career development postdoctoral fellowship programmes based here in UCD. Both in my roles leading a research team and as the Principal of College of Health and Agricultural Sciences I see the benefits that this breadth of training, workshops and one-to-one guidance gives to early career researchers and I would encourage you to make the most of these opportunities during your time here in UCD.

PROFESSOR MARK KEANE CHAIR OF UCD COMPUTER SCIENCE

Perhaps the real challenge in developing as a postdoc is to be cognisant of your next step to a full-time faculty position. While it is hard to do, if you can (even minimally) prep yourself for that next position then you should. So, if possible do a little bit of teaching (not too much as you need to build up your research); do a little bit of admin (if you can, acquire some organizational/management skills by taking

some initiative); and develop your relationship to others in your research area (Have you talked to the main players? Do they know you? Would they support your job application?). Do not think narrowly, think about developing all the aspects of the future job that you are moving towards.



**RESEARCH,
RESEARCH MANAGEMENT,
INNOVATION &
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**



THE IRISH FUNDING LANDSCAPE FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS

There are a variety of Research Funding Agencies in Ireland, but the two largest are Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Irish Research Council (IRC). SFI is the national foundation for investment in scientific and engineering research. SFI invests in academic researchers and research teams who are most likely to generate new knowledge, leading edge technologies and competitive enterprises in the fields of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). The Irish Research Council (IRC) manages a suite of inter-linked research schemes, funding scholars at various career stages including one to two year postdoctoral research fellowships. In recent years, Science Foundation Ireland and the Health Research Board have partnered with

UK-based agencies to extend opportunities for postdoctoral fellows in a variety of Health and STEM fields. In particular, the HRB-Wellcome Trust and SFI-Royal Society partnerships have opened schemes which allow Irish-based postdoctoral researchers to compete for funding with their UK-based counterparts for prestigious funding. There are a number of other agencies, such as Enterprise Ireland, Health Research Board, Environmental Protection Agency, Dept. of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, that also provide research funding that is available to Postdoctoral Fellows in Ireland.

RESEARCH INTEGRITY TRAINING

University College Dublin is committed to the promotion of an environment which maintains the highest standards of integrity in relation to its educational mission and research activity. A key part of promoting an environment of responsible conduct in research is the provision of Research Integrity training. We provide free online access to Research

Integrity training to all our researchers, with the expectation that all of our research community successfully undertake this Research Integrity training. If you wish to access this training, please email ritraining@ucd.ie.

RESEARCH PROFESSIONAL

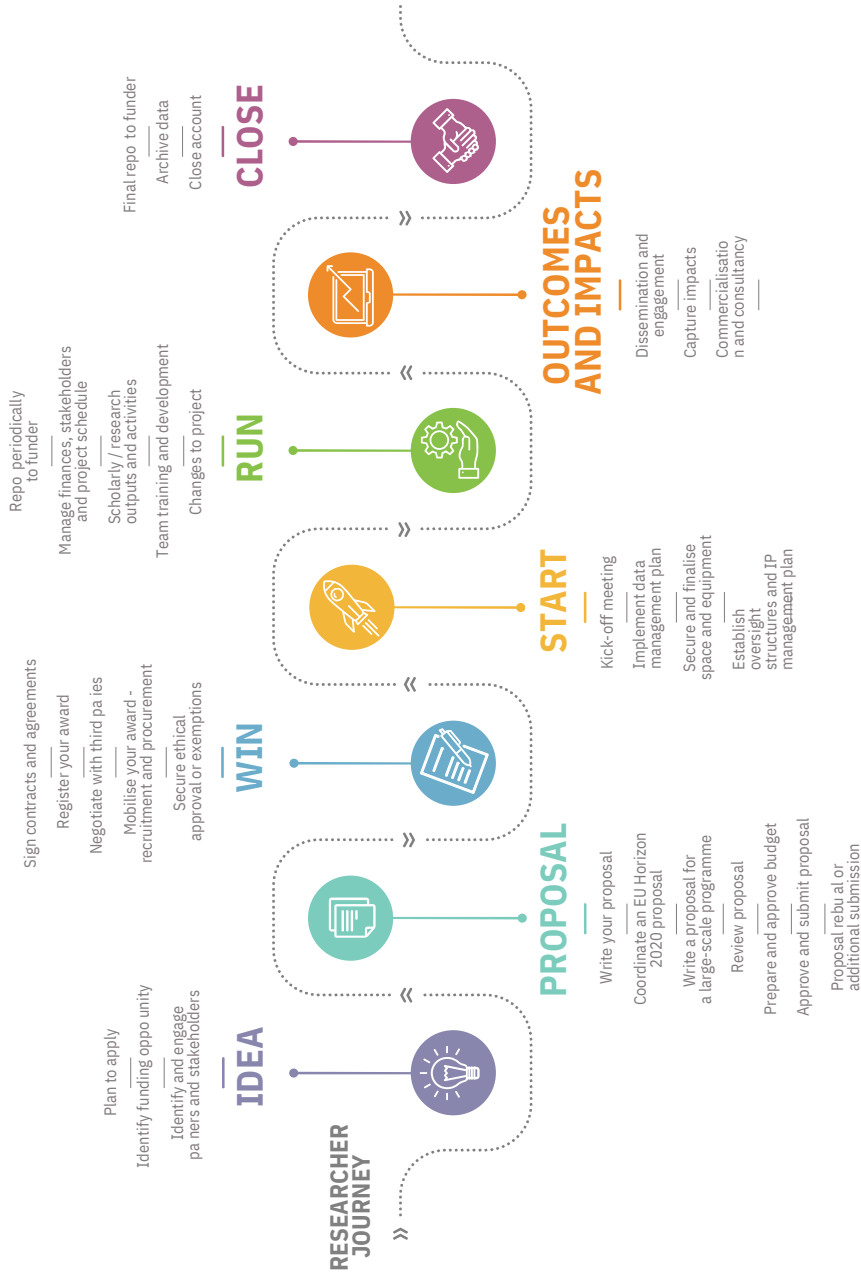
The best way to search for a funding opportunity that is relevant to your area of research is to use Research Professional. Research Professional is an online platform providing access to an extensive database of open research funding opportunities, as well as a source of research policy and practice news. This is accessible on the UCD campus, where you can create a user account allowing you to log

in to the service from anywhere in the world and create personalised email alerts to keep you informed about new developments in your areas of interest. For more information, please visit: <http://www.ucd.ie/research/portal/idea/identifyfundingopportunity/>



Research
Professional

UCD RESEARCH PORTAL



The UCD Research Services Portal is a 24/7, one-stop-about the supports available from UCD Research for shop for all research funding inquiries. Here you can find particular calls, e.g. information sessions, a read & review information on the most appropriate person to contact at all service. For more information, please visit: <http://www.ucd.ie/research/portal/>

At the start of a funding application lifecycle. At the start of the 'Idea' and 'Proposal' pages of the portal. The 'Proposal' pages include information

WHY DO I NEED A RESEARCH PLAN?

Professor Walter Kolch,

Director of Systems Biology Ireland, with some wise words on why it's best to start your research plan as early as possible.



Did somebody tell you that your PhD was the most defining phase in your professional life? You are not done. Your postdoc is when you can put all the things you learned to good use. Whether in academia or industry, your postdoc likely will be about excelling in research and producing papers that will advance the field – and your career. How will you manage?

“We cannot predict the future, but we can invent it.” (Dennis Gabor, Nobel Laureate Physics 1971). Invention requires creativity and a plan, in this case a research plan. Having a head full of ideas is like having a collection of butterflies – its beauty only comes out when properly arranged and displayed. Planning is what turns ideas into reality. However, planning research is not only figuring out the logistics. Much creativity is produced during planning.

