

The Researcher Development Pitch Competition

Innovative ideas to learn & thrive together

How to take part

- Do you have an idea for professional development that you think would benefit the postdoc community in Cambridge?
- Can you design a programme or tool that you think will help your fellow postdocs to enhance their skills? Improve their wellbeing? Help them to be even more ready for their next career move?
- Do you have a creative way to broaden teaching, leadership, or collaboration opportunities to include more postdocs?
- Do you want to collaborate with the University's professional services teams on postdoc support?

If so, pitch your idea to us! www.opda.cam.ac.uk/career-development/funding/rdpitch

What is the Researcher Development Pitch Competition?

Researcher Development at Cambridge

Cambridge is strongly committed to supporting its postdocs through the creation of the three Postdoc Centres, the opportunities provided through the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs [OPdA], and support for the Postdocs of Cambridge Society [PdOC] and the Departmental Postdoc Committees Chairs Network [DPCCN]. This commitment also includes large, sustained investment in Researcher Development [RD] – professional training and careers guidance, which has been centrally provided through the Postdoc Researcher Development Programme [RDP] and the Postdoc Careers Service for more than ten years.

The aim of RD for postdocs is broad and ambitious: to help everyone make the most of their time in Cambridge, to allow everyone to flourish personally and professionally, and to take a strategic approach to their futures. RD is about personal learning, interpersonal awareness, new and deepening skills, professional growth and development – so that we can all make a meaningful contribution to the life and research environment of the University.

The RD Pitch Competition

The RD Pitch Competition is your chance to co-create and co-deliver the future of postdoc support in Cambridge. The Competition enables you to utilise your creative talents and your expertise in the issues affecting postdocs. We're looking for great ideas for new training workshops or events, but also asking you to think more broadly and innovatively too: the door is open for designing fresh ways of delivering RD, new resources or tools, innovative programmes or platforms for opportunities. There are many possible themes to consider: creativity and idea generation, research communication and writing, entrepreneurship and social impact, or career development within and beyond academia. It's up to you what you consider important and what you think will make the biggest difference to the capabilities and potential of the postdoc community.

Funding

This Competition is first and foremost about ideas – we don't want to exclude brilliant innovations and creative solutions on the grounds of, say, time or cost. If you're not sure what an idea would cost, or quite how long it would take, then don't worry – pitch it anyway. The professional services teams can help with the details.

How does it work?

1. **Ideate.** Start to gather your thoughts and find other postdocs to collaborate with.
2. **Explore.** There is an [information session](#) at 5pm on 6 December 2018, where representatives from the professional services teams and the OPdA will share more details of the competition and be available to take questions. If you are thinking of submitting an idea, you are strongly encouraged to attend.
3. **Propose.** Expressions of interest should be a maximum of 300 words, pitching your idea, its potential impact, and any resource requirements that you know about. Expressions of interest should be emailed to hollie.godden@admin.cam.ac.uk by 21 January 2019. In addition to the main text, please include your Departmental, Institutional or College affiliation(s), job title, and relationship to any postdoc group in the University (e.g. Departmental postdoc committee or College network) if applicable.
4. **Refine.** The judges will choose a shortlist of the best ideas and invite the postdoc organisers to prepare a full proposal to be presented at the Pitch Event, to take place in Lent Term 2019.
5. **Pitch.** The organisers of the shortlisted ideas will be invited to do a short pitch, in person, to the panel of judges at an event hosted by the OPdA, PdOC and the DPCCN. The winning pitches will receive start-up funding of up to £1500 to get their idea off the ground (the precise amount will be determined by the quality of the proposal and the resources required).
6. **Try.** The winners of the Pitch Competition will be supported in turning their ideas into practical reality. This will be a chance to test out whether the idea can really make a difference.
7. **Grow.** The Panel can, at their discretion, offer follow-on funding for projects which, in the first trial phase, have already succeeded in making a meaningful impact on the postdoc community. There is no specific cap on the level of funding available at this stage – it entirely depends on the quality of the ideas and their effectiveness.

Am I eligible to apply?

Are you a postdoc/member of research staff at Cambridge? Then, yes, you are eligible! The idea proposed could be big or small and come from either an individual or a group.

What criteria will the ideas be judged on?

Expressions of interest will be judged on:

- innovation
- potential to enhance existing RD support in the University
- impact for the postdoc community.

In addition to this, those given the opportunity to pitch to the panel will also be judged on:

- plans for implementation
- how the start-up funding will be used to support the implementation.

Important dates

6 December 2018	Information session - Thursday 6 th December 5pm, Postdoc Centre @ Mill Lane.
21 January 2019	Deadline for expressions of interest
By 8 February 2019	Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the Pitch Competition
TBC February 2019	Pitch Competition Event