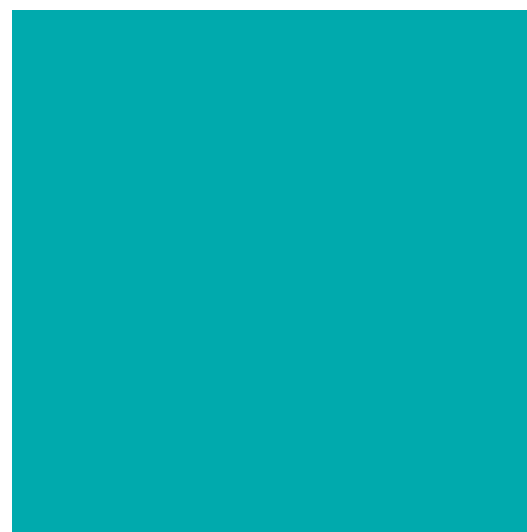




Toolkits for developing and sustaining researcher networks



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Executive summary

The aim of the toolkits is to **disseminate ideas and advice for developing and sustaining researcher networks**, gathered from the research community, for the benefit of researchers themselves and the research system overall. Researcher networks represent a key aspect of researcher support, but in spite of their growing prevalence and perceived value, there is limited, publicly-available evidence or information on how to set-up and run them.

Members of Vitae's 'Researcher Networks Working Group' sought examples of practice in an open call from individuals at new and established researcher networks, operating at different levels, for distinct populations and located internationally. Case examples were collected through an online form, which asked for information on the nature of the network, example activities it has undertaken, how the network's impact is measured, and what advice those contributing case examples would offer to those seeking to try something similar.

Key trends and guidance were synthesised from case examples submitted by some 31 different networks, and arranged into three distinct 'toolkits':

1. the fundamentals of running a researcher network;
2. key recommendations for using a researcher network to meet a specific purpose; and
3. key recommendations for using a researcher network to serve a specific population.

Whilst being fed by specific examples, the toolkits are intended to be broadly implementable, and to drive thinking and reflection amongst aspiring and existing networks on how to best achieve their aims. They are also intended to support networks in their efforts to highlight the general value of researcher networks to other research stakeholders, and to secure their sustainability into the future.

Background

Rationale for the project

‘Researcher networks’ are research community-owned and led channels through which members have a **collective voice for advocating on matters affecting researchers**; provide a platform for communication and networking; coordinate central support for researcher development; and facilitate borderless communities for researchers to make the most of their time at research-performing organisations.

Even before the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for supporting researchers through any means possible was self-evident. Whilst being an academic researcher was generally considered a rewarding profession, it was and still is considered a challenging career path. In spite of a growing research workforce, the researcher population remains fragmented along disciplinary and geographical lines, with researchers facing isolation and often lacking a sense of community. In addition, the pandemic has highlighted the long-standing deficits in equality, diversity and inclusion (‘EDI’) found in the research system, but has also widened existing cracks and, regrettably, driven marginalised groups further to the periphery (or even out) of the sector.

The value of researcher networks in helping to address these issues is considered unarguable; yet, in spite of this general appreciation, there is surprisingly limited evidence on how best to establish and then run researcher networks. Furthermore, many lack a visible presence, even locally, and as such, do not reach the degree of accessibility and participation they need to meet their aims.

Vitae’s Researcher Networks Working Group, comprised of active researchers and professional service staff at higher education institutions, was established to deepen the school of thought around researcher networks. As coordinators and participants in researcher networks themselves, members of the working group raised a number of key considerations when discussing the identity

and purpose of networks. This included questioning how research networks can continue to function and remain sustainable in spite of the transient nature of research employment contracts, as well as identifying the best strategy and tools for communicating with the network’s membership and external stakeholders.

Members of the working group, as well as attendees at dedicated workshops at the Vitae annual conference in 2019 and 2020 arrived at the same conclusion: whilst implicitly understood, the sector lacks an explicit synthesis of recommended actions, processes and behaviours that support developing and sustaining researcher networks.

Aim of the project

The aim of this project was to develop a ‘toolkit’, that describes key recommendations for researcher networks based on case example contributions from existing networks. This was envisaged as a resource on the Vitae website to which the research community can further contribute information and feedback with additional examples of good practice to supplement the toolkits. Please email us at membership@vitae.ac.uk to suggest how the toolkits may be developed further.

Users of the toolkits are anticipated to find value in universal reflections on how researcher networks are maintained and valued, and how specific communities can be best supported. Users will also have the opportunity to digest short summaries of each of the different networks contributing case examples to the toolkits, and read further into or contact specific networks should they wish.

Developing the toolkits

Evidence collection

The Vitae Researcher Networks Working Group sought to identify examples of practice in developing and sustaining researcher networks through an open consultation with the wider research community.

To collect case studies for eventual inclusion in one or more toolkits, the group developed an online form requesting key contextual information about a researcher network, and also providing free space to elaborate on activities, impact and advice through open-ended questions:

- The specific activities/topic areas that the case example relates to;
- The target audience for the initiative/network;
- A short summary of the initiative/network;*
- What were the measures of success- and what were the outcomes of your initiative/network?
- What advice would you share with someone wanting to try this initiative within their own organisation?
- Full details of your initiative/network.

**mandatory*

As part of the open call for examples of practice, the form was disseminated through both systematic and personal channels. Vitae shared the form and information on the ongoing project behind the toolkits via monthly newsletters and social media channels, whilst members of the Working Group personally shared the form through their own social media channels, local mailing lists, and individual contacts.

Case examples

Responding to the open call via the form, individuals shared practice to varying degrees, with some providing core information about the nature of the network, whilst others elaborated extensively, and several also provided detailed descriptions of specific activities.

In total, 31 different networks responded to the open call, contributing 33 different case examples. In one instance, a single network submitted three separate 'case examples', which related to individual activities that the network undertakes. The collection of submissions were considered suitably diverse, extending across the different dimensions initially sought when envisaging the final toolkits:

- 13 are institutional, 4 are regional, 7 are national, and 7 are international;
- 7 are discipline-specific, 3 are mission-focused (i.e., advocating for a specific cause);
- 3 are intended for doctoral researchers/PGRs¹, 16 for ECRs², 9 for MCRs³ (some networks represent and include members at more than one career stage, whilst some represent researchers more generally).

All data was collected according to Vitae's survey privacy policy and stored according to GDPR.

1. **PGR** – 'Postgraduate Researcher', the term used in the United Kingdom for those undertaking an MRes, MPhil, PhD or another doctoral degree
2. **ECR** – 'Early Career Researcher'
3. **MCR** – 'Mid-Career Researcher'

Using the toolkits

Who are the toolkits for?

The toolkits are intended for anyone and everyone involved in the running of researcher networks. This is most likely to include researchers and researcher development professionals, but can extend to managers of researchers, senior institutional leaders, policymakers and further stakeholders in the research system.

Advice provided within each toolkit is designed to facilitate organisers and participants in developing and sustaining researcher networks, but also to publicise both the external support that these networks require from their stakeholders and the value they offer to research.

The toolkits in practice

The toolkits contain simple practices that individuals may wish to trial with their local networks, and also more complex processes and behaviour changes that require more sustained action and reflection. In each case, recommendations are not expected to be entirely sufficient as they are written, and those representing researcher networks should always seek to contextualise and integrate the advice in a manner that make sense for them.

In synthesising advice and insights from the case examples submitted for the toolkits, members of the Working Group sought clear and self-evident conclusions that cut across the different dimensions of running a researcher network.

The scale and diversity of information provided meant that not all pieces of advice contained within the case examples could be included in the toolkits, though Vitae would like to encourage anyone to contact us if you feel pertinent recommendations are missing.

Following the toolkits, the 31 researcher networks who contributed to the toolkits are listed, along with a short summary of each network based on the information they provided to the online form. We encourage all users of these toolkits to review those who submitted examples of practice, and to contact researcher networks using the channels listed if they seek further information or to access the networks themselves.

Toolkit 1:

Fundamentals for developing and sustaining a researcher network

Researcher networks submitting case studies provided some advice that they considered absolutely crucial to any network, regardless of its location, membership or mission. Below, we list the most frequently mentioned general recommendations for running a network, both at its inception and thereafter, as well as warnings against common mistakes.

