

CIRCLE ISP Good Practice Guide

3

Enhancing Institutional Researcher Development Programmes



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About this Guide

This Guide is number 3 of a series of 6 CIRCLE ISP Good Practice Guides developed by the CIRCLE Programme to help institutions design and deliver a successful Institutional Strengthening Programme, a change management process, to support the career development of researchers as part of research capacity strengthening.

This Guide draws on the experience of the CIRCLE Programme, and the lessons learnt by the institutions that have taken part.

This Guide introduces the concept of Researcher Development Programmes (RDP) and explores how to design an effective training programme using an experiential learning approach. The Guide also covers how you can scale up your workshop to a full-scale institutional programme of training support.

Content in this Guide is expanded and developed upon in further Guides.

You can access all of our Guides on both the [ACU website](#) and the [Vitae website](#).

What is a Researcher Development Programme?

A Researcher Development Programme (RDP) refers to a series of activities offered to research staff and/or research students within an institution that are designed to improve their personal, professional and career development as a researcher.

RDPs can consist of a variety of activities, including but not limited to training workshops, specialist skills sessions, 1:1 meetings and online resources on a range of topics from research writing skills to professional development planning. It is important that an RDP includes not only the development of fundamentals of research such as skills, methods and techniques but also personal effectiveness and interpersonal skills to help create an effective researcher.

Topics of activities can include, but are not limited to:

SKILLS, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

- Research Methods and Analysis
- Research Ethics
- Scientific Writing Skills
- Writing for Publication
- Applying for Grant Funding
- Stakeholder Mapping and Management

- Research Uptake
- Project Management

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Networking Skills
- Time Management
- Mentoring
- Academic Supervision
- Career and Professional Development Planning
- Leadership
- Public Speaking
- Presentation Skills
- Poster Development

This guide will go through three of the most commonly used elements of RDPs: **Workshops**, accessible **Resources** for participants, and scaling up to a **Large-scale Training Programme**.



The Vitae Researcher Development Framework

It is helpful to map RDP activities against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and to consider how current activities are gaps identified in your Gap Analysis. *Try not to get confused between the RDP and the RDF!*

The **Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF)** is an approach to researcher development, that enhances our capacity to build the global workforce, develop world-class researchers and build our research base. The RDF is a professional development framework for planning, promoting and supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers in higher education. It articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages them to realise their potential.

The Framework is designed for:

- Researchers to evaluate and plan their professional development
- Managers and supervisors of researchers in their role supporting the development of researchers
- Supervisors, trainers, developers, human resources specialists and careers advisors in the planning and provision of support for researchers' development.

The RDF is not intended to be linked to performance management or replace locally agreed progression criteria or job requirements.

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) is structured into four domains covering the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of researchers. It sets out the wide-ranging knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards expected to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research. Within each of the domains there are three sub-domains and associated descriptors.

