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# EU-CONEXUS ENABLES presents "Expanding Your Horizons" Researcher Career Development Training Programme

## FOREWORD

### ELEVATE YOUR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

As a phrase, 'Researcher Development' addresses a broad spectrum of opportunities, experiences, conversations and reflective work that go hand in hand with research. These aspects are catalysts for developing a rich skillset, securing strong work-related relationships, fostering your talents, and accelerating your professional prospects. It encompasses all the learning experiences, skills, and development opportunities that one experiences and acquires in the process of doing research.

Whether you are planning for a career in academia or exploring non-academic opportunities, building a diverse professional skill set is essential to the future of your career. Across the EU-CONEXUS alliance, we are committed to supporting you by enhancing your research experience and contributing to your career development. The EU-CONEXUS Enables "Expanding Your Horizons" Researcher Development programme, is designed to foster career development through dedicated professional development training. By utilising the direct feedback obtained in the "Enables Training Needs Analysis" survey and following the recommendations of the European Competence Framework for Researchers ResearchComp, it aims to provide a range of training opportunities and support to help you become a confident, well-rounded researcher in the topics that survey respondents identified as the most important areas requiring future training.

## EXPLORE OUR PROGRAMME

Expanding Your Horizons offers a range of workshops, training sessions, mentorship opportunities, interactive research cafes, and other career development opportunities designed specifically to meet the needs of early career researchers. This portfolio of specialist training is mapped in reference to ResearchComp, The European Competence Framework for Researchers (2023), the IUA Researcher Careers Framework (2020) and the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (2010) to ensure its effectiveness in enhancing the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers.

This is an elective programme which allows the freedom to decide which training is most suitable for you. The majority of courses last half a day or less, running once a month. Most of the workshops are, by design, offered to an interdisciplinary audience. We believe that meeting researchers outside of your normal discipline is extremely valuable and can provide new, fresh perspectives. All workshops will be advertised on the [EU-CONEXUS Enables website](#). Prior to the event, an email with registration links will be sent. Upon registration, each participant will receive details on how to access the session digitally via email. This brochure contains an overview of the courses that are set to take place during the coming months. This is an organic document that will evolve as more content is added over time.



## WRITING GRANT PROPOSALS

This workshop teaches researchers the critical skills required for writing effective research proposals and obtaining funding. We will look at relevant funding agencies depending on the participants' areas of interest and study how to develop and refine grant proposals tailored to different calls. Participants will also gain a deeper understanding of the process where funders evaluate proposals, as well as review examples of real proposals in an interactive session, discussing the positives and negatives of each one. Additional exercises will encourage the participants to develop and communicate their ideas using practical brainstorming tools, and explore the different ways to effectively communicate complex research ideas to a less specialised panel review audience.



## COMMERCIALISING YOUR RESEARCH

Commercialisation is the process of turning an idea into commercial products or services. For our Universities, this means commercially developing intellectual property (IP) created through research with the goal of creating successful commercial outcomes that have a positive impact on wider society. This is typically achieved through the commercial licensing of intellectual property to an existing commercial organisation, or the formation of a new spin-out company which takes the new products or services to market. This workshop aims to inform participants of the steps and opportunities that need to be considered when making the decision to commercialise academic research.

Topics covered include specific elements of commercialisation, spotting an opportunity, protecting intellectual property, moving from research idea to implementation, and pitching for funding. We will also examine the benefits of getting involved in commercial activity, exploring how it can help to generate new career paths, provide additional individual income through the sharing of commercial revenues, yield beneficial partnerships and impact, and develop an understanding of corporate needs and how to communicate with industry to inform future research.



