

Developing future scientific leaders

# Pathway to Independence

A collaborative initiative to help develop future scientific leaders

Vitae Conference 2013

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# Would you invest £1,000,000?



Never managed a team

Limited previous investment

Never managed a budget

Never run a business

Never negotiated for resources

Numerous well-established global competitors

High fail rate in the industry

Unproven technology/ideas

Limited organisational savvy?

# This session will cover:

1. Background of collaboration and what we did
2. Feedback on the programme and next steps
3. What about you? Sharing your own practices



# Challenges – what's your experience?

What do you/does your institution do to get new team leaders hitting the ground running?

# Why is it important?

- 13.57bn HEI spend
- 6.84bn HEFCE spend
- Science and Research 5.6bn
- Research Councils 50m
- 100k to fund a 4 year studentship
- Tackle the global challenges
  
- £1m investment per new CDF
- They leave and become a competitor
- Huge challenges, time pressure, limited funding...

“A butterfly flaps its wings and the collaboration was formed”





# What we knew:

- We needed support from the top for success
- Funding helps
- Others in the sector have experience
- Demand created by
  - Prestige
  - Collaboration
  - Scarcity
- Want to hear from other scientists (NOT trainers)





# The Original Collaborators



# Invited partners



EMBL-EBI

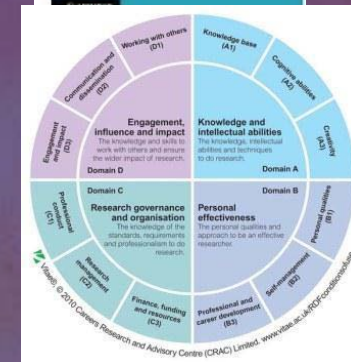
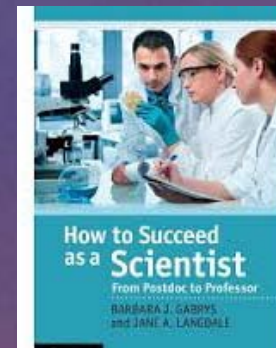
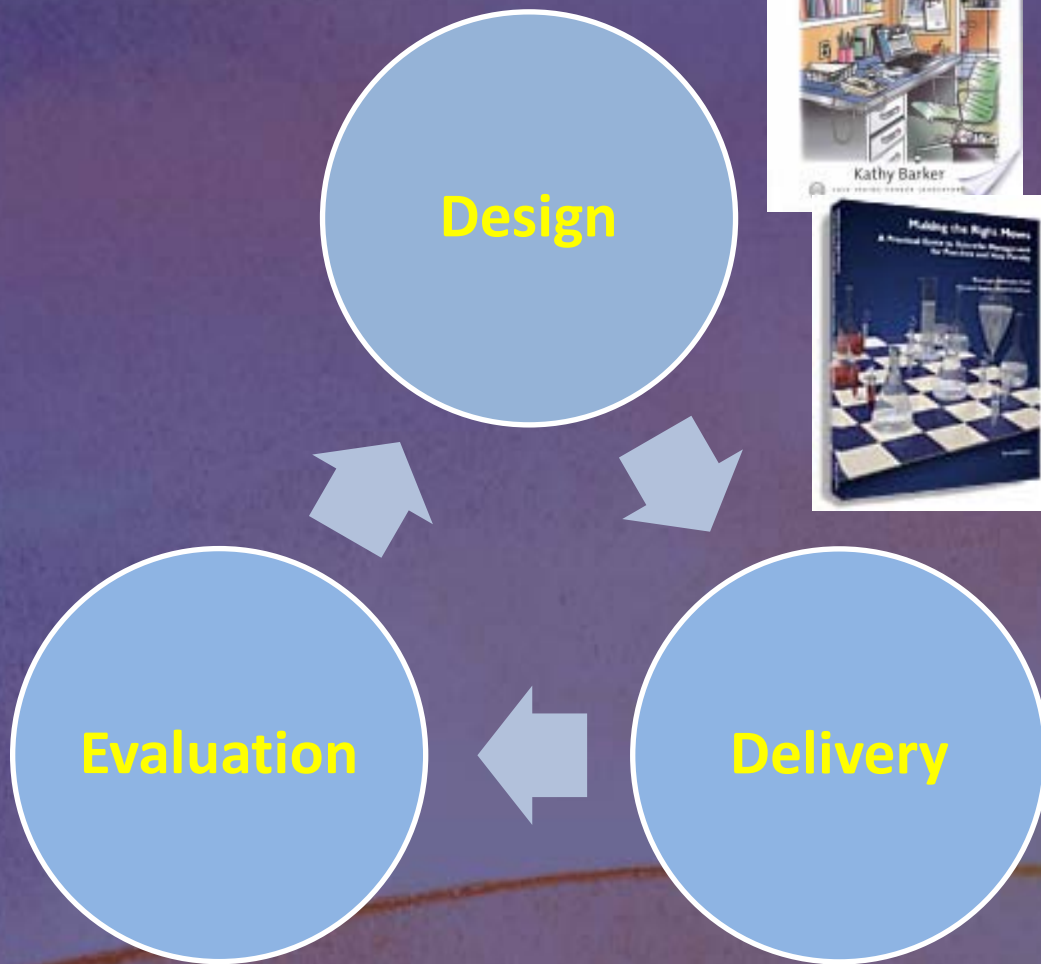


