UK Research and Innovation

UKRI

Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Ellen Meek and Nik Ogryzko

Who we are

Ellen, Senior Talent Programme Manager

- Veterinary surgeon

- Experience of public engagement and research management at a large HEI

- Previously worked in EPSRC on research teams and career mobility

Nik, Talent Programme Manager

- Postdoc, Biomedical science

  - Sheffield

  - Edinburgh

- Helped to write the new Researcher Development Concordat

Responsibility

- Concordat

- Technician Commitment

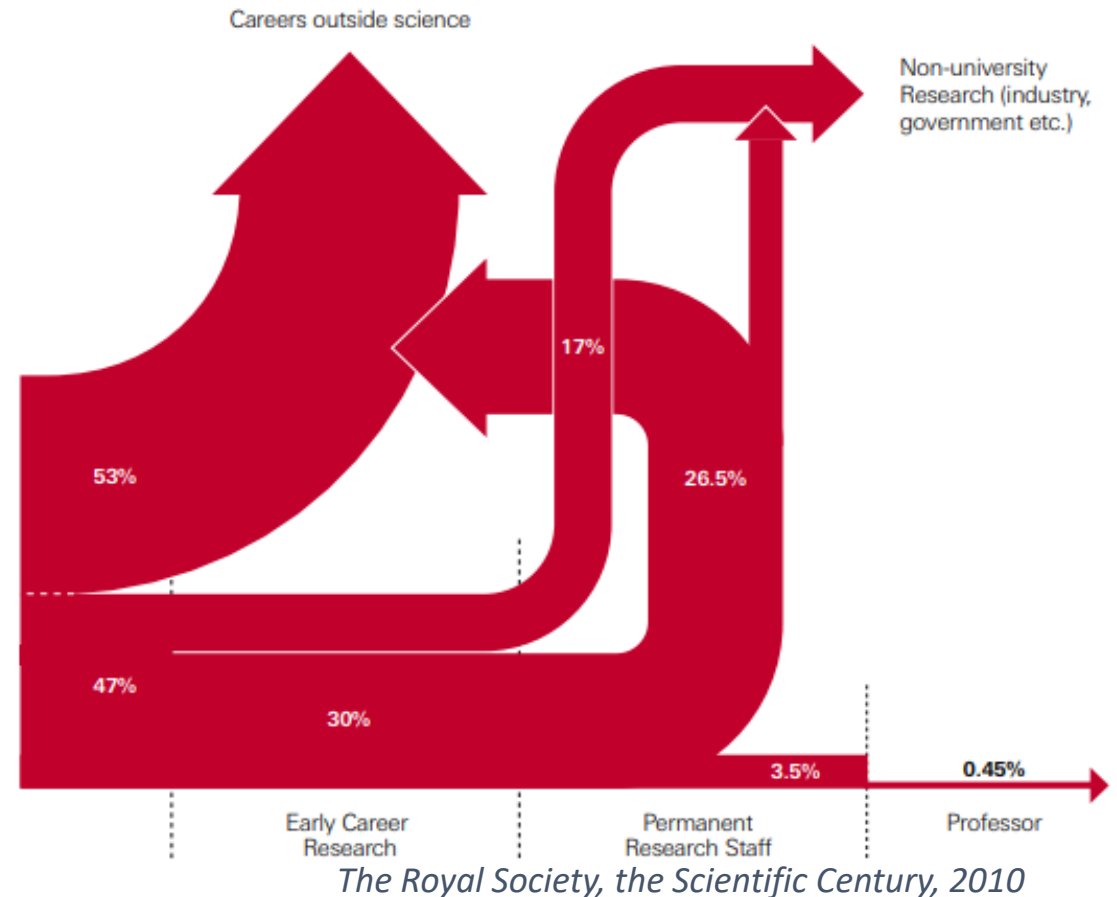- As a **funder** and an **employer**

Why do we need the Concordat?

The concordat is on its third revision, each one is more prescriptive than the last.

