

# Vitae Annual Report 2018 / 2019

**Global leader in supporting  
the professional development  
of researchers**



## FOREWORD



**Firstly, to introduce myself. I'm Astrid Wissenburg and I was delighted to recently become Chair of the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Ltd that manages the Vitae programme.**

I am Director of Research and our Doctoral College at the University of Exeter and have worked over 20 years in higher education and research, including senior leadership roles at the Research Councils and at the Open University.

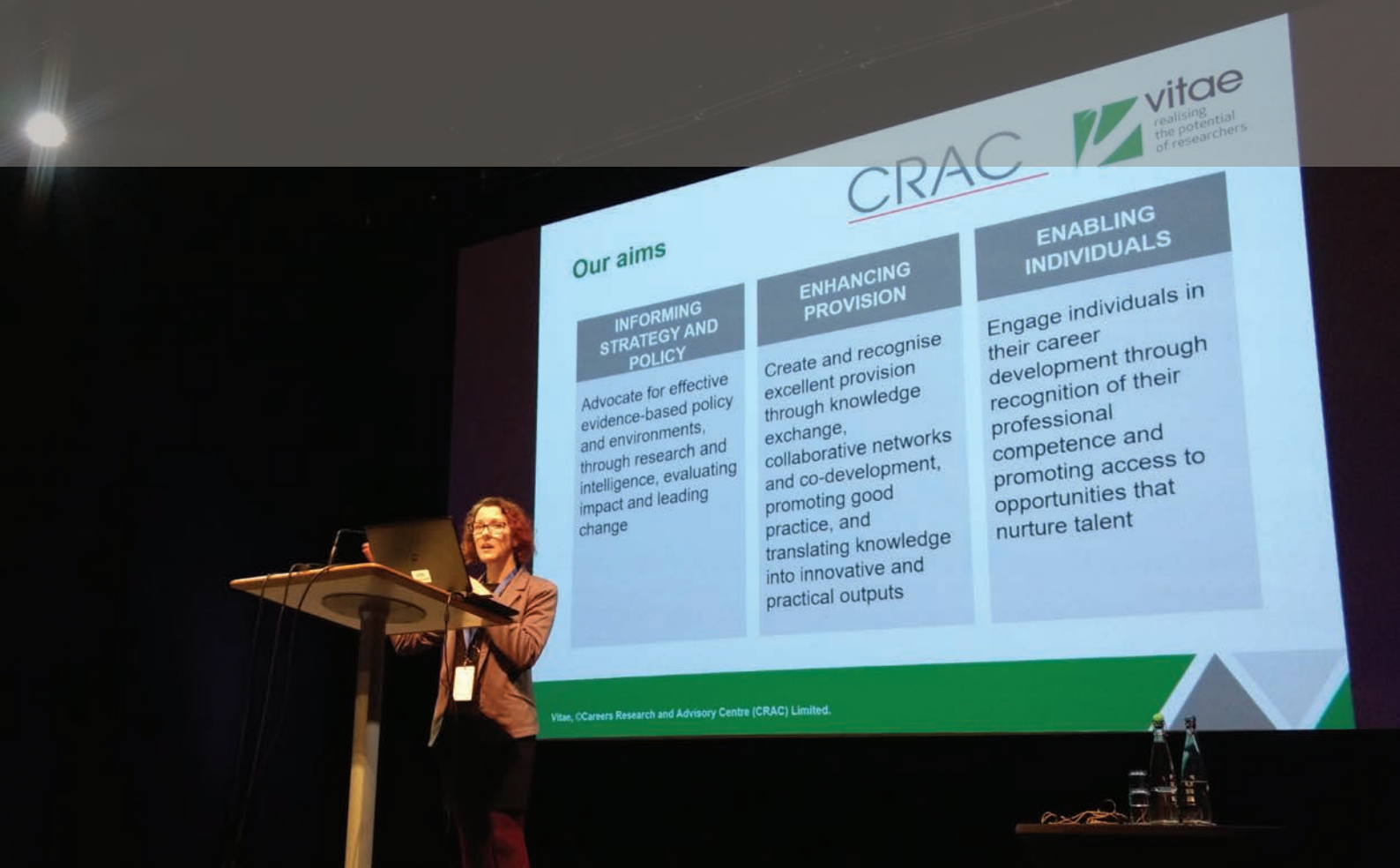
The growth in Vitae's influence and community, as more institutions discover the advantages that Vitae can bring through engagement, enhancement and enabling the researcher developer community, is a testament to the hard work that Vitae has accomplished over the last few years. Vitae bridges the gap between researchers, institutions and government and provides unique insights to policy makers, funders and the global higher education community.

