

**RESEARCHER  
CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK**

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# BACKGROUND

A close-up photograph of a scientist in a white lab coat and blue gloves using a microscope. The scientist is wearing a blue surgical mask and safety glasses. The microscope is white and black, with a 40X objective lens. The scientist is holding a slide under the microscope. The background is a blurred laboratory setting. A teal banner with the word 'BACKGROUND' is in the top left corner. A teal square with the number '4' is in the bottom left corner.

The need for a common researcher career framework at national level was identified by the Irish Universities Association (IUA) in 2020 when they developed and published a common policy framework for the recruitment and employment of researchers within Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The framework aims to address “the lack of a structured progression for researchers in academia, unclear pathways to exiting academic employment, and varying levels of learning and development opportunities and careers advisory services across the sector.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the European Commission has adopted the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers which aim to provide the background for the fair recruitment and equal treatment of all researchers, thus promoting an attractive, open and sustainable European labour market for researchers.

Researchers play a key role in the delivery of TU Dublin’s research and innovation strategy and make a significant contribution to the establishment of a positive research culture within the University. In the current national and international context, TU Dublin’s Researcher Career Development Framework provides the tools and structure researchers need to excel in their role and develop the skills that will help them achieve their career goals and aspirations.

The aim of the TU Dublin’s Researcher Career Development Framework (RCDF) is to support researchers, in developing knowledge, skills and attributes to:

- » Produce excellent research;
- » Develop transferable skills;
- » Engage in career development planning and execution;
- » Explore a range of career opportunities in academic and non-academic settings.

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<sup>1</sup> IUA Researcher Career Development and Employment Framework, p.4.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES



## 2.1 Stages of Career Development

In line with the IUA Researchers' career salary and grading structure, TU Dublin has designed 4 levels of researcher career stages. Progression from one level to the next level is normally by open competition and each level will include a set of skills and competencies which will enable the researcher to move to the next career stage.

The four levels identified by the IUA and adopted in TU Dublin are

- » **PhD or doctoral training stage:** This stage is not included in this framework as PhD students are normally funded by a student scholarship and their skills and competencies development is managed by the Graduate Research School and extensively described in the Graduate Research Regulations<sup>2</sup>.
- » **Postdoctoral to Senior Postdoctoral Researcher:** at this stage, the researcher will conduct a specified programme of research under the supervision of a PI while also continuing to develop skills and competencies with respect to their current role and future career prospects. Typically, there will be two levels at this stage:
  - Post-Doctoral Researcher for new entrants or researchers with very little experience subsequent to their PhD
  - Senior Post-Doctoral Researcher for researchers with a minimum of 3 years research experience or equivalent. It is anticipated that a researcher will have obtained the skills and experience necessary to compete for the next stage of career development, i.e. Research Fellow, after 5 years of postdoctoral research experience and the acquisition of skills and knowledge as set out in their Researcher Career Development Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> The Graduate Research Regulations are available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/postgraduate-research/current-students-supervisors/>

- » **Research Fellow:** researchers at this level will be recognised professionals who can work independently within a project led by a PI. Normally researchers with a minimum of 5 years' experience at postdoctoral level will be eligible to apply for this position through open competition. It is anticipated that a researcher will have obtained the skills and experience necessary to compete for the next stage of career development, i.e. Senior Research Fellow, after 10 years of combined experience at postdoctoral and Research Fellow level and the acquisition of skills and knowledge as set out in their Researcher Career Development Plan.
- » **Senior Research Fellow:** researchers at this level are defined as Leading Researchers in the EU Framework. They will have significant work experience at post-doctoral and/or research fellow level (10 years or more) and a track record of achievements commensurate with their experience such as record of postgraduate supervision, international collaboration and funding acquisition, including record of research leadership and research management.

In addition, the following roles are included in this framework as supporting roles to carry out research within a project:

- » **Research Assistant:** will usually have a minimum of a level 8 degree with very little or no research work experience.
- » **Senior Research Assistant:** will usually have a minimum of a level 8 degree and a minimum of 2 years wholetime equivalent experience.