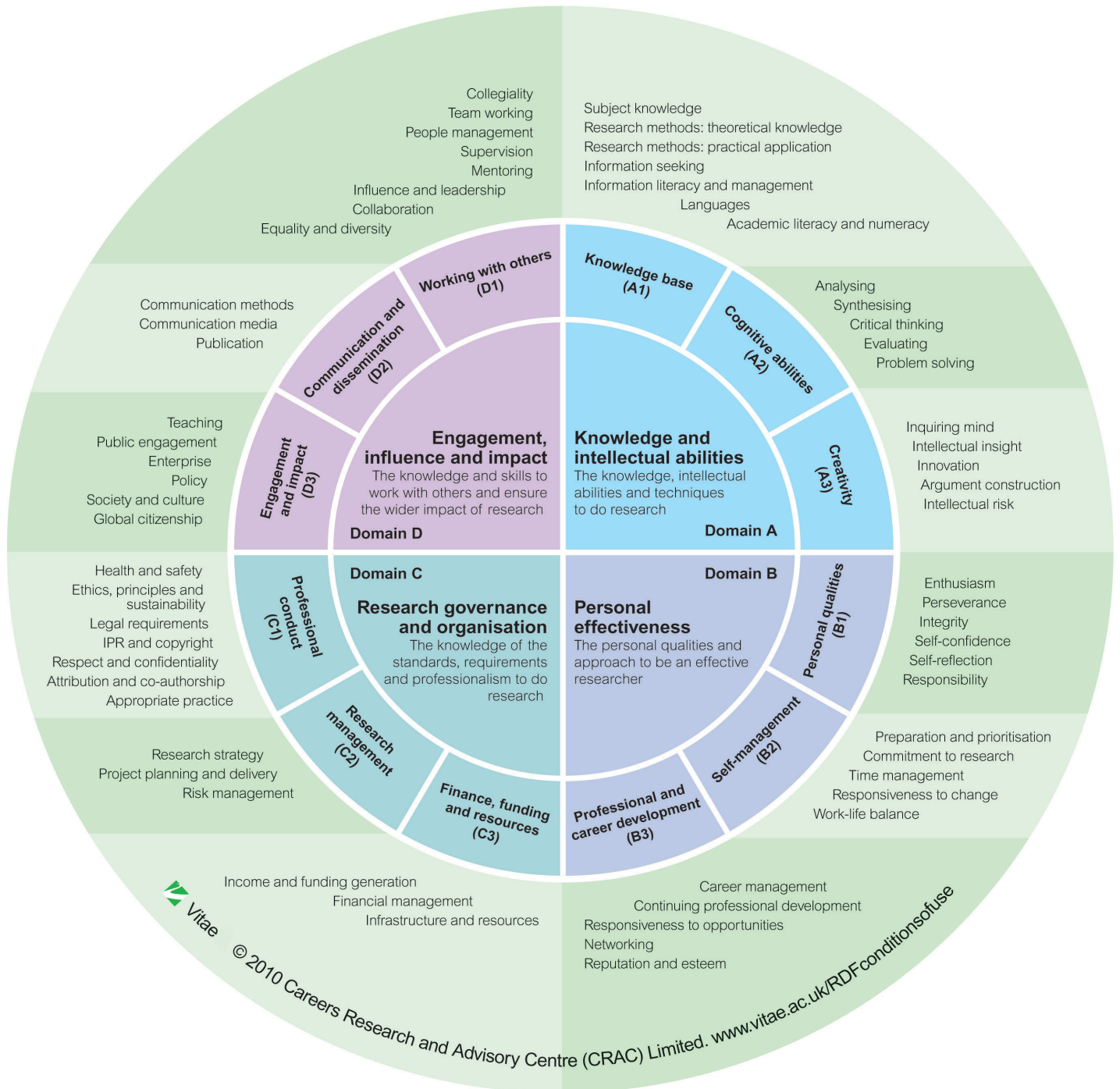
Domain A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities: The knowledge, intellectual abilities and techniques to do research

Domain B: Personal effectiveness: The personal qualities and approach to be an effective researcher

Domain C: Research governance and organisation: Knowledge of the professional standards and requirements to do research

Domain D: Engagement, influence and impact: The knowledge and skills to work with others to ensure the wider impact of research

The RDF



What does an effective RDP look like?

The design for an effective RDP will depend on the context, strategic goals and development priorities of institutions and individuals.

We recommend that you consider the following to ensure that your RDP is as effective as possible:

- Have you targeted the right participants for your RDP?
- Is content appropriate for the level of prior experience for each user?
- How will the course(s) be delivered?
- Will it be within a certain period or will there be rotating activities/ events?
- Will all content be available online at all times?
- What will work best for your audience?
- Do you have the capabilities to deliver the programme? If not how will you develop these as an institution?
- Can you bring in other activities in the institution?
- Have you provided a variety of activities and resources in your RDP for your targeted audience?
- Who is managing the RDP?
- How has responsibility been assigned?
- Have you developed a Communication Plan?
- How will engagement with and outcomes of your RDP be monitored and evaluated?
- How can you adapt your RDP in response to changing needs of your target audience?

Researcher development opportunities within your institution

Your institution may already have activities in place that support researcher development. In order to evaluate the need for a more comprehensive institution or department-wide programme, you will need to consider the following in your Gap Analysis:

Results from your Gap Analysis and Action Plan

The results from your Gap Analysis and consequent Action Plan will help you to determine what an RDP should look like for your institution. Consider the following questions:

- What is the current provision for researcher development?
- Is it localised within one department or institution-wide?
- Who leads on current provision within your institution?
- Who can you speak to?
- Who can help to deliver an enhanced programme?
- How are current researcher development activities evaluated?
- How can they be improved?
- What are the gaps in development you have identified?
- Do certain areas need to be prioritised over others?
- What delivery method will work best for each topic?
- Does the topic require hands-on activities, or can information be provided without need for specific training?