The Concordat to Support the Development of Researchers has filtered through many conversations in the past year, including at the Vitae Researcher Development International Conference and has affirmed its relevance in so many contexts.

At the last conference, the Concordat Strategy Group (CSG) announced a sector-wide consultation to consider the Concordat independent review recommendations. Vitae helped roll out an on line consultation and several live consultation events around the UK on behalf of the CSG at the end of 2018.

Analysis of survey responses by Vitae, provided a critical insight into the views of both researchers and those with a stake in managing them. A great deal of this detail and analysis, has been included in the revised Concordat by the Concordat Writing Group with Secretariat support provided by Vitae. The Concordat Writing Group (CWG) has made excellent progress in writing the new Concordat ready for the start of the academic year.

In the last 12 months Vitae has announced some new initiatives including three member Working Groups.



The groups that have now been established focus on researcher careers and professional development; wellbeing and mental health; and continuous professional development (CPD) for researcher developers. They aim to influence the global research environment by giving members an opportunity to engage in the policy and practice of researcher development and so far, there have been some very interesting discussions on target topics. I hope that the Working Groups, with further development, will provide a platform for innovation and give a greater voice to the expertise across the Vitae community.

With the new Concordat a significant step forward in the employment conditions, environment, and professional development opportunities available to researchers can be taken. In the next 12 months, Vitae will play a continued global role in advocating for the professional development needs of researchers and sharing good practice on improving wellbeing

and mental health, research integrity, and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Of course, it's the accumulation of research and intelligence that continues to underpin much of the work that informs Vitae's programme of activities, the advancement of which has often positioned Vitae at the forefront in realising and informing trends in the sector. It is this knowledge and experience that enriches Vitae's offering and collaboration with its members.

Going forward I am confident that collectively we can drive support for the development of researchers internationally - equipping them for a bright future by driving positive change in research culture through the Concordat; and creating a healthy and positive environment in which they can thrive and flourish.



**Drs. Astrid Wissenburg**

Chair of the Board of Trustees,  
Careers Research and Advisory  
Centre (CRAC)  
Director of Research,  
University of Exeter

## ABOUT US



**Vitae is the global leader in supporting the professional development of researchers, experienced in working with institutions as they strive for research excellence, innovation and impact.**

We are a non-profit programme, part of the **Careers Research & Advisory Centre (CRAC) Ltd**, with over 50 years' experience of enhancing the skills of researchers. We strengthen our members' institutional provision for the professional development of researchers through research and innovation, training and resources, events, consultancy and membership.

### **Vitae has four aims:**

- **Influence the development and implementation of effective policy relating to researcher development**
- **Enhance higher education provision to train and develop researchers**
- **Empower researchers to make an impact on their careers**
- **Evidence the impact of professional and career development support for researchers**

Our partners include governments, funders of research, academies, professional bodies, trusts and foundations, universities and research institutes.

CRAC provides research intelligence and innovation for all those who support career development for people of all ages and in all sectors. We work in partnership with government agencies, education organisations and providers, and employers and professional bodies.

CRAC is a registered charity No 313164 established in 1964.





**Vitae contributes to and influences higher education policy relating to research and researcher development, underpinned by our research and evaluation activities.**

**“Having this up to date sector knowledge, particularly during a period of landmark change for the sector is crucial to give you an added advantage in your role”**

Dr Saneeya Qureshi, Vitae  
CPD for Researcher Developers  
Working Group and Research Staff  
Developer, University of Liverpool

**Using our unique position in the higher education community and our relationships with key stakeholders, we can advocate on our members' behalf.**

### **VITAE RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018**

The Vitae Researcher Development International Conference 2018 drew nearly 400 participants from 15 countries, all with a strategic and practical role in developing researchers. Discussion themes were of attracting and retaining highly skilled researchers; enhancing researcher development capacity; meeting the future of career development needs of researchers; and evidencing the value of researchers and researcher development and their impact on society and the economy.

Participants gained an insight into and discussed the 10-year revision of the UK Concordat, the independent review and the Concordat Strategy Group (CSG) response. The CSG announced at the conference their plans for a sector consultation.