## 2.2 Career Progression

Researchers can progress through the different stages of their career path by open competition and providing funding is available. The details of progression through and completion of a PhD programme are described in the Graduate Research Regulations<sup>3</sup> and managed by the Graduate Research School.

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<sup>3</sup> The Graduate Research Regulations are available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/postgraduate-research/current-students-supervisors/>

For internal candidates, having achieved a certificate of completion on the current level of their research contract is a desirable requisite to apply for promotion to the next level, e.g. the Certificate of Completion at Postdoctoral Level is a desirable requisite to apply for a research fellow position. External candidates will be required to provide evidence of training and professional development similar to this certificate.

### **2.3 Teaching Experience**

At each level, the researcher is encouraged to undertake teaching activities up to a maximum of 100 hours in one academic year. The basis for this provision is that the researcher's career within mainstream academia will benefit from direct teaching experience. The activity, allocated by a Head of School, will be under the supervision of their Principal Investigator. The researcher may be required to undertake specific teaching training at the discretion of the relevant Head of School and in consultation with their line manager.

# RESEARCH CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



### 3.1 Competency Guidelines

The Researcher Career Development Programme (RCDP) is an integral part of the Researcher Career Development Framework and is based on the development and enhancement of four areas of competence:

- » **Professional Research Skills:** all knowledge and skills relating to being a professional researcher, including data analysis, research grant writing, project management and research conduct. This area also includes engagement and dissemination to include the wider impact of research, academic writing for publication and open access research and dissemination. Training in research ethics and integrity is mandatory for all researchers at all stages of career development.
- » **Teaching & Learning:** all knowledge and skills developed to disseminate the researcher's knowledge through teaching and supervising, particularly PhD students. For more senior researchers such as Research Fellows and Senior Research Fellows this area will also include mentoring of early career researchers.
- » **Career Development and Personal Effectiveness:** all knowledge and skills referring to the development of the researcher career, including career planning, job interview styles, CV writing, leadership and communication skills.
- » **Innovation and Commercial Skills:** all knowledge and skills involving research commercialization, patenting and business planning.

The RCDP will provide a number of workshops and development opportunities which are relevant to one or more of the areas above and to one or more of the career stages described above. Individual researchers will assess their current research skills and training needs by completing the Researcher Career Development Plan with their Principal Investigator.

### 3.2 Researcher Career Development Plan

The Researcher Career Development Plan<sup>4</sup> is a tool which researchers can use to explore career options, identify development gaps and opportunities, and support their career development and well-being.

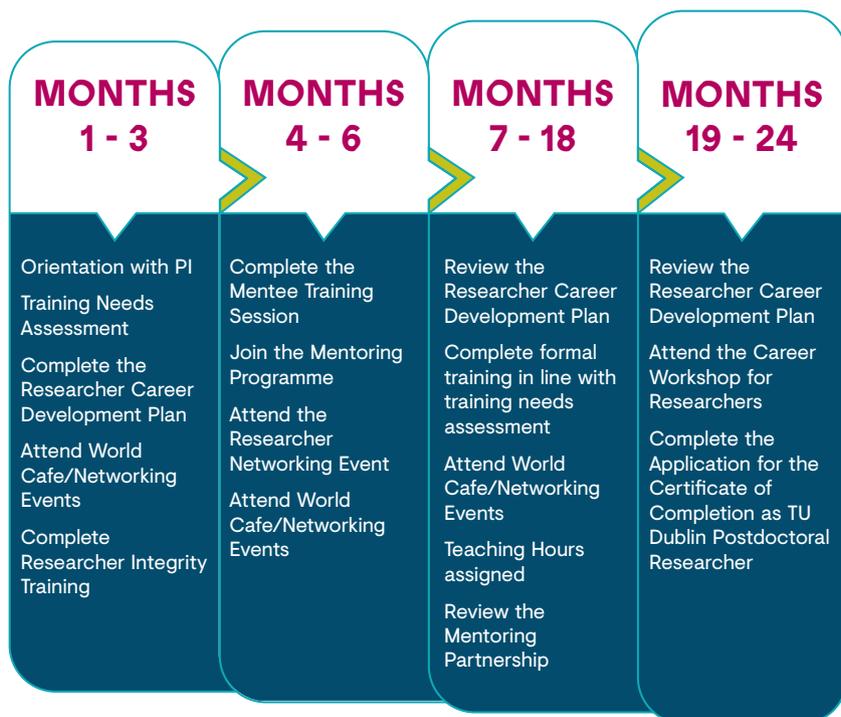
<sup>4</sup> The Researcher Career Development Plan is available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/support-for-researchers/researcher-career-development/researcher-career-development-frameworks/>