The best way to organise your ideas is to discuss them with colleagues, friends and mentor. Usually, this will give you new ideas and often improve the ones you had. It also will give you more clarity about which ideas are more important than others, and which ones can be the beacons guiding you through your research. By its very nature, research is bewildering. It is a search, and the most difficult decision is where to search. A plan helps enormously. Make the plan before you start searching and refine it while you re-search.

During your postdoc you only need to organise yourself and your own research. Afterwards, you will need to organise your team and its research. So, do not put research planning off. Start when you start your postdoc. Because, creativity and planning put together generate innovation, and “Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.” (Steve Jobs, cofounder of Apple).



WRITING A SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION

Professor Catherine Cox,

School of History, with practical tips on how to write a grant application – whether it's for the Arts and Humanities or another discipline.

Writing a successful grant application is a skill. Grant applications require time to write and should be clear and easy to read. Crucially, the application should excite the reviewers and convince them that you are the right person! Communication is key: write in an engaging, clear style. The project needs a ‘catchy’ title, an engaging and comprehensive abstract, as well as a convincing description of the research project. The prose should be accurate, and precise – *don't use jargon!*

Have a well-defined hypothesis and set of research questions that convince the reviewers of the importance and originality of the project. The project description should include explicit details of the projects' objectives, methods, and plans for the research. It should address the career development of principal investigator(s) and project team members.

The track record of the applicant(s), in terms of publication, grant management supervision and mentorship is important. These demonstrate your ability to deliver. Ensure *you* are ready to apply, and include details of your experience and expertise on the application form.

Ensure your collaborators (if you have any) also have the required expertise and track record – a good fit!

Include a strong discussion of the outcomes of the project. These range from peer review publications (articles and monographs), public engagement activities, career development, etc. These should be exciting but also feasible and match the skills and expertise of the research team.

Ask for feedback from experienced colleagues who are willing to read your application.

Give yourself enough **time** for reflection and proof reading/editing. A successful application is always coherent and comprehensive throughout the whole application.

Be familiar with the terms and conditions and applicants' guides as well as other relevant documentation. Make sure you follow funders' instructions meticulously. Include all requested information and complete *all* sections.

Be ambitious, exciting BUT feasible!



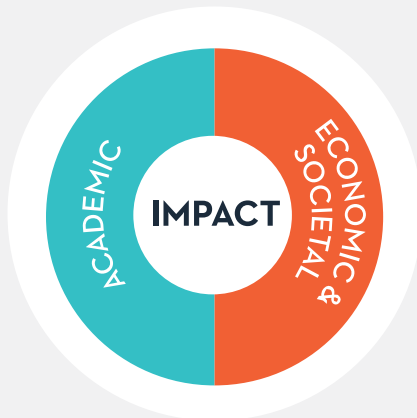
RESEARCH IMPACT AT UCD WHAT IS IT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

David Bennett
Research Impact Officer

The Challenge of Impact

Your research can make a meaningful difference in the world. At UCD, we recognise that this impact can have academic, economic and societal elements.

Academic impact is the contribution your research makes to advances within and across disciplines. Societal and economic impact, on the other hand, goes further: it describes the contribution of your research to changes across all [aspects of society](#), from culture to policy to the environment.



Impact Case Studies

If your research has had a positive impact on the world, a case study can be a great way of sharing that story. So every year we run a competition to capture compelling case studies from across the university. The competition asks researchers at UCD to develop a narrative, with illustrative images, highlighting the impact of their research to a non-specialist audience.

These case studies are an invaluable resource: they help the university, and the research sector at large, justify public funds being spent on academic research. Together, they demonstrate the contribution of research to society. Winning case studies from previous competitions can be seen [here](#), and a full list of UCD Impact Case Studies is available [here](#).

To plan, capture and communicate impact, you need to think carefully about the various ways different people can benefit from your work. This is more important than ever, as major funding bodies around the world now consider impact a fundamental aspect of almost all research programmes.

But impact is complex. It can take years, or even decades, for impact to become evident. And this impact may be the result of hundreds of factors, of which your research is just one. Moreover, a single research project can have impact in many different areas, and one impact may have knock-on effects elsewhere in society.

Despite these distant time horizons and tangled pathways, it is vital that you do what you can to direct your research toward positive impacts, and we have developed various [supports and resources](#) to help you. Visit our [Research Impact Toolkit](#).

Workshops and Seminars

As well as providing online resources, we regularly run tailored workshops and host seminars with international impact experts to help researchers at UCD understand the complex area of research impact.

To learn more about impact, case studies and future events, visit our homepage: www.ucd.ie/researchimpact



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public Engagement describes the many ways that UCD's research, teaching and contributions to society are influenced by and shared with the public for mutual learning. Public engagement is recognised as a pathway to impact and currently there is an increased focus from policy and funding agencies on how researchers engage with diverse audiences beyond the institution. There are already a wide range

of creative and innovative public engagement activities underway across UCD. These include a spectrum of forms of engagement from informing and inspiring audiences through lectures or articles, to co-producing and co-designing research with members of the public (including patients and other stakeholders). For more information visit the [UCD Public Engagement website](#).

WHAT SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE?

Public Engagement Resources

Below are links to resources to assist in planning public engagement. Further links will be available via the staff intranet shortly.

- Defining and Supporting Public Engagement at University College Dublin - Summary Report (Nov 2018) - [PE Report](#).

- UCD Research: Outcomes and Impacts: click [here](#).

- UCD Research: Public Engagement and Engaged Research: click [here](#).

- UCD Research: Engage Your Research guide: click [here](#).

- SFI Guidance and best practice in public engagement: click [here](#).

- The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) in the UK has created a wealth of resources to support high quality engagement: click [here](#).

- Campus Engage has a series of resources on engaged research and community engagement: click [here](#).

- Responsible Research and Innovation toolkit: click [here](#).

UCD Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) Ignite program

PPI is an approach to research that fosters collaboration between people with lived experiences, researchers, and research institutions. This would include, for example, involvement in the choice of research topics, assisting in the design, advising on the research project or in carrying out the research.

The [PPI Ignite Network @ UCD](#) is part of a [National PPI Network](#) funded by the Health Research Board and Irish Research Council. The PPI Ignite Network @ UCD is based in the Research Office. Contact: ppi@ucd.ie

There is a diversity of PPI activities occurring across UCD, involving a breadth of PPI groups. The PPI Ignite Network @ UCD are looking to capture examples of the diversity and variety of approaches to PPI in UCD. You can submit a case study to showcase your approach and help inspire other researchers [here](#).



UCD PPI Ignite 



CASE EXAMPLE, UCD CONWAY INSTITUTE

Elaine Quinn

Institute Manager (Communications & Education)

At UCD Conway Institute, we are passionate about the work we do and its potential to positively impact on society. We believe that research is more relevant when stakeholders are actively engaged in the process. By building capacity for public engagement practice, we enable researchers to confidently participate in a broad range of initiatives.