We know from Wellcome Trust's "Reimagine Research" what the problems are, that the situation isn't getting better by itself.

We know most PhDs and ECRs will not follow a "traditional academic career" pathway.

Figure 1.6 **Careers in and outside science**

Careers outside science

Non-university Research (industry, government etc.)

53%

17%

26.5%

47%

30%

3.5%

0.45%

Early Career Research

Permanent Research Staff

Professor

The Royal Society, the Scientific Century, 2010

Who is a researcher?

Concordat – Researchers

"These are defined as individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed specifically for this purpose by a higher education institution or research institute"

- For STEM disciplines, think "postdoc plus"

- Groups such as PhD students; staff on research and teaching, or teaching only contracts; clinicians; technicians; professional support staff; may also be expected to develop a research identity.

- Employers are encouraged to extend who will be covered by the concordat, however, the **focus should remain on researchers**.

Revised Concordat

The concordat is structured around 3 principles:

- Research Environment and Culture
- Employment
- Professional and Career Development

Sets out obligations for the four stakeholder groups:

- Research funders
- Employers of researchers (HEIs, institutes)
- Managers of researchers (PIs)
- Researchers.

The Concordat
to Support the Career Development of Researchers

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Commonly known as the Researcher Development Concordat

SEPTEMBER 2019

Obligations on managers of researchers

(paraphrased)

- Undertake training: EDI, employment law and institutional policy, leadership and management.

- Promote a healthy working environment: bullying and harassment, research integrity, EDI, flexible working, fair recruitment.

- Contribute to policy development and institutional efforts to improve things for researchers.

- (constructive) performance management.

- Career development discussions and reviews with researchers.

- Support researchers in preparing for non-academic careers.

- Professional development time for researchers and opportunity to develop intellectual leadership of their project.

Obligations of researchers
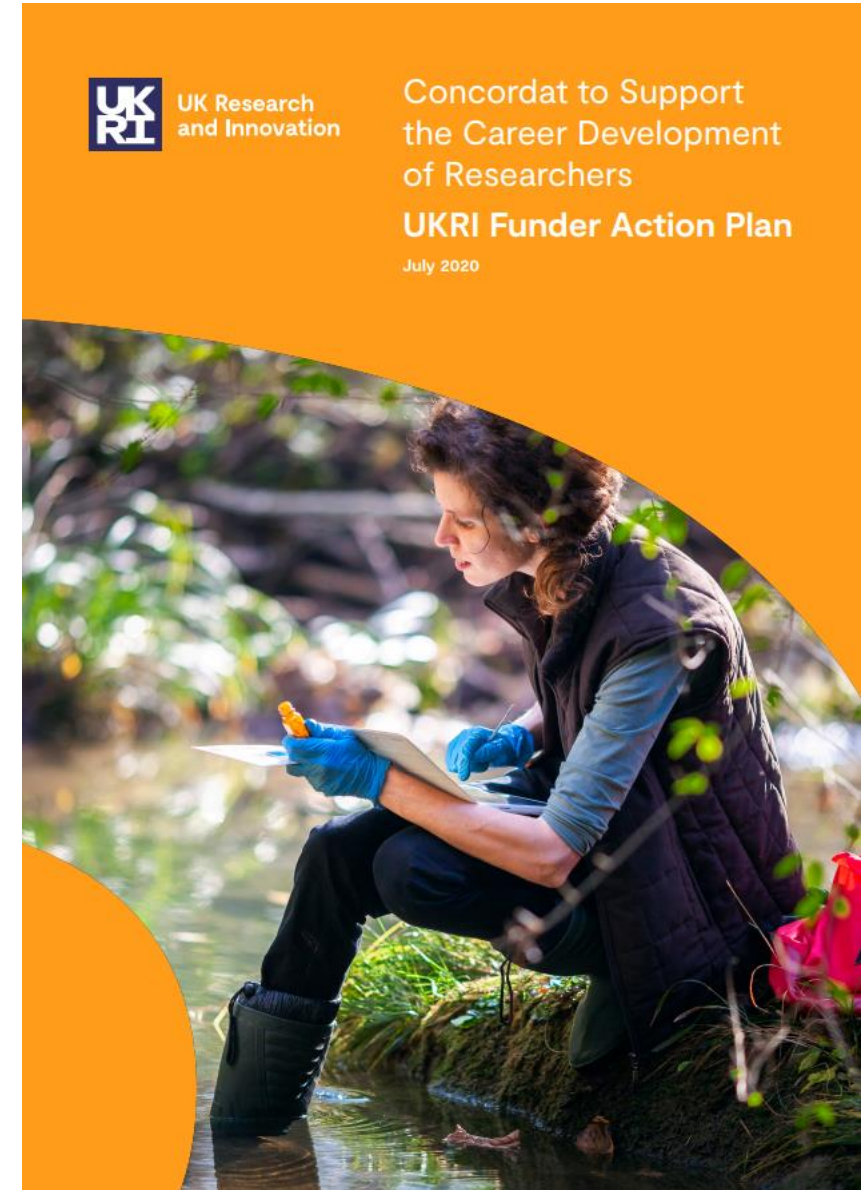
(paraphrased)

