

**Postgraduate Cultures:
Careers, Community and Connection**

**UKCGE PGR-Led Conference on
Careers, Skills and Futures Shaped
Through the PhD**

**Sherrington Building
University of Liverpool, 1st July, 2026**

Conference Programme

Sherrington Building, University of Liverpool

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| 09:30 - 09:50 | Registration | Foyer |
| 09:50 - 10:00 | “Welcome and Opening Address” Stephen Bickerstaff, Director of the Postgraduate Researcher Experience Team | LR1 |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | “PGR Students’ Career Development in the UK: Experiences, Insights and Opportunities” Dr Fiona McBride & Kerry McElroy, Prosper Chair: Janine Hatter | LR1 |
| 11:00 – 11:15 | Comfort Break | |
| 11:15 – 12:15 | Panels 1, 2, 3 & 4 | |
| | Panel 1: Lightning Talks: PhD Research Journeys Chair: Amy Birch “Navigating Research Design Challenges as a PGR: Lessons Learned and Practical Strategies” Vishakha Pandey “‘I Am Because We Are’: Reflections on the Importance of Community in Navigating the Doctoral Journey” Ebenezer Ishola “Resisting ‘Isolation’ in the Doctorate” Emma Cripps | SR3 |
| | Panel 2: Research Talks: PhD Research - The International Perspective Chair: Fiona McBride “Pivoting with Purpose: Lessons in Resilience, Resourcefulness and Research Design from an International PhD Student” Dorcas Adebayo “Decolonising English-Medium Instruction: What English-Only Policies Hide in Bangladeshi Universities” A Q M Khairul Basher | LT1 |
| | Panel 3: Interactive Reflective Presentations: Communicating PGR Skills Development Chair: Janine Hatter “Learning to Communicate: Skill Development for Success as a PhD Student” Kaydee Shepherd “Dual Identities: The PhD Student as Staff Member” | SR1 |

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| | Madeleine Murphy | |
| | <p>Panel 4: Interactive Workshops: How to Tackle PhD Research Overload</p> <p>Chair: Stefania Silvestri</p> <p>“Understanding the Part-Time Doctoral Journey: Challenges, Support, and Supervisory Relationships”</p> <p>Tania Goddard</p> <p>“You Don’t Have to Do Everything: Building a Sustainable PhD”</p> <p>Holly Green</p> | SR4 |
| 12:15 – 13:00 | Lunch | Foyer |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | <p>Interactive Workshop: “PhD Career Paths in an AI Landscape”</p> <p>Ben Carter, Careers Consultant & PG Lead, University of Manchester</p> <p>Chair: Nicola Rankin</p> | LT1 |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | Panels 5, 6, 7 & 8 | |
| | <p>Panel 5: Lightning Talks: Minority PGR Experiences</p> <p>Chair: Fiona McBride</p> <p>“Neurodiversity: A Hidden Challenge in Doctoral Study”</p> <p>Varun Padikal</p> <p>“The Disabled PhD Student: Navigating a PhD with a Disability or Chronic Illness”</p> <p>Charlie Wilson</p> <p>“Navigating a PhD Near the End of a Career: Minority Experiences, Personal Motivation, and Post Doctoral Pathway”</p> <p>Nicola Ryan</p> <p>“Finding Voice in Doctoral Spaces: Storytelling, Belonging, and Being a Global Majority PGR”</p> <p>Shameela Yoosuf Ali</p> | SR3 |
| | <p>Panel 6: Research Talks: The Importance of Collaboration</p> <p>Chair: Sally Hoare</p> <p>“Why PGR Students Should Organise, Attend and Present at Their Institutional Conference”</p> <p>Thomas Bennett</p> <p>“Co-Producing Knowledge Across Continents: Community-Engaged Research as a Model for Postgraduate Collaboration”</p> <p>Bilkisu Kuchazi</p> | LT1 |

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| | <p>Panel 7: Interactive Reflective Presentations: Well-Being and Play-Based Research</p> <p>Chair: Nicola Rankin</p> <p>“Beyond the Degree: Constructing Wellbeing Among Women Doctoral Students”</p> <p>Caterina Contreras Matté</p> <p>“A Reflection on Experiences as a Teacher-Researcher During EdD Study”</p> <p>Rachael Groves</p> | SR1 |
| | <p>Panel 8: Interactive Workshops: You Are More Than Your Research</p> <p>Chair: Janine Hatter</p> <p>“Becoming a Researcher: Identity, Paradox, and the Crafting of Scholarly Maturity”</p> <p>Silas Yenbon Sebire</p> <p>“Development Beyond the Project: A Reflective Workshop for PGRs”</p> <p>Theadora Jean</p> | SR4 |
| 15:00 – 15:30 | Refreshment Break | Foyer |
| 15:30 - 16:30 | Panels 9, 10, 11 & 12 | |
| | <p>Panel 9: Interactive Reflective Presentations: Utilising Your Skills Beyond the PhD</p> <p>Chair: Stephen Bickerstaff</p> <p>“From Thesis to Practice: Turning Research Skills into Freelance and Public Work During a PhD”</p> <p>Leila Ainge</p> <p>“Beyond the Thesis: Recognising and Communicating Transferable Skills Developed During a PhD”</p> <p>Fatimah Alsulaiman</p> | SR1 |
| | <p>Panel 10: Interactive Workshops: Navigating PhD Researcher Identity</p> <p>Chair: Janine Hatter</p> <p>“Finding My Voice: Navigating Insider Identity, Relational Methodology and Researcher Growth in the PhD Journey”</p> <p>Nicola Mawer</p> <p>“Being a Small Fish in Several Big Ponds: Navigating Interdisciplinary Research and Variable Levels of Expertise”</p> <p>Luke Richardson</p> | SR4 |
| | <p>Panel 11: Roundtable Discussion: Women in STEM - Careers, Families & More</p> <p>Chair: Amy Birch</p> | SR3 |

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| | <p>Speakers: Dr Helen Clough, Senior Lecturer in Statistics, Institute of Infection, Veterinary & Ecological Sciences; Dr Shreyashi Dasgupta, Lecturer and Outreach Lead in Geography; Dr Frances Sherratt, NIHR Advanced Research Fellow, Department of Public Health, Policy & Systems; Professor Anna Slater, Royal Society University Research Fellow and Professor of Chemistry</p> | |
| | <p>Panel 12: Roundtable Discussion: Career Pathways in the Humanities and Social Sciences</p> <p>Chair: Ross McGarry</p> <p>Speakers: Dr Bernadette McBride, Creative Practitioner; Dr Jasmin Johurun Nessa, Research Associate in International Law, University of Bristol; Dr Campbell Price, Curator of Egypt and Sudan, Manchester Museum; Dr Laura Radcliffe, Director of the North-West Social Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership, Reader in the Management School</p> | LT1 |
| 16:30 | Close | |
| 17:00 | Optional Dinner (<u>Bundobust</u>: vegetarian and vegan Indian food restaurant, at own cost at venue) | |