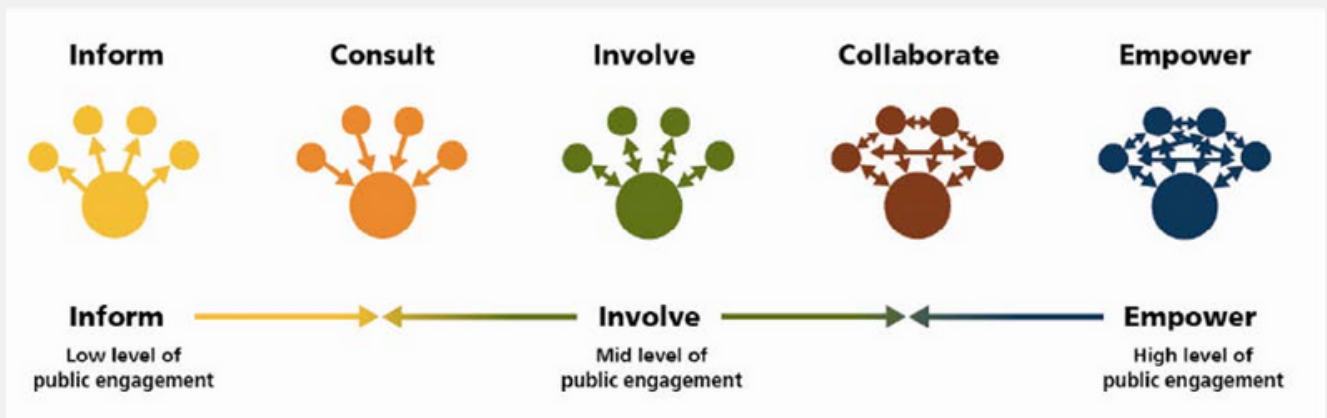
The Patient Voice in Cancer Research is an initiative to actively engage cancer patients, cancer researchers and other interested parties in discussions and decision-making processes, which positively impact on cancer research and outcomes for patients. There are similar initiatives ongoing in arthritis and diabetes research.

The Amgen Biotechnology Experience is a science education initiative led by Systems Biology Ireland. It provides curriculum linked training for secondary school teachers

in molecular biology techniques; facilitates equipment and consumable loans to schools; and enables teachers to carry out these laboratory experiments with pupils in the classroom. Through engaging with teachers and pupils, researchers can help to ignite the spark of curiosity, highlight the real-life application of molecular biology and raise aspirations of STEM careers.

Researchers are encouraged to capitalise on opportunities to talk about their research in the context of national or global narratives such as World Cancer Day and Movember; as well as fundraising events such as the Irish Cancer Society's Daffodil Day. For details on how to become involved, contact: Elaine Quinn, Institute Manager (Communications & Education)

Email: elaine.quinn@ucd.ie



● IAP2 International Association for Public Participation, Best Practice Standards



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ON THE PRISONS PROJECT

Dr Holly Dunbar,
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, School of History



Being involved in public engagement looks great on a CV, but it also offers a great opportunity to communicate your research clearly to a broad audience and can be lots of fun too. On the Wellcome-funded project, 'Prisoners, Medical Care and Entitlement to Health in England and Ireland, 1850-2000', we have prepared a wide-ranging programme of public engagement events.

A lot of our activities involve arts and theatre. In July, we will be putting on a theatre piece based around prisoners' experiences of solitary confinement, which will be performed in Coventry, Dublin and Belfast. Our other activities include a photographic exhibition on prisoners and their families, hosting policy workshops, and working with school children. Being involved in public engagement offers the opportunity to aid young people, policy makers, NGOs, government officials and the general public to reap benefits from your research.

Public engagement events work best if they are based around your current research, particularly the aspects of it which you are most passionate about. Engagement is different to writing an academic article, so make sure what you do is accessible and appealing.

Think about targeting people who will either be interested in, or could gain something, from learning more about your work. Outreach is not just about putting your work out in the public domain, but making it useful for specific groups. Garnering more attention for your research can attract more students to your discipline, influence policy or legislation, or foster debate about key issues. Our project sees outreach and engagement as integral and complementary to our academic research.

COMMERCIALISING YOUR RESEARCH

NovaUCD,

The Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre at University College Dublin

At NovaUCD, the Knowledge Transfer team supports UCD's research community to identify valuable research results and implement protection strategies, to explore commercialisation opportunities through licensing and spin-out formation and to develop productive collaborations with industry.

NovaUCD provides a range of courses for researchers, at all stages, from spotting good ideas, to commercialisation via licensing or start-up companies.

Key programmes / supports include:

- UCD Researcher Supports. <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/knowledge-transfer/researcher-supports/>
- UCD Commercialisation Bootcamp. <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/researchers-and-students/commercialisation-bootcamp/>
- UCD VentureLaunch Accelerator. <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/researchers-and-students/venture-launch-accelerator/>
- Knowledge Transfer Scouts. <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/researchers-and-students/venture-launch-accelerator/>

Technology Transfer

You've done all the hard work in applying for the research grant, spent countless hours doing the research and may now have results that might be patentable and/or have commercial potential. So what do you next? Complete the NovaUCD Invention Disclosure Form (IDF). <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/knowledge-transfer/researcher-supports/tell-us-about-your-idea/>

Once received by NovaUCD the process outlined below will commence.

A. Review and assessment of invention:

The IDF will be reviewed by the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the invention and to complete any gaps in the information provided. Central to the discussions will be an assessment of the commercial potential and patentability of the invention. Funding opportunities aimed at developing the research further will be discussed.

B. Protecting the invention:

The TTO shall evaluate the IDF to decide if the invention can be protected. If your invention is potentially patentable then NovaUCD will engage a patent agent to do this work. If the invention is not patentable then it may be best protected through other methods.

C. Commercialisation Strategy:

The TTO will work closely with you to identify the optimal route for the commercialisation. The two main routes for commercialisation are licensing the invention to an existing company or to a new company (start-up).

D. Marketing and licensing inventions:

If the decision is made to commercialise the invention via licensing to an existing company, the TTO will prepare a non-confidential summary of the invention, in consultation with you, to send to potential licensees. Any revenues received by NovaUCD will be shared with you in accordance with UCD's Intellectual Property Policy. <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/knowledge-transfer/ip-policy-forms-and-template-agreements/>

E. Supporting start-up companies:

If the decision is made to commercialise the invention through the creation of a new company the TTO will assist you in the establishment and development of a start-up company.

Who can help you ?

Please see the NovaUCD website for staff listing <https://www.ucd.ie/innovation/about-us/meet-the-team/>

PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM— POSTDOC FEEDBACK INFORMS THE PROGRAMME!

After every session, we send out a short online survey that assesses how you enjoyed it, how much better informed you are and whether it's helped your confidence or career development on the subject. The feedback is confidential and anonymous but it gives us a better idea of where to make changes and developments and keeps us in tune with arising needs and ideas.

'Being able to avail of the services of UCD Research Careers has been invaluable to me in helping me to develop my career goals. Through my [one to one meetings with Careers] I have gone from having little to no direction to having a well thought out and realistic 5-10 year career plan. Would recommend the service to all UCD post docs without hesitation.'

Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I, Social Sciences

'I do believe that this [MBTI] workshop has helped me in understanding my working patterns, in understanding that my way is not the incorrect way, and even if it may sound odd, it gave me more confidence in me.'

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I, Life Sciences

'The [academic] mock interviews are a great idea. It was really helpful to go through an interview process and then to get feedback on my interview technique. It helped consolidate some of the other information I had received in other sessions (e.g.) CV prep and interview prep.'

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl II, Health Sciences

'The [Preparing Academic applications and interviews] session covered all relevant aspects of academic job applications (research, teaching profile, personal presentation, feedbacks from committee). I learned a lot about how to improve my profile and deal with academic job interviews.'

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I, Humanities

'The [academic] mock interviews are a great idea. It was really helpful to go through an interview process and then to get feedback on my interview technique. It helped consolidate some of the other information I had received in other sessions (e.g.) CV prep and interview prep.'

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I, Life Sciences

**TEACHING,
LEARNING &
MENTORING**



MAKING CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR MENTOR WORK



Prof Catherine Godson

UCD Conway Institute IAIS Woman in Science Award recipient 2019

Take time out from the frequent research - directed conversations for occasional career focused discussions with your mentors; it really is helpful to have more than your PI for mentorship. To take advantage of the training and development opportunities at UCD it is a good idea to start these conversations early in order to identify what can help you to achieve your professional goals. It is great when PostDocs consider the breadth of career opportunities that exist, way beyond traditional academic boundaries.