How to have clear roles and responsibilities

- ✓ **DO** develop terms of reference and role descriptions/expectations
- ✓ **DO** reduce the burden on individuals by building a leadership team
- ✓ **DO** recruit at least two people to each role/duty so that responsibilities can be shared
- ✗ **DON'T** assume the incentives for participating are clear; be explicit

How to be an effective organisation

- ✓ **DO** employ different tools to enable virtual meetings to be as interactive as possible
- ✓ **DO** establish effective communication channels, that enable members to react promptly
- ✓ **DO** seek administrative support, if available, to free up time for the leadership team
- ✗ **DON'T** ignore your resource limits, such as finances or personnel; plan within your means

How to build a community

- ✓ **DO** spend time team building and getting to know (key) members
- ✓ **DO** nominate representatives to cover the breadth of your target audience
- ✓ **DO** seek out a senior champion or sponsor
- ✗ **DON'T** rely solely on open calls for recruitment; extend personal invitations as well

How to make an impact

- ✓ **DO** understand the goal of your network and identify appropriate success measures
- ✓ **DO** ensure these goals are set within realistic timeframes
- ✓ **DO** get agreed actions in writing to guard against missed commitments from partners
- ✗ **DON'T** overlook regular monitoring and evaluation; collect data to support your mission

Toolkit 2:

Achieving a specific goal with a researcher network

This toolkit draws on responses from those networks which self-identified as goal- or purpose-driven and from which emerged the high-level themes which frame the toolkit, of 'Community Building', 'Training and Development' and 'Advocacy'. While the networks' primary goal or purpose usually fell under just one of the high-level themes, many had an intersecting interest or project which fell outside that: for example, a network with advocacy as its primary focus may also seek to develop community at a certain point in its development. Thus, the high-level themes are intended as signposts for user-navigation rather than hard categories of networks, and users may find it helpful to read wider than their primary goal or purpose. Responses were coded under the high-level themes, which allowed the development of sub-themes and within those, recommendations. For each high-level theme a good-practice example is included, which illustrates how a single network has engaged with a number of sub-themes.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Planning and documenting the purpose and structure of the network	Define your purpose clearly (the change you want to see) and capture that in writing to share with prospective members and other stakeholders, and to keep the core group focused.
	Move to formalize the network as early as possible. Define Terms of Reference for the group to establish a shared vision, and role descriptors for core members (including anticipated time commitment) to allow prospective core members to make an informed decision about whether to take on a role.
	Be realistic about what can be achieved, particularly if you are operating with a volunteer base. Understand the resource limits (physical, financial, people and time) and plan activities accordingly, with sustainability plans built in.
Supporting the core membership	Do not underestimate the time commitment that will be required of the core group, particularly in the early stages of a network. Consider spreading the workload, where possible, by creating team projects rather than single-person projects, by having key roles shared by two people, and by using technology to minimize unnecessary effort.
	Be clear and organized in what is asked from core members: set meeting schedules well in advance, produce action items and allocate responsibilities after meetings, send reminders as deadlines approach, and offer templates of key documents to facilitate dissemination and improve consistency of presentation.
	Explore reward and recognition for core members, remembering that different members may have different motivations for participating (e.g., career development or network building). When forming your core group, look for complementary skills, such as project management, finance, or communications, in addition to a commitment to the network's purpose.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Fostering connection with the membership base	<p>To really connect with your base, ensure you have effective two-way communication channels and that you actively foster these.</p> <p>Be mindful of supporting all your intended beneficiary populations, and not merely a vocal subset who are active in your membership.</p> <p>Anticipate the time and patience required to build a membership base, and remember that, because of turnover, this will always be an ongoing and vital activity.</p> <p>Hold space within your core group meetings for new topics for discussion arising from the membership base.</p>
Connecting with wider sources of support	<p>Identify key institutional- and wider nodes of connection for your network. Actively seek to make and foster relationships with these, and as the relationship grows, seek to broaden these beyond connections embodied in a single person.</p> <p>Look for sources of support that you can jigsaw together for your network: administrative support from Career Development or Researcher Development teams in your institution, funding pockets within your institution, and expertise support from more established networks that share your purpose.</p>

Case example:

The National Junior Faculty of Sweden

This established national network (in existence since 2014) prioritizes and invests effort in community building, understanding that to mean broadening and deepening member engagement rather than simply growing numbers.

Defining purpose and structure:

The network has appropriate governance documents to keep the membership (core and wider) on track, and to enable easy communication with other stakeholders. These are considered 'living documents' and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain fit for purpose and helpful.

Support your core membership:

The network recommends good project management and division of tasks to support the core membership, while remaining mindful that contributors are often volunteers. The management or coordination of this volunteer core community requires patience and flexibility.

Connecting with your base:

The network uses a reflexive approach to community building: having defined its core purpose, its priorities and contributory activities are shaped through continuous engagement with the wider membership.

Identify and connect with wider sources of support:

The network draws attention to, and recommends working in awareness of the different working cycles and time scales of partner individuals and groups (differences may be particularly pronounced outside higher education).

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Developing research skills	<p>To address a barrier in a specific research area, motivate network participation through innovative activities, such as challenge-led workshops (e.g., sandpits) or funding competitions that bring together teams. This has the added benefit of initiating new collaborations.</p> <p>Provide safe spaces through the network for sharing new, ongoing or unresolved research projects, to explore ways to address barriers.</p> <p>Provide matchmaking options via the network for those seeking collaborators, mentors or advisors for projects and personal development. This could be achieved through scheduling opportunities to share research tools, data and facilities via in person and virtual workshops, retreats and conferences, as well as by building local, regional and national hubs of expertise.</p> <p>Consider how network initiatives can have a lasting impact on researcher development through the development of new shared resources and contributions to policy/practice. For example, to support researchers to develop skills for grant writing, networks could develop a repository of successful funding applications, with support from network members to manage, update and share communications about this resource.</p> <p>Be mindful of how costs for training opportunities delivered by external facilitators will be covered. If there are any anticipated costs for training participants then ensure sufficient notice is provided to enable planning for expenditure and explore subsidized options.</p>
Developing inclusive leadership skills	<p>Engage with stakeholders, including at senior levels, throughout institutions participating in the network to provide opportunities to showcase a diverse range of leadership journeys.</p> <p>Enable members to share experiences of leadership challenges and opportunities through peer mentoring.</p>
Planning career pathways within and beyond academia	<p>Raise the visibility of the diversity of career paths available to researchers within and beyond academia. For example, provide access to industry-specific career fora, and develop case studies from a range of different career paths.</p> <p>Enable intelligence sharing between members and relevant stakeholders about career development opportunities through reports, blogs, directories, and researcher profiles.</p>

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Building engagement	<p>Build members' engagement with development opportunities by producing simple 'communications kits'. This could include sample tweets or newsletter/e-bulletin abstracts detailing training and development objectives that can be copied for easy dissemination to publicise activities and their value.</p> <p>Explore which platforms and engagement activities, such as written materials and workshops (face-to-face or virtual) will best meet the development needs of the network's members, being particularly mindful of those traditionally underrepresented.</p> <p>Secure buy-in and support from senior stakeholders such that network members feel empowered and permitted to allocate time to participate in training and development opportunities.</p> <p>Explore forms of reward or recognition for participation in training and development activities.</p>
Evaluating activities	<p>Understand the impact of activities by developing approaches to quantify engagement and satisfaction. This could include measuring the uptake from tailored communications, and following up with the participants of development activities on their impact using both quantitative and qualitative information.</p> <p>Establish routes to feedback lessons learned from successful pilot activities to senior leaders to effect institutional changes, such as integrating these training activities within existing programmes or scaling up activities to reach more participants.</p>

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Case example:

University of Liverpool Research Staff Association

This institutional network provides a platform for communication, researcher development, and networking amongst research staff both within the schools, institutes and Faculties, and across the wider University of Liverpool community. The aims of the network have been co-created and co-defined by the researchers themselves.

Developing research skills

The network has delivered over 150 presentations, facilitated by invited speakers covering a diverse range of topics that are of interest to postdocs' and ECRs' development, including: mentoring, intellectual property, career impact, teaching recognition, responsible research and ethics, and research policy.

Planning career pathways within and beyond academia

Network members are encouraged to identify transferable career development skills that they have built through their research careers to date to support career progression within and beyond academia. These include (i) leadership skills through managing people, (ii) financial skills through managing a budget and gaining sponsorship, (iii) management skills through organising talks and administrative tasks, and (iv) networking skills through collaborating with ECRs and professional services staff across the University.

Invited internal, external and alumni speakers provide perspectives on researcher development, and informal networking is offered through lunch and learn sessions every six weeks bringing together research staff from different institutes across the University. An annual conference supports researchers to take control of their own careers through keynotes, short talks, panel discussions, lunchtime workshops and 1:1 surgeries.

Building engagement

All research staff automatically become members of the network when they start their contracts, building the network membership. The use of social media (particularly Twitter) and weekly e-bulletins help to disseminate information and make researchers aware of activities being organised, as well as to increase the profile of the network.

ADVOCACY

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
General recommendations	<p>Differentiate advocacy needs according to individual circumstance, such as by position in the research journey (doctoral researcher, ECR) or position within the institution (research only, teaching and research) to create targeted campaigns.</p> <p>Advocacy works best when driven by members of the community they represent who can report firsthand on their lived experience.</p> <p>Advocacy networks thrive when set up and maintained by the target group who can create a sustainable and supportive community focused on key issues.</p> <p>Advocacy networks are conduits for feedback and should seek ways to maximize participants' voice, empowerment and potential to contribute to decision making in the most appropriate forms.</p>
Advocating within institutions	<p>Representation on 'external' committees and working groups enables matters raised in networks to be shared across the institution and can contribute to policy and strategy development.</p> <p>Pair ECRs with senior staff on committees to facilitate advocacy upward through the institution and to promote both detail-oriented and strategic perspectives on issues.</p> <p>Aim to have more than one representative of a target group per committee and to establish hand-over/mentoring policies for continuity of representation. This is particularly relevant for those in transitory positions (e.g., on fixed-term research contracts).</p>
Large networks	<p>Establish smaller network groups within wider discipline or national networks to help those who might be marginalized to advocate for key issues (e.g., doctoral researchers, ECRs).</p> <p>Large, multi-organization networks should devolve advocacy activities into smaller working groups with specific objectives.</p> <p>Smaller networks can be invited to align with other discipline or mission-led national networks to have their voices heard, creating representational power through collaboration.</p> <p>Be mindful about supporting all your members and not only a subset. Maintaining representativeness can be supported by surveying network participants to determine how the network can continue to uphold their values.</p>
National advocacy	<p>Advocacy at the national level tends to be a characteristic of mature networks and is often the result of merging organizations or networks.</p> <p>Advocacy at an organisational level can sometimes develop into advocacy at a national level through engagement with stakeholders, the public, policy makers, funding bodies and learned societies.</p>

ADVOCACY

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
National advocacy	<p>Understand that there are different limitations/timelines when working with groups beyond academia.</p> <p>Use a range of communication tools to get your message across, including social media, publications, position papers and a sustained web presence.</p> <p>Choose delegates who are trusted to represent the values and opinions of your organisation.</p>
Advocating for a particular set of conditions (e.g. mental health, disability, age/ career break)	<p>Blogs can be a good way to increase the visibility of shared experiences and can be an effective form of advocacy.</p> <p>Develop an identity and mission statement which guides your actions and defines how you build relationships.</p> <p>Raise awareness of 'best practices' amongst organisations, so that researchers can inspire their own employers and other stakeholders to do better.</p>

Case example:

Manchester Metropolitan University, Early Career Researcher Forum

This relatively young network (established in 2019) represents ECRs across the University's 14 Research Centres, and aims to exchange best practice, raise issues, and support the career development of ECRs.