## EMBEDDING EDI WITHIN RESEARCH

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is a core issue in research and higher education. The European Commission recognises EDI as a critical priority, as do other funding bodies. This workshop will explore how issues around equality, diversity and inclusion can be integrated within research projects from their inception. Exploring how EDI can be embedded across the research project life cycle, including research design, response to funder requirements, and public engagement. This session will help you understand how to integrate consideration around EDI (and other research integrity matters) in research projects from their inception, explore how EDI can be embedded across the different stages of the research journey, and hear from research colleagues on their approaches to embedding EDI within their work. It will also provide a stage for sharing your ideas and questions on how EDI can be centred within your research area. This workshop will not only help you learn how to embed EDI into your research, but also allow to strengthen your research proposals and put the new knowledge into practice when you win the grant.



## PREPARING ACADEMIC/ NON ACADEMIC APPLICATIONS

Academic applications can involve a multitude of documents. Especially for faculty positions, academic employers ask for a package - not just your CV, and when it comes to Academic applications, the starting point is you. It's ALL about you. In this session, we will look into CVs, narrative CVs, cover letters, research statements, diversity statements, and academic interviews. And where non-research roles are concerned, the starting point is your reader. What do they need to know about you? What part of your background - technical skills, specific experience, and transferable skills - will they be most excited about? We will explore different ways to build your submissions around these components and find ways to summarise other material. We will also look at industry research applications and access opportunities for careers beyond research, tailoring your CV for individual use cases. Finally, this session will also explore how researchers can build their online presence.



## MENTORING MATTERS

The EU-CONEXUS Enables Mentoring initiative aims to pair experienced Researchers (Mentors) with their colleagues at an earlier career stage (Mentees) to provide guidance, specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the mentees' career and personal growth during their research journey. This virtual Mentoring Workshop covers introductory mentoring concepts and definitions, and takes a look at what 'good mentoring' entails. Through guided practice and reflection, the workshop helps participants build skills that are useful in cultivating and managing successful mentoring relationships. During the workshop, Mentees and Mentors have an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of why Mentoring is so vital in building and enhancing one's research career. This initiative is designed for sharing knowledge and expertise, fostering networking opportunities, and supporting mentees in taking responsibility for their own skills and long-term career development.



## CAREERS SYMPOSIUM

"Life's Journey As A Researcher And Beyond". In this online symposium, guest speakers from a variety of sectors will speak frankly about their chosen career path, detailing what brought them to this particular point and why they do what they do. This symposium is a unique opportunity to see what others in your position chose to do, why and how they made the move, and what aspects of their job they enjoy the most. You will also get a feel for their daily activities, workplace culture, work-life balance, and learn which skills the speakers developed during or after their PhD that proved helpful in getting their job and performing well. By featuring people who have successfully built upon their research expertise to thrive in diverse roles, this session aims to create a relaxed conversation between speakers and participants around careers in research and beyond. Informal and interactive by design, it is a unique opportunity for researchers to hear real world stories, network with professionals, and ask their own questions.



## PRESENTING EFFECTIVELY

Presenting your research at a conference or seminar is a fundamental skill in any academic career, yet it is also a task that can make a large portion of the research community feel anxious. This workshop will improve your communication skills and explore the different techniques for presenting and engaging your audience. Most importantly, this workshop will help you work through your fears before a presentation and help you feel more confident in such situations. It is designed to build a foundation of presentation techniques for both in-person and online presentations.



## RESEARCHER WELLBEING

Research can be an enormously fulfilling and rewarding intellectual challenge, but we also know that it can be difficult, stressful, isolating and - quite often for some - all of these things at the same time. This workshop is designed to increase your resilience to stress, anxiety and burnout, and to enhance your overall well-being. We will explore the self-critical inner voices that sabotage your motivation and enjoyment for your work to notice how your mindset can help or hinder your day-to-day life and future career prospects, and how certain maladaptive coping strategies (e.g., procrastination and avoidance) maintain these self-sabotaging thought and behaviour cycles. Following up on those observations, we will focus on how to reshape your thinking and behaviour patterns to support you in the pursuit of your goals.

Continuous professional development is essential for advancing your career in research. By developing new skills, building your network, and demonstrating your commitment to your career, you can set yourself up for success in this ever-changing field. We hope you enjoy this programme, proactively invest your time in your professional development, and reap the benefits of a fulfilling and rewarding research career in the future!



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