

## CSE PDRA Symposium

In collaboration with the postdoctoral research associate (PDRA) Forum, the College organised a Postdoc and Research Staff Symposium featuring insightful talks and valuable networking opportunities, enabling participants to explore various career paths with guidance from experienced professionals. This event provided an opportunity for learning and networking and acknowledged the diverse contributions and roles that postdoctoral researchers play within academia and beyond. It included a service “fair” at which providers from across the University could make their services visible to the postdoc community.

<b>College (where initiative takes place):</b>	College of Science and Engineering
<b>School (where initiative takes place):</b>	College Office
<b>Stakeholders involved in the planning, organisation and execution of the initiative:</b>	College Research Cultures Team, PDRA Forum, PDRA Symposium working group
<b>Webpages:</b>	<a href="#">Beyond the Research: The CSE Postdoctoral and Research Staff Symposium – IAD4RESEARCHERS</a>
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Lisa Gunther on behalf of Jane Hillston
<b>Concordat principles:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Culture</li> <li>• Professional &amp; Career Development</li> </ul>
<b>Area the Concordat Initiative Supported:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment: Research Staff Societies</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Culture: Wellbeing</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Culture: Diversity of our Research Staff Population</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Culture: Research Culture</li> <li>• Professional &amp; Career Development: Researcher Visibility</li> <li>• Professional &amp; Career Development: Career Support</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholders:</b>	Research staff e.g. postdoctoral researchers, and central services e.g. Edinburgh Research Office, Digital Research Services, Edinburgh Innovations, The Institute for Academic Development, Edinburgh Open Research, and the University and College Union.
<b>Comments:</b>	<p>This inaugural event marked a significant opportunity for both learning and networking. The Symposium working group curated an engaging programme, which included insightful talks and valuable networking opportunities, enabling participants to explore various career paths with guidance from experienced professionals. Attendees also took part in round-robin sessions specifically designed to enrich their postdoctoral experience. The symposium featured numerous informative speakers, including Dan Nussey (School of Biological Sciences), who provided insights into the crucial role of mentoring and engagement within postdoctoral societies for the success of researchers. Fiona Philippi’s (Institute for Academic Development) presentation on the Researcher Development Concordat highlighted the impact of its core principles on the University’s research culture. The day concluded with an inspiring keynote address by Sara Shinton (Director of the Future Leaders Fellows Development Network and Institutional Lead for the Wellcome InFrame Institutional Research Culture Change Project), in which she offered practical advice on career progression and enhancing professional visibility.</p>
<b>Outputs:</b>	<p>Over 90 researchers attended the event and feedback was very positive. For example, attendees expressed gratitude for the opportunity to feel seen and valued in the university community. The Career Round-Robin panel, networking opportunities and the exploration of stalls were also highlighted as impactful. The following testimonies were collated after the event:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The CSE symposium is a transformative experience that I highly recommend to all postdoctoral fellows. Be prepared for a profound shift in perspective – attending this symposium will change you in meaningful ways.</i></li> <li>• <i>This event has been incredibly valuable and enriching. It provided a wealth of resources, great networking and helped refresh my motivation, perspectives, and values. I truly felt seen and valued as a member of the university community. It also inspired new ideas and clarity about the direction I'd like to pursue after my postdoc.</i></li> <li>• <i>This was an invaluable opportunity to network and discuss with PDRA peers. It is encouraging to see that senior academics and management are willing to engage and communicate with the PDRA community.</i></li> </ul>
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