CIRCLE Case Study: Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), Nigeria

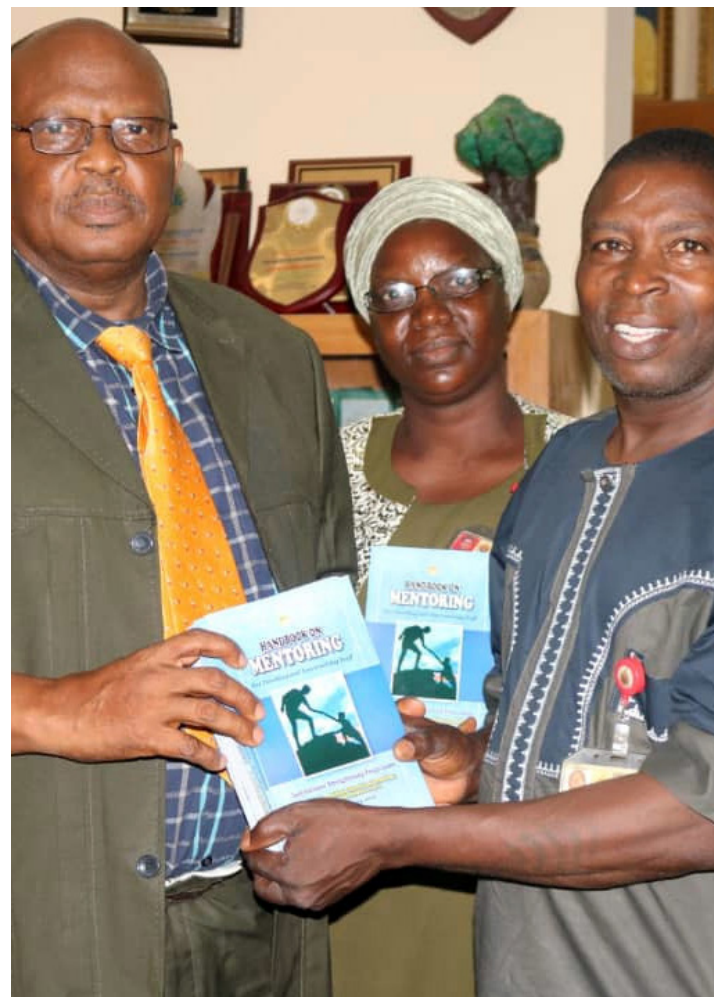
LAUTECH is a large tertiary institution based in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. It currently enrolls over 25,000 students and employs over 3,000 academic and non-academic staff.

As part of the CIRCLE ISP, the Implementation Group identified a number of areas of researcher development support that needed improving, namely the need to “offer a broad range of courses to cover generic and transferable skills and equally provide necessary training in communication and professional skills”. Within their action plan, they outlined a number of proposed activities that aimed to introduce the Vitae RDF to the wider institution, embed the use of the RDF in career and professional development policies, and to promote the activities of the ISP Group through promotion of training and activities.

Throughout the programme the ISP Implementation Group ran a series of 15 training workshops on:

- Mapping research needs for early career academics in the University
- Mentor and Mentee relationships in the University
- Scientific Writing Methods and RDF Usage

Following the completion of the workshops, all training content and supporting materials were published in a Compendium, which was made available for all staff and students across the institution, as well as other ISP Implementation Groups within the CIRCLE network. This has become a valuable resource, and vital reference material for individuals seeking support on researcher development and opportunities available at LAUTECH.