It is recommended that, within three months of commencing their employment with TU Dublin, the researcher, under the guidance of their Principal Investigator (PI), draft a Career Development Plan. After this initial meeting, the Researcher and their PI should have a formal career development review meeting every six months. More information on the Researcher Career Development Plan is available in section 5.1.

### 3.3 Researcher Career Stage Certificate of Completion

It is recommended that researchers undertake their formal training within the first two years of their employment.

The typical schedule of a new postdoctoral researcher in the first two years of their employment may look as follows:



At each stage of their career development, researchers will be able to apply for a certificate of completion by submitting the relevant online form<sup>5</sup> comprising the following information:

- » **Evidence of career planning and development activity**, e.g. completed Career Development Plan;
- » **Certificate of Completion of Mandatory Research Integrity Training**: this module is delivered in a blended format with a 2-hour live session followed by an online course hosted on the Epigeum platform;
- » **25 hours of formal learning addressing the RCDF competency areas**: this can include workshops or courses attended within or outside TU Dublin and should include the name, duration and brief summary of each course attended, date attended and the name of the workshop organizer. Copies of certificate of completions will be required for courses external to TU Dublin. Research Fellows and Senior Research Fellows will have 12 hours accredited towards this certificate if they participate in the Mentoring Programme as Mentors for a minimum of 12 months;
- » **Evidence of Being Able to write a coherent research proposal**: This can be a copy of a recent successful research proposal (e.g. application for a TU Dublin Supervisor Funding Scheme) or a new proposal;
- » **Personal Statement (around 500 words)**: this should include the stage of career development the researcher feels has been achieved, e.g. if the stage in question is postdoctoral researcher level, the researcher will provide information on their experience of engaging in career planning and continuing professional development, outlining how they intend to continue to develop and progress their career towards the next stage of development, i.e. Research Fellow.

The submitted application will be assessed by a Researcher Career Development Stage Group comprising the VP for Research and Innovation or nominee, the Researcher Career Development Manager and an experienced leading researcher who is not related either personally or professionally to the applicant.

The successful applicants will receive a Certificate of Completion for the relevant career stage. It is envisaged this will be ultimately released as a digital badge.

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<sup>5</sup> The Application for the Certificate of Completion is available at <https://forms.office.com/e/zUETUs9TtK>

### 3.4 Orientation and Researcher Networking Event

Every new researcher will receive an introductory orientation from their Principal Investigator. They will learn about their project, working space and any recommended training specific to their role, e.g. Health and Safety in a lab setting. A one-to-one Orientation Session can also be arranged with the Researcher Career Development Manager for information on all services available to researchers.

Every year there will be a Researcher Networking Event which aims to foster connection and collaborations amongst all TU Dublin researchers. The event will normally be opened by the VP for Research and Innovation and will include talks from across the Research and Innovation Service function, the Library Services and relevant external speakers.

Every two months, the Researcher Career Development Manager will facilitate a research World Café' event whereby researchers will be able to meet other colleagues from different discipline areas and present their research. These will be short lunch time sessions lasting a maximum of 1 hour and have the aim to expose participants to multiple disciplines, perspectives, and possibilities and ultimately generate collaborations and partnerships for future funding applications.

