

Activity 1 - Identifying Research Career level

Dependent Early-stage –L1	Independent Early-career –L2	Mid-career –L3	Senior research career –L4
RESEARCH CAREER L1: orientation and guidance; planning your research career and research track.	RESEARCH CAREER L2: orientation and guidance, developing a visible portfolio; planning and applying for your first NRF rating and ad hominem promotion	RESEARCH CAREER L3: raising your profile; renewing and improving your NRF rating; planning for promotion; organising a conference; writing nomination for award.	
RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY: formal training in principles and policies		Ongoing development through experience... and applying best practice principles	
QUALIFICATION: working towards your higher degree	POST PhD: define your own research niche and identity and establish your area of expertise.		
FUNDING L1: selecting a funder, writing a grant proposal for your higher degree or for a project with limited scope/team	FUNDING L2: selecting a funder, writing a grant proposal (PI with students and some participating members)	FUNDING L3: selecting an international funder and writing a collaborative grant proposal for involving a larger and diverse research team of researchers	
BASIC PROJECT MANAGEMENT: project and grant management for a limited team and budget		ADVANCED PROJECT MANAGEMENT: project and grant management for an extensive (multilateral and/or multidisciplinary) team of researchers and significant budget with stringent reporting requirements.	
Basic DISSEMINATION / VISIBILITY: developing and formulating ideas; pitching to funders, basic academic and layman writing (where, how) and reviewing for journals, presenting at conferences.		Advanced DISSEMINATION / VISIBILITY: formulating and pitching to funders; advanced academic and layman writing; becoming a plenary/keynote speaker; chairing panel discussions, becoming an editor for journals	
LEADERSHIP L1: managing the relationship with your supervisors and developing supervision skills for co-supervision	LEADERSHIP L2: developing supervision skills as main supervisor; attracting postgraduate students, examining theses.	LEADERSHIP L3: creating a research group; managing your team	LEADERSHIP L4: establishing a formal unit, centre, or institute; managing multidisciplinary work and team
BASIC MENTORSHIP: mentorship models; optimising being mentored & being a good mentee; identifying a mentorship framework/model, choosing a mentor		ADVANCED MENTORSHIP: becoming a mentor	
BASIC NETWORKING: why, how, what are the opportunities.		ADVANCED NETWORKING: why, how, what are the opportunities; organising a conference, facilitating local and global networking	
BASIC SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT: Principles of Engaged Scholarship, incorporating Engaged Scholarship in your research practice		ADVANCED SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT: from engaged scholarship to policy development, becoming an agent for change (government advisor...)	

Activity 2 – Considering the Researcher Development Framework

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.	

Activity 3 – Identify possible Researcher Development Courses

Researcher Development Planner

Professional & Career Development Themes & Courses

2026

The building blocks for your career development plan

Presented by the Office of Postgraduate Studies & Researcher Development
UCT Research Office

THEME 1 Career Development



- Career Development Workshop | 21 Jan
- Preparing to Apply for Promotion | 8 Apr
- Career Development for Engaged Scholars | 8 Apr
- The Ad Hom Promotion Process | 5 May
- Planning a Sabbatical | 13 Aug
- Applying for NRF Rating | 5 Nov

THEME 2 Grant Writing (GW)



- Introduction to Grant Writing | 17, 19, 24, 26 Feb
- Proposal Development | 5 March
- International Grants Hub: Grant Budget Management | 19 March
- GW for Engaged Scholarship | 9 Jul
- Advanced Grant Writing | 29 Sep & 1 Oct

THEME 3 Supervision



- Introduction to Supervision | In-person: 2 & 3 Feb | Online: 20, 21, 22, 23 Jul
- Hosting Postdoctoral Fellows | 5 March
- Dealing with Challenges & Maximising Opportunities – Panel Discussion | 22 Apr

THEME 4 People & Project Management



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

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



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
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RDA
RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY



Researcher Development Planner

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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 June
- ☐ Open Access Publication | 22 June
- ☐ Publishing a Book through UCT | 12 Nov
- ☐ Writing Space at Research Office | Last Friday of the month
- ☐ Master/PhD peer meeting space | Every 2nd month

THEME 7

Research Innovation & Entrepreneurship



- ☐ Using AI responsibly for research | 14 Apr
- ☐ Science Implementation | 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
- ☐ Equitable Community Partnership Building & Reciprocity | 23 March
- ☐ Career Development for ES | 16 Apr
- ☐ Research Design for ES | 19 May
- ☐ Co-Creation Approaches to Research | 9 June
- ☐ Narrating Research Impact | 18 June
- ☐ Grant Writing for Engaged Research | 9 Jul
- ☐ Engaged Scholarship in Action | 3 Sep

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Contact the Researcher Development Team for more information.

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