Advocacy by target group

The network is formed of ECR representatives who experience and understand the issues that arise from being a junior staff member and the discipline specific context of the Research Centre they represent.

Enable advocacy upward

The network pairs ECRs with more senior staff who can provide a wider institutional perspective and who can champion ECR issues at a strategic/management level.

Shared experience as advocacy

The network provides a supportive space where members can share their own and local concerns with colleagues who may have experienced similar issues.

Influencing policy

The network provides a conduit to communicate on specific issues affecting ECRs, which have successfully influenced University policy and decision making and contributes to the development of institutional action plans, such as for the HR Excellence in Research Award⁴.

Awareness of specific context

The network recognises how the specific contractual and disciplinary context of its ECRs contributes to key issues affecting this population. Consideration of how to balance teaching and research commitments, and different needs between subject areas both inform the network's advocacy efforts.

4. The HR Excellence in Research Award recognises institutions' implementation of the principles espoused in the 2005 'European Charter and Code for Researchers', or implementation of the 2019 'Researcher Development Concordat' for institutions based in the UK. Vitae manages the UK process on behalf of the European Commission.

Toolkit 3:

Supporting a specific population
with a researcher network

Researcher networks are often formed with the intention of supporting specific populations. This toolkit focuses on populations that were notable across the dataset: 'Doctoral or Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs)', 'Early Career Researchers (ECRs)', 'Mid-Career Researchers (MCRs)', and 'Marginalised Groups'. Salient responses from the dataset were identified, enabling overall recommendations to be framed around high-level themes: embedding diversity and inclusion; building compassion into leadership; recognising and championing development; and raising the researcher voice.

Some overlapping activities, behaviours, and processes are noted in relation to supporting specific researcher populations. However, subtle differences have also been captured in the toolkit that reflect career positions and commonly shared lived experiences linked to population status, identity, and associated advantages and challenges. Examples have been included based on specific reports of 'good practice' amongst the case studies contributed.

**DOCTORAL CANDIDATES/STUDENTS/RESEARCHERS OR
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHERS (PGRs)**

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Embedding diversity and inclusion	<p>Consider the diversity and study demands of the doctoral/PGR population, in terms of access and participation when recruiting new members and encouraging passive members to become more active.</p> <p>Consider methods of communication and the choice of platform for hosting the network and exchanging ideas that best fit the diversity of the doctoral/PGR population.</p>
Building compassion into leadership	<p>Take time to team-build and get to know the people involved. Doctoral/PGR membership shifts over time (reflecting the lifecycle of the doctorate), and as levels of confidence grow, the evolution of network roles and succession planning is needed to sustain networks.</p> <p>Acknowledge and embrace the value of informal, continuous feedback as doctoral researchers/PGRs progress through their studies.</p>
Recognising and championing development	<p>Provide recognition for the time researchers give to engaging in and organizing network activities alongside their doctoral studies. For example, the European Educational Research Association (EERA) acknowledges this by offering financial incentives.</p> <p>Promote opportunities for the acquisition of leadership skills for researchers in training. This may be through mentoring and ownership of specific network tasks and activities or through steering activities. The University Alliance's Doctoral Training Alliance (DTA) has developed a formalised system for members to gain committee membership or governance experience.</p> <p>Champion network ownership and offer opportunities for peer learning and support throughout the doctoral lifecycle.</p>

**DOCTORAL CANDIDATES/STUDENTS/RESEARCHERS OR
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHERS (PGRs)**

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Raising the researcher voice	<p>Aim to encourage open discussion and reduce stigma around common doctoral challenges through honest and productive conversations.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for the doctoral/PGR voice to be heard and respected in other fora. This can be achieved by securing the engagement and participation of institutional/organisational senior leadership teams and governing boards, and by capturing the attention of wider research communities. The Young Academy of Slovenia's 'Mentor of the Year' award is aimed purposefully at combatting poor mentoring and supervision practices faced by doctoral researchers and has enabled the network to gain wider visibility through Eurodoc communications.</p>

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS (ECRs)

Embedding diversity and inclusion	<p>Remember that the experiences of an interdisciplinary group are likely to be quite varied. For example, some ECRs will have completed postdoctoral posts, some will have come from industry/practice and some may have a more teaching focused background. At Manchester Metropolitan University, time was taken to understand the particular context of their ECR community to determine what type of support was most suitable. Consider using surveys, polls and focus groups to get to know your ECR community.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for network members to share experiences, ask questions, and raise concerns. To support the creation of a safe space, work with network members to set ground rules and ensure members know how any shared information will be used or acted upon. Consider inviting senior colleagues to certain events or meetings to hear feedback directly and/or provide options for anonymous feedback, for example via an online form.</p>
Supporting effective communication	<p>Provide ways for members to communicate easily, share resources and collaborate between meetings, for example via MS Teams or SharePoint.</p> <p>Use social media to increase outreach and engagement. For example, social media is particularly useful when aiming to connect with people beyond a single institution, both nationally and internationally.</p>

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS (ECRs)

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Recognising and championing development	Ensure the benefits of active membership and leadership are clearly outlined and promoted, and identify enthusiastic members who can form the core membership. Consider developing a mission statement which helps you to describe key network roles, their purpose and benefits to the individual.
	Plan for high membership turnover. It is helpful to design all roles to be completed as pairs or teams, as this also has the added benefit of not overburdening a single person. Consider running recruitment events to encourage people to take more active roles.
	Provide opportunities for members to develop their own networks, such as by scheduling occasions to develop both formal and social networks, both in person and virtually. The PostDoctoral Society of Cambridge (PdOC) found social connections formed the foundation for more professional ones.
	Provide opportunities for members to gain exposure to careers both within and beyond academia. Champion the diversity of these options, thereby supporting members to contribute to a healthy research culture and environment.
	Explore options of providing funding support with the aim of encouraging development of research independence. For example, the University of Dundee's School of Medicine Research Staff Association was able to leverage pockets of development funding to support various initiatives. Use case studies and blog posts to raise the profile of ECRs and their research.
Raising the researcher voice	Consider routes towards raising the profile of this community and amplifying their voice in policy-making/strategic arenas. The network represents a group which can be regularly consulted, and using feedback from consultation can improve and strengthen proposals and reports to senior leadership.

MID-CAREER RESEARCHERS (MCRs)

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Sustaining networks	<p>Mid-career researchers are likely to take a more focused approach to their development than ECRs, and may already be a member of multiple networks. It is therefore important to understand what would particularly motivate members to participate and put in place appropriate incentives. One example could be providing access to mentorship from more senior colleagues.</p> <p>As with all networks, active members are important in driving forward initiatives; however, more senior academics can be increasingly time-poor. To combat this, consider allocating time to support engagement of key members. The Marie Curie Alumni Association found more experienced individuals were willing to take on an advisory role supporting members who wished to step up and lead, as well as those who wished to grow and develop.</p> <p>Be aware that administrative support can be a limiting factor to the progress/achievements of the network. Understand your resource limits and investigate options for support.</p>
Embedding diversity and inclusion	<p>As with colleagues earlier in their career, it is important to provide opportunities for members to ask questions and raise concerns. To support creation of a safe space, work with network members to set ground rules and ensure members know how any shared information will be used or acted upon. Provide options for anonymous feedback; for example, via an online form.</p>
Supporting effective communication	<p>Build and maintain strong two-way communication routes between members and the network leadership. For example the Initiative for Science in Europe found this approach helps ensure their network is agile and responsive. In particular, ensure that ownership and responsibility for these routes is clear and each member takes personal responsibility for maintaining them.</p> <p>At this career stage, academics can become entrenched within their department or discipline. Use your network to provide opportunities for members to meet colleagues from a variety of backgrounds. For example, the -Inter-Institutional MCR Mentoring Programme, which pairs mentors and mentees from a different institution, found members benefited from a fresh perspective and broader outlook.</p>
Recognising and championing development	<p>Mid-career researchers each have a significant body of experience. Provide opportunities for members to share these experiences and swap ideas. Your network may also provide the framework to facilitate mentoring partnerships. Mentoring is particularly helpful in supporting career promotion.</p>
Raising the researcher voice	<p>Empower members to inform and develop institutional strategies. Provide opportunities for this group to network with senior decision makers to champion their collective voice and raise the profile of any particular issues they are experiencing. Engagement in this type of activity will also provide important insight into institutional and/or sector governance.</p>