### 3.5 Researcher Career Development Programme

The programme will include a number of courses which are relevant to one or more stages of the researcher career development. Some of them will be delivered online while others will be delivered in person. The majority of workshops will be delivered in clusters of 1 or 2 weeks outside of term time, typically in January and May. Some other workshops will also be delivered throughout the academic year.

The **Research Integrity module** is mandatory for all researchers at all stages of career development and will be delivered in a blended format, with a live session followed by an online module developed and hosted by Epigeum. It is recommended that this should be completed within the first six months of joining TU Dublin as a researcher.

The **Licence to Lead a Successful Research Project** is highly recommended for all new researchers who obtain the role of Project Investigators and for those who wish to lead a project.

Below is a list of courses offered on the programme regularly. This list is not exhaustive, and more modules will be added to the programme each academic year. The completed and up-to-date list is available online<sup>6</sup>.

### **Beyond Metrics: Planning and Narrating Your Research Impact**

**Outline:** This two-hour workshop on research impact is designed to equip postdoctoral researchers and research fellows with the knowledge and tools necessary to maximise and effectively communicate the broader impacts of their work. It will provide valuable insights into identifying and measuring both academic and societal impacts, fostering a deeper understanding of how research can influence policy, industry, and community. Through interactive sessions, participants will learn strategies for enhancing their research's visibility and engagement with various stakeholders. This workshop is an essential opportunity for early-career researchers to align their work with broader impact goals, crucial for career advancement and meaningful contributions to their fields.

### **Fast Track Your Research Impact**

**Outline:** This session will give participants everything they need to generate and communicate real-world impacts from their research. They will learn about practical tools to time-efficiently increase the significance and reach of their impact and how to increase their success rates and integrate impact into their next research proposal. The training is based on the latest research evidence and takes a unique relational approach to deliver wide-reaching and lasting impacts. As part of the session, all participants will receive a hard copy and a PDF copy of the second edition of The Research Impact Handbook.

### **How to Lead a Successful Research Project**

**Outline:** Leading a research project encompasses many different skills and knowledge that go well beyond the ability to write a successful research proposal. Principal Investigators will not only be required to manage their project from the financial and administrative point of view, including recruitment and selection of their research team, but will also be expected to lead the intellectual property of the project and guide everyone on the team, especially early career researchers, through their professional and career development. These two sessions will delve into the practical aspects of leading a research project in TU Dublin.

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<sup>6</sup> The list of training events for researchers is available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/support-for-researchers/researcher-career-development/workshops-and-supports/>

### Identifying and Engaging with Stakeholders

**Outline:** This workshop is designed to provide participants with the skills and confidence to identify and engage effectively with the end users of their research (i.e, stakeholders) and/or those proposed to employ in a particular study to advance or validate a particular component of the research. It will include a mix of mini-presentations and breakout activities. The presentations will focus on methodologies, current best practice, things to consider when choosing which method might suit the project, methods which might not have been considered, avoiding common pitfalls, and top tips for success. The breakout sessions will enable participants to prepare and plan in practice and how best to communicate with diverse stakeholder groups. The workshop will conclude with a group discussion on next steps, and additional post-workshop supports.

### Industrially Focused Research Funding Seminar

**Outline:** This seminar will provide participants with information on how to secure funding from €5k to €5m through industrially focussed research. The presenters will take participants through a quick overview of the opportunities currently available to TU Dublin staff with major funders such as Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Enterprise and will illustrate how the funding works through their own experience and case studies.

### Integrating the Gender Dimension in Research

**Outline:** This capacity building session will mobilize applied knowledge to provide definitions, evidence, and solutions relevant to the integration of the gender perspective in research projects carried out at TU Dublin. Under Horizon Europe, integrating the gender dimension in project management and research contents has become a mandatory requirement that contributes to enhancing the validity and applicability of research design, methods and outputs. Combining short presentations with hands-on sessions in sub-groups, this activity will briefly introduce the state of the play with regards to gender imbalances in research and academic organizations, discuss the notions of gender blindness and gender bias in knowledge production, and provide practical guidance to build on self-reflexivity and enhance participants' ability to mainstream a gender perspective.