Often these prospects are realised through the iterative conversations PostDocs have with their mentors. There are numerous high quality courses at UCD to support your ambitions. In addition, early discussions will help you benefit from your mentor's professional network and experience. As a mentor it is really rewarding to see our PostDocs find positions that leverage the excellence of their research skills and personal development plans developed at UCD.



WHY THE UNIVERSITY YOU WORK IN AS A POSTDOC MATTERS TO YOUR CAREER

Dr Agnese Balzani, Previous Post Doc Research Fellow Lvl I School of Veterinary Medicine

It seems that where and with whom we work as early career researchers will have a considerable impact on our careers. I did my Masters, PhD and two Postdocs in different Universities, in different countries and with unrelated supervisors. I had some great experiences and some not great ones, but collectively they taught me a valuable lesson about managing my career while I am an Early Career Researcher. The main thing is that the objectives of my Postdoc should not only be to carry on a research project and publish papers, but it can also be to reach or re-enforce professional maturity and independence to find a job after.

The two main things to help with this are when the University provides high-quality training, career development planning support, networking opportunities, and a supportive mentor. As a PhD student or Postdoc, your boss can have a significant influence on how successful you are while working for them and in getting subsequent positions. I've learned it's crucial to be

very comfortable with that person and happy that the group will help you get what you want to get out of the Postdoc. It's worth spending lots of time finding out about possible future mentors/ supervisor's history. I usually only checked their work, but I've learned that it is not enough to determine if your motivation and interest will match. In order to have fruitful work experiences, it is crucial to do a thorough check on their career path, working relationships, mentoring skills, and what Postdocs who worked with them went on to do.

I now believe that being active and fully engaged in the career and skills development process should be part of good work practice and our mentors are there to support us with this!

UPDATING 1-2-1 MEETINGS WITH YOUR PI



- 1 Log onto UCD Connect
- 2 Click the Infohub icon
- 3 Select the Human Resources tab at the top of the page
- 4 Select My Development Workspace

Personal Details

Staff Photo:	
ID Number:	XXXXXXXXXX
Name:	Mícheál Heenan
Job Title:	Post Doc Research Fellow Lvl II
Research Grant:	R12200 - National Nutrition Surveillance
School / Unit:	School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science
Email Postdoc:	MHC_Heenan.Heenan@ucd.ie
Managing Principal Investigator:	Cecily Kelleher
Active on CoreHR:	No
Welcome Sent:	28-Sep-15
Reminder Sent:	
Access:	KMS Profile*
Access:	Career Certificate

*Postdocs should ensure their KMS Research Profile is active and up to date.

Current Contract

(Details of current contract showing the start and end date as recorded on the CoreHR system.)

Start Date	Expected End Date	Contract Type
01 Jan 2016	31 Dec 2020	Fixed Term

Career Development Meetings

(Details of career development meetings as recorded by Post doc or by UCD Careers. For PI to approve record of meeting, click the Edit button.)

[Add a New Meeting](#)

Edit	Date of Meeting	Meeting Type	Met With	PI Approved	Delete*
	26 Feb 2016	Careers - Exit Meeting	Naomh O'Connor	No	
	11 Mar 2015	Careers - Development Meeting	Naomh O'Connor	No	
	15 Jan 2015	Careers - Introductory Meeting	Naomh O'Connor	No	

*You may only delete career development meetings that you have recorded



Following your meeting with your PI/Mentor you can login into your Postdoc Career Development Profile in Infohub to record details of this meeting. See above for log-in details.

It is recommended that you meet with your PI/Mentor at least 3 times over the course of your contract to review your progress. You can update/amend your development plan as where appropriate.

There is a development plan template you can download from the Research Careers website, or also see pages 35 and 36 for development plan.



THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A GOOD MENTOR

Prof Cormac Taylor,

UCD School of Medicine and recipient of the Nature Award for Mentoring in Science 2014 outlines how important being a mentor has been to his career

As a principal investigator, I truly believe that the opportunity to mentor a postdoc is both a privilege and, if done well, a wonderful opportunity to generate a personal legacy that continues to give long after one's own research career has come to an end. In supporting the career development of my trainees, I believe it is of vital importance to promote their scientific independence and encourage them to develop their own research niches. This frequently involves providing the opportunity for those in the lab to take the ideas developed during their training and make it their own by, for example, providing the opportunity for them to be senior/last authors on papers and reviews. I believe the provision of opportunity for students and fellows to spend time in international collaborators labs is key to giving them a broader international view of how science is done.

I strongly believe that my primary legacy as a scientist will stem from the progress of people I have trained and the success that they have in their future careers. Since establishing an independent research lab in 2001, I have mentored seventeen PhD students and nine postdoctoral fellows. People who have trained in my lab have hailed from Germany, Spain, India, Italy, Mauritius, Cameroon, the UK, Portugal and Ireland giving the lab an important international flavor. I have intentionally maintained a lab of no more than six to eight carefully selected students and fellows with the specific aim of ensuring that I have sufficient time to give to each individual a high level of mentorship. I maintain an open door policy and feel that as a mentor, it is my duty to ensure that each person under my supervision generates the high level of scientific achievement required to pursue a successful career in international science.

Postdoctoral research fellows in my lab are encouraged and supported in their applications for career development grants (e.g. I am currently mentor to lab members who hold an SFI SIRG award, a HRB career development award and a National University of Ireland postdoctoral fellowship). Senior research fellows in my lab are given the opportunity and encouraged to publish last author papers in order to develop their career possibilities (e.g. three postdocs in the lab have recently published last author papers).

While academic mentorship is my main priority with my trainees, I try to develop close working and personal relationships with the members of my lab. I believe that it is important to develop a strong culture of enjoyment and pride in one's work and we frequently have social events and attend conferences as a group to enhance this.

While it is difficult to teach personality skills, I continually emphasize to my trainees the importance of personality in science. A strong academic can be greatly helped by an ability to interact socially with other scientists. I am lead singer in GI distress, a rock band made up of scientists which can be an important ice-breaker at conferences and meetings (www.facebook.com/GIdistress).



THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING GOOD MENTORSHIP AS AN EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER



Dr Eoin Cummins,

Lecturer/ Assistant Professor in Physiology, School of Medicine and Recipient of SFI Career Development Award suggests a multiple-mentor model

The early stages of a research career are filled with opportunities and challenges, new responsibilities and often increased freedom. The decisions that you make in these early stages are instrumental in shaping your career, often for years to come. For this reason I believe that it is essential that early career researchers receive good mentorship to help them navigate this time of flux and come out the other side more qualified, more supported and more confident.

My advice to an early career researcher starting out would be to seek counsel from two different mentors to help them in their career. The first should be an established senior academic, preferably one who knows the local environment well but also has experience in working in other institutions. This may or may not be the principal investigator in your lab. This person can serve as a sounding board for queries and help you to position yourself as well as possible for the next stage of your career in academia or elsewhere. The second mentor might be someone closer to your own careers stage (maybe 3-4 years ahead) with whom you can share experiences. This way you can identify successful strategies to advance while avoiding pitfalls that could obstruct. Such a mentor might for example have been successful

in publishing in a journal you are targeting or in securing funding from a source you have marked.

Using this dual-mentor approach you can benefit from a wealth of knowledge from experienced researchers who can help you to create networks, develop independent research areas and navigate the local political landscape while at the same time availing of advice from your peers who have just been on such a journey and are happy to share their experiences.

Choose carefully and try to identify a senior mentor who has a track record of mentoring past lab members to faculty positions in academia and leadership roles in business/ industry. Good luck!