- Take ownership of their own careers.

- Support their peers and colleagues.

- Engage with training and career development discussions and opportunities.

- Engage with opportunities to develop policy or improve research culture.

- Prepare for careers beyond academia.

UKRI Concordat action plan

Equipping researchers with the skills for diverse and flexible careers

UKRI expects the research organisations (ROs) in which it invests to **recognise and value** their researchers and nurture them in reaching their full potential.

This includes supporting their professional development as members of the research and innovation community, providing working conditions that enable them to flourish, and equipping them for **diverse and flexible careers across the research and innovation system**, whether in the private, public or third sectors.

Grant assessment

Intended Outcome	Action	Outline success measure
Grant review and assessment considers:	2.2 We will review and revise as necessary the guidance and training for our reviewers and panel members, to support their decision-making around:	
• Non-traditional career paths and equality friendly ways of working.	• The impact on track records and ways of working of extended leave, flexible working patterns and non-traditional career paths.	Proposals with a variety of working patterns of the researchers listed on the grant are fairly considered in the same way as more 'standard' grants.
• Workload expectations of researchers.	• The appropriate level of staffing and workload expectations on research grants.	Proposals with non-standard staffing requests are considered fairly in competition with others.
• Whether applicants have given sufficient thought to the careers of staff they aim to employ.	• How researchers employed on grants are supported to develop their professional and technical skills and how this will add value to their career.	Professional development support for researchers on grants is considered as standard in assessments.
Incentivise leadership and management development in research leaders.	2.3 Clear expectations for the leadership and management attributes of grantholders will be developed alongside mechanisms to efficiently integrate these into our assessment processes.	Leadership and management capabilities are considered and assessed as part of the peer review process.

Recognising a broader range of contributions to research and innovation

- We are looking to introduce an inclusive single 'narrative CV' format across UKRI, based on the Royal Society's 'Resume for Researchers', that enables us to capture **a more holistic view of the breadth of critical contributions** made by researchers and innovators to the research and innovation system as a whole.

- These span not only the direct outputs of their research such as publications, but also the outcomes of their work **to develop and support individuals and teams**, to create networks in and collaborate with the wider research and innovation community, and **how they engage with the users of their research and wider society**

TRDF: Transformative Research Technologies

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council — **New Horizons**

Natural Environment Research Council — **Pushing the Frontiers**

UK Research and Innovation — **Citizen Science Collaboration Grant**

TRDF Capability to Deliver

TRDF: Transformative Research Technologies

2 pages to tell us:

1. [Eligibility question]

