

Enhancing UCL's research culture



# UCL

## Research Culture Career Accelerator

Programme Information Pack

**WHEN** | WOMEN'S  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
NETWORK

# Research Culture Career Accelerator

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This programme offers a tailored and comprehensive career planning tool for women in technical staff roles and women in early career researcher roles. It supports participants to create clarity and focus on their career direction and identify actions that they can take to achieve their goals. It aims to increase career fulfilment and support positive career moves.

## Programme outcomes

The programme is delivered as a two-day, in person workshop and followed by two sessions of action learning sets. Participants will be grouped by job role for both the workshops and the learning sets.

Through the programme, participants will have the opportunity to:

1. Purposefully reflect on and plan their career stages
2. Understand their progression so far
3. Map future aspirations and goals
  - Be inspired by others' career journeys
4. Identify career barriers and ways to overcome them
5. Access the tools and strategies needed to mobilise change
  - Where relevant, understand the UCL promotions process
  - Understand varied career pathway options
  - Make the most of appraisal discussions
  - Maximise training opportunities
6. Define the next steps that will make the biggest difference for progression
7. Be supported to put actions in place to sustain momentum

## 1. Introduction

The Research Culture Career Accelerator programme will support women technical staff and women early career researchers to address the common challenges they face in their roles within the research community.

UCL's [research culture consultation](#) in 2021 showed that female researchers had less positive experiences than their male counterparts, particularly with merit-based career progression. It also highlighted the need for more targeted career development for staff with specialist expertise, such as technical staff and the need to increase the understanding of varied career pathways for early career researchers. This programme responds to these findings and builds on existing activity at UCL, such as the recently launched Career Framework for Technical Professionals.

The programme will be facilitated by [WHEN](#) and will be delivered by two lead consultants and small group facilitators. Lead consultants have expert understanding of researcher careers and are experienced coaches and career development

facilitators. The programme combines expert insights with focused small group coaching, sharing of experiences and time for individual reflection.

## 2. Programme elements

The comprehensive programme ensures that every participant is supported through a range of structured, interactive and insightful sessions that are relevant to their individual circumstances. All action learning sets are led by an experienced coach.

Element	Description
Participant preparation	Participants are asked to complete a short onboarding form so that the programme delivery team can be briefed and best prepared to support them. Participants are encouraged to think about their hopes and outcomes for the programme and given some reflection questions.
Workshop day 1 (in person)	Participants look back at their careers to date, reviewing their career timeline and focusing on their strengths. They explore their core values and purpose and are supported to define a career vision. They identify barriers to their career progression and start to define strategies to overcome these barriers.
Workshop day 2 (in person)	Participants explore and practice using techniques, tools and approaches to achieve tangible results towards achieving their vision. Key strategies for career confidence and achievement are introduced. Each participant prepares an action plan for implementation in their day to day lives. Finally, they are supported to prepare for the action learning sets.
Two sets of action learning sets lasting two hours each. The first action learning set (two weeks after workshop) will take place in person and the second action learning set will take place online (six weeks after the workshop).	Participants meet in small peer groups to support each other with the successful implementation of their action plans. A coach facilitates the discussion, enabling them to solve challenges and strengthening their internal support network at UCL.

## 3. Eligibility

The programme is open to women technical staff and women early career researchers from all disciplines. We also welcome applications from non-binary people who are comfortable in a female-centred community.

There are 35 places available for technical staff and 70 places available for early career researchers. Participants will be grouped by job role for the workshops and learning sets.

We are committed to equality of opportunity, to being fair and inclusive, and to being a place where we all belong. We therefore particularly encourage applications from participants who are likely to be underrepresented in UCL's workforce. These include people from Black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds; disabled people; and LGBTQI+ people.

#### **4. How to apply**

Please complete the [Research Culture Career Accelerator application form](#) outlining your suitability and commitment to the programme.

## Key dates

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Please note that the workshop dates and groupings are indicative and are subject to change. Where possible, we will try to follow the below timelines.

Stage	Time and date	
<b>Applications open</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants complete the application form online.</li> </ul>	Monday 18 March – Monday 15 April	
<b>Shortlisting stage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Research Culture team will convene a panel to support with shortlisting.</li> </ul>	Monday 15 April – Thursday 18 April	
<b>Verification stage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Research Culture team verify applications to ensure proper representation of underrepresented groups.</li> <li>The Research Culture team will inform all applicants of the outcomes by 23 April.</li> </ul>	Friday 19 April – Tuesday 23 April	
<b>Career accelerator workshop (in person)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Research Culture team will send out invitations for the in-person two-day career accelerator workshops.</li> <li>Participants will attend one of these three options, according to their job role.</li> </ul>	Tuesday 14 – Wednesday 15 May, 09:00-16:00	Group 1 (early career researchers)
	Monday 17 – Tuesday 18 June, 09:00-16:00	Group 2 (technical staff)
	Thursday 27 – Friday 28 June, 09:00-16:00	Group 3 (early career researchers)
<b>Career accelerator first action learning set (in person)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will be grouped into small peer groups of up to 6.</li> <li>Participants will attend one of these sessions.</li> </ul>	Thursday 30 May – Friday 31 May 09:00-11:00, 12:00-14:00, 14:30-16:30	Group 1 (early career researchers)
	Thursday 4 July – Friday 5 July	Group 2 (technical staff)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants must agree to keep these dates free until the action learning set sessions have been allocated.</li> </ul>	09:00-11:00, 12:00-14:00, 14:30-16:30	
	Thursday 11 July – Friday 12 July 09:00-11:00, 12:00-14:00, 14:30-16:30	Group 3 (early career researchers)
<b>Career accelerator second action learning set (online)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants will be grouped into small peer groups of up to 6.</li> <li>Participants will attend one of these sessions.</li> <li>Participants must agree to keep these dates free until the action learning set sessions have been allocated.</li> </ul>	Thursday 13 June – Friday 14 June 09:00-11:00, 12:00-14:00, 14:30-16:30	Group 1 (early career researchers)
	Tuesday 16 July – Wednesday 17 July 09:00-11:00, 12:00-14:00, 14:30-16:30	Group 2 (technical staff)
	Monday 29 July – Tuesday 30 July 09:00-11:00, 12:00-14:00, 14:30-16:30	Group 3 (early career researchers)

## About WHEN

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WHEN drives equity of opportunity for women in higher education. Through our network and programmes we are supporting, enabling and connecting women. Through our approach to systemic change we are challenging, supporting and realising change within institutions. All of our work is raising the profile and presence of women across the sector. More information can be found here

<https://www.whenequality.org/>

### WHEN values

**Inclusion** | We are a space for all women\*

We are different races, ages, roles, sexualities. Some of us are disabled, some of us are religious, some of us have children. We have different home lives, different roles, different levels of seniority. We take an intersectional approach and unite as women.

**Respect** | We understand and value our differences

Our differences are our strength. Being open to sharing our backgrounds, experiences, approaches and opinions is essential. We don't cast judgement, we listen.

**Cohesion** | We are strong and supportive

We seek to share, learn from and support one another. We are stronger, together.

**Action** | We go for it

We use initiative to get things moving and encourage others to do the same. We are busy professionals but will find time to focus on what is most important to us.

\* Inclusive of cisgender women, trans women and non-binary people who are comfortable in a female centred community

## Find out more or get involved

### Visit our web pages

[ucl.ac.uk/research/culture](https://ucl.ac.uk/research/culture)

### Email the team

[researchculture@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:researchculture@ucl.ac.uk)