### **WORKING GROUPS**

Launched at the conference last year, the aim of the Working Groups is to influence the global research environment by giving members an opportunity to engage with a wide range of colleagues who have a stake in the policy and practice of researcher development.

#### **RESEARCHER CAREERS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

Discussions in this group have been around local and national researcher career tracking as well as developing researcher recognition. Findings will lead to valuable intelligence and benchmarking to the wider research community.

#### **WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH WORKING GROUP**

Discussions so far have focused on the mental health of research staff, training supervisors, differences between disciplines and reporting sector trends and challenges. The Wellbeing and Mental Health Group will guide Vitae's ongoing advocacy for the wellbeing of all research professionals.

## CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) FOR RESEARCHER DEVELOPERS WORKING GROUP

This Working Group has been seeking to explore the applicability of the Vitae Career Framework for Researcher Developers (CFRD) in today's researcher developer environment; the current CPD provision for researcher developers; gaps in CPD provision and feasible solutions to them. The group is identifying synergies with the Vitae pilot for the recognition of Researcher Developers and identifying Continuous Professional Development (CPD), that is not currently available.



## CONCORDAT UPDATE THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND CSG RESPONSE

During the Vitae Researcher Development International Conference 2018, the independent review report, including 15 recommendations and a subsequent response from the Concordat Strategy Group (CSG), were published.

The review made a strong case for how the Concordat could make a real difference in improving the environment and career development for researchers, but that revisions were needed, to reflect the changes to the research environment over the last 10 years to make it fit for the future.

### THE CSG CONSULTATION

The CSG announced the undertaking of a broad sector Concordat engagement consultation on the review recommendations. An online consultation, ran from October 2018 until January 2019 for all staff engaged in research and those managing or supporting research and researchers.

Alongside this, a series of live consultation events took place in December in Bristol, London, York and Edinburgh, with a dedicated researcher focussed event at Oxford, in partnership with UKRSA. As the Secretariat for the CSG, Vitae was instrumental in the roll-out and implementation of these events.

### THE CONSULTATION REPORT

The level of engagement and strength of opinion was demonstrated through almost 600 responses and over 5,000 free text survey comments. Analysis of the survey results, by Vitae on behalf of the CSG, provided a critical insight into the views of both researchers and those with a stake in managing them.

The responses were overwhelmingly in favour of revitalising the Concordat and welcomed the opportunity to clearly define the specific responsibilities of funders, employers, principal investigators/managers of researchers and researchers, while showing the interdependencies and collective effort needed across the sector to take the agenda forward.

## CONCORDAT WRITING GROUP

As Secretariat for the CSG, Vitae's open call for members resulted in the formation of the Concordat Writing Group (CWG) at the start of 2019, Chaired by Dianne Berry. The CWG should be credited with producing text that encapsulates the complexity of the Concordat's ambitions, in a structure of three principles and expectations for four stakeholder groups - funders, institutions, managers of researchers and researchers.

We look forward to the revised Concordat planned for September 2019.

**“The new Researcher Development Concordat should provide a fresh impetus in driving this important agenda forward, and hopefully will further the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK”**

*Dianne Berry, Chair, Concordat Writing Group and Dean of Postgraduate Research Studies of Psychology, University of Reading*

## CATALYST FUND EVALUATION

The 17 Catalyst funded projects are progressing well and demonstrating a range of approaches in tackling mental health and wellbeing for doctoral researchers. Appointed as evaluators of the programme by Research England, Vitae, in partnership with Universities UK (UUK) is working across all projects to identify emerging themes and identify good practice. The main areas include peer mentoring, training courses and surveys amongst other wellbeing activities.

## SHAPING POLICY

On behalf of the researcher development community we have helped gather evidence to inform a response to the following Consultations and Select Committees:

- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) Invitation to Comment on Doctoral Training Partnerships Programme 3 (DTP3)
- 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF) Consultation
- Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Graduate Outcomes Survey: doctoral graduate questions
- CSG online consultation to inform a revision of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
- National Research Landscape Survey - in preparation for the post-REF2021 assessment cycle, Research England commissioned survey of researchers within higher education institutions (HEIs)

### Sector consultations:

- Vitae managed five sector consultation events in December, hosted by the Concordat Strategy Group. The events were held in Bristol, London, York and Edinburgh, with a dedicated one for researchers in Oxford in with UKRSA.