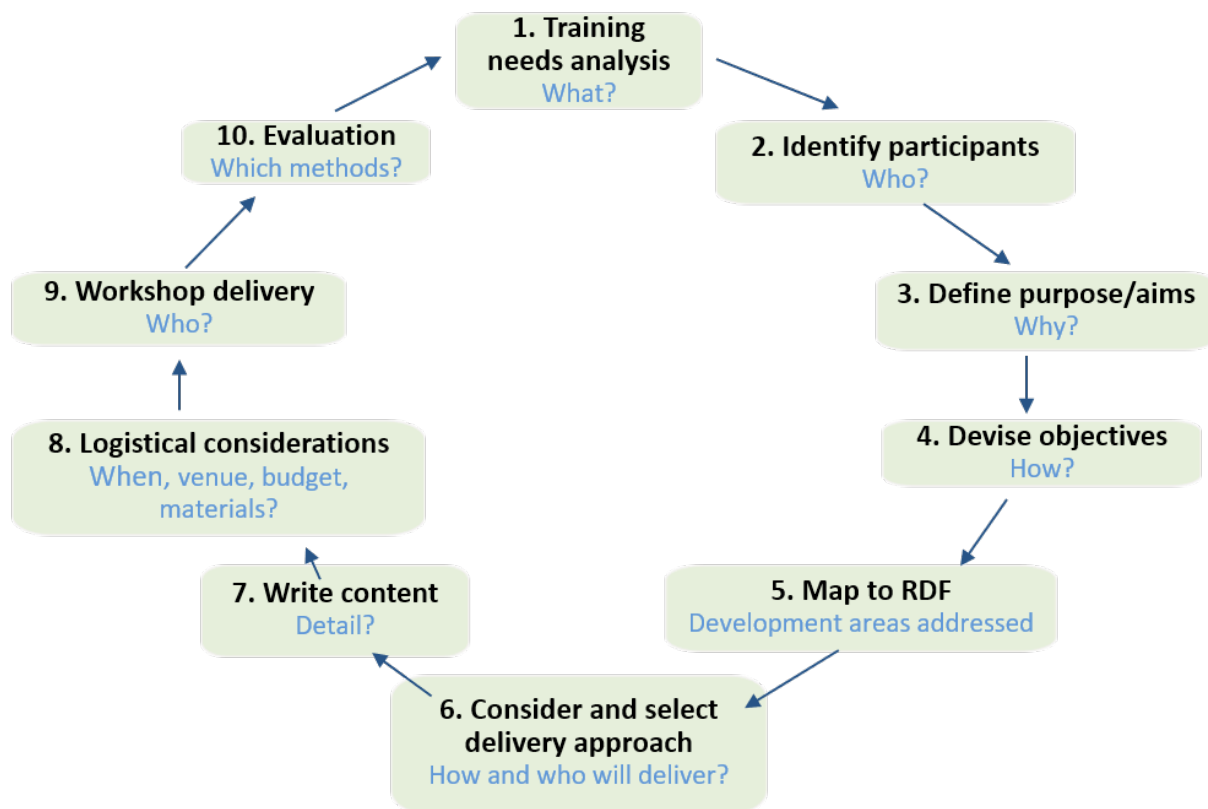
Your Researcher Development Programme

This guide will go through three of the most commonly used elements of RDPs: **Workshops**, accessible **Resources** for participants, and **Scaling up to a large-scale training programme**.

Workshops

A workshop should not be seen as an isolated activity but as part of a wider RDP. There are several aspects of a successful session that you need to take into consideration when designing your workshop.

Vitae recommends using this 10-step process to refine aspects of your workshop.



1 & 2. TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS & IDENTIFYING PARTICIPANTS

Firstly, you need to determine the gap in existing skills, knowledge and abilities that your session will address and then establish the learning needs of participants, in order to provide the right training to cover them. You may have started this as part of your Gap Analysis, but here we go into a lot more detail on the specific needs of your potential participants.

It is useful to consider a definition of the terms learning and training:

Learning – a relatively permanent change in behaviour that occurs because of practice or experience

Training – a process to modify knowledge, skill, attitude or ability through learning to achieve improved performance

You should also link learning needs analysis to the wider institutional needs:

Strategic – looking at what might be needed in the future for your institution

Institutional – looking at what is needed to meet your institution’s mission, value and goals

Departmental – what is needed for the department to meet the needs of the institution – this may be different to another department in your institution.

Individual – what is needed by researchers at certain points in their careers to enhance research capacity and progress their careers within the institution.

It could be that different levels within the institution have the same learning needs, for example, those in leadership positions may all need training on research management, or perhaps all newly recruited researchers need training on the institutional research policy or priority areas.

Staff of differing levels will require training targeted to their particular needs and expertise, so the training for each group will be different, e.g. senior leaders who have been in their role for some time and have experience of leadership will have different priorities and expectations from training than early career researchers who may be aspiring to become leaders.

You will therefore need processes that:

- Detect learning needs at the individual and/or institutional levels
- Examine learning needs to determine what training is best to address them

There are a variety of methods that you might use to undertake a learning needs analysis including:

- A survey of researcher’s needs
- A review of strategic priorities
- Feedback from annual performance/progress review of researchers
- Focus groups of stakeholders
- Observation of researchers carrying out tasks
- Exit interviews with people leaving the institution or particular roles

It may be apparent from the way you have undertaken your learning needs analysis who should be attending the training, however it is helpful to review this and gain feedback outside of your ISP Implementation Group before designing your programme to ensure that your training is at the right level.

3. DEFINING PURPOSE & AIMS OF THE WORKSHOP

The content of the workshop should reflect the overall purpose of what you are trying to achieve. When considering the purpose and aim of your workshop you should think about:

- Who the participants are
- What learning needs you want to meet
- What you want participants to do in the workshop
- How to ensure your participants are actively involved in the training
- What you want participants to achieve or do better after the workshop
- How this workshop addresses actions outlined in your ISP Action Plan and your overall ISP Vision for Change

At this point, you might want to use a template to capture the range of information needed to develop a workshop that you can then use for subsequent workshops.

Vitae has provided a template to capture the range of information needed to develop a workshop. You can find this in Appendix A.

4 & 5. DEVISING WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

Once you have decided on the overall purpose of your workshop, you can begin to work on the specific objectives. The objectives should be more activity focused than your overall aims.