### Introduction to Open Research

**Outline:** TU Dublin is an Open Research University, but what does that mean? What are the best practices and easy wins for effectively working in an Open Research environment, and what supports are in place to help? Learn more about policies and practices in this session.

### Licence to Chair

**Outline:** This workshop is mandatory for all Research Student Viva Voce Examination Chairpersons. The topics covered include: an overview of TU Dublin's Graduate Research Regulations, the role of a Chair, difficult situations, Do's and Don'ts of a Chair work.

### Licence to Supervise

**Outline:** This workshop is mandatory for all First Time Supervisors, i.e. supervisors who have not supervised a research student to completion. The topics covered include: an overview of TU Dublin's Graduate Research Regulations, the context of change in doctoral study and support, the role of supervisors, recruitment and selection of PhD candidates, and maintaining progress to completion.

### Managing your Research Project

**Outline:** Much of a researcher's work centres around delivering projects but for many researchers and research leaders the actions needed to deliver their milestones are not contained within a cogent Project Management framework. This focused webinar will equip participants with professional applied project management skills and an overview of various project-planning tools and techniques.

### Mentee Session: How to be a Good Mentee

**Outline:** TU Dublin's Research Mentoring Programme aims to match early career researchers with outstanding senior researchers and academics to foster their professional development and enhance their growth and learning experience. At this training session Mentees will learn what their role includes and how to pursue a successful mentoring partnership.

### **Mentor Session: How to be a Good Mentor**

**Outline:** TU Dublin's Research Mentoring Programme aims to match early career researchers with outstanding senior researchers and academics to foster their professional development and enhance their growth and learning experience. At this training session Mentors will learn what their role includes and how to pursue a successful mentoring partnership.

### **Networking for Researchers**

**Outline:** As the old saying goes – “It’s not what you know that counts, it’s who you know”, which, in the modern professional environment, means building a net that works. Once upon a time this network was built upon the face-to-face connections that academics made – especially at conferences. However, the current climate means that these opportunities may be harder to come by. We do, however, live in a very connected world. Having an online profile and presence, using Social Media, LinkedIn, ResearchGate etc. is part and parcel of academic or industrial success. Yet, for many in the research community, ‘networking’ is still not an easy or natural thing to do.

This focused webinar will help participants to explore how to disseminate their work effectively, foster links and build strong connections.

### **Open Access Publishing**

**Outline:** Publishing your research open access is now a requirement of most funders and is a requirement of TU Dublin. This session will cover TU Dublin and funder policy requirements, explain Article Processing Charges, institutional supports and tools to help.

### **Planning Your Research Career**

**Outline:** During this workshop participants will explore the following topics:

- » What is the value of me and my post doc experience? We will delve into career motivations, skills developed, strengths and areas for development and try to define what is “success”.
- » Communicating my brand: We will discuss different types of CVs and how to best prepare for interviews depending on the nature of the role applied for. We will also look at job search strategies and how to use LinkedIn for self-promotion.

- » Where can my post doc take me? During this exciting discussion panel, we will explore potential career opportunities by hearing from colleagues who were postdocs in the past and have achieved a successful career path.
- » Researcher Career Development Plan: we will look at the Researcher Career Development Plan and how to make sure it is used it at its full potential.

### **Postgraduate CPDs from Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA)**

**Outline:** Researchers can access all webinars and Postgraduate CPDs organized by the LTA office. The full calendar of events is available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/explore/about-the-university/academic-affairs/lta/>. To attend the Postgraduate CPDs or any of the other courses organized by the LTA a request for a fee waiver must be lodged with the People Development Team and copied to the Researcher Career Development Manager.