## ADVOCACY

Vitae provides a voice for the professional development of researchers by inputting to the following boards and advisory groups:

- **Advance HE Surveys Advisory Group**
- **Economic and Social Research Council, North West Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership, Training, Employability and Knowledge Exchange (TEKE) Panel**
- **EURAXESS TOP III Advisory Board**
- **Prosper, Stakeholder Advisory Group**
- **QAA Doctoral Degree Characteristics Advisory Group**
- **Royal Society Diversity Committee, UK (2015-2018)**
- **Scientific Advisory Board for GW4 BioMed MRC Doctoral Training Partnership**
- **The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) Data Insights Strategy Group**
- **The European Laboratory Research & Innovation Group (ELRIG) Early Career Professionals (ECP) Panel**
- **Training Advisory Board for The Post-crisis Legitimacy of the European Union (PLATO), Innovative Training Network, Norway**
- **Wellcome Four-year PhD Programmes in Science**



## RESEARCH EVALUATION ACTIVITY: RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE

Having carried out over 40 research assignments in the last 10 years, CRAC provides research, intelligence and innovation services to those working to support career development in a range of career sectors. Areas of specialism include career decision-making, employability development, transitions to postgraduate study, graduate and

postgraduate career tracking, STEM and research careers, and also evaluation and impact studies.

CRAC's expertise includes design and implementation of quantitative and qualitative research studies as well as secondary data analysis, knowledge reviews and desk research.



## EVALUATION OF EARLY CAREER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMMES

Following our successful career tracking study of the Royal Society's Research Fellowship schemes, we have been undertaking an evaluation of the Newton International Fellowships. This scheme is run jointly by the Royal Society, British Academy and Academy of Medical Sciences, and brings early career researchers from across the world to the UK, with the aim of expanding international research capacity and forging sustained international research partnerships which include the UK. CRAC has also started an evaluation of the Royal Society and Wellcome Trust Sir Henry Dale Fellowship scheme, which is targeted on non-clinical biomedical science and aims to develop independent research leaders.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

CRAC has been undertaking a range of projects which seek to understand disparities in employment and research and enhance diversity and inclusion in workplaces. These range from provision of support to a research institute to developing a wide-ranging toolkit for organisations in the arts and cultural sector to increase the diversity of their workforces and governing boards.

Recent projects in the civil service and the engineering sector have focused specifically on enhancing recruitment and selection processes to improve the gender, ethnic and socio-economic diversity of new intakes. These projects build also on a variety of data studies where CRAC has identified statistically significant variances in progression outcomes from higher education.

## VITAE IN THE MEDIA

As a result of Vitae's frequent interview requests, articles, comment pieces and blogs have been published in the last year by:

- [EURAXESS](#)
- [European Service Network](#)
- [European University Association](#)
- [Genetics Society](#)
- [Higher Education Policy Institute](#)
- [Nature](#)
- [Nature Careers](#)
- [New Scientist](#)
- [The Guardian](#)
- [Times Higher Education](#)

Posts have been on a variety of themes but have included numerous articles around the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers; wellbeing and mental health; postgraduate earnings; and promoting careers beyond academia.



## EVIDENCE GATHERING

CRAC also provides much of the research that underpins Vitae's activities, feeding into the evidence base that helps influence policy as well as understanding emerging trends. This includes analysis of aggregated data from surveys such as CROS and PIRLS, to feed into policy development, and also tracking the careers of doctoral graduates and early career researchers.

## UK RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (UKRI) RESEARCH INTEGRITY LANDSCAPE STUDY

Vitae, in partnership with UKRIO, have recently been commissioned by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to undertake a research integrity landscape study. This project involves research into the effects of incentives in the research system on researcher behaviour in the context of research integrity, how these incentives are perceived by

different stakeholders and consideration of the impact of these incentives on researcher behaviour and organisational practices more broadly. The project involves a literature review, large scale survey, focus groups and interviews to gather the views of different stakeholders.

The project is due for completion by the end of the year.

