Careers Workshops for Research Students and Research Staff
Michaelmas Term 2019

Positive steps in career development come from meeting others and learning. Did you know that Oxford’s Careers Service runs tailored support and information services for research students and staff? See our menu below. Most workshops are designed primarily with DPhil students and postdocs or research fellows in mind, while welcoming MPhil and Masters by Research students. Some are geared towards ‘pre-PhD’ thinking and are open to all.

Make sure you browse our researcher webpages [www.careers.ox.ac.uk/researchers/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/researchers/) for top tips and links to wider events, careers fairs and skills training opportunities relevant to your interests. And do look out for Careers Days, invited speakers and skills sessions run by your department, division or post-doc network.

A [green header](#) indicates events taking place ‘down the hill’ in the Careers Service building (56 Banbury Road) or other town-centre locations, while those with a [blue header](#) will be delivered ‘up the hill’ (on the JR site or on Old Road campus: see the event listing for details). Please note that all research students and staff are welcome to register for workshops in any location.

For appointments with Rachel Bray, Rebecca Ehata or another Careers Adviser of your choice at the Careers Service on Banbury Road, please book through CareerConnect. We also offer regular appointments for scientists at the JR and Old Road Campus, bookable by phoning reception on 01865 274646. Bookings for workshops/events should be through CareerConnect; if you have queries, please email reception@careers.ox.ac.uk.

**Week Minus Two**

**Careers in Finance for Researchers**
Tuesday 24 September, 4.00 pm-6.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

This event is for DPhil students and postdoctoral researchers considering a career in finance or interested to learn more about potential career options in the field. The panellists will come from a range of organisations, all working in applied research roles and will talk about their current work, firms and experience. They will share the information needed to help in making a successful transition from academia to finance. Presentations followed by Q&A.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](#).

**Week Minus One**

**Careers in Consultancy for Researchers**
Tuesday 01 October, 4.00 pm-6.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

Hear from a panel of recent Oxford DPhils now working as consultants with leading firms. Hear about their current roles and experiences; how they apply at work what they learnt during their Advance Degree Programme; the opportunities and challenges in making the transition from researcher to management consultancy; and the way they learnt about the sector and succeeded in the application processes. Presentations followed by Q&A.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](#).
Career Design and Development: A three-part course for Research Staff and DPhils

Workshop 1: Thursday 10 October, 9.30 am-12.30 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road
Workshop 2: Thursday 7 November, 3.00 pm-5.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road
Workshop 3: Tuesday 3rd December, 4.00 pm-6.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

This series will also be run on the Old Road Campus, Headington starting on 16th October, see below.

Career Design and Development is a 3-part workshop series whose purpose is to open the space for creative thinking and equip you with insights and tools for developing – with confidence – your career. We will combine individual, pair and group activities to stimulate thinking, explore new areas and practice new ways of self-expression on work-related topics. Amongst other tools relevant to researchers, the course applies Stanford’s ‘design-thinking’ approach to integrating your life aspirations with your career thinking; see https://designingyour.life/ for an introduction to this material.

“Evidence based and evaluated - pretty unusual in the self-help genre. Useful for anyone wanted to work out what they want to do next, from students to career changers in their 50s.” (Amazon reviewer of Designing your Life)

The process relies on your participation in all three workshops, which are spaced by several weeks to allow experimentation and reflective exercises set in the first two workshops. In signing up for this workshop, you are also committing to workshops 2 (on 7th November) and 3 (on 3rd December); more details and timings below.

In the first workshop on 10th October (9.30 am – 12.30 pm) you will learn from your professional experiences to date, and begin finding relevant intersections between your skills, values, sources of joy and what the world will pay you for. We will introduce you to a framework for career development in which you can consider the decisions you have made so far and how to move forward. We will then explore the role of narrative in making sense of our own career journeys and in talking about them with others.

To apply this learning to your own life, you will be asked to read a little and complete some short exercises before the next workshop.