### **Research Commercialisation & innovation**

**Outline:** Innovation is fundamental to maintaining a competitive edge in industry but sometimes, time and financial constraints can prevent you from developing innovative ideas that could become an important source of revenue in the future. In this workshop, you will learn the fundamentals of research commercialization, from valuing the output of a research idea right through communicating it in a way that potential consumers can relate to. Key Elements of this workshop will be:

- » Commercialisation strategy;
- » Intellectual Property;
- » What is a patent;
- » How to develop a successful trademark;
- » Managing confidentiality and types of confidential information

### **Research Data Management**

**Outline:** This session will cover good RDM practices, from writing a DMP for funding proposals, active research data management throughout a research project, and publishing research data as a citable research output.

### Research Grant Writing

**Outline:** This workshop will focus on selling yourself, career trajectory, horizon scanning, finding the right funder and programme, scaling your idea and project, how to read programme documents, and designing a project around an idea (work packages, team formulation, etc). It will then delve into putting your idea down on paper i.e., turning your project into an application, how to design work packages, how to write impacts, sex/gender, data management and abstracts. And finally, how to ensure authorisation/endorsement.

### Research Integrity

**Outline:** If you had to carry out research involving human participants, would you know how to go about it? What should you do if you see a colleague engaging in questionable research practice? Do you have a clear understanding of how much input you need to have in order to merit authorship – and how to prevent disputes on this subject? Have you considered the broader impact of your research on society? This course provides a comprehensive overview of how researchers in Ireland can meet their responsibilities, setting out the key principles and practices of good research conduct, and guiding learners through the lifecycle of a research project. It is delivered in a blended format with a preparatory in-person workshop followed by an online course, developed by a consortium of Irish Higher Education Institutions and funders and delivered through the Epigeum platform.

### Research Writing and the Peer Review Process

**Outline:** This module introduces participants to peer reviewing in research writing, not only in their research area but also in other disciplines.

The module will provide structured guidance and support to researchers in the arts, humanities, business, science and engineering fields, who are keen to publish their research.

### Social Media Presence for Researchers

**Outline:** Social media offers a powerful way for researchers to act as a public voice for the university, make their research engaging and understandable to a wide audience, and boost their professional profile.

During this training session, participants will learn the power of social media, how to clarify their messaging, audience and channels and learn about establishing a social media strategy. The training will provide an overview of the most powerful social media platforms available to researchers, including LinkedIn, X and Research Gate and insights into effective measurement tools to track their reach and influence.

### Sustainable Research in the European and Global Context

**Outline:** This workshop is designed to promote engagement and increase understanding around the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the UN General Assembly in 2015. Many of the Targets, Indicators and Associated meta-data are highly relevant for Business contexts. By the end of this workshop (including the preparatory activities) researchers will be familiar with the 17 SDGs and how to navigate Goals, Targets, Indicators and Meta-data online.

Participants will also learn how the SDGs impact the current European research mission, especially in terms of grant applications and research dissemination.

### Writing a Narrative CV

**Outline:** What is a Narrative CV, and best practices for writing one - what to include and more importantly what to omit. Discover why funders are asking for narrative CVs and how you can avoid some common pitfalls, and go about communicating the impact of your research effectively.

### Writing Competitive Research for Horizon Europe

**Outline:** The programme combines the knowledge and advice of European senior researchers on how to strategize the project and how to write each section of the proposal template, unravelling the evaluation criteria behind each section. They will cover the 6 main steps for success in RIA addressed in Modules, from Understanding the Horizon Europe Framework and the Excellence, Impact and Implementation sections. At each stage Strategies for HE Success and practical examples will be proposed and discussed.

# MENTORING PROGRAMME



## 4.1 Guidelines

Each researcher is encouraged to join the TU Dublin Research Mentoring Programme<sup>7</sup>.

Mentoring is an informal learning process in which the mentor, a more skilled or experienced person, acts as a role model to the mentee. Mentoring is a goal-oriented relationship that aims to enhance and nurture professional and personal development. Through reflection on the part of the mentee and guidance and support from the mentor, there is a mutually beneficial learning exchange based on knowledge gained through experience.