## ENHANCING PROVISION



**Vitae membership enhances researcher development in higher education institutions through a blended offering of courses, resources and delivery of innovative professional development and capacity programmes, helping strengthen provision for the professional development of researchers.**

**“Such a fantastic #vitaechat! There is much more to do and things to follow-up from these discussions . . . thanks for organising this @vitae\_news”**

Dr Alejandra Aranceta Garza,  
Panel member of #vitaechat,  
Co-chair of Researchers' Group  
and Research Associate,  
University of Strathclyde

### ENGAGEMENT WITH MEMBERS

Visitors to the Vitae website during the last year amounted to 456,240, with the current number of registered Vitae website users increasing by 21% to 75,076.

The Vitae website is packed with resources for institutions, researcher developers and researchers, including:

- Publications - an extensive range of policy level and practice-sharing reports
- CV examples, cover letters and interview examples which continue to be the most frequently viewed pages gaining around 400,000 views per annum
- Access to Vitae Twitterchats during the year - popular and fast-paced open discussions connecting participants from around the globe to chat in real time around a shared interest
- @vitae\_news reached a milestone of 10,000 followers this year and each #vitaechat has resonated c.25,000 initial impressions with a 50% re-tweet rate
- Additional resources for members such as 'off-the-shelf' training programme manuals and back copies of our full suite of 'Focus-on' resources and #vitaehangouts
- Information and advice web pages - hundreds of dedicated web pages containing advice, tips and links for researcher developers and researchers, covering a wide range of relevant topics, including speaker presentations from events
- Inspirational career story videos, webinars and podcasts, including the recent '15 minutes to develop your researcher career', developed in conjunction with Taylor and Francis, and 3MT® recorded performances including those from the live final

## HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD

Holding and retaining this Award demonstrates long-term commitment to the career development of researchers. Aside from meeting researchers' needs, the Award adds value to funding applications and is also an attractive benefit to researchers who might be considering moving to your institution.

97 UK member institutions currently hold the award.

Vitae supported 46 institutions with their HR Excellence in Research Award reviews last year.

## RDF AND RDF PLANNER

Our internationally acclaimed Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) maps the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of researchers, to enhance their success. Researcher developers can use this tool to create a powerful professional development programme for researchers. The web-based RDF Planner application was used by 12,655 researchers spread over 18 countries, from 88 institutions - 30 of which are Sub-Saharan African Institutes.

Our Professional Development Planning for Researchers Online Course (PDP ROC) is suitable for researchers at any career stage and can be used together with institutional provision.

## LA CAIXA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMMES, SPAIN

The Vitae-La Caixa Training Programme provides personal and professional development training for researchers from all disciplines and is based in Spain. Since 2016, Vitae has delivered six 3-day residential workshops and almost 30 webinars for over 170 PhD fellows, PhD supervisors, and postdoc fellows. Workshop themes include personal effectiveness, project management, working with and managing others, self-confidence and self-reflection, academic writing, career planning and opportunities, and public engagement.

Webinar topics include grant writing, networking, preparing for internships, and building an online profile.

## POLONEZ

The Vitae POLONEZ training programme consists of 29 2 workshops on five different themes for over 100 fellows. It is aimed at research fellows funded by POLONEZ, a funding scheme run by the National Science Centre, Poland. The themes of the Vitae POLONEZ programme include personal effectiveness, working with others, management, communication and intellectual property and commercialisation.

In June 2019, Vitae facilitated an evening networking event, which included talks on research-industry collaboration and a networking opportunity for Polonez fellows and fellows from other programmes to meet those involved in R&D and Startups beyond academia.

**“The learning programme offered by Vitae is definitely an engaging and inspiring experience for its participants . . . and gives POLONEZ Fellows an opportunity to develop techniques for personal effectiveness, as well as time and risk management”**

Anna Kotarba, International Cooperation Officer,  
National Science Centre



## BESPOKE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Each year we deliver a host of live and virtual professional development training programmes for researchers across the world.

Our professional development and training programmes are developed and evaluated in collaboration with the researcher development community and we collaborate with a community of experienced professional Associates to deliver them.

Vitae offers bespoke and flagship training programmes ranging from a few hours to multi-day residential events, to long-term programmes reaching hundreds of researchers over multiple years.

Topics covered include:

- Diversity
- Engagement
- Enterprise
- Impact
- Research Leadership
- Managing research
- Open research environment
- Policy

Additionally, at a strategic level we offer: benchmarking, training needs analysis, organisational gap analysis, strategy, policy development, talent management and development.



### **TOP IV - EURAXESS NETWORK**

As part of the ongoing development of the EURAXESS network (Top IV), Vitae held a series of training webinars for a network of European buddies who have chosen to act as champions across the community.