MARGINALISED GROUPS

Overall recommendation	Specific activity, behaviour or process
Embedding diversity and inclusion	<p>Be aware of and respond to access and participation opportunities to widen inclusive membership. For example, the Marie Curie Alumni Association pays particular attention to under-represented and at-risk researcher sub-groups (e.g. by employment status, geographical location, or political/economic status).</p> <p>Acknowledge intersectional aspects of self-identity and demographic characteristics that may contribute to differentiated experiences of marginalisation and exclusion.</p>
Supporting effective communication	<p>Facilitate opportunities for members to communicate and make connections with colleagues in and beyond their host institutions to collect and share data and experiences in the face of minoritised positions. For example, the NADSN-STEMM Action Group acts as a super network with a mission to connect and represent disabled staff networks. The Daphne Jackson Trust, focusing on returners to research after career breaks from all backgrounds, puts its Fellows in touch with other Fellows and former Fellows within their host institution and beyond.</p>
Recognising and championing development	<p>Enable members to take a lead in sharing their experiences, creating greater awareness, and putting forward preferred solutions/strategies to address the impact of issues relating to demographic characteristics and personal circumstances that impact on research opportunities and capabilities. For example, The Disabled and Ill researchers' network has encouraged members to take a lead in producing guest blog posts for a wider researcher development network.</p>
Raising the researcher voice	<p>Take time to understand the specific development needs and challenges faced by marginalised researchers, such as systemic and cultural barriers that might impact on access and participation in institutional and funders' research initiatives. This can assist with the articulation of the network's goals and purpose that draws positive attention to the marginalised researcher voice.</p> <p>Provide data and recommendations for institutions and funders to remove and ameliorate barriers faced by researchers who are marginalised on the basis of demographic, political or economic characteristics. Emphasise the importance of funders being able to attract and capture the broadest talent base and range of expertise.</p>

Networks contributing to the toolkits

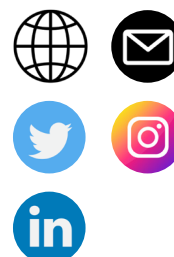
Institutional		Audience/Mission	
Lancaster University Research Staff Association (RSA)	UK	ECR and MCR	
Manchester Metropolitan University The Early Career Researcher (ECR) Forum	UK	ECR	
Sheffield Hallam University Early Career Researcher (ECR) Network	UK	ECR	
Umeå University Umeå Postdoc Society	SE	ECR	
University of Birmingham Postdoctoral and Early Researcher Career Development and Training (PERCAT)	UK	ECR	
University of Cambridge The PostDoctoral Society of Cambridge (PdOC)	UK	ECR	
University of Chester The School of Arts and Media Research Network	UK	Disciplinary	
University of Dundee School of Life Sciences Research Staff Association	UK	ECR and MCR	
University of Dundee School of Medicine Research Staff Association	UK	ECR and MCR	
University of Liverpool Research Staff Association (UoL RSA)	UK	ECR and MCR	
University of Oxford Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS)	UK	ECR and MCR	
University of Sheffield Disabled & Ill Researchers' Network	UK	Institutional Mission-Led	
Regional		Audience/Mission	
London Postdoc Network	UK	ECR	
Mid-Career Researchers Mentoring Programme Universities of Huddersfield, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester Metropolitan and Salford	UK	MCR	
Network of Expert Researcher Developers (NERDS)	UK	General	
Northern Advanced Research Training Initiative (NARTI)	UK	PGR - Disciplinary	

Networks contributing to the toolkits

National		Audience/Mission	
Danish Diabetes Academy	DK	Disciplinary	
Daphne Jackson Trust NADSN - STEMM Action Group	UK	Mission-Led	
National Junior Faculty of Sweden	SE	ECR and MCR	
Postdoc Futures (University of Manchester)	UK	ECR	
The Young Academy of Slovenia (Društvo Mlada akademija)	SI	PGR and ECR	
UK Research Staff Association (UKRSA)	UK	ECR and MCR	
University Alliance Doctoral Training Alliance	UK	PGR	
International		Audience/Mission	
European Educational Research Association (EERA)	Europe	Disciplinary	
European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)	Europe	Disciplinary	
Europlanet (University of Kent)	Europe	Disciplinary	
Initiative for Science in Europe (ISE)	Europe	General	
Marie Curie Alumni Association (MCAA)	Worldwide	General	
Women In Supramolecular Chemistry Network (WISC)	Worldwide	Disciplinary - Mission-Led	
Young Academy of Europe (YAE)	Europe	ECR and MCR	



Danish Diabetes Academy



Institution/ Country:	Denmark
	Danish Diabetes Academy
Network:	5-10 years
Number of Years Active:	In the last five years we have granted in total 100 PhD scholarships and Postdoc fellowships.
Number of Participants:	These researchers are employed at research institutions in Denmark.

Background:

The main focus areas of the DDA activities are:

- To strengthen the research training available to PhD students and postdocs within the field of diabetes, in collaboration with academia, hospitals, and life-science industry, by organising PhD and postdoc courses and symposia.
- To serve as a national hub within diabetes, unifying academia, hospitals, and life-science industry in Denmark, by organising workshops, networking meetings and collaborative events.
- To recruit outstanding national and international PhD students, postdocs and visiting professors, within the field of diabetes, in open and free competition.

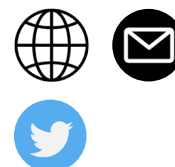
Advice:

Event Organisation:

The Danish Diabetes Academy Winter School for postdocs is a five-day event for national and international postdocs within the field of diabetes. The Organizing Committee behind the Winter School is constituted by a group of postdocs. The Organizing Committee defines the vision of the program and develops the sessions and activities. In other words, they get to make the choices as they represent the voice of the next generation of diabetes scientists that the Winter School itself is aimed at.

Set Challenges:

As a cornerstone of the Winter School program, the Organizing Committee constructs a set of challenges for the participants to solve in groups. Here, the participants are asked to provide solutions to challenges that typically reflect the tough questions people around the world ask about research culture. For example, in 2021, the participants worked together on challenges connecting current scientific focus areas and society, such as how language matters when approaching people with diabetes, how academia and industry collaborate when it comes to innovation and how science may translate into policy. The output is six podcast episodes.



Institution/ Country:	UK
Network:	Daphne Jackson Trust
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years
Number of Participants:	Over 400 fellows have been awarded to date with approximately 50 to 60 current Fellows at any one time.

Background:

At the Daphne Jackson Trust, we strongly encourage networks amongst our Fellows and former Fellows. Daphne Jackson Fellows can often feel like the only people working part time within their departments and often the people who best understand what it is like to come back from a career break are other returners. We offer networking opportunities through our conference, training courses and other events. We put Fellows in touch with other Fellows within their host institute and beyond.

Advice:

Peer support:

Daphne Jackson Fellows often feel empowered when they meet other Fellows, especially those who are a few steps further on with their careers than them. Through the networks, they can share experiences, especially what works and what doesn't work. They can swap ideas and start their own informal networks offering support and advice. We have a few regional groups that meet up socially. We try to link Fellows as much as possible but often it's best to offer opportunities for networking and let natural friendships form.

Monthly Webinars:

One initiative we have started during the pandemic is an informal monthly webinar for our Fellows lasting for an hour. Here a former Fellow will talk about their Fellowship and what they went on to do. They will offer advice, top tips, especially with regards to next steps. The webinars help the Fellows feel more connected and less isolated in some instances. We aim for a friendly and welcoming atmosphere to encourage discussion and swapping of ideas.



Institution/ Country:	Europe
Network:	European Educational Research Association (EERA)
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years
Number of Participants:	EERA's Emerging Researchers' Group (ERG): 5000+ consisting of a mixture of PGR and postdoc educational researchers

Background:

The Emerging Researchers' Group fulfils two main EERA objectives: to develop research training in Europe by generating methodology seminars and workshops and to provide support for young researchers on issues of career development, promoting collaborative work. These include; the Annual Emerging Researchers' Conference (ERC), ERC Poster Awards, the EERA Best Paper Award, EERA Conference Bursaries, Mentoring Emerging Researchers and Season Schools/ Workshops.

The ERG aims to:

- provide a European research community for Emerging Researchers (including those undertaking a Doctorate)
- broaden professional development opportunities and research dissemination experiences internationally; exchanging experiences and ideas about research and researcher development
- offer support for early career researchers from low GDP countries to engage with ECER.

The strength of the ERG's outcomes lies in the support it offers to 'new' researchers in providing a space for discussion and collaboration with peers across Europe via the various annual activities outlined above. In addition, it creates a new space in EERA which allows emerging researchers to be supported so that a strong, independent 'Emerging Researchers' forum will add to EERA's internal democratic accountability. The Group recruits members whose membership details are held within the EERA database. In addition to the annual meeting, year-round contact is maintained through email and via the Emerging Researchers' Group website.

Advice:

Administration:

Dedicated admin support to drive forward the activities of the Network.

Governance:

The Link Convenor is elected for a fixed term by the annual group meeting and represents the interests of emerging educational researchers in Europe on EERA Council. It is important to have the support and participation of individuals from the institutional/organisation's senior leadership team/Board of Governors.

Financial incentive/Recognition:

Important for the time that researchers give to organising the Network activities.



Institution/ Country:	Europe
Network:	European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years

Background:

Created specifically for business school professionals in charge of doctoral programmes and research, it addresses the challenges within different types of doctoral programmes (PhD, DBA). Follows global trends and continually examines different models for doctoral training including research mobility, research placement, the nature of the curriculum and international cooperation. The annual conference encompasses all the different facets of doctoral education around the world.

Advice:

Attendees:

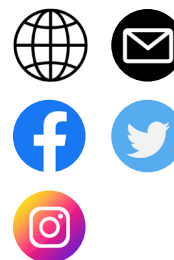
Attraction of repeat attendees and new attendees year on year.