In the second workshop on 7th November (3-5 pm at the Careers Service), we will deepen the focus on ways to construct a working life to suit you and on identifying any assumptions that may be restricting your thinking. You will be supported to be more creative in your thinking than traditional career planning allows, and to consider a variety of options that emerge. We will also take a fresh look at ‘networking’ as something that can be rewarding and comfortable (even fun!) for all.

Through a further set of brief ‘take-home’ tasks, you will be able to develop your thinking and convert your learning into practical steps.

The third and final workshop on 3rd December (4-6 pm at the Careers Service) will build on learning from the first two workshops and your exploratory activities between these, and give you a ‘road map’ for your next steps. You will reflect on potential career routes with input from your peers and the facilitators. We will then spot opportunities for developing your professional network and for gaining practical experience towards these goals, before working together to find solutions to any dilemmas or fill information gaps.

Course objectives:
- Learn how a design approach can be used to develop and progress a personal career plan
- Use visual methods to explore career options for the coming five years
- Understand the generative potential of networking
- Feel confident to consider, and try out, different career directions (within or beyond academia)
- Learn strategies for narrowing down your options and making decisions
- Define personal action points for developing your career, plus indicators for evaluating your learning.

All DPhil students and research staff welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect, then make sure you diarise and attend all three workshops.
**Week One**

**Career Design and Development: A three-part course for Research Staff and DPhils**

Ludwig Seminar Room, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, Old Road Campus Research Building, Headington.

Workshop 1: Thursday 16 October, 11.30 am-2.30 pm,
Workshop 2: Thursday 7 November, 11:30-13:30 pm,
Workshop 3: Wednesday 11 December 11.30 – 13.30 pm,

*This series will also be run at The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road starting on 10th October, see above.*

Career Design and Development is a 3-part workshop series whose purpose is to open the space for creative thinking and equip you with insights and tools for developing – with confidence – your career. See the entry above for further details of the course content.

*All DPhil students and research staff welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect, then make sure you diarise and attend all three workshops.*

*Tea/coffee will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own lunch.*

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**Week One**

**Researchers @ the Oxford Careers Fair**

Saturday 19 October, 10.00 am-11.00 am, Examination Schools

This session will focus on how to get the most from the Careers Fair, including asking insightful questions and building relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

*All welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.*

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**Week Two**

**Researchers @ the Finance Fair**

Monday 21 October, 1.30 pm-2.30 pm, Oxford Town Hall

Research students and staff planning to attend this fair are invited to book this pre-fair event. We will hear from an employee of the exhibiting companies about their recruitment priorities, what people find most interesting in their daily activities, and the work-place culture. Through questions and discussion, you will learn more about what companies value in a doctorate and/or academic research experience and what the transition involves.

The second half of our session will focus on how to get the most from the Careers Fair, including asking insightful questions and building relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

*All welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.*
**Week Two**

**Insight into Academia: Is a PhD right for me?**  
Tuesday 22 October, 12.30 pm-2.30 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

*Insight into Academia* is a series of informal seminars and informal ‘conversations’, exploring opportunities for an academic career within and beyond the UK, important decisions along the way and what it takes to thrive as an academic.

This seminar is open to anyone considering applying for a PhD. In this 2-hour session we will cover the steps you might take to discover whether a PhD is the right course of action for you, and discuss how to choose the best institution and programme for you. We will also briefly talk about the application process and funding.

Workshop objectives:
- Develop a better understanding of what a PhD involves and its value in the employment market
- Clarify whether a PhD is the right step for you at this point in your life

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careerconnect). Tea/coffee will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own lunch.

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**Week Two**

**Researchers @ the Management Consultancy Fair**  
Tuesday 22 October, 1.30 pm-2.30 pm, Oxford Town Hall

Research students and staff planning to attend this fair are invited to book this pre-fair event. We will hear from an employee of the exhibiting companies about their recruitment priorities, what people find most interesting in their daily activities, and the work-place culture. Through questions and discussion, you will learn more about what companies value in a doctorate and/or academic research experience and what the transition involves.