When setting objectives, it is important that activities provide an intellectual challenge for researchers. It is useful to consider both Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning and the Vitae RDF.

BLOOMS TAXONOMY OF LEARNING

Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning is a framework which uses “action words” to describe the dynamic cognitive processes by which learners encounter and work with experiences. This framework has been used to pose the right questions and design appropriate activities for learners.

Mapping the RDF against Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning shows that most objectives and activities for researchers should reflect the higher levels on Bloom’s Taxonomy such as ‘create’ ‘evaluate’ and ‘analyse’.

Bloom’s Taxonomy

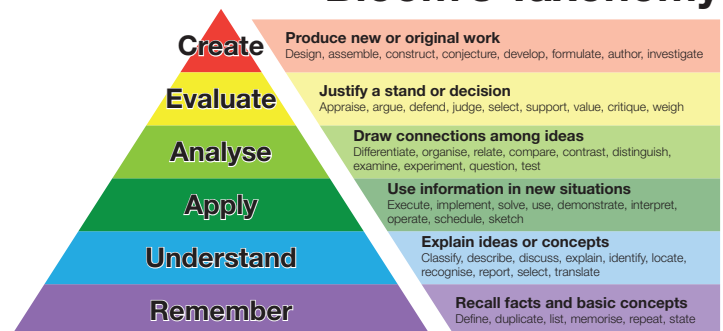


Image taken from Vanderbilt University Website: <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-subpages/blooms-taxonomy>. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

When you prepare your workshop, you should:

- Consider your aim: what are you trying to achieve?
- What Action is this addressing?
- Set around 5 workshop objectives for your workshop (depending on length of workshop – if it is a long workshop you may need more).
- Use the higher level ‘action words’ to ensure activities are at the right level for researchers
- Refine your objectives into ‘learning outcomes’ by using the SMART model
- SMART objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound and you can measure the impact after the workshop. Check the RDF to see which descriptors and phases your learning outcomes cover as it is helpful for researchers to know which areas the training is covering for their development

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Once you have refined your aim and objectives, you can identify sections for your workshop that will enable participants to achieve the learning outcomes. You can use Appendix B: Workshop Programme and Content Plan to begin planning your workshop using the below method:

- Based on your objectives, brainstorm the section headings for your workshop
- Add section headings to post-it notes (one heading on each post-it note) and put each on a flip chart or white board
- Using the post-its, move your headers around to group ideas together and create a logical flow for your workshop
- Decide which RDF descriptor(s) each section maps to and note these on the document
- Add these to your Plan with approximate timings for each section (e.g. 30 mins). Do not forget to ensure you include breaks!

Now that you have prepared your objectives and thought about the order and timings of your workshop, you should think about the actual content of your sessions.

Here is an example of aim, objective and learning outcome:

Aim: To develop mentoring skills.

Workshop objective: To enable researchers to apply the GROW model as a tool for their mentoring conversations by evaluating the model interactively with others during the workshop.

Learning outcome: Participants will continue to use the GROW model in their mentoring conversations after the workshop. (Note this outcome can be measured sometime after the workshop to evidence its success).

You can use Appendix B: Workshop Aims and Objectives to outline your aims and objectives.

6. CONSIDERING & SELECTING DELIVERY APPROACH

After you have formulated your aims and objectives and decided on the topics for each section of the workshop you should consider how to deliver the session to best meet the learning outcomes.

It's helpful to consider the various learning styles of your participants to ensure the delivery format is suitable and accommodates different learning styles.

Honey and Mumford (1982)* classified 4 distinct learning styles as follows:

- Reflector:* Observes and thinks about what happened
- Pragmatist:* Needs to see how to put learning into practise
- Theorist:* Likes to understand the theory behind the actions
- Activist:* Learns by doing - hands-on

There are a variety of different types of activity that you can use in a workshop to accommodate different learning styles. Try to include some variety from the following list:

- Brainstorming
- Stories
- Pictures
- Videos
- Games
- Lecture
- Discussion
- Demonstration
- Case studies
- Role play

FACILITATOR VS TEACHER

When leading a workshop, it is important to consider your role in promoting experiential learning to empower researchers. There is a difference between being a teacher and being a facilitator, and other roles that you might adopt to assist the learner to absorb the information effectively.

*Honey, P. and Mumford, A. (1986a) The Manual of Learning Styles, Peter Honey Associates.

You can adopt a variety of roles in one session and should consider where and when you will assume different roles during a session, being sensitive to the needs of the participants. However, the guiding principle remains that to empower researchers in their own career development, experiential learning activity should dominate the session. Here is a guide to some of the roles that may be taken and their usual approach:

- Presenter:* Tell them
- Trainer:* Follow me
- Coach:* Ask them
- Facilitator:* We'll go together

When running a training session, consider how these 4 roles would make up 100%, how much time you would spend in each role, and how time in that role affects the delivery style of the session. For example, a session that is 100% presenter would essentially become a lecture.