2. How have you contributed to the generation and flow of new ideas, hypotheses, tools or knowledge?

3. **How have you contributed to research teams and the development of others?**

4. How have you contributed to the wider research community?

5. How have you contributed to broader society?

6. How will your institutional environment help to deliver the projects objectives?

7. Additional information

Working with other funders

Intended Outcome	Action	Outline success measure
Shared vision and standards across the UK funding landscape.	1.3 We will collaborate with other funders to develop consistent narratives, expectations and comparable grant terms and conditions around:	Development of shared vision and expectations for researcher careers that larger funders have signed up to.
	• The roles of researchers within the research system, our collective vision for their development and the relationship between researcher support and the resulting impact of their contributions across the economy and society.	New shared language in terms and conditions of research funding across major research funders.
	• The scope of what we consider professional development for researchers and the level of support we expect for researchers, fellows, their managers and associated staff from the research organisations that we fund.	
	• How research organisations can redeploy researchers and offer more secure and sustainable employment.	

Research assessment and funding assurance

Intended Outcome	Action	Outline success measure
UKRI has appropriate assurance of compliance with grant terms and conditions as they relate to the concordat.	3.4 We will develop suitable processes to monitor compliance of research organisations with our terms and conditions of grants as they relate to the concordat and integrate these into a wider programme of non-financial assurance activities around research culture. These will include a set of remedies and/or sanctions where breaches of terms and conditions are identified.	A new non-financial assurance process will include questions relevant to the concordat.
Research organisations have greater financial incentive to invest in supporting researchers/ research careers.	3.5 Research England, collaborating with the other UK HE funding bodies, will consult on strengthening the recognition for concordat implementation and wider research environment in the successor to REF[5] 2021.	Inclusion of appropriate weighting on research careers and research culture in the consultation on the successor to REF 2021 to drive change in institutional behaviour.

Listening to researchers

Intended Outcome	Action	Outline success measure
Stronger researcher voice represented in UKRI concordat activity and greater engagement with our community.	1.4 We will continue to engage our existing researcher (and related professional) advisory groups and create a UKRI wide external advisory group to guide future development and implementation of this action plan.	Establishment of cross council researcher advisory group capable of contributing to future iterations and annual reporting of UKRI's action plan. Contribution of existing council advisory groups to year 1 plan development and reporting.
UKRI knows who is employed with the funding it awards and can contact them.	2.5 We will ensure that the new UKRI Funding Service: • Allows us to recognise and value researchers, by knowing who our grant funding is employing and the contributions and status of everyone involved in the research effort.	UKRI has the name, contact details/contact permission, and status (for example, Researcher Co-I) for researchers employed on its grants.
UKRI has reliable and representative data on the experience of researchers aligned to concordat principles.	3.3 We will establish processes to collect information on the researchers we fund, ensuring survey data are robust and informative enough to assess the impact of our efforts.	CROS/PIRLS successor or future research culture surveys generate robust and representative data of the UK research population.

UKRI to pilot early career researcher forum

14 October 2020

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is to launch a new early career researcher forum, Chief Executive Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser has told the Future Leaders Fellowships conference.

A pilot for the forum will launch later this year and will seek to recruit 400 early career researchers.

Dame Ottoline told the future leaders fellows:

> We have a major responsibility for stewarding the research and innovation system and supporting a positive research culture.
>
> Because it is so important to understand the perspectives of early career researchers, I am pleased to announce that UKRI will be piloting an early career researcher forum. The forum will seek to reach out to the early career researcher community and engage on the issues that matter to you.

> Researchers who are interested in being a member of the forum, or who want to find out more without committing, can **express interest on this short online form**.

The forum follows the publication of UKRI's action plan on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in July.

The action plan outlines UKRI's commitment to working collaboratively with researchers, as well as other funders and employers of researchers, in co-creating its response to the concordat.

What we would like you to take away

Careers outside academia are not failure, for you or your staff.

"If you can only offer someone a fixed term job, part of the deal is that you help them get the next one."

Gaps in support for PIs

- **Pressure to deliver, not enough time to develop staff.**

- **What does good look like?**

- **How to prepare staff for non-academic careers?**