The second half of our session will focus on how to get the most from the Careers Fair, including asking insightful questions and building relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careerconnect).

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**Week Three**

**Researchers @ the Careers in Computing Fair**  
Tuesday 29 October, 2.00 pm-3.00 pm, Mathematical Institute

Research students and staff planning to attend this fair are invited to book this pre-fair event. We will hear from an employee of the exhibiting companies about their recruitment priorities, what people find most interesting in their daily activities, and the work-place culture. Through questions and discussion, you will learn more about what companies value in a doctorate and/or academic research experience and what the transition involves.

The second half of our session will focus on how to get the most from the Careers Fair, including asking insightful questions and building relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careerconnect).
**Week Three**

**Too Late to Change Direction?**

Tues 29th October, 11.00 am-2.30 pm, Room 71 a, b & c – Oncology Department, Old Road Campus Research Building

Of course not! It’s never too late for a career change... But perhaps you are wondering “Is this right for me? And if so, how do I start the process or make more effective steps forward?”.

In this workshop you will learn from your experiences in academic research and other professional/personal roles, look at various routes that others with similar backgrounds have taken and consider options available to you. We will also discuss the possibility of combining aspects of academia with another role, and how to find any elements you love about academic life in other sectors or roles.

**Workshop objectives:**

- To capture your skills, values and sources of enjoyment as signposts towards different career steps
- To find ways you can build on your existing expertise, networks and personal attributes in exploring next steps
- To understand what the process of transition will feel like and how best to sustain your confidence

All DPhil students and research staff welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect. Tea/coffee will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own lunch.

*Please note: This is the only such session to be run in Headington this academic year, however it will be run in the Careers Service in Hilary and/or Trinity Term. If this date does not suit or you are looking for sustained support, please consider the three-part workshop series ‘Career Design and Development’ running in both Headington and The Careers Service, Banbury Road described in Week Nought and Week One (respectively). More details can be found here and here.*

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**Week Three**

**Researchers @ the Science, Engineering and Technology Fair**

Saturday 2 November, 10.00 am-11.00 am, Examination Schools

Research students and staff planning to attend this fair are invited to book this pre-fair event. We will hear from an employee of the exhibiting companies about their recruitment priorities, what people find most interesting in their daily activities, and the work-place culture. Through questions and discussion, you will learn more about what companies value in a doctorate and/or academic research experience and what the transition involves.

The second half of our session will focus on how to get the most from the Careers Fair, including asking insightful questions and building relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.
**Week Four**

**Insight into Academia: Should I do a Postdoc?**
Tuesday 5 November, 1.00 pm-2.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

If you’re aiming for a career in research, securing a postdoctoral research position may seem to be the logical next step to build on your doctorate. In some – though not all – fields of academic research, having postdoc experience is a requirement for higher-level jobs, though it still doesn’t guarantee future success in securing a permanent academic position. So is postdoctoral research worth pursuing?

This seminar is an opportunity to pause and ask some important questions: How can a postdoc support my academic progression most effectively? What value is a postdoc for those considering working in sectors beyond academia? What do I need to have in place to ensure that the postdoc period is as productive from a career perspective, as well as meeting the research aims? The seminar will propose strategies to help you consider this decision, and understand both the conditions in which a postdoc could work well for you and viable, attractive, alternatives.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](#).

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**Week Four**

**Researchers @ the Internship Fair**
Wednesday 6 November, 1.30 pm-2.30 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

Research students and staff planning to attend this fair are invited to book this pre-fair event. We will hear from an employee of the exhibiting companies about their recruitment priorities, what people find most interesting in their daily activities, and the work-place culture. Through questions and discussion, you will learn more about what companies value in a doctorate and/or academic research experience and what the transition involves.

The second half of our session will focus on how to get the most from the Careers Fair, including asking insightful questions and building relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to [CareerConnect](#).