Webinars:

In 2020/21 proposition of extending event beyond annual conference to series of webinars was discussed.

Dissemination:

Emerald book proposal accepted based on capturing knowledge and practice emerging from the event.



Institution/ Country:	University of Kent (UK)
Network:	Europlanet
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years
Number of Participants:	The Europlanet initiative includes academics, research staff and research students (> 400 researchers in 50 countries)

Background:

Europlanet links research institutions and companies active in planetary research in Europe and around the world. Since 2005 Europlanet has provided the European planetary science community with a platform to:

- Exchange ideas and personnel.
- Share research tools, data and facilities.
- Define key science goals for the future.
- Engage stakeholders, policy makers and European Citizens with planetary science.
- Offer access to >50 facilities for collaborative research.

Europlanet is:

- Creating a sustainable pan European research infrastructure that unites the planetary research community.
- Raising awareness of European planetary science and influencing policy makers in its funding and development.
- Creating an early career network.
- Organising an annual planetary science conference (EPSC).

Advice:

Time:

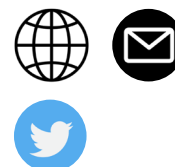
Establishing a large-scale network takes time. It is best broken down into small teams with specific objectives supported and run by a small 'Executive' team. The Executive team needs to include specialists in project management, finance and communications which are tasks that academics/ researchers are not always best placed to do.

Team Building:

Most of all you need patience and to invest time in getting to know the people involved. It also requires hard decisions - some groups and people will not fit and you need to think of the overall common good and what you want to achieve when choosing partners.

Inclusivity:

The Europlanet Society was formed in 2018 to promote the advancement of European planetary science and related fields for the benefit of the community. It is open to individual and organisational members. Anyone with an active interest in planetary science (whether academic or industrial, professional or amateur) is welcome to join.



Institution/ Country:	Europe
Network:	Initiative for Science in Europe
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years
Number of Participants:	Represent more than 1 million researchers

Background:

Our organisation gathers together European scientific societies and get them together to work on specific science policy issues. Different types of initiatives are then undertaken; the most frequent one is to publish a position paper. Member organisations provide experts from within their membership to work on the paper; once drafted, feedback from all our members is asked. Depending on the internal mechanisms, our members might involve a number of researchers within their organisations.

Advice:

The following aspects are important to succeed in engaging with researchers all the way down to the bottom:

The structure of the member organisations:

Some are small and/or agile and they are able to gather valuable feedback from their base. Others are large with no much contact with their base; they are usually slow in providing feedback or do not provide any. The Initiative supports member organisations to create a better connection with their members and become more agile and responsive.

Create, plan and maintain:

A two-way communication plan between the leadership and the members. This is a very resource intensive operation and a well-defined strategy should be made to avoid wasting resources.

Motivation:

Is (as always) the main driver to any successful initiative. Not only a two-way communication channel should be up and running, but communication should be used to incentivise the engagement of members. Understand what motivates members' participation and put in place appropriate incentives.



Institution/ Country:	Lancaster University (UK)
Network:	Research Staff Association (RSA)
Number of Years Active:	5-10 years
Number of Participants:	393 Research only roles (372 indefinite and 21 fixed term)

Background:

The RSA actively engages with the University, and its management team, as a voice for researchers in policy making decisions, as well as providing a social forum for researchers. The RSA undertakes a wide range of activities and events, which include:

- Facilitated workshops enabling research staff to develop and reflect on individual career paths.
- Informal gatherings and networking events facilitating social and professional connections to bring about cross-cutting research opportunities.
- Social events and opportunities to meet other research staff across all disciplines.
- Representation on the Researcher **Concordat** Implementation Group.

Members have been having a regular virtual 'coffee and catch up during Covid (though attendance was very small). Now back to having termly events, where they check in with broad researcher community and receive feedback from Departmental researcher reps on local culture.

All new researchers are added to the mailing list, which is then used by the RSA to inform researchers of all opportunities. The RSA web site (www.wp.lancs.ac.uk/rsa/is) the main point of contact. They also have an active Teams area for general discussion.

Advice:

Induction:

Researchers, are the only staff group that currently get a 'central' induction. Currently online, but looking to run them both face to face and online. This provides a good oversight of the institution, some essential information about systems and processes. The aim is to get researchers 'up and running' as quickly as possible, and to offer them an early networking opportunity.

Researcher Development Concordat:

Give a regular opportunity for all researchers to feed into the Concordat, raise any issues and share practice. Keep an open dialogue with all researchers, this is backed by a regular email update on any development opportunities and activities. Discussing any current relevant issues. It is all working as anticipated, however, active participation is very low. Problems in recruiting to departmental reps and other committee representatives.

Administration Support:

It does need someone in a support role to help pull activities together, to help with recruitment to the executive and to keep the communication flowing. This person needs to have some influence and ability to follow up on issues and to act as a conduit. Or the RSA executive needs to have some 'time' allocated or bought out of day role to enable them to fully participate. The fast turnover in staff can be a problem.



Institution/ Country: UK

Network: London Postdoc Network

Number of Years Active: 1 - 2 years

Number of Participants: 10

Background:

The London Postdoc Network is providing postdocs in Greater London with access to career development opportunities. The goal of this initiative is to develop a network formed with the aim of ensuring career development of postdoctoral trainees across London.

Advice:

Online Events:

We did several career development online round table events, which attracted from 100 to 400 attendees.

Communication:

Work hard to establish effective communication with members/attendees.



Institution/ Country:	Manchester Metropolitan University (UK)
Network:	The Early Career Researcher (ECR) Forum
Number of Years Active:	2-5 years
Number of Participants:	< 30

Background:

The Early Career Researcher (ECR) Forum is a network of representatives from each of the 14 Universities Research Centres to exchange best practice, plan events, raise questions and discuss matters relating to the career development of ECRs. The ECR Forum works to bring together Centre representatives to form a cross-institutional and interdisciplinary network. Representatives also use the Forum as a communication system to cascade information of interest to Centre ECR communities. Forum meetings are supported by the Researcher Development and Training Manager, who provides a link to professional service functions. Forum members meet once a term and communicate between meetings using a dedicated Microsoft Teams Chat channel. This network aims to support Centre based and institutional efforts to raise the profile of the ECR community and their development needs. The majority of ECRs at Manchester Metropolitan University are on teaching and research contracts, rather than solely research focussed. It is therefore important to consider the complexity of their working environment with the joint priorities of delivering excellent teaching alongside high-quality research.

Advice:

Representation:

Centres often have two representatives, one of which is an ECR themselves and is therefore a member of the community they are representing. The second is a more senior member of staff in a position to champion ECR matters at management meetings.

Meetings:

Forum members meet once a term and communicate between meetings using a dedicated Microsoft Teams Chat channel.

Ideas sharing:

Representatives use the Forum to showcase local development activities taking place within their Centres. Colleagues can then adapt and develop ideas further to benefit their own ECR communities.

Influencing policy:

The Forum creates a conduit for feedback and case studies of the ECR experience to be shared with key decision makers.

Communication network:

The Forum provides a quick and easy method for ECR related opportunities to be shared amongst the ECR communities. This is particularly helpful when notices are associated with tight deadlines.

Support network:

The Forum provides a space for members to share their own and local concerns with colleagues who may have experienced similar issues.

Next steps:

The Forum is exploring further initiatives which take advantage of the cross-institutional group to promote networking of ECRs between Centres and across disciplines.



Institution/ Country:	Europe / International
Network:	Marie Curie Alumni Association
Number of Years Active:	5-10 years
Number of Participants:	20,000 members (current and former Researchers) from 150 countries

Background:

The MCAA is an international non-profit organization established and supported by the European Commission, but entirely run by volunteer members and with a bottom-up approach at its core. MCAA members have in common to benefit or have benefitted from an MSCA funding, therefore sharing a strong background in research, but their career paths are diverse and touch all economic sectors. The vibrant MCAA community brings together all career stages from all scientific disciplines, encouraging networking and cooperation, making the MCAA a forum of debate between researchers and with the society. The MCAA is a major platform for researchers to contribute to shaping science policy in Europe, providing career development opportunities and supporting the wider research community on topics affecting research and researchers' lives.

Activities include:

- The Marie Curie Alumni Association's communication medium includes a newsletter (published every 4 months) and an annual magazine. The magazine is published in hard copy as well as soft copy. From 2020, an editorial board and Editorial Team has been established. Both of these teams are very active and now due to their effort, there is also have ISBN number for both of the publications.
- A MCAA Learning opportunity has been started for both members and non-members. In addition, free learning opportunities for active MCAA members and underrepresented groups (Researchers at risk, Researchers with disabilities, Unemployed MCAA Members, Members residing in developing and Widening countries) has also been created.
- MCAA Annual Flagship events have become very popular among researcher community. In the last physical event, there were 24 parallel sessions on topics affecting researcher life.

Advice:

Membership and leadership:

Find active members who would like to lead the task, even if they lack the relevant experience but wish to learn and grow. Identify experienced members who could support the other teams.

Planning and Governance:

Make an early plan and to form the association's structure. Make sure the overall process is written and understood by ALL persons involved in the process.

Feedback:

Measure success and change depending on the feedback from members.

Publications:

Formalize the publications (ISBN or other form of accreditation).

Monitor:

The numbers of attendees at each event, the number of initiatives taken after events have taken place and feedback from stakeholders.

Goals:

You need to understand what's your goal and what you want to achieve.