POST-DOCTORAL TRAINING AND WHERE TEACHING FITS IN – A SUPERVISOR’S PERSPECTIVE



Professor Barbara Dooley,

Acting Registrar, Deputy President and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Where does teaching fit with post-doctoral training? This question can only be answered when a post-doctoral fellow has discussed the career track they wish to pursue. Early on in training each post-doc should discuss their career aspirations with their supervisor. A key question to answer is whether or not to pursue an academic track. Then the supervisor can mentor you in achieving that goal. If the goal is an academic post, next consider how to develop your CV. What are the key components of a CV for applying for an academic post? Research output will be the number one decider whether or not you are called to interview. To then add value to your CV, you should be able to demonstrate teaching experience and administrative tasks associated

with teaching (e.g.) use of Brightspace and Gradebook skills that are transferable from one institution to another. Discuss with your supervisor what opportunities they may have to support you. Your post-doc research expertise will be directly aligned with your supervisor. This may open opportunities to give a master-class at graduate level or give some lectures as part of an established module. Supervising is another form of teaching. Seek opportunities to shadow or co-supervise minor dissertations. For example project supervision at undergraduate and/or minor dissertations at graduate taught. And finally get a teaching qualification if you can - in UCD there is a Teaching and Learning seminar series specifically for Postdocs!



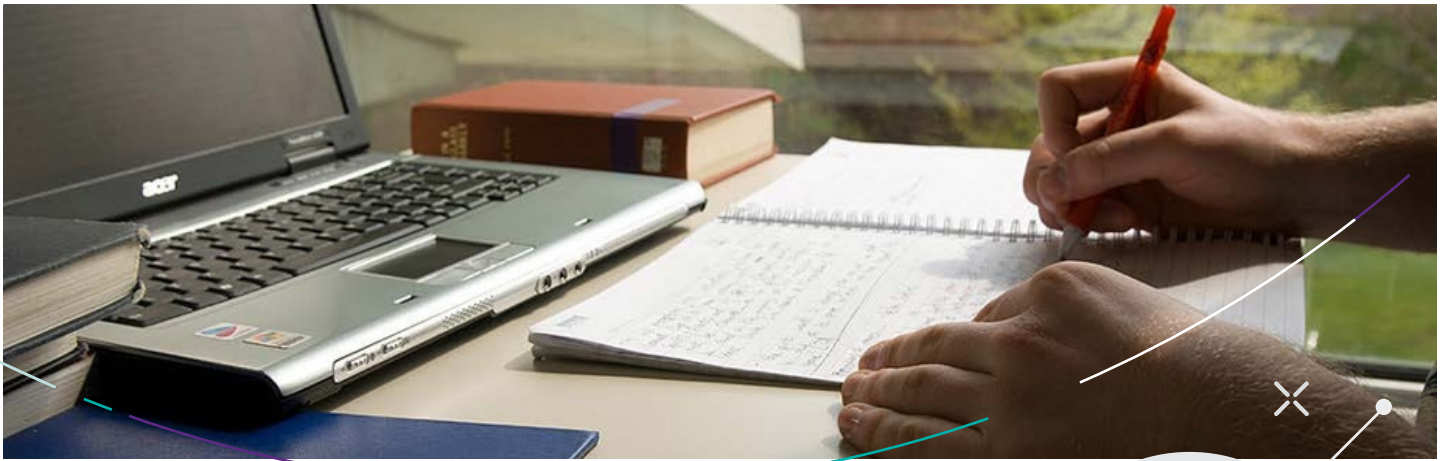
TEACHING – A PREVIOUS POSTDOC’S PERSPECTIVE

Assoc. Professor Amanda Fitzgerald,

Associate Professor, UCD School of Psychology

When considering my career development as a post-doctoral researcher, I discussed with my mentor how I would go about gathering teaching experience, particularly, as I was interested in pursuing an academic career. Firstly, a strong piece of advice I received from my mentor was to obtain some professional training in university teaching and learning. On foot of this, I undertook a one-year Professional Certificate in University Teaching and Learning which assisted me with developing a range of teaching, learning and assessment strategies. This qualification boosted my confidence to try interactive approaches to engage students in the modules I was collecting on. I also developed my teaching philosophy statement, which facilitated me to convey clearly my teaching values and beliefs. This really stood to me at a later academic interview when I was asked *‘What’s your philosophy of teaching?’*. I sought teaching experience within UCD School of Psychology, however, I

also sought opportunities in other schools and external institutions. One piece of advice I would give to postdoctoral researchers is to make sure you are proactive and seek out opportunities where possible. For example, it’s a good idea to let other academics know you are interested in gaining teaching experience in your related field. Another way to gain knowledge of teaching is to ask an expert in teaching if you can shadow/observe their lectures for a few hours. It’s also important to see how other opportunities such as supervisory experience of undergraduate projects or mentorship of research assistants can contribute to your teaching portfolio.



ADVICE TO POSTDOCS PREPARING FOR AN ACADEMIC INTERVIEW



Professor Joe Carthy,
School of Computer Science

First off, focus on the job description which may be narrow or broad; for example, it may be a post to replace an existing academic with very specific requirements. In this situation, you need to show that you can address all/most of the requirements in the job description. Your focus should be on the specific research field or teaching topics that are being sought. Don't worry if you don't have experience of everything in the job description - perfect candidates rarely exist.

However, if the post is a new one requiring the best person from any of a number of areas in a school/department. In this case, you need to show that you excel in your area, are carrying out world class research; have the ability (and ideally some experience) as well as the interest and motivation to teach well. Do not underestimate what is involved in university teaching, some postdocs make the error that it is only a matter of teaching along the same lines as they themselves were taught. If you have not had the benefit of professional teaching development then it's time to starting looking for it as soon as possible.

Next, prepare well:

- (a) Make sure your CV is well laid out and addresses the requirements of the post - get a couple of PIs in your field to check this for you
- (b) Perform similar checks for your covering letter - typos and mis-spellings are a big no-no!
- (c) Do at least one mock interview even if it's only with your peers. However do not be afraid to ask your supervisor or other academics for 30 minutes to help with this.
- (d) Take advantage of the Research Careers team and communications supports in the University to assist you with the above. There are a lot of supports in place for postdocs in UCD.

Practice your presentation many times. If you have 10 minutes, finish in 8 - DO NOT OVERRUN.

Ignore as far as possible what is outside of your control. Do not be concerned with who is on the interview board, "what they are looking for/ what they may think of you" - focus on the post. Do not be concerned with who else may or may not be applying

At the end of the interview, you will be asked if you have any questions or anything to add. Only ask a question if you have a genuine one - do not make up one "that sounds good". You may have want to conclude with a sentence expressing your interest/passion for the position, if you feel that this did not come through during the interview.

Finally, you may or may not get the post. If you are unsuccessful, don't beat yourself up, especially if you have prepared well. Most often, it comes down to one candidate on the day who was more impressive (in the board's view) than you were. This is completely outside of your control. They may have more relevant experience or simply more experience or they simply "fit" the requirements a little better than you do. If possible, seek some feedback from the chair on your performance and in particular are there things you could improve on in future interviews.

TEACHING & LEARNING SEMINAR SERIES FOR POSTDOCS



The aim of this seminar series is to introduce Postdocs to the key concepts underpinning good practice in third-level teaching and learning, and to enable them to review and prepare to undertake some basic teaching activities.

The structure of the programme offers a number of opportunities for the individual to engage in core aspects of academic practice and to begin to build a professional teaching portfolio.

The practice seminars will take place across two full days, followed by a peer-review session. At the core of these sessions is the opportunity for participants to engage, negotiate and participate, where possible in a range of teaching and learning activities.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of these seminars one should be able to:

- Appraise a range of teaching, learning and assessment methods
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of some of the basic principles and practices of third level teaching and learning
- Demonstrate the use of universal design in the course of teaching
- Develop a teaching practice portfolio.