You can make your session more engaging and facilitate learning by adopting different roles during the session, or by introducing interactive activities and group work.

7. WRITING CONTENT

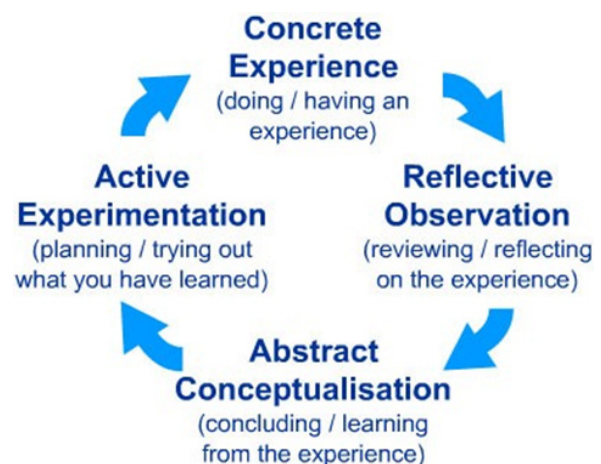
Before you begin to write content, you should consider what approach you will take to each individual session, and what style of learning would be most appropriate. During CIRCLE, Vitae utilised and recommended using an Experiential Learning approach.

"Experiential learning takes place when people learn from their experience by reflecting on it so that it can be understood and applied." Bradfield Group 2011

In simple terms, experiential learning is a process of learning through reflection on doing. This approach to learning was popularised in the 1970s and 80s by David A. Kolb, an educational theorist who developed the modern theory of experiential learning and the Experiential Learning Cycle.

According to Kolb, effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences.

The below diagram outlines this Experiential Learning Cycle**:



**Kolb, D. A. (1984). Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development (Vol. 1). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

This is an especially successful approach in the development of researchers as it challenges participants, builds interaction with others, and taps into their intellectual skills.

Kolb also states that in order to gain genuine knowledge from an experience, the learner must have four abilities:

- The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience
- The learner must be able to reflect on the experience
- The learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualise the experience
- The learner must possess decision making and problem-solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience.

With this in mind, you should consider how your workshop will ensure the full cycle is addressed. A balanced workshop is likely to include a mixture of experiential learning activities, periods of discussion and reflection, new insights and knowledge acquisition. Here is an example of the variation in activities delivered during a training workshop on how to use the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, delivered by the ISP Group at STEPRI, and funded by CIRCLE:

- Introduction to the workshop including aims and objectives
- Overview of the model using physical handouts
- Concrete Experience: Group discussion on challenges and success stories on research
- Reflective Observation: Group activity and presentations on identifying attitudes, behaviours and knowledge for each domain
- Abstract Conceptualisation: Presentation on why career development is important for researchers
- Abstract Conceptualisation: Group discussion on key insightful questions
- Active Experimentation: Draft personal career objectives using the RDF
- Active Experimentation: Key points and tasks to carry out after session to measure progress

Make sure your activities and workshop content is well-suited to those within the workshop.

For each session of your workshop, you should decide which type of activity is best. You can choose different activities for different sections to provide a variety of content and to tap into different types of learner.

Once you have decided on your activities, you can then begin to prepare the more detailed content for the session:

- What will the activity be about?
- What is the context?
- What resources will you need?
- Who would be best to deliver the session? Internal or external staff?
- Perhaps one of your participants could prepare a case study?
- Do you need to prepare slides, handouts, gather or write case studies, find photos, devise a role play, find or create a game?

Go back to Appendix B: Workshop Programme and Content Plan and add more detail.

8. LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the content for the session you will also need to think about the logistical considerations:

- What budget do you have for the training?
- What physical environment do you need? Think about the amount of light, space, layout, acoustics, inside or outside activity
- Where should the training be held? Within the institution? Nearby? Further away?
- What are the transport links like?
- What is the best venue type?
- Do you have space within the institution?
- Do you need to book space at a hotel/training centre?
- What materials do you need? E.g. internet connection, handouts, flip charts, pens
- When is the best time to run the training?
- Are there dates to avoid so that attendance isn't affected by holidays, exam period, or other pinch points
- How will you promote or communicate about the training?
- How will you register interest?
- Will the training be compulsory or optional?
- How will you log attendance?
- What are the risks?
- How will you evaluate the success of the workshop?

See Appendix C for a basic template to guide you in logistical planning for your workshop.

