

University of Hertfordshire HR Excellence in Research

CASE STUDIES OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Case Study: Excellence in Research Conference 26th September 2014

The University held its inaugural Excellence in Research conference to introduce our renewed researcher development provision for researchers at all levels, raise awareness of the importance of and opportunities for researcher development at the University, and fulfil a commitment to a researchers' conference for 2013-14 in the CROS 2013 Action Plan. Around 100 Research staff attended as participants and presenters, from the University staff of 2,650, approximately 8% of whom are named staff on a research contract. This is one of the largest attendance figures for an internal research event at the University, including a broad range of staff from PhD students to Professors. The conference was opened by the Vice-Chancellor. Participant comments included "Nice to have senior management there to confirm that UH values researchers". The conference reviewed the external context for researcher development, introducing the HR Excellence in Research award, Vitae and the Concordat, CROS and PRES and evaluation showed that staff are aware of these external UK initiatives. Further presentations covered the internal context for researcher development at the University, including the use of the Research Development Framework by individual researchers and in appraisal and mentoring contexts, the Research Handbook and HR Development Training Opportunities. A Pecha Kucha session showcased research activity in the Schools; participants commented it was a 'great format which most speakers handled well'. Finally the afternoon workshops were on Mentoring, Social Media and Career Progression. The evaluations show participants found the more in-depth afternoon session very useful and rated 'Career Progression' 100% good to excellent and 'Social Media' 93% good to excellent. Comments included "The social media session was useful, interesting and cutting-edge" and 'I liked the shared experience (of mentoring)'. The evaluation feedback is positive with 84% of respondents telling us they found the conference beneficial and would subsequent related conferences. The programme is provided overleaf. All the PowerPoint slides and films of the presentations are published on the University intranet for their use in further researcher development.



Above Left: Professor Quintin McKellar CBE, Vice-Chancellor, University of Hertfordshire opens the conference. Above Right: 'How social media works for researchers' Workshop panel discussion facilitated by Dr Catherine Manthorpe, Head of Research Policy and Assessment. Below Left: 'Researcher Development: An Introduction' Dr Grace Lees-Maffei. Below Right: Dr Andrea M Mayrhofer's presentation on research and researcher development at the Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care.

Researcher Development: Virtuous Circle



In summary: Researcher development

- Offer opportunities to become a co-applicant
- Provide opportunities to write and publish (prior to having to leave as contracts end)

Awareness in CRIPACC of:

- Importance of drawing researchers in as co-applicants
- Time within funding to support the writing of papers

Suggested UH strategy for researcher development / longer term view:

- E.g. developing career paths (5 years)
- Requires investment
- Long term benefits / international reputation

• Contact: Prof Sally Kendall (detail overleaf)

- 9 am Coffee, E350 foyer. Exhibition of display stands from Careers (CEE), Vitae, etc.
- 9.30 **Welcome** - Professor Quintin McKellar CBE, Vice-Chancellor
- 9.40 **Researcher Development: An Introduction** - Dr Grace Lees-Maffei, Chair, Research Development Working Group (RDWG) and Reader in Design History
- 9.50 **Vitae** – Dr Rodney Day, Associate Dean (Research and Commercial), School of Engineering and Technology and Co-ordinator for the Vitae East of England Hub
- 10.10 **Athena SWAN** – Dr Susan Grey, Director of the University Doctoral College and Athena SWAN Institutional Coordinator
- 10.20 **Research Integrity** - Dr Susan Grey, Director of the University Doctoral College and Research Ethics and Integrity Institutional Lead
- 10.30 **UH Appraisal and Mentoring** – Helen Ellis Jones, Head of HR Strategy and Change.
- 10.40 **HR Development and Training** - Jill Lees, HR Manager - Development; Dr Yasmin Imani, Researcher Development Programme; Ellie Hubbard, Research Policy and Assessment.
- 11 am Coffee
- 11.30 **Careers Resources for Researchers** - Katharine Littlefair Careers, Employment & Enterprise (CEE)
- 11.45 **Research Grants Office: External Research Funding** – Andrée Sheehan-Evett, Senior European Research Coordinator & Kate Swainston, UK Research Grants Coordinator
- 11.55 **Research Institutes and Schools** – Prof Jonathan Morris, Research Institute Director, SSAHRI.
Schools Pecha Kucha: Dr Roger Levy, ADR Education; Dr Chris Stopford, Representative of the Early Career Staff on the University Research Committee; Dr Chamu Kuppuswamy, School of Law; Dr Joanne McDowell, English Language & Communication, Humanities; Dr Christabel Tan, School of Engineering and Technology; Dr Barbara Brownie, School of Creative Arts; Student Voice: Dr Andrea M Mayrhofer, Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care (CRIPACC).
- 1.15 **Research Poster Session**, E350 foyer and Lunch.
- 2.15 Workshops – These run simultaneously; conference attendees choose a session from the following:
- E350 - How social media works for researchers** – Dr Catherine Manthorpe, Head of Research Policy and Assessment; David Gibbs, School of Law; Jodi Nelson, School of Creative Arts; Ciara Meehan and Jennifer Evans, School of Humanities; Chamu Kuppuswamy, School of Law.
- E350 Foyer - Mentoring Best Practice Workshop** - Dr Roger Levy, ADR Education; Dr Joanne McDowell, English Language & Communication, Humanities; Dr Martina A. Doolan Centre for Computer Science and Informatics Research.
- C402 - Career Progress for Researchers** – Professor Owen Davies, ADR Humanities; Dr Steven Adams, ADR Creative Arts; Dr Geraldine Byrne, Principal Lecturer, Health and Social Work; Dr Volker Steuber, Reader in Biocomputation & Head of the Biocomputation Research Group; Professor Fiona M. Brooks, Health and Social Work.
- 4 pm Close.