Sessions	Seminar Series Overview
ONE	Critical Reflection & The Review and Design of Classes
TWO	Developing a Teaching Portfolio & The Review and Design of Teaching Materials
THREE	Presentation, Communication and Facilitation
FOUR	The Design of Effective Student Assessment
FIVE	Peer Review and Portfolio Preparation

'This was the most enjoyable, informative, and valuable training that I have been a part of in my career. This course is perfectly designed, expertly delivered and will absolutely feed into my teaching practice'.

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I

PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

PLANNING YOUR DEVELOPMENT

Qiong Zhang

Researcher Development Specialist

As part of your ongoing professional development it is important to be proactive and make time to develop/enhance your skills which will make you more efficient and proficient in the long term.

To support you as a Postdoc here in UCD, there are a number of core development activities which are strongly encouraged to complete.



1.Attendance at a Postdoc Career Orientation Day

This event runs four times per year and aims to provide Postdocs with practical information about existing supports in UCD that are there to help you carry out your research and plan your career development. You will hear from a range of UCD academic and professional staff at this event giving you the benefit of their experience.

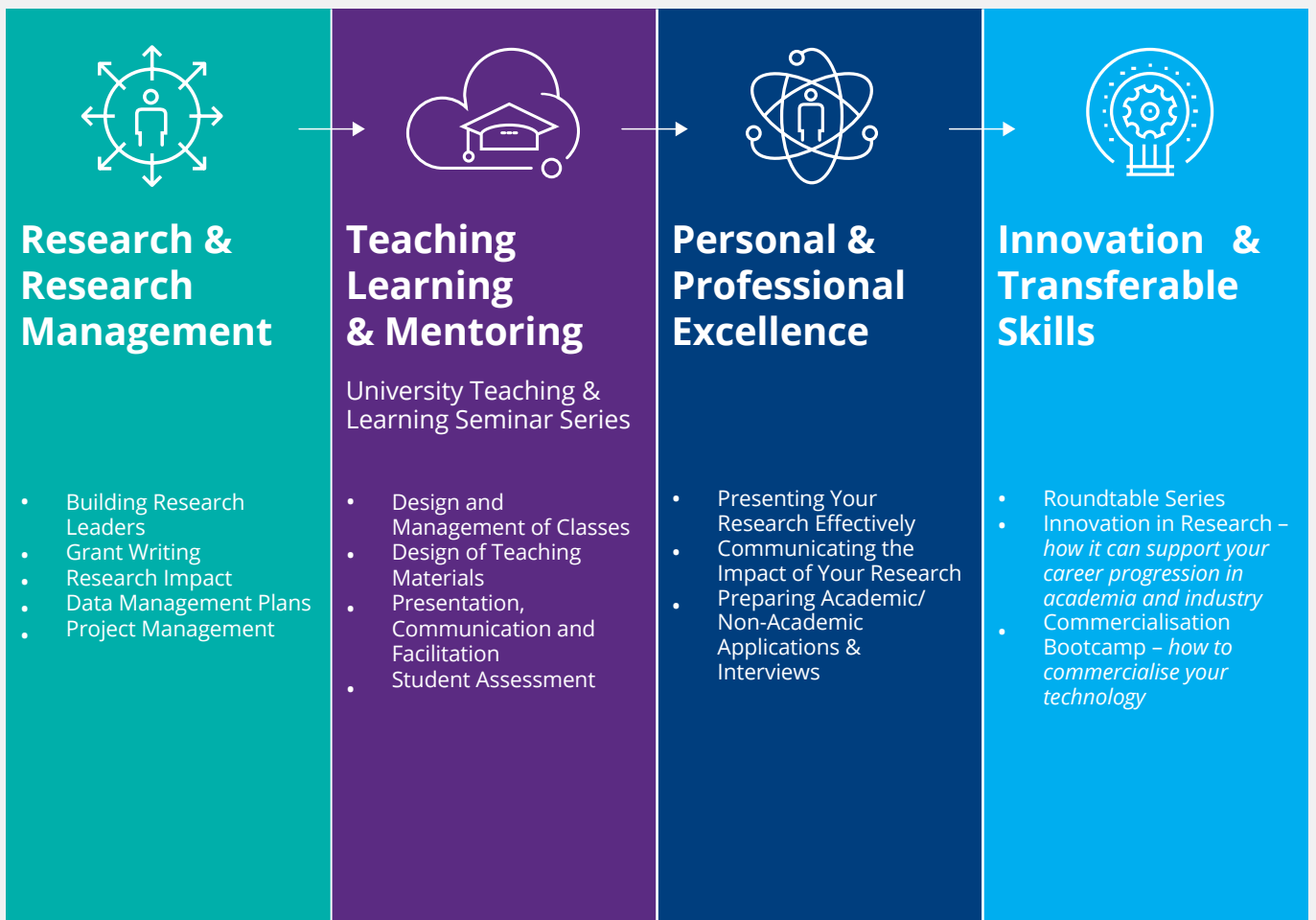
2.Engagement in the One-to-One Service

Along with individual meetings with your PI, as a UCD Postdoc you are entitled to at least three confidential one-to-one career development meetings with the Research Careers team over the course of your contract – Introduction, Career Development and Exit. To book a meeting, go to [Careersconnect](#) once you have opened a Postdoc Careersconnect account. To create an account, please contact researchcareers@ucd.ie with your UCD Connect Login Username.

3.Participation in Development Programmes/Activities

We offer a variety of courses and events that enhance your skills, both technical and transferrable, and improve your understanding of how best to approach your future. This programme has been designed in consultation with Postdoctoral Researchers to ensure that it is a true reflection of your needs. You can register for training and development courses through the [Events Calendar](#) as agreed with your PI/mentor using the Personal Development Plan.

These training and development opportunities are across four Core Competency Areas:



If a training course/development opportunity is not currently on offer please discuss with your PI/ mentor to explore options or contact a member of the Research Careers team.

Throughout my contracts (PD1 and PD2) I have found the Postdoc Research Careers guidance to be an invaluable support. I have attended numerous workshops and information days and have availed of a number of one-to-one meetings - which I found extremely useful and constantly recommended to my fellow postdocs.'

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl II

YOUR CURRENT ROLE – COMPETENCY ANALYSIS



Based on your own self-assessment and feedback from others, jot down in the following table the competency areas that you want to develop over the next 12 months. Included in this section are some questions to help you with

your reflection which are not intended to be exhaustive. As part of this self-assessment process you can also start to explore development options available for continuing with your competency development.

Competency Area	Prompt Questions to Aid Reflection	Competence and Development Areas Achieved for
Research & Research Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What new methodologies have you devised to solve complex problems? • How familiar are you with the main funding agencies and national strategies in your research area? • What experience do you have of managing a research project? • How would you assess the level and reach of your research writing/publications? 	
Personal & Professional Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective are you in communicating your research to expert and non-expert audiences? • Have you identified and taken advantage of opportunities to network and collaborate? • How would you assess your ability to influence and work with others as a peer and as a leader? 	
Teaching Learning & Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What contribution have you made to teaching activities that support development of PhDs and/or MSc students? • Would you describe yourself as a Mentor to others? How would you assess your understanding of how people learn? 	
Innovation & Transferable Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and in what areas of your work have you shown your innovative ability? • Have you thought about or are you aware of how you might commercialise or market your research? • How would you rate your understanding of what skills (other than discipline specific) organisations and institutions are looking for in someone with post-doctoral experience? 	

PREPARING APPLICATIONS FOR NON-ACADEMIC PHD ROLES – THE STAR CV!