Participants will then develop their own webinar series in order to create a widespread community of practice.

The purpose of these webinars was to highlight topics that might be of interest to the community whilst also supporting buddies in the use of webinar tools and webinar format. Topics included mentoring and coaching, career development planning, articulating transferable skills, setting up a career development centre and networking for researchers.

During this next phase Vitae will support buddies in the development and delivery of their own webinars.

### **RRING**

The RRING project has completed its first year focusing on gaining greater understanding of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) approaches globally, in order to start to build a long-term sustainable RRI network.

The project consists of 21 international consortium members and the first year of the project has seen two public engagement stakeholder workshops, held in Dublin and London, with more in the pipeline for year two.

### **CLIMATE IMPACTS RESEARCH CAPACITY AND LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT (CIRCLE)**

An extension of funding from the Department for International Development (DfID) has resulted in institutions being able to access materials developed by Vitae and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU).



## THE PATH TO RESEARCH LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

Wellcome and Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESAI) commissioned Vitae to explore the landscape of research leadership and associated training programmes available across Africa.

Vitae gathered views from 330 research leaders, early and middle career researchers, research managers, senior management, and funders by means of focus groups, in depth interviews and an online survey, across 25 countries in Africa. A literature review was compiled as well as a gap analysis which resulted in the articulation of an African Research Leadership Model.

The Leadership Lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework was also used to outline competencies.

Vitae made 15 recommendations for institutions, researchers, research leaders/managers of researchers and funders, around how to develop the next generation and build the capacity of current African research leaders.

## EPSRC INCLUSION MATTERS

Vitae has been collaborating in four of the Inclusion Matters projects funded by the Engineering and Physical Research Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).

The £5.5m funding announced in 2017, is aimed at improving equality, diversity and inclusion within engineering and physical sciences. Vitae is involved in projects relating to pathways to spin-outs for women researchers with Oxford Brookes University and the development of an innovative shared platform to evaluate culture and inclusion in STEM facilities with the University of Lincoln.

Vitae has been acting in an expert advisory capacity for projects around bias in physical sciences and engineering research with the University of Birmingham and reimagining recruitment with the University of Bath.

We hope to showcase some of the early outcomes from the projects at the Vitae International Researcher Development Conference 2019.

**“Excellent workshop. Very helpful. Especially the panel discussion with 2 academics who have been through the patent and spin-out process. It helped me understand more about IP and copyright, and how it would affect me throughout my academic career”**

Quote from IP for research workshop participant

## IP FOR RESEARCH

Vitae have delivered 15 IP for Research events throughout the UK on behalf of the Intellectual Property Office. Each workshop introduced researchers to Intellectual Property and encouraged them to reflect on its implications for their own research area. Topics included patents, design rights, trademarks, commercialisation of IP and the role of the Technology Transfer Office at the institution. Over 250 researchers have been trained so far and feedback from the workshops has been extremely positive.



## ENABLING INDIVIDUALS



**Vitae helps enable talent development of researchers and researcher developers through professional development and recognition.**

**“ The Professional Recognition of Research Developers Pilot is enabling researcher developers to reflect on their own practice and professional development, providing them with a tool to guide their own career progression.**

**This award is the first official recognition of the unique and critical role researcher developers play in directly supporting early stage researchers, as well as in strategically working at institutional, regional, national and international level to champion policies and initiatives that support researcher’s professional and career development”**

**Dr Dawn Duke  
Head of Researcher Development  
and Engagement, University of Surrey**

### **PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION OF RESEARCHER DEVELOPERS AWARD AND CAREER FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCHER DEVELOPERS (CFRD)**

The recognition scheme aims to offer a standard for researcher developers to work towards using the Vitae Career Framework for Researcher Developers (CFRD). Since the sector welcomed the initiative, a pilot group consisting of 19 researcher developers from range of different types of institutions, including from Australia, Africa, Germany and Switzerland have been working towards gaining the Award. Two practice-sharing guidance meetings have taken place and a buddy system is in place for participants.

An assessment group will review the portfolio’s during summer 2019 and findings will be shared during the Vitae Researcher Development International conference 2019.

