Researcher Development Planner

Emerging Researcher Programme (ERP)
Themes & Courses 2026
The building blocks for UCT Staff career development

THEME 1 — Career & Professional Development

- Career Development Workshop | 21 Jan
- The Ad Hom Promotion Process | 8 Apr
- Career Development for Engaged Scholars | 16 Apr
- Preparing to Apply for Promotion | 5 May
- Networking Event (in-person) | 21 May; 29 Oct
- Avoiding Burnout | 11 Jun
- Planning a Sabbatical | 13 Aug
- Work/Life Balance | 20 Oct
- Applying for NRF Rating | 5 Nov
- Staff Masters/PhD Cohort Meeting Space | Every 2nd month

THEME 2 — Grant Writing

- Introduction to Grant Writing | 17, 19, 24, 26 Feb
- Grant Proposal Development Workshop | 11 March
- International Grants Hub: Grant BudgetManagement 19 March
- Grant Writing for Engaged Scholarship | 9 Jul
- Advanced Grant Writing | 29 Sep & 1 Oct

THEME 3 — Supervision

- Introduction to PostGrad Student Supervision | In-person: 2 & 3 Feb | Online: 20, 21, 22, 23 Jul
- Hosting Postdoctoral Fellows | 23 March
- Dealing with Challenges & Maximising Opportunities – Panel Discussion | 22 Apr

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THEME 4 — People & Project Management

- Research Project Management | 18, 20, 25, 27 Aug
- Building a Research Team | 21 Sep
- Working in Multi-Disciplinary Teams | 7 Oct

Note: Events are hosted online, unless indicated otherwise

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THEME 5 — **Research Visibility**

- Personal Branding Workshop | **12 Feb**
- Conference Presentations | **10 March**
- Research and Social Media | **13 May**
- Communicating Research to Non-Academic Audiences | **29 Jul**
- Writing for the Conversation | **tbc**

THEME 6 — **Writing & Publishing**

- Ethics & Responsible Conduct | **12 March**
- Author ID's and Profiles | **30 Apr**
- Writing Workshop | **25-27 May (half day)**
- Writing for a Scholarly Journal | **2 Jun**
- Open Access Publication | **22 Jun**
- Publishing a Book through UCT | **12 Nov**
- Writing Space at Research Office | **Last Friday of the month**

THEME 7 — **Research Innovation & Entrepreneurship**

- Populating your Profile on eRA | **4 Feb**
- Award Management on eRA | **20 Feb**
- Using AI responsibly for research | **14 Apr**
- Implementation Science | **4 Aug**
- Entrepreneurship and Research | **16 Sep**
- Research Contracts & Innovation | **15 Oct**
- Design Thinking for Research Workshop | **2 Nov**

THEME 8 — **Social Responsiveness & Engaged Scholarship (ES)**

- Introduction to ES: Mapping Conceptions, Motivations & Practices | **3 March**
- Principles of Equitable Partnership Building & Reciprocity | **24 March**
- Career Development for ES | **16 Apr**
- Research Design for ES | **19 May**
- The Art of Research Co-Creation | **9 Jun**
- Designing & Demonstrating Research Impact | **18 Jun**
- Grant Writing for Engaged Research | **9 Jul**
- Engaged Scholarship in Action | **3 Sep**

Contact the Researcher Development Team for more information.

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Researcher Development Framework

Our Researcher Development Framework is designed to promote long-term partnership with institutions rather than ad hoc interventions. Based on typical needs as voiced by our own researchers, this framework describes the essential skills that provide a foundation for a successful academic career, and enables institutions to jointly design face-to-face and remote programmes with the RDA team to suit the specific needs of their institution and researchers.

TOPICS	DEPENDENT EARLY CAREER – L1	INDEPENDENT EARLY CAREER – L2	MID CAREER – L3	SENIOR RESEARCH CAREER – L4
Research	Orientation and guidance; planning a research career and research track.	Orientation and guidance; developing a visible portfolio; planning and applying ad hominem promotion. ---for SA: NRF Rating	Raising one's profile; planning for promotion; organising a conference; writing a nomination for awards.---for SA: NRF Rating	
Ethics & Integrity	Formal training in principles and policies.		Ongoing development through experience and applying best practice principles.	
Qualification	Working towards a higher degree.	**Post PhD:** Defining one's own research niche and identity; establishing an area of expertise.		
Funding	Selecting a funder, writing a grant proposal for a higher degree or for a project with a limited scope or team.	Selecting a funder, writing a grant proposal (Principal Investigator with students and some participating members).	Selecting an international funder and writing a collaborative grant proposal for involving a larger and diverse research team of researchers.	
Project Management	**Basic:** Project and grant management for a limited team and budget.		**Advanced:** Project and grant management for an extensive (multilateral and/or multidisciplinary) team of researchers and significant budget with stringent reporting requirements.	
Dissemination / Visibility	**Basic:** Developing and formulating ideas; pitching to funders; basic academic and layman writing (where, how) and reviewing for journals; presenting at conferences.		**Advanced:** Formulating and pitching to funders; advanced academic and layman writing; becoming a plenary/keynote speaker; chairing panel discussions; becoming an editor for journals.	
Leadership	Managing the relationship with supervisors and developing supervision skills for co-supervision.	Developing supervision skills as main supervisor; attracting postgraduate students; examining theses.	Creating a research group; managing a research team.	Establishing a formal unit, centre, or institute; managing multidisciplinary work and team.
Mentorship	**Basic:** Mentorship models; optimising being mentored & being a good mentee; identifying a mentorship framework/model; choosing a mentor.		**Advanced:** Becoming a mentor.	
Networking	**Basic:** Why, how, what are the opportunities?		**Advanced:** Why, how, what are the opportunities? Organising a conference; facilitating local and global networking.	
Engagement	**Basic:** Principles of engaged scholarship; incorporating engaged scholarship in research practice.		**Advanced:** From engaged scholarship to policy development; becoming an agent for change.	

https://uct.ac.za/research-support-hub/researcher-development