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## Research Staff Newsletter - April 2010 Issue

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the April edition of the University of Leicester Research Staff Newsletter, prepared by the Academic Practice Unit to circulate news of relevant opportunities and events to you. The aim of the newsletter is to keep you informed of what is happening both at Leicester and in the wider academic world so that you can make the most of the opportunities for your future career development, be that gaining new skills and broader experience, or contributing to national discussions on issues affecting research staff. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for you to develop contacts across the institution and to build a support network. The newsletter is meant to be interactive, so if you know about events that you would like to circulate then please contact me ([nri1@le.ac.uk](mailto:nri1@le.ac.uk)). I would also greatly welcome feedback on the content of the newsletter.

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In this issue:

- Skills for the Professional Researcher events in April and May
- 'Learning at Work' day
- University support for research staff - 'Roberts' funding and the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
- Vitae events - 'Leadership in Action' and 'Broadening Horizons - Career Management'
- Useful resources - Research Careers in Europe report, Vitae Research Staff Conference report
- You can contribute - new University Staff pages

### UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

#### Skills for the Professional Researcher

- Introduction to Message Passing Interface
- Guided IT learning sessions
- Powerpoint 2007
- Integrating research and teaching
- MBTI - Enhancing working relationships
- NVivo for qualitative research

For more information and details on how to book please visit: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/staff-development/calendar>

#### 'Learning at Work' day

Would you like to learn more about opportunities for personal and professional development at the University? Members of the Academic Practice Unit, IT Services and Leadership at Leicester will be hosting a stand in the foyer of the Charles Wilson Building on Learning at Work Day, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010, from 10am until 4pm.

## UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH STAFF

### Research Training Initiative Fund (RTIF): Supporting Innovation in Researcher Development

The UK Research Councils provide research institutions with additional funding to support the training and development of research staff and students, commonly known as 'Roberts Money'.

Within the University, part of this funding has been used to create the 'Research Training Innovation Fund', which provides members of the University with access to financial support to set up innovative researcher development opportunities. 'Roberts' money has been utilised to great effect by postgraduate researchers and research staff, and examples of successful local initiatives include student-led networking events, and the use of network technologies to support postgraduate researcher development. Further afield it has been used to support career development and networking opportunities for research staff. Applications from research staff in Leicester would be particularly welcome, and I am on hand to support the development of bids!

Bids may be made by an individual or on behalf of a group (College, Department) and are considered at the Training and Development Working Group, which convenes again in June. Forms and guidelines are available at <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/about/role/rtif> and should be submitted to Brett Dodgson ([bsd4@le.ac.uk](mailto:bsd4@le.ac.uk)) by the end of May.

### Implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

The University has recently taken concrete steps to implement the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. A new website has been published to document developments to date, and outlines the steps taken to:

- raise awareness of the Concordat
- implement best practice in recruitment and selection, and retention of research staff
- provide comprehensive professional development opportunities
- offer support for career management

The website also contains a section entitled 'What does the Concordat mean to you?', with briefings for Heads of Department, Principal Investigators, HR and careers specialists, and University senior managers.

For more information please visit <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/staff-development/research/concordat/implementation>.

## VITAE EVENTS FOR RESEARCH STAFF

### 'Broadening Horizons : career management for researchers'

University of Loughborough, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010

This interactive and intensive one-day programme, held at the University of Loughborough on 17<sup>th</sup> May, is free for University of Leicester research staff. The programme will provide you with the opportunity, skills and tools to engage proactively in your own career development, and will enable you to gain a clearer self-orientation of where you are within your career and to consider what your next steps might be, whether your aspirations are to remain in research and/or academia or to move into other areas.

Participants will work in small learning groups and plenary to work on a range of activities, supported by an experienced team of facilitators. The programme will enable you to:

- gain a sense of direction and progression
- widen your understanding of career options
- better understand your own career situation
- use tools and techniques to explore your skills, motivations, values and talents and how you can apply these to your career planning
- consider potential jobs you might like to explore further
- commit to an action plan for your personal and career development

For further information on booking please visit: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/56271-230061/Broadening-Horizons-Loughborough-2010.html>

## **'Leadership in Action'**

Bournemouth, 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Do you want to...

- develop your leadership skills?
- explore the concept of leadership?
- build confidence in your own leadership style?

This 3 day residential course will allow you to explore and develop your leadership skills. You will have the opportunity to look at relevant theory, practice your leadership style and receive feedback. The course will be attended by up to 60 researchers from across the country, from different disciplines and career stages. The course will be led by a team of experienced facilitators who will work with you throughout the 3 days to support your learning. They will be from a variety of backgrounds with experience in leadership, academia and other sectors.

This course takes a 'learning by doing' approach. There will be presentations on leadership theory, but for the most part, you will be actively participating in the sessions and activities.

For booking information please visit: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/223981/Leadership-in-action-.html>

## **USEFUL RESOURCES**

Vitae has recently advertised a number of publications which are relevant to research staff:

### **EURAXESS**

The [EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion](#) website is a joint initiative of the European Commission and the countries participating in the European Union's Framework Programme for Research. It provides useful information for researchers seeking to advance their careers and personal development by moving to other countries. In addition to the information on training and jobs, it hosts practical information on living, working and relaxing in the European countries involved.

### **Report from the Vitae Research Staff Conference**

Vitae's first UK-wide **research staff conference** took place on 5 November with over 60 research staff from over 40 institutions exploring some of the key issues faced by research staff in the current climate. Participants also discussed how to make their voices heard more effectively within institutions and by policymakers. There was a clear consensus for research staff to collaborate and build a collective voice on issues of career and personal development and that researcher issues were common across discipline and institutional boundaries. The report, which contains a number of practical ways forward, is available to download at [research staff conference report](#).

## **YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE...**

You may have noticed a number of changes to the University website over the past week, including a brand new set of pages with information for staff. There is a growing section entitled 'How do I?' and a section containing essential information for newcomers to the University. If there is any more information you would like to see, please email your suggestions to [webcomms@le.ac.uk](mailto:webcomms@le.ac.uk).