9. WORKSHOP DELIVERY & RISK MANAGEMENT

When you have completed your preparations consider your contingency plan for unforeseen circumstances, e.g. what will you do if bad weather prevents either the trainer or participants from attending – do you have a backup plan or another trainer who could take over? At what point would you cancel the training and how would you let participants know if this was the case?

If your workshop is one of a series of workshops, how will you ensure that the rest of the programme is not affected? Will there be another session attendees can go to at a later date?

Also consider any risks in the actual participation of the workshop. Are there any support services or resources you can offer participants if they become alarmed or distressed regarding the content of the training? For example, if you are running a session on writing for publication and one of your participants believes that they have been a victim of a predatory journal, they may need advice on how to manage the situation and avoid financial repercussions.

10. EVALUATION

It is always important to consider your evaluation criteria right at the beginning – before you run the workshop. Consider the following:

- What will success look like to you? E.g. no of attendees? % positive feedback?
- How will you know if you have achieved your aims and objectives?
- How will you know if participants have put the learning into practice after the workshop?
- How will you assess short and long term successes?
- How can you use the evaluation to improve future delivery of the workshop?

You might consider using a framework for evaluation, such as the Vitae Impact Framework below.*

IMPACT LEVEL 0: FOUNDATIONS

This level relates to the investment in the infrastructure for training and development activity, such as the employment of staff, a programme of training and development interventions, or training facilities.

Examples of Level 0 impact measures include metrics which primarily measure inputs and throughputs, such as the number of training opportunities offered, the number of participating researchers.

These metrics might be considered in a baseline analysis of a training programme. The baseline analysis, in effect, goes a long way towards understanding the environment in which training activity takes place. Additionally, from the perspective of a researcher participating in a training and development activity, Level 0 would be a baseline assessment of initial attitudes, behaviours, expertise and/or training needs.

An appropriate analysis at this level should be carried out prior to initiating any new training and development activity in order to establish a baseline understanding as a reference comparator in terms of determining the impact of the intervention.

IMPACT LEVEL 1: REACTION

This level indicates the reaction of participants to training and development activities. For example, at the end of a workshop participants may be asked their views of the experience or the training programme.

IMPACT LEVEL 2: LEARNING

This level reflects “the extent to which participants change their attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or increase skill because of attending the programme”. For example, does a researcher have a better understanding of how to work effectively within a team because of attending a training workshop?

IMPACT LEVEL 3: BEHAVIOUR

This level reflects “the extent to which change in behaviour has occurred because the participant attended the training programme”. For example, is the researcher now managing their project and time better because of the development activity? How has the researcher applied what they have learnt?

IMPACT LEVEL 4: OUTCOMES

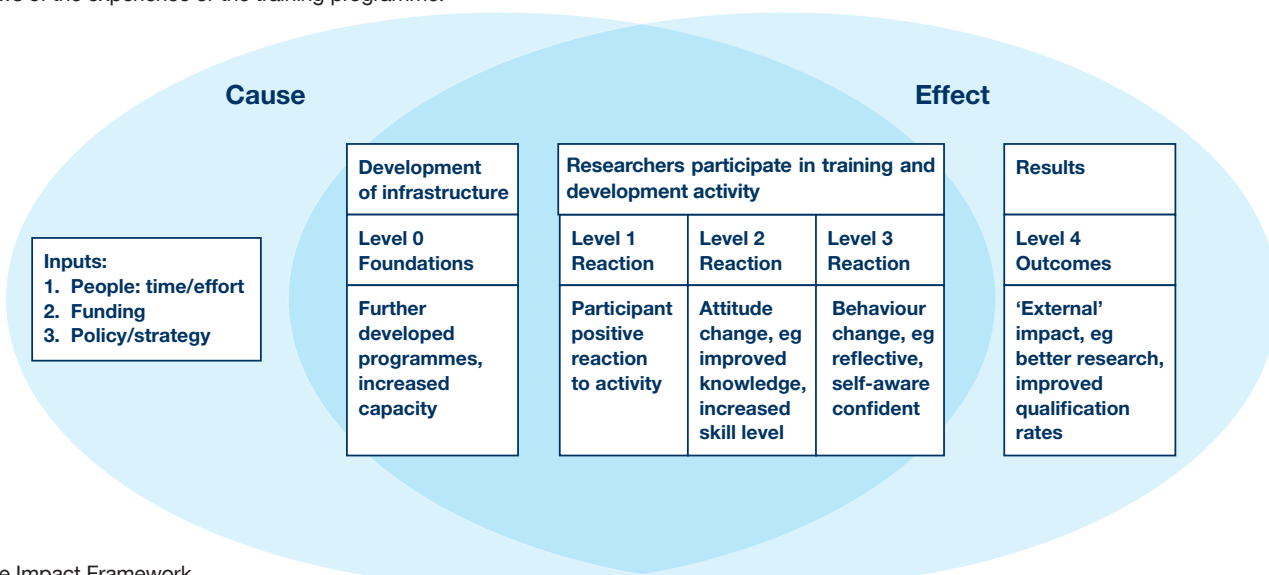
This level measures the results of the training and development activity. Have changes in behaviour resulted in different outcomes? Has the quality of research improved? Is there a more highly skilled research workforce?