Mid-Career Researcher
Mentoring Programme



Institution/ Country:	Joint between the Universities of Huddersfield, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester Metropolitan and Salford (UK)
Network:	Mid-Career Researchers Mentoring Programme
Number of Years Active:	1-2 years
Number of Participants:	> 30

Background:

An inter-institutional mentoring programme between the Universities of Huddersfield, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester Metropolitan and Salford. The programmes purpose is to facilitate mentoring across institutions to support the researcher community. Aimed at Mid-Career Researchers (MCRs) the objectives of the programme are to enable networking, collaboration, progression/career development, and help avoid sectoral drain, retaining good academics within the sector.

The first round of the programme was launched in summer 2021 with 16 mentoring pairings. Pairs worked together for 4-6 months, with a suggested 3-4 virtual meetings during this time period to encourage focused development activity. Opportunity to attend mentoring briefings were offered locally and pairs have been supported throughout by a programme handbook and local key contact.

Building on the success of the first round, additional partner universities are being sought to contribute to an expansion of the network.

Advice:

Covid restrictions led to all planning meetings and mentoring taking place virtually. As the majority of people are now quite familiar with an online way of working, the virtual format led to greater flexibility for both the planning team and mentoring pairs.

The planning team used online meetings to progress actions in real time. This enabled input from all partners and actions to be progressed more quickly. To support effective programme set-up, the planning team also took advantage of various tools. These include creation of an MS Teams channel where all meeting minutes were stored and documents could be worked on collectively, and use of Mural, an online whiteboard, to support the matching process.

Several of the partner institutions also benefited from having two representatives in the planning team, as this provided greater availability for meetings and sharing of the workload.



Institution/ Country:	Slovenia
Network:	The Young Academy of Slovenia (Društvo Mlada akademija)
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years
Number of Participants:	~ 400 members (10-20 comprise the active core of the association)

Background:

The Young Academy of Slovenia is an independent, non-profit and voluntary association of doctoral candidates and early-career researchers. Our aim is to bring together doctoral students and early-career researchers active in research and higher education in Slovenia as well as Slovenians active in these areas abroad. The association represents the interests of its members in the public sphere and as a stakeholder in the co-creation of Slovenian research and higher education policies.

In 2016, The Young Academy of Slovenia's predecessor, the Society of Young Researchers of Slovenia joined forces with The Association of Youth in Higher Education and Science. With the arrival of certain motivated and dedicated new members and with closer cooperation with Eurodoc, the Young Academy of Slovenia began tackling further important topics, such as mental health, open science, career development, employment, and mobility. We currently organize the Mentor of the Year Award, one event on mental health and one event on open science per year. We have also organized or co-organized events on the topics such as funding opportunities for PhD students, crowdfunding for scientists, and popular science talks.

Advice:

Visibility and Engagement:

The Young Academy of Slovenia has become an important stakeholder in all matters important for early-career researchers in Slovenia. We are regularly invited to attend meetings, give talks, participate in roundtables, and give interviews on the topics such as employment prospects, mental health, and best practices in the supervision of doctoral candidates. In this way, we help to share the voice of early-career researchers, raise awareness of their struggles, and help create solutions. We are also members of the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc), through which we can co-create European research and development policies.

Advocacy/Policy:

We regularly participate in high-level policymaking decisions, e.g. by providing comments on important legal documents such as the novella of the Research and Development Activity Act and the Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia 2021 to 2030. Our greatest achievement so far was the participation in the development of a new funding scheme that will facilitate brain circulation, which was led by the Slovenian Research Agency and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports.



Institution/ Country:	Sweden
Network:	National Junior Faculty
Number of Years Active:	5-10 years

Background:

The National Junior Faculty (NJF) is an umbrella organisation for local networks of postdocs, researchers, assistant professors, and other academic ECRs without a permanent position.

Remit and actions of the NJF:

1. Communication with the researcher community.
2. Events (organisation of conferences, workshops, and webinars).
3. Sustainability (democratic majority, spirit of consensus and inclusion, living bylaws).
4. Advocacy/Policy (national surveys, collaboration with other networks).

Advice:

1. Communication with the researcher community:

- Be open to new initiatives, questions, and challenges being brought to your organisation.
- Be patient and understanding as representatives/members are volunteers. Things often move very slowly.
- Have an agenda and always invite new items to be added and allow time for their discussion.
- Produce action items from all your meetings with a person responsible for carrying it out (e.g. Working groups).
- Set a meeting schedule in advance and meet routinely.
- Clearly communicate when feedback is required and remind representatives of these deadlines in good time.
- Attempt to distribute tasks and work amongst all representatives to avoid burnout.

2. Events:

- Determine what concrete outcome you want from an activity (e.g. report, publication, working group generation etc).
- Use live/online tools to collect information/feedback/answers/complaints/etc from participants in real time (e.g. Padlet, Zoom polls).
- Engage the community using comics or other artwork that can be posted on social media or on bulletin boards.

3. Sustainability:

- Always be welcoming of new groups or individuals who approach you, but be cautious of whether personal or corporate engagement is the right choice of action.
- Be cautious about supporting all your members and not only a subset.
- Make decisions together and codify this in your governance documents to avoid bias.

4. Advocacy/Policy:

- Understand that there are different limitations/timelines when working with groups outside academia.



Institution/ Country:	Joint between 14 Universities, predominantly based in Yorkshire and the North East of England (UK)
Network:	Network of Expert Researcher Developers (NERDS)
Number of Years Active:	More than 10 years
Number of Participants:	Approximately 30

Background:

North East Researcher Developers (NERDS) group organises network meetings, events and sharing of resources with spotlight focus on key topics of shared interest. Regional focus intended to facilitate face-to-face meet ups between institutions.

Advice:

- Sharing of practice and tips/resources for common issues faced.
- Peer support networking.



Institution/ Country: Northern UK HE Institutions (UK)

Network: Northern Advanced Research Training Initiative (NARTI)

Number of Years Active: More than 10 years

Background:

Network of research-led universities in the north of England providing specialist advanced training through the facilitation of events, retreats and conferences to establish networks to share cross-regional expertise.

As a self-funded initiative, NARTI operates with care and probity, with funds held and administered by the University of Leeds. Events aimed at PGRs in Business & Management Schools.



Institution/ Country:	Universities of Bristol and Manchester (UK)
Network:	Postdoc Futures
Number of Years Active:	< 1 year
Number of Participants:	60

Background:

Background: A 'grassroot' group of postdocs and researcher development team who came together to advocate and promote development (both career and personal) of postdocs and research staff. They are in contact with funders and will start contacting employers (e.g. Russell group) to advocate for equity for treatments of postdocs, regardless of which institutions they are from, and to promote the implementation of research concordat.

Advice:

A key thing is to have a group (or even just a couple) of people within your institution that has a similar goal and start from there. Speak with researcher developers and/or research staff reps, and don't be shy on sharing what you believe is important with others.

As this is something that started spontaneously, it would have been nice to know which other groups are already existing. Although this group is also quite different from other groups, e.g. R14 or N8, as it's driven by postdocs/former postdocs, so we're offering something quite different for institutions, postdocs and funders.

It was really encouraging to see the responses of postdocs to the initiative, and we probably could've achieved more if we had more structure to the initiative. We are planning to do so this year, by having more regular meetings, and to set up a website and logo so that the initiative could be promoted much further and in a way that is easier to understand.

Sheffield Hallam University



Institution/ Country:	Sheffield Hallam University (UK)
Network:	Early Career Researcher (ECR) network
Number of Years Active:	2-5 years
Number of Participants:	~ 80 members (10-15 comprise the active core group)

Background:

A university-wide early career researcher (ECR) network established to enhance research community and provide support for those relatively new to research. Provides opportunities for ECRs to: meet other ECRs across the university and benefit from peer support; present their research and form multidisciplinary collaborations; provide feedback on lived experiences as ECRs to support further development of institutional researcher development programme.

Advice:

MS Teams channel:

In response to limited face-to-face meeting opportunities, a MS Teams channel has been established where ECRs can talk about issues related to research culture and researcher development.

Inclusivity:

Not using strict definition of an ECR and invite all staff new or returning to research who want to engage with other researchers.

Organisation and Impact:

ECR reps help run events, promote the network locally and channel communications to inform university researcher development and related university policy.

UK Research Staff Association



supported by Vitae



Institution/ Country:	Joint (UK Universities and research stakeholders)
Network:	UK Research Staff Association (UKRSA)
Number of Years Active:	> 10 years
Number of Participants:	Nationwide

Background:

The UK Research Staff Association (UKRSA) was established in 2010 to provide a collective voice for researchers at Higher Education Institutions across the UK and our vision is a fulfilling career for every researcher in the UK.

Advice:

Our Mission is to:

- Empower research staff to take control of their careers.
- Build researcher communities.
www.ukrsavitae.wixsite.com/ukrsa/events
- Support local and regional RSAs by providing resources.
www.ukrsavitae.wixsite.com/ukrsa/blog
- Carry out projects into the issues facing researchers and influence UK policy.
www.ukrsavitae.wixsite.com/ukrsa/projects

Above all, we want to connect to as many people as possible across the UK that share our passion for developing researchers' careers. If you are interested in becoming involved in our work, please email UKRSA at the link at the top of the page.



Institution/ Country:	Umeå University (Sweden)
Network:	Umeå Postdoc Society
Number of Years Active:	1-2 years
Number of Participants:	17

Background:

Umeå Postdoc Society is a postdoctoral member-driven organisation whose goal is to improve the quality of the working environment and networking possibilities of the postdocs at Umeå Campus, including both Umeå University (UmU) and SLU Umeå, and to thereby make Umeå a more attractive place for postdoctoral research. To achieve this major purpose, the UPS promotes scientific interaction within the postdoctoral community by organising both social and professional networking event.