# Funder – Small development project grant



# Why collaborate? Pros and cons

Benefits	Challenges
Pool of speakers widened*	Logistics of working across organisations
Share workload	Project management, conflicting priorities
Increase profile	Different expectations/cultures of organisations and disciplines*
Learn from others	Ensuring consistent calibre of delegates*
Prestige of collaborators	Progress is slower
Attractive to funders	Equal pain and equal gain
Wider impact*	



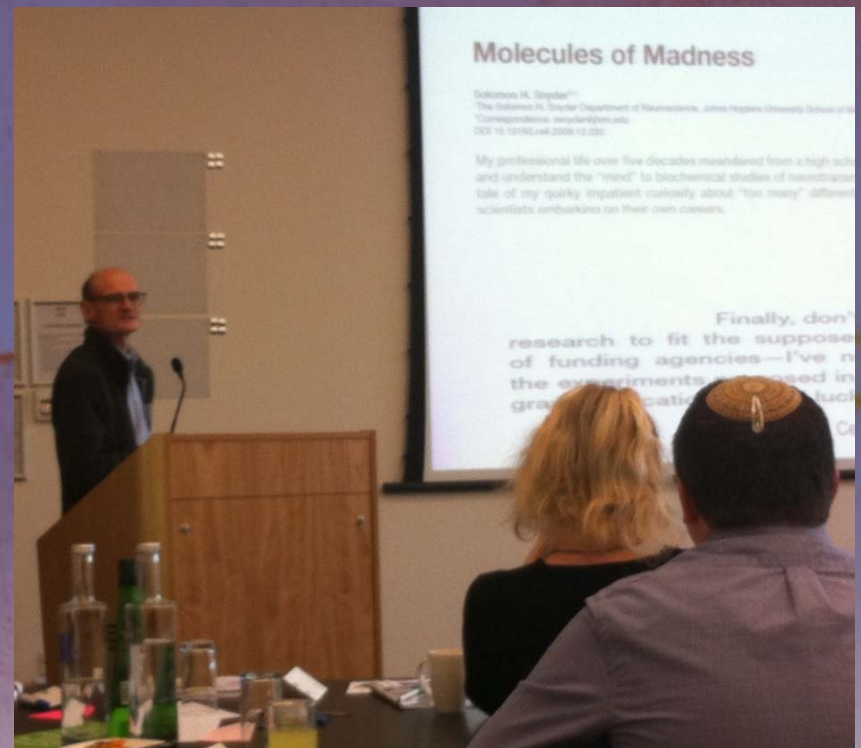
# Significant milestones

July 2011	Initial discussion at network meetings
November 2011	LFHE bid submitted
January 2012	Funding confirmed
Feb-May 2012	Recruit speakers, develop content
June 2012	Confirmed venue Moller Centre*
July 2012	Develop branding and marketing materials
September 2012	Advertising/open for applications
October 2012	Application deadline
December 2012	Successful delegates informed, pre-course work issued
January 2013	Core programme ran
September 2013	Follow-up event

Total cost: £16,000

# Researcher good will







Any questions so far?