### **ACADEMIC APPRENTICESHIPS**

The level 7 Academic Professional Apprenticeship is a new standard intended to develop full competency in early career academics’ role as practitioners. HEIs in England could consider this option to access Apprenticeship Levy funds to support the costs of early career academic development. Academic Professionals undertake a core role and follow one of two specialist routes; teaching and supporting learning or undertaking research.

The apprenticeship requires an independent End Point Assessment (EPA). Advance HE is now the registered End Point Assessment Organisation for the Level 7 Academic Professional Apprenticeship, working in partnership with Vitae on the research track.

### 3MT® VITAE MEMBER COMPETITION

Running a 3MT® competition is an effective way to increase public engagement, demonstrate the impact researchers are making and raise the profile of research at your institution. The Vitae 3MT competition 2019 has resulted in 70 finalists from member institutions being judged, an increase of 9% who reached the same stage last year. More than 1,200 postgraduate researchers (PGRs) take part in the preceding heats.



### UK RESEARCH STAFF ASSOCIATION (UKRSA)

UKRSA has engaged with the Concordat through representation on the Concordat Strategy Group and Concordat Executive Group as well as jointly leading a Concordat consultation dedicated to researchers. UKRSA members also provided feedback for the Concordat Consultation review in June 2019.

Last year, UKRSA fed into REF September 2018 and more recently was involved in a researcher development #vitaechat. Ongoing activities include representation on the HR Excellence in Research Award Panel UK, a project looking at experiences of researchers taking parental leave, and being represented at a number of research specific conferences. UKRSA has undergone a change in leadership during the last year.

### VITAE INVOLVEMENT IN CATALYST FUND PROJECTS

Engagement in the Catalyst Fund projects to date has provided useful learning in how to engage with and improve the wellbeing and mental health of PGRs that will be of considerable use to the wider HE sector. The initial learning has been valuable in shaping the direction of the projects, with many adapting their project plans, so as to be even more impactful.

Strong themes emerging on these projects, which are currently ongoing, include engaging with PGRs and profiling wellbeing and mental health activities to them as part of the doctoral degree experience; and the value of using a diversity of approaches and engaging with supervisors and other relevant staff management to understand their role in the wellbeing and mental health of PGRs.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP LENS**

Bringing together complementary expertise in researcher development and public engagement, Vitae, Wellcome and the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) are developing a Public Engagement Leadership Lens on the RDF aimed at researcher leaders.

Following consultation with the steering group, analysis of other relevant lenses and sector consultation the appropriate descriptors have now been identified.

We are currently developing the supporting text for the lens in order to ensure maximum value and usability.

## **MEMBER WEBINAR**

In November 2018, Vitae members were invited to join a Vitae membership webinar, to virtually meet the Vitae team and other participants.

Aimed at Researcher Developers and anyone in a role supporting researchers, it attracted over 50 participants and provided the opportunity for those new to Vitae, or looking for a refresher, to have a tour of the website and our resources, and to ask questions of the team. A recording of the webinar is available to members on the Vitae website.

## **GET TO KNOW VITAE AND THE TEAM SESSION**

This session at last year's annual conference gave the opportunity for participants to meet members of the Vitae team and find out about more about their specialist interests and upcoming projects.

The session was particularly useful for anyone attending the conference for the first time, coming from outside the UK, or new to researcher development.

## **VITAE CONNECTIONS: GETTING TO GRIPS 2019**

Vitae's annual professional development event for those within their first 18 months of supporting researchers in their professional development, ran in May in Manchester.

Participants were provided with insights, tools and tactics to make them more effective researcher developers, including how to develop workshops, delivery approaches, issues and challenges in researcher development, adding value and creating impact in the role, as well as supporting their continuing professional development. 87% of participants said they would recommend the event to colleagues.



## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) LENS**

The Intellectual Property Lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework has been developed through a consultation between Vitae and the IPO, drawing on a range of expertise and experience, and also through

consultation with representatives from institutions with experience of developing researchers and at the Vitae conference last year.