Advice:

Consultation:

We realized that this initiative was needed once we organized a first kick-off to advertise the society, more than 100 postdocs attended the event. Based on the discussions we had with our colleagues at the campus, we understood that most of the postdocs wished for more career development events.

Career Development Workshops:

Based on this feedback, we launched several workshops based on this thematic, including leadership workshops, grant writing workshops and created monthly seminar series (Career Paths Series) during which we have a presentation from a guest speaker who chose a specific path after the postdoc e.g. industry, science communication, academia etc. together with round table discussion with the speaker.

Feedback:

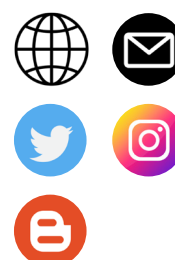
A survey was conducted after these events to gain valuable feedback from attendees.

Establish support at Faculty Level:

It was very important to have the right contacts at the faculty (e.g. group leaders, head of research departments and administration staff). First this helps to have funding for the events, second it helps to disseminate our activities and newsletter.

Collaboration:

Establish good collaboration with the different University entities like the research grant office and international office is crucial to share useful information to our target audience as well as improving the current initiatives of the university.



Institution/ Country:	UK
Network:	University Alliance (Doctoral Training Alliance)
Number of Years Active:	7 years
Number of Participants:	Around 100 Post-Graduate Researchers

Background:

Since the onset of the pandemic, Doctoral Training Alliance (DTA) have developed several initiatives to maintain and develop its nationwide, cross-institutional community of PGRs. These have included virtual training events organised by the DTA team, informal networking hosted by students as well as the development of asynchronous resources to strengthen community ties throughout the year (blogs, directory, researcher profiles). Examples include:

- Researcher profile pdfs, these share research interests and contact details within the cohort, helping students get to know and reach out to others.
- Social interest groups providing peer support to marginalised groups (LGBTQ+, BAME, parents etc.). Students were invited to fill in a survey identifying groups they would be interested in joining. They were put in contact with one another to arrange their own informal meetings.
- DTA Representative committee regularly organise student-hosted socials throughout the year, as well as part of DTA residential events. For example, during the Summer School, they hosted an icebreaker social each morning.
- DTA Researcher blog series was set up in January 2021 to help students get to know one another remotely and share experiences.
- Posting resources packs to attendees at virtual residential events to support DTA researcher identity and sense of belonging, and promote engagement with online activities.

Advice:

Objectives:

Set clear objectives of initiatives through understanding what sort of benefits come from different forms of networking (for example, social networking, research networking, networking at training, development of support networks, friendships, research collaborations). To support development of our initiatives, I developed an internal report exploring what effective DTA researcher engagement could look like in the online/blended environment, drawing on feedback from past in-person and virtual activities.

Expectation and Impact:

Don't be downhearted if you develop something and engagement seems low. As the organiser of virtual networking, you don't get the same sense of immediate impact you get with in-person networking. Informal feedback from students is important.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM



Institution/ Country:	University of Birmingham (UK)
Network:	Postdoctoral and Early Researcher Career Development and Training - PERCAT
Number of Years Active:	5-10 years
Number of Participants:	> 500

Background:

The PERCAT initiative has been established to facilitate the career development and training of Postdoctoral and Early Career Researchers across the Colleges of Life and Environmental Sciences and Engineering and Physical Sciences at Birmingham. They aim to foster this by providing access and information to a range of training courses, career advice, funding opportunities, workshops and seminars.

It is run by a Committee, which consist of postdocs from all associated Schools within the College, research facilitators and senior academics. The Committee organise a range of training courses, career advice, funding opportunities, workshops, seminars and other development events that are tailored for the needs of researchers at Birmingham.



Institution/ Country:	University of Cambridge (UK)
Network:	The PostDoctoral Society of Cambridge (PdOC)
Number of Years Active:	> 10 years
Number of Participants:	> 2000

Background:

The PdOC society is a network of postdocs, run 'by postdocs, for postdocs'. PdOC supports the welfare of postdocs through in social and professional events. PdOC is the longest running postdoctoral society in the UK, started in 2003.

PdOC represents postdocs in career development, contract research conditions, college affiliation, and social and sporting issues. All Cambridge postdocs are welcome to join, and there is no membership fee.

The aims of the PdOC society are to:

- Represent Postdocs from all Faculties, Schools and Departments at the University of Cambridge and University Partner Institutions (UPIs).
- Facilitate communication and networking between Postdocs both within the Departments and across Faculties and the wider University community.
- Provide information and support so that Postdocs can make the most of their time at Cambridge.
- Create a social and intellectual network for Postdocs throughout the University.

Advice:

1. A dedicated group of postdoctoral volunteers can do a lot.
2. Regular social meetings can be underrated - establishing friends and connections is very important, even for professional reasons.
3. Establishing university connections to reach new postdocs will contribute to the long-term growth.
4. Finding revenue streams can be difficult: The university should contribute for regular annual general meetings or career development, local companies may also be willing to sponsor an event.
5. It is very important to keep new postdocs to get involved. We tend to hold an annual garden party specifically for recruiting!



Institution/ Country:	University of Chester (UK)
Network:	The School of Arts and Media Research Network
Number of Years Active:	2-5 years
Number of Participants:	Approximately 45 (1 research staff, 35 lecturers with teaching/research 9 PG students)

Background:

The School of Arts and Media Research Network was set up to engage new and emerging researchers in the Departments of Art and Design and Music, Media and Performance who often felt excluded from events aimed at more established/experienced researchers. The network is based on a SharePoint site which forms a repository for talks from Faculty or Dept events and discipline specific research information. It also provides a noticeboard for those seeking collaborators, mentors or advisors for projects.

Advice:

Visibility:

The network reinvigorated the visibility of research in the School for ECR, emerging and new researchers through a number of practice-as research events which focussed on sharing new, ongoing or unresolved research projects rather than finalised papers.

Sustainability:

Any new initiative must overcome the scepticism of some colleagues who have “seen it all before” and so building in sustainability is key to developing a successful network.

Leadership:

Striking a balance between leadership and distributing decision making to create sense of ownership and belonging is important in this regard and it also means that more voices and energy are engaged in sustaining the network. This has been difficult to do in recent years due to the pandemic and the workloads of key organising members.

Online Platforms:

The online repository side of the network is rather under used, perhaps as result of information fatigue and potentially needs a more attractive platform than a university SharePoint site which allows for easier updating and contributing functions in line with the comment above. Thinking carefully about which virtual platforms to use requires some advance research to ascertain the best fit.

Inclusivity:

The network was conceived as a staff network, however events were attractive to PGT and PGR students and it would be good in future to bring them into the network more fully as participants and perhaps give them opportunities to organise events for staff and students.



Research Staff Association
School of Life Sciences
University of Dundee



Institution/ Country:	University of Dundee (UK)
Network:	School of Life Sciences Research Staff Association
Number of Years Active:	> 10 years
Number of Participants:	~10 on committee, but represents the whole research staff community at School of Life Sciences

Background:

The School of Life Sciences Research Staff Association (SLSRSA) represents all research staff within SLS, including postdoctoral researchers, research assistants and technicians. Representatives from the SLSRSA are placed on university- and school-wide committees in order to give a voice to research staff. This includes the Athena SWAN, School Research Committee, Research Staff Forum (University of Dundee wide), among others.

The aims of the SLSRSA include:

- Catalyse interactions between researchers through social events and networking opportunities.
- Organise events and workshops to benefit the career development of all SLS members.
- Act as a voice for researchers in interactions with SLS management boards.
- Foster a culture of debate, open communication and information access.
- Provide individual funding for training related to researcher career development.
- Help with a large variety of issues relating to researcher life.

Successes include a virtual careers seminar series that highlights career paths people take after obtaining an education in life sciences. This series began in the first lock down and since then has had over 46 guest speakers.

Advice:

1. Create specific roles for your group that will help spread the workload between members.
2. Ensure that you have connections to the executive board or other higher-ups in order to make things happen.
3. Poll the staff often to make sure that you are giving targeted help and representing everyone.

Institution/ Country:	University of Dundee (UK)
Network:	School of Medicine Research Staff Association
Number of Years Active:	1-2 years
Number of Participants:	> 40

Background:

During the pandemic, it was realised there was no direct way for research staff in the School of Medicine (SoM) to collectively communicate to senior management, especially about what they require to progress in their careers, which had been particularly impeded by the pandemic. Therefore, the SoM Research Staff Association (RSA) was created to enable this.

The RSA now has representation on the SoM Athena SWAN, BAME, LGBT+ and disability committees. Members of the RSA also sit on the Career Development for Research Staff steering group, which is hosted by the Vice Principal of Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact. This enables policy changes which are shaped directly by research staff. The RSA has worked to ensure the University of Dundee became a signatory on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, with appropriate support in place to commit to the Concordat fully. The RSA has worked to create access to training workshops, which are not currently available through the University, as well as ensure the courses provided by the UoD are appropriate for Research Staff. The SoM hosts a 'Careers in Academia and Beyond' seminar series with the School of Life Sciences RSA, which aims to provide information on how to progress your career in academia as well as give information on other careers out with academia.

Advice:

I would advise to ask your institute for funding. Institutes often have pockets of money to support these types of initiatives. I would also advise finding out who at a senior level is named as responsible for career development of researchers within your institute and have a conversation around why you want to carry out your initiative. They may be able to offer support in the form of funding or admin or may have a similar initiative in the process of being developed. Lastly, I would advise to carry out short online polls to gauge what type of support is most needed within your institute to support career development.