# Evaluating the programme

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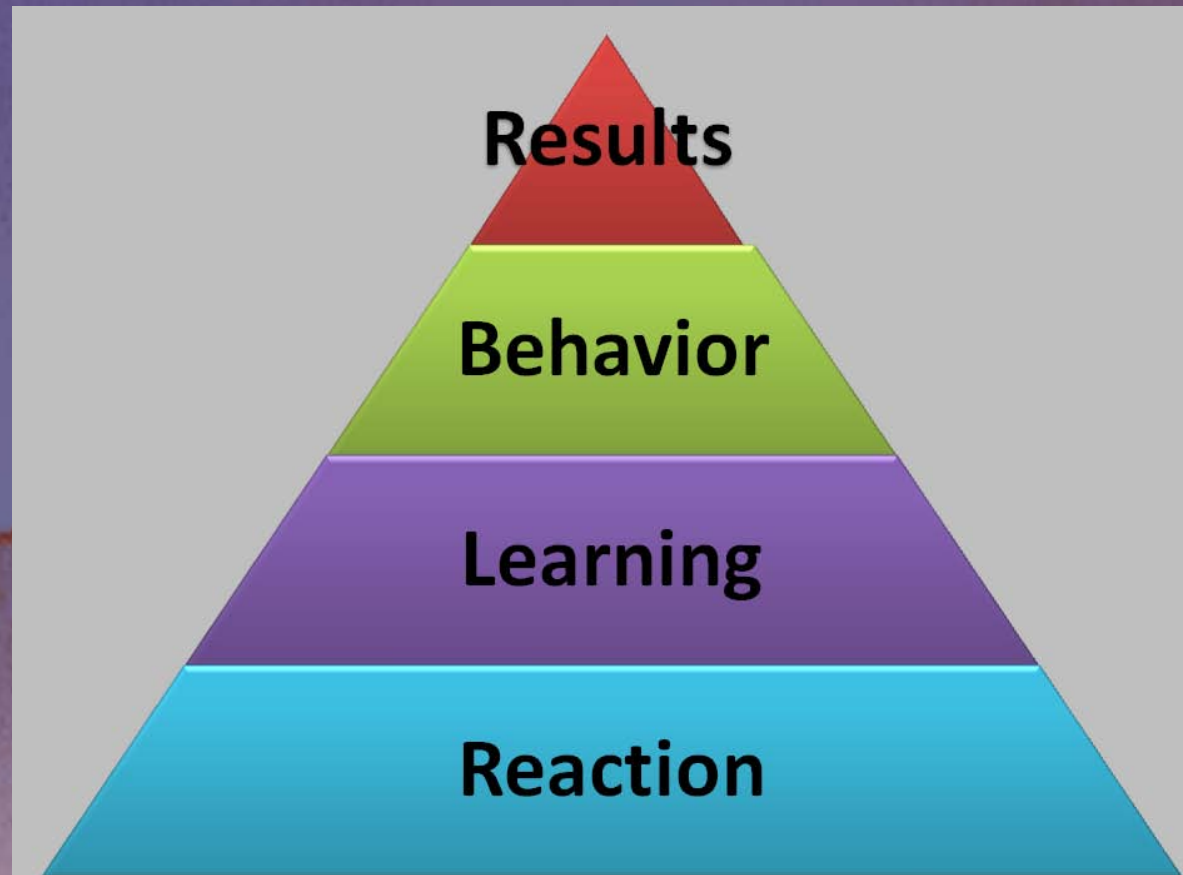
Pre-course self-assessment identified the perceived weaknesses

Immediate feedback

8 month feedback

2 year feedback

Control group



Participant: It was all really useful but the grant proposal appraisal session was particularly useful. Also, the personal experiences of the recently appointed team leaders were very interesting. The duration of the course was ideal

Speaker: As well as being rewarding to help some of the future leaders in science in their development, I found it very valuable personally. Having recently gone through this process myself, it was fascinating to hear how my approach differed from others, and also to look back with the benefit of hindsight. I even learned some things that I will put into practice myself.

Participant: Day two was interesting but I couldn't help thinking that how to manage a lab seems less urgent for somebody who doesn't have a lab yet. I will cross that bridge when I come to it.

Participant: Overall I enjoyed the course a lot and found it extremely valuable. I have been recommending it to lots of people if the scheme is funded further!

Participant: There were quite a few aspects the different speakers did not agree on, and it was a bit of a surprise that different answers to the same questions and/or different approaches can be 'right'.

# What the evaluation said

Key learning points (more in handout)

- Need scientific vision/the bigger picture
- Feedback on their project proposal v useful
- Variety of routes to independence
- Negotiate the offer/package. Don't rush to accept the first offer you get

# Next Steps

Follow-up day: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013, The Royal Institution

Repeat the programme

Update the website

Develop broader support for all postdocs

# Positives so far

Oversubscribed

Feedback on day

Speakers learned something

Attending a follow-up

Successful fellowships

Framework used as an exemplar

We are going to run it again

ICR/Royal Marsden clinician scientist version



# Take home messages

Barriers may exist – built it up slowly from the bottom up

Collaboration – bigger than the sum of the parts

Scientists delivering – gain experience, lose control

Happy to talk further and share our resources!



# Thank you

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