Dr Claire Erraught

Previous Post Doc Research Fellow Lvl I

Having returned to academia as a mature student, I was no stranger to a non-academic CV. Having said that, I attended the training session for Postdocs run by Careers to check if I was still on the right path, as it had been several years (nearly a decade) since I had applied for a job outside of academia. I got a shock and was glad I had attended! My CV was outdated and badly needed to be refreshed. I didn't realise the appearance was so important and I needed to do a bit of work to make mine stand out. I also got good advice on how to structure a CV for today's job market. Like a sponge I took it all in and put it into practice straightaway; there were a few opportunities coming up. During the course we were shown how to interpret a job advertisement, and I found this to be the most powerful tool in my arsenal and was extremely useful also for preparing for interviews. I learned about the STAR technique, which is a really handy tool in interviews. It

can be applied to answer any question. I found it a great tool for getting my point across to the interviewers and a way of promoting myself. Having structured, pre-prepared answers, that can answer multiple core competency questions, made me feel very confident in interviews, as I knew exactly what I was going to say. Since attending this course, I received two interviews from two applications (100% record!) and was offered one of the roles (the other offer is pending). I'm excited to return to and transition to a new role outside of the Academy and I believe the Research Careers team have prepared me greatly for this – Thanks!

What Other Postdocs Have Said:

'The ['QQI Project Management 4 day course'] helped me think about a project in a more defined and organised manner. It clarified some terminology and processes that I wouldn't be as aware of in academia'.

Female, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I

'The ['Grant Writing in the Life Sciences'] workshop enlightened me on the difference between writing for grant applications and for academic journals. Information presented during the workshop was very useful and relevant'.

Male, Postdoc Research Fellow Lvl I



CAREER PLANNING: THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



Alanna O'Sullivan

Research Careers Manager

For links to referenced articles 1 - 7, see:

<http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2015/09/22/career-planning-the-next-five-years/>

It is becoming more and more apparent that (1) having a doctorate and being an expert in your field does not automatically set you on a fixed career path. In fact, (2) devising a focused career strategy is now becoming part of the job of successful researchers.

Many postdocs I work with find that, because of the need to focus on day-to-day activities, there is little time or mental energy to consider the future. So, when it comes to completing the Career Development section of a fellowship application or answering the 'where do you see yourself in five years?' question at an interview, they feel unprepared and uninspired.

One of the workshops I facilitate is called 'Creating a Job-seeking Strategy for Researchers'. In it I recommend a three- step process for beginning to structure your career-plan. It's not so different to a research project in that it involves your imagination, collecting and analyzing facts, and then creating a timeline with short and long-term goals. The earlier you start, the more comfortable the process will be for you, but even if you only have a few months left, this model helps put you more in control.

STEP 1: IMAGINATION - CONSIDER YOUR PRESENT SITUATION AND YOUR IDEAL FUTURE.

1

Often, having invested so much of themselves in their PhD or their current project, researchers are not sure what they want from their career anymore. To 'unstick' this way of thinking, it is useful to consider the following questions, first from your current experience and then from the perspective of your future self, five years down the line: what do you like about your current day-job? What do you dislike about it? How would you currently describe your career? How much

do you earn at the moment? How many hours a week do you work? Describe your life outside of work.

The benefit of imagining yourself five years from today, answering the same questions about your job, salary and working hours is that it can help you clarify how exactly you would like to describe your job and your personal life in five years. More (3) probing questions here.

STEP 2: COLLECT FACTS, ANALYZE OPTIONS.

2

The next step involves turning abstract ideas into concrete facts. If you know someone who is currently living all or some aspects of your ideal life, contact them and ask them how they got to where they are. If you don't know anyone like this, expand your network. For example, if you are trying to secure funding, identify people who are one fellowship ahead of you and get as much solid information as you can from them about their experience. If you're curious about non-academic roles, start with some desk-based research: a LinkedIn 'people search' with your PhD title in the search field will help you spot what other people with

your background call what they do every day. Once you have identified appropriate job-titles, examine relevant job descriptions online for mandatory and desirable criteria to clarify what are realistic options for you. As another careers expert puts it, (4) collect data on yourself. And for academic careers in particular, make sure to (5) assess how competitive you are.

STEP 3: PROJECT CAREER.

3

When you feel clearer about what you want and you are equipped with facts about how to get there, you can then prioritize how best to use your time and energy plugging the gaps. While your medium-term plan might involve a stint with another university/in a company, your short-term/six-month plan could include a personal (6)skills- gap analysis, a career conversation both with your PI and a careers expert and weekly searches on job portals, LinkedIn and funding databases like (7)researchprofessional, as well as attending grants-writing seminars and non-academic careers sessions.

It is important that you use your Postdoc to clarify your goals, collect information about your options, build your network and find an expert team to help you on your path. This may not make the distant future less ambiguous, but it will put you in charge of how you steer the next six months into your medium-term future.

Useful Articles/Resources

- 1 Having a doctorate and being an expert...
<http://www.nature.com/news/the-future-of-the-postdoc-1.17253>
- 2 Devising a career strategy
<http://hal.grenoble-em.com/hal-00794944/document>
- 3 Probing questions link:
<http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2015/04/23/job-search-probing-questions>
- 4 Collect data on yourself:
http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2015/08/13/career-a-or-b-making-the-decision?WT.mc_id=FBK_NatureJobs
- 5 Assess how competitive you are:
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-00198-0>
- 6 Career gap analysis link:
<http://www.jobs.ac.uk/media/pdf/careers/resources/career-planning-for-phds-ebook.pdf>
- 7 Research Professional
<https://www.researchprofessional.com/sso/login?service=https://www.researchprofessional.com/0/>



CONSIDERING YOUR CAREER PRIORITIES



Knowing what motivates you and gives you fulfilment can guide you to make more balanced choices for the future. It can also help you focus your time and energy on development activities and career avenues that bring you the rewards that matter to you.

The exercise below is modified from Vitae's 'The Career-wise Researcher' (www.vitae.ac.uk/researcherbooklets) which uses information gathered by researchers for researchers. Consider how important each of the following values are to you. Consider also the questions overleaf.




POTENTIAL MOTIVATOR ↓		SCALE 1 - not important 5 - very important
1.	Job security	
2.	Good income	
3.	Flexible working environment	
4.	Working alone	
5.	Variety	
6.	Contact with people	
7.	Feeling appreciated	
8.	Pursuing excellence	
9.	Professional recognition	
10.	High level of responsibility	
11.	Helping others, benefitting wider community	
12.	Status within an organization	
13.	Status outside an organization	
14.	Using technical expertise	
15.	Opportunity to be creative	
16.	Challenging work using my abilities and skills	
17.	fully Specific geographic location	
18.	Working on a team	
19.	Managing other people	
20.	Opportunity for promotion	
21.	Managing major projects	

CAREER & LIFE EXERCISE

(CONSTRUCTING YOUR FUTURE 5 YEARS FROM NOW)



Aspect of life ↓	Today's date:	6 months from today	+5 years 20
---------------------	------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------------

My workday  (couple words to describe it)			
My Career  (what I think when I think of that)			
Family/ home life  (couple words to describe it)			

CAREER MOVE: GETTING FUNDED TO WORK ACROSS SECTORS



There are various opportunities available for Postdocs to partner with a company or a charity/ NGO on a research project for a year/ two years (i.e. depending on the funding call). This way, you can explore the possibility of working in that organisation on a more long-term basis or simply gain specific industry/ non-profit experience to work in that sector in the future and so are an ideal transitioning-out-of-academia possibility.