NADSN



Institution/ Country:	UK
Network:	NADSN - STEMM Action Group
Number of Years Active:	1-2 years
Number of Participants:	There is a core group of about 12 people (mainly comprised of academic staff)

Background:

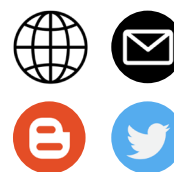
NADSN is an international super-network with a mission to connect and represent disabled staff networks. We are an unincorporated association, non-governmental, independent and self-determining, made up of impassioned people.

The NADSN STEMM Group is an active steering group comprised of people with experience of disability, and working in and around the STEMM disciplines. Since its inception in 2020, members have worked to develop a set of recommendations for funders and institutions to remove and ameliorate barriers faced by those who are marginalised due to disability.

We have been asked to share these by EDIS, an All-Party Parliamentary Committee, and bodies such as Advance-HE. We are working to support disabled scientists.

Advice:

- The STEMM Action Group acts as a collective platform to share experiences and good practice and examine challenges and opportunities.
- NADSN focus on the tertiary education sector (i.e. universities and colleges) and are open to any individual and organisation interested in the equality of disabled staff.



Institution/ Country:	University of Liverpool (UK)
Network:	University of Liverpool Research Staff Association (UoL RSA)
Number of Years Active:	2-5 years
Number of Participants:	880 Early Career Researchers

Background:

The University of Liverpool Research Staff Association (UoL RSA) supported by the Academy is a research community-owned and led initiative. It provides a voice for research staff across all faculties, and a platform for communication and networking. It helps coordinate central support for researcher development and builds a researcher community that, through representation on committees and working groups, empowers researchers to be involved in decision making. The RSA's aim is to facilitate a borderless community for researchers to make the most of their time at the University of Liverpool.

The University of Liverpool Research Staff Association (UoL RSA) It is made up of those on research-only contracts as Early Career Researchers and Postdoctoral researchers experience prevailing differences in their employee experience. They are best placed, with support of the Academy, to create targeted support for wider-research staff and represent their needs to the University.

The UoL RSA's successes in raising the profile of the needs of research staff across the University of Liverpool include:

- 300+ research assistants/associates/fellows engaging annually with the UoL RSA across various events.
- 150+ presentations across all the events, facilitated by invited speakers covering a diverse range of topics that are of interest to postdocs and ECRs, including: mentoring, intellectual property, career impact, teaching recognition, responsible research and ethics, research policy, careers outside academia and how to have an effective professional development review.

Advice:

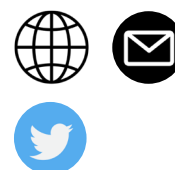
Creation of Core Committee:

The core committee that helps guide and organise activities and events work well when there is representation across all faculties. It is beneficial to design all roles to be undertaken as part of a team, with collaborative input from across the Chairs and Officers team, to reduce the burden of voluntary commitments on single individuals. It again works best to have at least two representatives assigned to each role so that responsibilities can be shared.

A detailed description of what the role involves for Chairs, deputy Chairs and liaison members as part of a terms of reference outlines the commitment needed and helps maintain sustainability, as researchers that become involved in the core committee are aware from the beginning of the workload involved.

Effective Communication:

Frequent, short meetings enable a community feeling to be created amongst the core team and for issues and ideas to be shared and acted upon if appropriate. A Microsoft Teams channel where members of the UoL RSA core committee can communicate daily (if required) with each other and with members of the Academy (as well as providing further information to liaison members that represent each institute in the University) also supports close collaboration. The use of social media (Twitter) and weekly ebuletins help to disseminate information and make researchers aware of activities being organised, as well as increasing the profile of the UoL RSA.



Institution/ Country:	University of Oxford (UK)
Network:	Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS)
Number of Years Active:	5-10 years
Number of Participants:	> 5000

Background:

The Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS) is a society for research staff, the largest & most diverse staff group within the University of Oxford. Its purpose is to facilitate: social and intellectual networking, communication among research staff, & professional development. From 2013 to 2021, OxRSS initiated & managed a network of RS representatives, in which researchers serving as Reps reported concerns in their departments to OxRSS & to University committees capable of influencing change.

Advice:

Get a core group of researchers, involved as volunteers, who are excited about connecting with other RS and engaging in RS issues across the university. Getting institutional support makes a difference, but the network cannot be run by the university or university support services; it needs to be run by researchers with institutional support. This needs to be built into the statement of who you are as an organisation.

- Develop an identity and mission statement which guides your actions and how you build relationships.
- Listen to researchers and then organise events that they want to attend. This builds momentum.
- Garner university support. In the case of OxRSS, this included funding for admin support and fellowships (professional development grants of £2,000) for each of the chairs, who spend the most time running the organisation.
- Work on growing the visibility of the society. Being visible is the first step to generating participation, and this is not easy. There can be significant barriers to communicating and being seen in large organisations. Institutional support can help with this: while a society cannot send a university-wide internal email to all research staff (under data protection rules), sometimes an office of the institution can (because the institution is the RS employer), which could enable promoting joining the society mailing list.
- Cross-divisional RS Rep meetings: holding these at OxRSS each term was an effective forum for swiftly sharing information on RS concerns across all academic divisions, as well as news on developments in policy/measures from RS Reps sitting on University committees.
- Virtual meetings: attendance of live meetings was always partial (never 100%), but moving meetings online during Covid increased attendance by enabling more RS Reps to attend from across a large, sprawling University.
- Communication/Minutes: detailed minutes showing the breadth and diversity of experiences of RS across the University were taken and circulated to all RS Reps so that members absent from a meeting were kept updated and connected. Minutes also formed the basis of reports to University committees.
- Recruitment: recruitment has been an ongoing process because RS are a transitory group. Where possible it is best to aim to have 2 representatives per department and to have support from departments and divisions. Efforts should be taken to ensure the diversity of researchers are represented, which can be challenging depending on the research area.



Institution/ Country: University of Sheffield (UK)

Network: Disabled & Ill Researchers' Network

Number of Years Active: 3 years

Background:

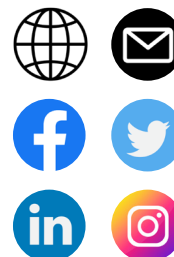
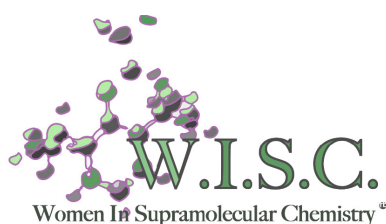
The Disabled & Ill Researchers' Network is a group for postgraduate researchers (in the first instance) who are managing a disability, impairment, injury, or physical, psychological, and/or mental health condition. This group aims to discuss problems, share strategies, and campaign for greater awareness of researcher disability and illness, and its impact on study.

The network is locked to Sheffield researchers so a semi-private space for researchers to discuss their experiences can be cultivated. This blog post shares the outcomes of the first scoping meeting, and how the network will progress: www.thinkaheadsheffield.com

Advice:

Dissemination and Visibility:

Growing series of blog posts from PhD and post-doctoral researchers, all members of the Disabled & Ill Researchers' Network.



Institution/ Country:	International
Network:	Women In Supramolecular Chemistry Network
Number of Years Active:	1-2 years
Number of Participants:	1752 followers on Twitter

Background:

WISC is an international network that was set up to support women and intersectional diversity within the field of Supramolecular Chemistry. This area specific network effects change through calling in the community to support its own, thereby holding the community accountable for its actions. At present, evidencing the effects of the network is difficult to do as WISC is still relatively young. However, we have received a 90% satisfaction rate from our mentoring scheme, our research is reaching a large audience, there is a good international attendance at our international and in person events and, those that have taken part in our reflective and autoethnographic studies have found this work to have improved their wellbeing, self-confidence and career progression.

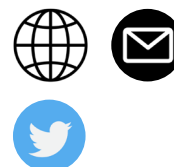
Our approach is innovative due to our area-specific focus, and because we embed EDI expertise and use qualitative and reflective methods more associated with the social sciences in our research.

We continue to publish our research on topics such as our approach to EDI in supramolecular chemistry and managing research through COVID-19 in international journals such as *Chem* (Impact factor = 22.8) and *Angewandte Chemie* (Impact factor = 12.2). A recent comment piece in *Nature Reviews Chemistry* from the network discussing pregnancy in the lab received over 2.7 million interactions on social media within the first 5 days since publication.

Our first book, *Women in Supramolecular Chemistry: Collectively crafting the rhythms of our work and lives in STEM* is available open access from Policy Press.

Advice:

- Think innovatively.



Institution/ Country:	Europe
Network:	Young Academy of Europe
Number of Years Active:	5-10 years
Number of Participants:	170 current members and 100 alumni

Background:

The Young Academy of Europe (YAE) is a pan-European initiative of outstanding young scientists (young group leaders / principal investigators) for networking, advocacy, scientific exchange, and science policy. We are organised as a bottom-up initiative of a dynamic and innovative group of recognised European young scientists and scholars with outspoken views about science and science policy. We provide input and advice from a younger generation's perspective, a vital input to shape EU-wide policy for the benefit of future European scholars.

Advice:

Influence:

Respond to external requests to provide input into science advice and policy (science advice taken by European Commission). This can lead to change in policies that benefit the careers of young scholars.

Continue to grow membership base.

Consider administrative support:

Initiatives are often run by volunteers and therefore the lack of proper administrative support limits the ability of how much can be done.

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Toolkits for developing and sustaining researcher networks.

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