# Vitae Researcher Development Framework

## Consultation on draft intellectual property for research lens



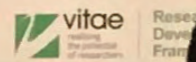
A draft IP for researchers lens created by the Intellectual Property Office and Vitae for consultation at the Vitae Researcher Development International Conference 2018



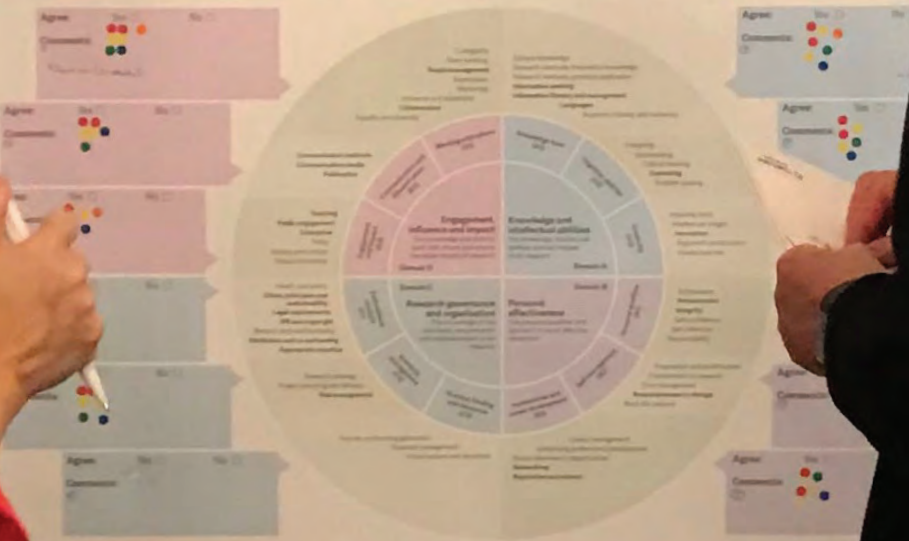
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# Vitae Researcher Development Framework

## Consultation on draft intellectual property for research lens



A draft IP for researchers lens created by the Intellectual Property Office and Vitae for consultation at the Vitae Researcher Development International Conference 2018



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## FUTURE



**Whilst the future holds many uncertainties, now is the time for us to work together to create a positive environment for researchers to thrive.**

Vitae will play a continued role in advocating for the professional development needs of researchers at all career stages and sharing good practice on improving wellbeing and mental health, research integrity, and equality, diversity and inclusion. We will work with and for our member community in the UK, Europe and internationally to understand how research culture is realised on the ground, and ensure key messages and challenges are received and heard by policy-makers.

The 2019 revised Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and its principles, underpin many of these elements, amongst others, serving as a set of guidelines for institutions and funders to improve the employment and support for researchers and research careers in UK higher education. It is essential, that the principles of the Concordat become integral to UK institutional researcher development strategy and that they are actively applied. The UK higher education sector can take a significant step forward now in the changing landscape of research

culture, around employment conditions, environment, and professional development opportunities available to researchers.

The '**connected world**' in which research operates means that researchers are increasingly working in collaborative, connected, international and interdisciplinary ways. With current political and societal attention on global challenges, such as climate change, we have an opportunity to help researchers access a global platform for their research. In the coming year, Vitae will look at the underpinning competences and behaviours of open research, collaboration, and responsible research and innovation.

To complement this focus on future societal needs, we will continue to challenge the myth that a research degree inevitably leads to a career as a researcher by showcasing the breadth of varied, challenging and rewarding roles that make use of research talent and skills across all sectors and far beyond 'being a researcher'.



The Industrial Strategy ambition to increase UK investment in R&D to 2.4% of GDP and the implementation of the 2019 revised Concordat provide an opportunity to renew and strengthen efforts to showcase the attractiveness and importance of cross-sector career mobility, and we need to find effective mechanisms to support this.

We will drive the future of researcher development as a profession to help researcher developers access appropriate development opportunities and get reward and recognition for this. It is important to ensure that researcher development provision continues to

build on good practice and we will support this through the Vitae member community to share learning, provide mentorship and identify common challenges. By working together, we can tackle some of the enduring challenges in researcher development and ensure we are working optimally to develop researcher talent.

The Vitae 2019/20 programme of activities has been designed to help institutions, researcher developers and researchers adjust their perspective and prepare for the changing world of research to help to tackle these challenges. This includes policy-

informing activities, practical and useful events and resources to improve researcher development as well as many practice-sharing and networking opportunities within the international Vitae member arena.

By informing policy at institutional level, enhancing researcher development provision and ultimately, enabling researchers, Vitae can offer solutions to help overcome the certain challenges and seize the opportunities the future holds for researcher development.

[www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)

We are a non-profit programme, part of the  
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with over 50 years' experience of enhancing  
the skills and careers of researchers

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