

Information Sheet for Participants

Discovering the professional identities of Researcher Developers: roles responsibilities and representations

King's College Research Ethics Committee Ref: REP/14/15-116

Invitation paragraph

We are inviting anyone whose role (in whole or in part) involves researcher development to respond to this online survey. You should only participate if you want to; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in anyway. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please feel free to use the contact information below if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

Aims of the project

This research project aims to provide a 'census' of researcher developers in the UK with the aim of beginning to define their professional identities by asking those who identify, at least in part, as researcher developers to complete an online questionnaire with questions on their past roles, present roles and aspired future roles.

The 'academic pipeline' and the skills required for progression in academia (formalised in the Vitae RDF - bit.ly/VitaeRDF) are well documented and very familiar to researcher developers. Less well documented is the pipeline for the emergent profession of researcher developer. Although the role exists at a high proportion of UK HEIs, there is no consensus on its definition or the requirements to enter, succeed and progress in the field: Researcher developers come from a wide range of professional backgrounds, bringing with them a wide range of different skill sets. Researcher developers sit in different areas of their Higher Education Institute's structures, may have different responsibilities and stakeholders, and may work as individuals or in teams; thus, the key skills required of the role may vary (demonstrated by the variety of skills outlined in the new Vitae Career Framework for Researcher Developers - CFRD).

Why have I been invited to take part?

We are inviting responses from colleagues who we believe are involved in researcher development. We are attempting to collect information from as many researcher developers as possible to get as complete a picture as possible of the roles and responsibilities of researcher developers in different institutions across the UK. If you consider that other colleagues at your institution may also be within the target group for this study, we would be grateful if you could forward the invitation to participate to them. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. Completion of the questionnaire implies consent to participation in the research. The questionnaire will take approximately 20 mins to complete, and may vary depending on the level of detail that you choose to provide in your answers.

Confidentiality

The findings will be published in aggregate. Participants will be asked to indicate their institution and role and will have the optional opportunity to provide additional identifying data if they wish in order to be contacted by the researchers at a later date. Only the researchers will have access to the raw data. Participants will not be able to withdraw their data from the study after submission of the questionnaire due to the anonymous nature of the questionnaires.

Outcomes of the research

This research will provide an insight into the varied roles and responsibilities of researcher developers across the UK and the findings will be published as a Vitae report, academic papers, policy documents, conference/meeting workshops, etc. The improved understanding of the profession may also result in more tailored support for the professional and career development of researcher developers.

Funding

The researchers gratefully acknowledge Vitae for part-funding this project.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this study, please contact either of us using the following contact details:

Dr Anna Price: anna.price@kcl.ac.uk 020 7848 3914

Dr Richard Freeman: r.freeman@ioe.ac.uk 020 7612 6976

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If this study has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

The Chair, Education and Management Research Ethics Panel rec@kcl.ac.uk

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Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.