Confidentiality is an essential part of the Mentoring Programme. There must be a high degree of trust and confidentiality which should be agreed between the mentor and mentee at their first mentoring meeting through the Mentoring Agreement<sup>8</sup>.

## 4.2 The role of the mentor

Some Irish funders refer to PhD supervisors and Principal Investigators as mentors and the early career researchers in those projects often report to their mentors. However, as part of this programme, mentors are to be intended in a broader perspective as senior colleagues who provide guidance and advice to their mentees for their personal and professional development. Therefore, mentors on this programme will never be directly involved in the mentee's research project and will not be in their reporting line.

The mentor offers advice and provides the mentee with an open and confidential forum where they can discuss their strengths, weaknesses, concerns and ideas. The mentor will not however manage or be responsible for the mentee or their performance. It may arise during the mentoring relationship that a mentee requests advice or guidance that is outside the boundaries of the mentoring relationship. In such cases, the mentor should refer the mentee to the appropriate University's policy or department for guidance.

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<sup>7</sup> More information on the Research Mentoring Programme is available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/support-for-researchers/researcher-career-development/workshops-and-supports/mentoring/>

<sup>8</sup> A Mentoring Agreement Template is available at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/support-for-researchers/researcher-career-development/workshops-and-supports/mentoring/>

Mentoring benefits mentors in many ways:

- » It improves the mentor's leadership and coaching skills.
- » It provides an opportunity for self-reflection, and personal satisfaction particularly from seeing junior staff progress.
- » It provides great visibility for the recognised involvement in a programme of strategic importance to the University and a sense of purpose for sharing the knowledge acquired so far and giving back to the University and society.
- » It expands the mentor's horizon by providing potential for networking and new connections for future research collaborations.
- » It can strengthen a grant application as funding bodies increasingly value an active mentoring programme and often encourage senior staff to be mentors.
- » It is a great opportunity for Reverse Mentoring whereby the mentor will acquire new knowledge and expertise thanks to the mentee's own strengths.

### **4.3 The role of the mentee**

The mentee should be committed to the mentoring process and take responsibility for compiling the meeting agenda and contacting the mentor to schedule mentoring meetings. The mentee should trust the mentor and be open to having their ideas, concerns, issues challenged. The mentee will not be told what to do or given solutions to problems, instead, they will be given advice and guided by their mentor in making a decision or solving an issue.

The benefits of a mentoring programme for the mentee are numerous:

- » Gain practical advice, encouragement and support for their personal and professional development.
- » Expand the mentee's network and connections.
- » Provide intellectual stimulation and direction.
- » Develop the mentee's communication, negotiation and influencing skills.
- » Provide specialist knowledge in the mentee's field of research.
- » Identify SMART goals and establish a sense of direction for their career development.

#### 4.4 Matching mentor and mentee

Research mentees and mentors are normally matched by the Researcher Career Development Manager on the basis of the learning needs identified by the mentee through the learning needs exercise and indicated in their Mentee Matching Form<sup>9</sup> and the competencies and strengths indicated by the mentor in their Mentor Matching Form<sup>10</sup>. A good starting point for the first mentoring meeting is to discuss the mentees learning goals and expectations contained in the draft Mentoring Agreement. A sample First Meeting agenda is provided as a guide below;

##### First Meeting Sample Agenda

- » The mentee will describe their
  - personal and professional learning needs
  - goals for the mentoring programme/learning outcomes.
- » The mentor and Mentee will discuss and sign the Mentoring Agreement which should include
  - expectations
  - confidentiality
  - location of meetings.
- » The mentor and Mentee will review the effectiveness of the meeting and recap the mentee's actions and decisions and agree the next meeting date.

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<sup>9</sup> Available online at <https://forms.office.com/e/dtSrkybkmp>  
<sup>10</sup> Available online at <https://forms.office.com/e/BPJyrrFvXV>

#### 4.5 Duration and Evaluation

Both mentor and mentee should be patient as it takes time for a mentoring partnership to become effective.