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**Week Four**

**Career Design and Development: Workshop 2 for Research Staff and DPhils**
Thursday 7 November, 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

See outline and booking link for this 3-part series of workshops in ‘Week Nought’ above.
**Week Four**

**Career Design and Development: Workshop 2 for Research Staff and DPhils**
Workshop 2: Thursday 7 November, 11:30-13:30 pm
Ludwig Seminar Room, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, Old Road Campus Research Building, Headington

*See outline and booking link for this 3-part series of workshops in ‘Week One’ above.*

**Week Four**

**Researchers @ the Law Fair**
Saturday 9 November, 10:00 am-11:00 am, The Examination Schools

Research students and staff planning to attend this fair are invited to book this pre-fair event for both researchers and alumni.

This is an opportunity for talk informally with a Careers Adviser about options for researchers in the legal arena, for example intellectual property law. Our discussion will be led by participant interests and may cover reasons why companies see value in a doctorate and/or academic research experience, and how you can identify, translate and/or build your skillset in ways that will appeal strongly to recruiters.

We will also consider how to get the most from the Careers Fair, e.g. how to ask insightful questions and build relationships with organisations that interest you. Time permitting, we will discuss any questions you may have about job search strategies, networking or applications.

Further information on the fair can be found at [http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/). The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

*All welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.*

**Week Five**

**Job Search, CVs and Cover Letters for Roles Beyond Academia**
Tuesday 12 November, 9.30 am-12.30 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

Through a mix of individual and informal small group exercises, participants will be introduced to the principles of, and tips on, effective job-searching. They will increase their understanding and recognition of the characteristics of effective CVs and cover letters, and will developing the capacity to critique the strengths and weaknesses of their own and colleagues’ draft CVs and cover letters.

**Workshop objectives:**
• Gain a clearer understanding of the recruitment process in sectors beyond academia and the implications for applications
• Develop confidence and effectiveness in tailoring a CV and Cover Letter for specific jobs
• Practice giving and receiving constructive feedback from peers and the workshop facilitator

Please note that this session will not cover academic job applications, which will be the focus of a workshop on 26th November (see below for details).

To get the most out of this workshop, please bring along a draft 1-2 page CV and/or cover letter, plus any job descriptions that interest you, whether in general terms or for a potential application. We are unable to print documents for participants; if you wish to work on a paper copy of your CV/cover letter please print before arriving at the Careers Service.
All DPhil students and research staff welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect. Please note: This is the only such session to be run during Michaelmas term. The plan is to run it again during Hilary term in the Headington area, and in Trinity term at the Careers Service, Banbury Road.

Week Six

OXRSS Fellowship Workshop
Monday 18 November, 9.00 am-12.30 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

Research fellowships offer researchers an unparalleled opportunity to advance their academic career, and as a result, the applications process for a fellowship is highly competitive. This workshop, which is organised by Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS) and delivered in collaboration with Oxford University Research Services and the Careers Service, provides an overview of the rationale behind fellowship schemes and will help postdocs and other research staff to understand how they can optimize their chances of success when preparing to apply for a fellowship.

Workshop objectives:
- Understand the logic of key fellowship schemes and how to interpret guidelines for the written application
- Find out more about research funding options as an alternative to a fellowship scheme
- Hear from Oxford staff who have made successful applications to a range of fellowship schemes, and learn from a reflection on unsuccessful bids.

All research staff welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.

Week Six

Insight into Academia: Coping with Academic Setbacks
Tuesday 19 November, 1.00 pm-2.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

The early stages of an academic career are undoubtedly exciting, but for many they are also characterised by personal and professional uncertainty, frustration, career setbacks and an ensuing sense of failure. Such issues can be very difficult to broach with project or departmental colleagues, leaving researchers feeling isolated and unsure how to move forward. This session provides an opportunity to discuss the feelings and experiences that can trouble early career academics in a supportive environment. We will reflect on the broad range of obstacles typically encountered and then look at resources available to early career academics for dealing with these situations. Reminder: All questions and contributions will be kept confidential.

All welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.

Week Six

Researchers @ Jobs for Mathematicians
Tuesday 19 November, 3.00 pm-4.00 pm, Mathematical Institute

It isn't only the financial and academic or teaching world that is hungry for employees with advanced mathematics skills. Increasingly, commercial, government and not-for-profit sector players of all kinds are keen to employ highly numerate, analytical and creative thinkers to understand and predict trends, plan and develop strategy and deliver smarter and more efficient solutions. This pre-fair session focuses on how to present your skills and experience to employers at the fair and beyond.

Further information on the fair can be found at http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/careers-fairs/. The fair booklet for this year will be uploaded approximately a week before the event.

To book please go to Career Connect.
All welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.
Week Seven
CVs and Cover Letters for Academic Job Applications
Tuesday 26 November, 1.00 pm-4.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

An interactive workshop for researchers preparing applications for teaching or research positions in higher education. We will cover understanding what matters in the academic job market and the principles of writing effective CVs and cover letters; you then have an opportunity to reflect on your own documents and receive objective feedback on these via peer review to maximise learning.

Workshop objectives:
- Gain a better understanding of the key skills sought in academia and the constraints of the hiring process
- Learn how to organise and present your qualifications and experience in ways that meet current criteria for recruitment and the foreseeable priorities of academic departments
- Consider the skills and knowledge you should be keeping track of to future-proof your academic CV

Please note that this session will not cover non-academic job applications, which will be the focus of a workshop on 12th November (see above for details).

To get the most out of this workshop, please bring along a draft 1-2 page CV and/or cover letter, plus any job descriptions that interest you, whether in general terms or for a potential application. We are unable to print documents for participants; if you wish to work on a paper copy of your CV/cover letter please print before arriving at the Careers Service.

All DPhil students and research staff welcome. To reserve a place please go to CareerConnect.

Please note: This session will also be run as the first half (AM) of a full-day workshop in Hilary Term at the Careers Service, the second half (PM) of which will cover academic interview skills. These will be bookable separately or as a full day.

Week Eight
Career Design and Development: Workshop 3 for Research Staff and DPhils
Tuesday 3 December, 4.00 pm-6.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

See outline and booking link for this 3-part series of workshops in ‘Week Nought’ above.

Week Nine
Communication Skills for Researchers: Improv Workshop
Tuesday 10th December, 13.00 pm – 16.00 pm, The Careers Service, 56 Banbury Road

Are you looking to improve your interviewing, presentation and networking skills? Do you sometimes struggle to communicate effectively when you’re in the spotlight?

This 3-hour masterclass will use improvisation techniques to boost your ability to respond spontaneously in stressful situations. Excellent feedback on our pilot has prompted us to re-run this session with even more focus on helping you deal with the unexpected and feel more confident to think on your feet.

You will have the option to practice applying different techniques – as if you were in a conference/similar networking opportunity or in an interview – within a supportive environment. The session will be led by actor and trainer Joel Gatehouse (https://www.joelgatehouse.com/), who has extensive experience of running improvisation
workshops, with input from Ed Scrivens; co-founder of the Dragprov Revue and Musical Comedy Awards Finalist 2019 and currently a DPhil student, tutor, and Welfare Officer for St Peter’s College.

**Workshop Objectives**
- build your confidence in having good conversations in interviews or other contexts that matter to your career
- learn different ways of responding to unexpected situations
- give you tips and techniques to help you stay calm, engaged and vibrant when meeting new people or in potentially stressful situations

To reserve a place please go to [Career Connect](#).

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**Week Nine**

**Career Design and Development: Workshop 3 for Research Staff and DPhils**
Wednesday 11 December, 11.30 am-1.30 pm, Ludwig Seminar Room, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, Old Road Campus Research Building

*See outline and booking link for this 3-part series of workshops in ‘Week One’ above.*

*Tea/coffee will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own lunch.*