

This guide, assembled by PDRA Champions for PDRA Champions, provides practical guidance (1) for PDRA Champions and key resources (2). It includes relevant contact information (3) and an appendix with details on setting up a mentoring scheme (4a) and a template welcome message for new research staff (4b).

1) PDRA Champion Role Guidelines

As a PDRA Champion, your primary responsibility is to foster a community among post-docs within your School, and facilitate communication with stakeholders. The primary challenges include effectively communicating with the post-doc community and encouraging their participation in initiatives. Do not be discouraged if only a few post-docs attend an event, even after considerable effort, or if many seem to overlook messages and actions. Assisting even a small number of post-docs is a significant accomplishment.

Community Engagement:

Actively collaborate with PDRA representatives and motivated PDRAs to build and maintain a strong community. If a post-doc society exists in your school, engage regularly through informal meetings. If not, advocate and support the creation of such a society.

Communication and Awareness:

Develop an effective mechanism to be notified of new PDRA joiners and offer them the opportunity meet with you or their institute representative (this can be done in groups if there are significant numbers of PDRAs). Promote available resources for example the Researcher Development webpages and the Research Staff Hub.

Representation and Advocacy:

Ensure PDRA representation at relevant school or institute meetings, leveraging senior colleagues for support. If PDRA participation in meetings is not in current terms of reference, advocate for this at strategy meetings. Work towards establishing smaller PDRA communities within each institute (if applicable).

Infrastructure:

Use or establish email lists to facilitate communication with PDRAs and try to establish mechanisms to keep these up-to-date. Support the setting of community events such as coffee or lunch meetings to listen to and identify common concerns or needs.

Action and Advocacy:

Address actionable items promptly and ensure PDRAs are informed of your efforts. For issues beyond your control, escalate them to school/centre leadership and make them part of long-term strategies.

Mentoring Programme:

Evaluate current mentoring opportunities for post-docs and ensure they meet PDRA needs. If necessary, develop new mentoring programmes that complement existing resources.

Leadership Interaction:

Establish contacts within your school/institute's management to address high-level concerns and to seek resources to support the post-doc society such as budget for events and admin support for mailing lists etc. Consider arranging regular meetings with leadership to discuss PDRA issues and initiatives.

Supporting the post-doc society:

Create and help maintain a Teams page for post-docs with regular updates on diverse topics. Support research, career, and networking events to connect post-docs across the school.

2) Key resources for PDRA Champions at the national, university and college level

National Level	
<u>Postdoc career development in the UK</u>	A great resource for postdoc career development led by the University of Liverpool
<u>UK Postdoc Appreciation Week</u>	Originally an initiative from the National Postdoc Association in the USA, it is now celebrated in the UK every September
University Level	
<u>Researcher Development (Edinburgh Research Office)</u>	Guidance, support, training, mentoring, professional and career support for research staff and academic faculty engaged in research
<u>Academic Development (Registry)</u>	Guidance, support, training, professional accreditation and development for teaching staff and academic faculty engaged in teaching, including PGR supervision
<u>The Research Staff Hub</u>	Information from across the University to support research staff in their roles and career development
<u>Research Staff Societies</u>	List of active researcher and research staff contacts for research staff societies in different Schools
<u>UoE PDRA Champions</u>	List of current PDRA Champions within CSE and other colleges
<u>Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers</u>	Information about the Concordat, progress updates, and opportunities to get involved
<u>The Concordat Implementation Group (CIG)</u>	Implementation group to support development of a two-year action plan. Contact Nicola Cuthbert to find out how to get involved with the CIG.
<u>The 10 Days Professional Development</u>	PDRA's are entitled to 10 days of training a year
<u>UoE PDRA Champions Teams</u>	A network to share best practices, ask questions, and promote networking sessions.
College Level	
<u>PDRA Champion Role Descriptor</u>	A broad overview of the role, including examples of initiatives across the College
<u>CSE PDRA Forum meeting</u>	Quarterly meetings chaired by Dr Rohit Pillai (Senior Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering)

3) Contact details

- For queries relating to Researcher Development and the CIG, please contact Nicola Cuthbert (n.cuthbert@ed.ac.uk).
- For queries relating to CSE including cross-school research culture activities, please contact the CSE College Research Office (CSE.CRO@ed.ac.uk).

4) Appendix

- Appendix a) SBS Template for Welcome Message
- Appendix b) SBS Mentoring scheme