Normally, the mentoring partnership will proceed as follows:

- » Mentor and Mentee will meet once a month for approximately one hour for 12 months.
- » The mentoring agreement and boundaries should be discussed at the first meeting.
- » Meeting two should take place no later than three-four weeks after the mentoring agreement has been decided.
- » Subsequent meetings are then scheduled at monthly intervals.

All line Managers should be advised by the Mentee either informally or through the Performance Management & Development discussion that they wish to engage in the TU Dublin Mentoring Programme to agree time to attend mentoring meetings.

The Researcher Career Development Manager will periodically check in with both mentors and mentees to ensure that the partnership is going well for them and will invite them to complete a survey questionnaire at the end of the programme to evaluate the mentoring process and the training and support available through People Development. At any stage during the programme, both mentor and mentee can contact the Researcher Career Development Manager to seek advice or guidance.





TU Dublin is committed to supporting and assisting researchers in progressing their professional development during their period of employment.

The professional development training for doctoral researchers, including workshops on career advice is specifically designed and delivered by the Graduate Research School as a part of the university's doctoral programme.

Postdoctoral Researchers, Research Fellows and Senior Research Fellows can access various tools for their career development:

- » Researcher Career Development Plan
- » Career Development Training
- » One to one Career Advice Sessions with the Researcher Career Development Manager.

### **5.1 Researcher Career Development Plan**

The Researcher Career Development Plan<sup>11</sup> is a tool which researchers can use to explore career options, identify development gaps and opportunities, and support their career development and well-being.

The Career Development Plan will include a wide variety of formal and informal activities, from attendance at workshops, conferences, coaching around research proposal development to job and mobility opportunities. It should include both short-term and long-term objectives and will form the basis for the application for the Researcher Career Stage Certificate of Completion.

It is recommended that, within three months of commencing their employment with TU Dublin, the researcher meet with their Principal Investigator (PI) to self-assess their own skills and career goals and discuss how these can be achieved through further training and other development opportunities. This will form the basis for the first draft of the Researcher Career Development Plan. During this period, the researcher and their PI may meet again to consolidate and agree upon the Researcher Career Development Plan.

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<sup>11</sup> Available online at <https://www.tudublin.ie/research/support-for-researchers/researcher-career-development/researcher-career-development-frameworks/>

After 3 additional months, it is expected that the PI and the researcher will meet again to review the agreed Researcher Career Development Plan and the schedule of training available. From then on, the researcher and the PI will continue to meet regularly every six months to review the researcher's competency development and their career goals and achievements.

Below is the recommended schedule of career development meetings for the first two years of employment:

Career Development Planning/Review Meeting	Meeting Number and Timing	Time & Date e.g. start date of researcher on 01.09.23
Career Development Planning Meeting	Meeting 1 Months 1-3 Year 1	02.10.23
Career Development Planning Meeting	Meeting 2 Months 4-6 Year 1	08.01.24
Career Development Plan Review	Meeting 3 Months 7-12 Year 1	08.07.24
Career Development Plan Review	Meeting 4 Months 1-6 Year 2	08.01.25
Career Development Plan Review	Meeting 5 Months 7-12 Year 2	08.07.25

## 5.2 Career Development Training

The Researcher Career Development Manager and the People Development Team will offer several workshops and courses on career development to researchers throughout the academic year. The workshops will focus on

- » Career development planning, including self-assessment techniques, CV writing and interview skills
- » Networking for researchers
- » Engaging with Stakeholders
- » Presenting with Impact
- » Career Days aimed at connecting industry and researchers.

## 5.3 One-to-one Career Advice Sessions

All researchers can book one-to-one career advice sessions with the Researcher Career Development Manager which can be held either online or in person. During these sessions, the researchers' career goals and aspirations will be further examined with practical tips on the training opportunities that can enhance the researcher's career progression.

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