However, these career development grants are also a method of building a partnership to write a bigger grant with the organization if your focus is on building your

academic profile. Successful PIs now need to build capacity across sectors so it will never be a waste of time to take a secondment out of the Academy, once it is part of a career strategy. Three of these opportunities are:

- The Irish Research Council (IRC) Enterprise-Partnership Postdoc Fellowship
- The Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Industry Fellowship
- The Marie S. Curie Society & Enterprise Fellowship



DR MOHAMMAD REZA GHANNI

SFI INDUSTRY FELLOW,
ALMAC DISCOVERY, BELFAST, NI

Mohammad spent two years in UCD as a Postdoctoral fellow in the School of Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering, funded by the Irish Research Council. His research focus was mainly on computer simulation of biomaterials. He completed an SFI Industry fellowship with a pharmaceutical company to research drug discovery. 'I believe the experience [of the SFI fellowship] combined

with the chance of developing a network within the industrial realm will help me get a solid academic career and start potential university-industry collaborations in the near future'.

And, in fact, Mohammad has recently moved on from the fellowship to secure an Enterprise Ireland commercialisation grant.

DR STEFANIE DUESBERG

MARIE S. CURIE SOCIETY & ENTERPRISE FELLOW,
REGIONAL DEPT AGRICULTURE, MUNICH, GERMANY



After completing her PhD in UCD, Stefanie was a Postdoc here for just over a year in the school of Agriculture with a specific focus on forestry.

'The reason I considered the Society & Enterprise call was that it offers an opportunity to move on to roles outside of academia... Overall, for me as a researcher in agricultural policy and rural development being involved in the administration was an exciting experience and it

considerably grew my network outside academia. The additional experience in project management and securing EU-funding are highly valued by potential future employers. As a result the range of jobs I am a suitable applicant for has considerably grown.'

CAREER MOVE: WORKING IN A FUNDING AGENCY/ POLICY



The primary funding agencies in Ireland now offer internship opportunities to Postdocs to move (on their own salary) into the agency to learn about the work they do in a structured way. You need to be on a Postdoc contract to apply for these roles. Jobs in the field of research administration/ research management/ research policy development are growing year on year and if you have a PhD, you like this work and you have some experience there are lots of opportunities to pursue in university research offices and teams to national, European and international funding agencies.

The IRC offer this opportunity only to currently funded IRC fellows who can freeze their research project for one year in

the first instance and then return to their project afterwards. The IRC advertise this themselves to their fellows.

SFI offer a three year contract for Postdocs to work and learn 'the business of science' across a range of teams. They open the call (open competition) as the need arises and this creates a pipeline of people within the organisation who are eligible to apply for more senior roles in SFI.

The Health Research Board (HRB) have an internship programme that runs for two years and they offer it (open competition) every other year.



DR LOUISE ROCKS SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME MANAGER AT SCIENCE FOUNDATION IRELAND



Dr Louise Rocks is Scientific Programme Manager at Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), Dublin. Her background was in BioNano interactions and she started with SFI through the Fellowship Scheme in 2015.

"Two and half years into my postdoctoral contract I began to question whether continuing on the academic career path was right for me. However, I wasn't sure of what other options were available to me. I met with the UCD Research Careers team on a number of occasions to explore the numerous opportunities that were available. The Science Foundation

Fellowship stood out as a perfect opportunity to expand and formalise my project management skills and develop a network of contacts within the Irish funding and research landscape, whilst remaining close to the front line of the top research in Ireland. The benefits that I have gained have far surpassed my expectations, including but not limited to strategic development and implementation, national policy, communication & Influencing. The training and mentoring afforded to me over my fellowship were instrumental in obtaining my current role of Scientific Programme Manager."

YOUR CURRENT ROLE – DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The below development plan can be used to discuss and agree on a strategy for your development with your PI/Mentor. It is recommended that you commit up to three development goals over the development period

Research & Research Management

Ability to translate critical and original thinking into published research and to manage a research project through all stages of the lifecycle

Objective/Goal

(eg. To co-author a journal; to submit article to appropriate peer-reviewed journal; to improve skills in writing coaching and research proposals)details at www.ucd.ie/researchcareers)

What action/s are required to achieve this objective/goal By when?

(to include training/development programmes, career support, mentoring, and on the job training – please refer to Events Calendar for

Personal & Professional Excellence

Ability to operate effectively and manage self and others

Objective/Goal

(eg. To be more actively involved in managing project; to improve my team and project management skills)

What action/s are required to achieve this objective/goal By when?

(to include training/development programmes, career support, mentoring, coaching and on the job training – please refer to Events Calendar for details at www.ucd.ie/researchcareers)

Teaching, Learning & Mentoring

Ability to transfer knowledge to individuals and groups using a variety of learning methods

Objective/Goal

(eg. To gain more teaching experience; to develop my teaching skills; to gain experience supervising PhD students)

What action/s are required to achieve this objective/goal By when?

(to include training/development programmes, career support, mentoring, coaching and on the job training – please refer to Events Calendar for details at www.ucd.ie/researchcareers)

Innovation & Transferable Skills

Acquiring knowledge and experience that support alternative career options

Objective/Goal

(eg. To generate a more extensive network of contacts in (to include training/development programmes, career support, industry; to gain understanding of commercial potential of mentoring, coaching and on the job training – please refer to Events research)Calendar for details at www.ucd.ie/researchcareers)

What action/s are required to achieve this objective/goal By when?

Additional Comments

Interim (mid-contract) Review & Feedback Date:

(PI in conjunction with the PD Fellow to insert a brief summary of progress 12 months into contract)

Final (end of contract) Review & Feedback Date:

(PI in conjunction with the PD Fellow to insert a summary of discussion to capture PD Fellow's assessment of development, key feedback points and any other aspects of the discussion deemed worthy for inclusion)



WHAT ELSE DO POSTDOCS DO?



What should a non-academic CV look like? How do I tailor my applications?

How do I transition to Biopharma without 'experience'?

What would it be like to work in a funding agency? Or in policy

organisations? What kind of places need a Project Manager with a PhD?

How do I negotiate my contract?



To find out more about how other Postdocs have answered these questions, book your place on the Alumni Postdoc Roundtable series, taking place in Autumn and Spring.



These sessions aim to demystify the experience of moving out of academic work into another sector. Each week, Postdocs who have moved on come back to talk about their career paths, the companies, organisations and charities they have moved to and the jobs they do now. Even if you don't plan to work there, it's good to broaden your network and hear about other people's experiences.



It's a structured, informal session, all disciplines welcome for all sessions – lunch included. Early booking advised as seating is limited!

Booking via the events calendar: <http://www.ucd.ie/researchcareers/eventscalendar/>

4 CORE COMPETENCIES 70+ EVENTS A YEAR

Event Code	Title	Dates	Start Time	Venue/Location
PDCD192018	Careers Roundtable for Postdocs - Centre for Effective Services (CES)	26 Nov 2019	12:00	UCD Research Building Research Boardroom
PDCD192001	Postdoc Career Orientation Day	28 Nov 2019	9:30	UCD Research Building Research Boardroom
PDCD192016	Research Professional UCD's Funding Database	3 Dec 2019	10:00	Daedalus Building G3
PDCD192008	Interview Practice for Postdocs	5 Dec 2019	10:00	NovaUCD 0.23
PDCD192004	Research Impact	10 Dec 2019	10:00	UCD Research Building Research Boardroom
PDCD192010	Teaching & Learning Seminar Series for Postdocs	11-12 Dec 2019	10:00	NovaUCD 0.23



To book a place, see the [events calendar](#)



UCD RESEARCH STAFF ASSOCIATION



The [UCD RSA](#) was formed on the 11th of August 2010. The aim of the association is to promote the interests of research staff in University College Dublin and in doing so to create a working environment which encourages excellence in research and serves to attract and retain high quality researchers. We also promote networking and support to researcher staff within UCD. The UCD

RSA committee comprises 4 Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) and also a member of the Irish Research Staff Association (IRSA). Membership is open to all research staff. If you wish to be added to the mailing list, please e-mail rsa@ucd.ie.



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