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

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: Stefania Silvestri **"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

	Madeleine Murphy	
	Panel 4: Interactive Workshops: How to Tackle PhD Research Overload Chair: Amy Birch **"Understanding the Part-Time Doctoral Journey: Challenges, Support, and Supervisory Relationships"** Tania Goddard **'Beginning with the End in Mind: Setting Realistic Goals for Your PhD'** Amy Birch	SR4
12:15 – 13:00	**Lunch**	Foyer
13:00 – 14:00	**Interactive Workshop: "PhD Career Paths in an AI Landscape"** **Ben Carter, Careers Consultant & PG Lead, University of Manchester** Chair: Nicola Rankin	LT1
14:00 – 15:00	**Panels 5, 6, 7 & 8**	
	Panel 5: Lightning Talks: Minority PGR Experiences Chair: Fiona McBride **"Neurodiversity: A Hidden Challenge in Doctoral Study"** Varun Padikal **"The Disabled PhD Student: Navigating a PhD with a Disability or Chronic Illness"** Charlie Wilson **"Navigating a PhD Near the End of a Career: Minority Experiences, Personal Motivation, and Post Doctoral Pathway"** Nicola Ryan **"Finding Voice in Doctoral Spaces: Storytelling, Belonging, and Being a Global Majority PGR"** Shameela Yoosuf Ali	SR3
	Panel 6: Research Talks: The Importance of Collaboration Chair: Sally Hoare **"Why PGR Students Should Organise, Attend and Present at Their Institutional Conference"** Thomas Bennett **"Co-Producing Knowledge Across Continents: Community-Engaged Research as a Model for Postgraduate Collaboration"** Bilkisu Kuchazi	LT1

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

	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	
	Panel 12: Roundtable Discussion: Career Pathways in the Humanities and Social Sciences Chair: Ross McGarry 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	LT1
16:30	**Closing Remarks**	LT1
17:00	**Optional Dinner (Bundobust: vegetarian and vegan Indian food restaurant, at own cost at venue)**	