

Valuing the Impact of Researcher Developers

What is it that we do?



Delivering Learning and Development

- courses and resources
- evaluation and reporting
- mentoring and coaching



Programme facilitation

- administration
- event management

eLearning

- supporting career development
- pastoral care

managing the team

- comms and engagement
- managing websites and digital platforms



Influencing strategy & culture change

- governance, policy and strategy
- building connections
- advocacy
- sectoral awareness
- contributing to research activity



Developing knowledge & skills

- scholarly work
- research
- personal development

In one sense, Researcher Developers do exactly as our job title implies - support the development of researchers. **But is this the tip of the iceberg?**

As Researcher Developers, we do a broader range of valuable work than our job titles imply. **Much of our work takes place under the water line.**

Valuing the Impact of Researcher Developers

What is it that we do?

Using this tool:

Researcher Developers

Reflect upon what activities you undertake and the skills that you've developed, for your own Professional Development (see also the Vitae Career Framework for Researcher Developers; CFRD). or as a starting point for a conversation with others.

Those hiring and managing Researcher Developers

Consider which of these roles and responsibilities you need a Researcher Developer to undertake (or, for teams of Researcher Developers, how these will be shared), and how these link to their professional development needs.

Those leading Researcher Development

Reflect upon what activities are currently being supported within your team and evaluate whether any additional activities need to be undertaken to ensure you are effectively supporting researchers' professional development.

Higher Education Institutions

Understand the full breadth of activities Researcher Developers in your institution are undertaking and the related value and impact that they make, as well reflect upon what institutional resources are in place to support them.

Organisations supporting Researcher Developers

Understand the changing nature of the role and how this relates to changes in the researcher development landscape, as well as Researcher Developers' training and support needs.

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What is it that we do?

Delivering learning and development

Courses and resources

- Design, organize, manage training courses and resources
- Identifying & liaising with facilitators
- Teaching and facilitating
- Researching new skills, trainers, methods of delivery
- Design and deliver induction programmes
- Specialist & core skills for researchers
- Supervisor training
- Developing new initiatives

Evaluation and reporting

- Evaluation & reporting of programmes
- Evaluating impact of professional development
- Data collection and analysis

eLearning

- Developing further online provision
- Learning and sharing new technology & championing digital skills

Supporting career development

- Skills assessment & training plans
- Career development activities
- Linking to broader research community

Pastoral care

- Pastoral care
- Emotional support
- Central independent point of contacts

Mentoring and coaching

- Mentoring
- Coaching

Programme facilitation

Administration

- Administration and technology
- Budget management
- Procurement
- Project management

Event management

- Events management
- Conferences, festivals and external residentials
- Room bookings
- Risk assessments
- Attendance monitoring
- Event booking systems

Managing the team

- Line management of the team

Communications and Engagement

- Fielding general enquiries and signposting
- Communication and engagement
- Marketing and promotion of researcher development internally
- Stakeholder engagement
- Raising profile of researchers internally and externally
- Finding and sharing opportunities
- Public engagement activities

Managing websites and digital platforms

- Content management of websites and social media
- Management of digital platforms
- Adapting to online environment

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What is it that we do?

Influencing strategy and culture change

Governance, policy and strategy

- Concordat and HR Excellence commitments
- Policy development and influence
- Statistical analysis and report writing
- Driving change, e.g. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Committee work (including ethics panels)
- Generating new initiatives to support researcher development

Sectoral awareness

- Building and maintaining connections with others in the sector
- Attending and presenting at relevant fora/conferences
- Strategic development
- Stakeholder engagement

Contributing to research activity

- Contributing to funding bids
- Influencing research culture
- Facilitating collaboration

Building connections

- Networking
- Promoting collaboration
- Community building
- Building connections intra- and inter-institution across a variety of roles/interests
- Developing collaborations with other institutions
- Knowledge broker

Advocacy

- Advocating for researchers
- Community building
- Creating a voice for Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs)
- Support for mental health and wellbeing of PGRs

Developing knowledge and skills

Scholarly work

- Scholarly work
- Lead modules on academic programmes
- Ensure using evidence-based approaches to Researcher Development
- Maintaining an awareness of policy developments and practice in the sector more broadly
- Disseminating relevant policy changes and good practice

Research

- Conducting research into researchers' needs and researcher development
- Produce research publications

Personal development

- Ongoing professional development
- Enhanced skills in online learning environment
- Coaching/mentoring

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What is it that we do?

Thank you to all the researcher developers who took part in and contributed to this work.

This infographic and accompanying tool were developed from workshop discussions about the current roles and responsibilities being undertaken by Researcher Developers in the UK.

Celebrating the Impact of Researcher Developers: is the job description the tip of the iceberg? was part of Vitae Connections Week 2021 and led by Dr Heather MacKenzie, Rosie Wadman, Catherine Howe (University of Southampton) and Lisa Thompson (Ulster University) with input from Dr Emma Compton-Daw (University of Strathclyde).