Collecting Feedback

You will need to consider methods for gathering feedback for each of the above levels. Methods can include, but are not limited to:

- Pre- and post-workshop participant surveys
- Follow-up participant surveys at various stages after workshop delivery
- Interviews with participants
- Data analysis of predicted outputs. E.g. number of promotions in Departments, research outputs etc.
- Surveys for heads of department/wider institution
- Data on access to online resources. E.g. page views, video views, document downloads

Your institution may have data collection methods already in place that you could use, or you may need to create these from scratch. Ensure that your evaluation activities are captured in your ISP Action Plan.



The Vitae Impact Framework

*<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/impact-and-evaluation/researcher-development-evaluation-toolkit/impact-levels-for-researcher-development-evaluation>

Accessible Resources

Once you have delivered your training workshop, it is helpful to provide resources which participants can access at any time to support learning outcomes.

CIRCLE ISP Groups have provided participants with the following types of resources to support longer-term learning and development. Note that resources can be provided in hard-copy or soft-copy either via email or online space:

TRAINING CALENDARS

Participants can be provided with copies of calendars of future training opportunities within the institution, as well as details of training by external providers which may be useful.

HANDBOOKS/GUIDELINES

Participants receive copies of formal institution handbooks or guidelines on key training topics such as Research Ethics or Mentoring. Participants with accessibility issues such as the visually impaired or individuals with dyslexia should be provided with their accessible versions.

WORKBOOKS

Participants can be provided with workshop workbooks to record learning and notes throughout the workshop. They can then refer to these at a later date if required.

TEMPLATES AND TOOLKITS

Any useful templates or toolkits used in the delivery of the workshop should be made available to participants before, during and after the workshop.

These should be in an easily accessible format such as Word or Excel documents or paper copies.

POLICIES

Copies of any relevant policies and/or strategies in place at your institution should be shared with participants. These add valuable context to the training session, and help participants to understand the reasons why the workshop has been developed.

FORUMS AND INTRANETS

If possible, an online space for discussion or sharing of resources should also be provided. This can be created via an online forum (such as Basecamp, or even Facebook) or via an institutional intranet or Blackboard style platform.

STAFF MEMBERS, DEPARTMENTS AND 1:1 GUIDANCE

Participants may also want to know where they can go for further support or information after a workshop has been delivered. Giving details on relevant departments across the institution would enable participants to seek advice as and when they required. You may also like to provide details on staff members responsible for certain areas (for example, your ISP Group may nominate an RDF Coordinator or a Mentoring Lead), as well as other sources for 1:1 Guidance such as their Academic Supervisor or Mentor (if in place).

It should be noted that it is standard good practice for all of the above examples of resources to be made available to all researchers within the institution, regardless of attendance to any training workshops.

Scaling up to a large-scale training programme

Once you have established processes for...

- Understanding learning and training needs at your institution
- Planning and delivering a workshop to address those needs
- The evaluation of the workshop's success

...it is then time to consider how to scale up from an individual workshop to a wider programme of several workshops.

You will need to address the broader needs of different participants and your institution and translate them into a series of workshops to deliver broader aims and actions outlined in your ISP Action Plan. However, the process for developing each workshop remains the same.

For example, you may have run a successful training workshop on the use of the Vitae RDF for early career researchers within the climate change department at your institution. Following the workshop evaluation, you have found that there is an increasing interest from other departments to run a similar programme, as well as discussion on how to deliver RDF training for more senior researchers across the institution.

Here are some questions to consider turning your workshop into a wider programme of workshops:

- Have you identified other groups of early career researchers who could benefit from this training workshop as part of your ISP Gap Analysis?
- Would delivery of a wider programme help you to achieve actions in your ISP Action Plan?
- Does your Implementation Group have the capacity to deliver a wider programme of workshops?

- Who do you need to speak to within your institution to adapt content for other audiences?
- What workshops are already in place across your institution?
- How can you bring these together and learn from other trainers?
- How can you assess current workshop provision against a different group of researchers needs? Ensure you can map to RDF and institutional strategic priorities.
- How would content of the workshop need to be adapted for different participant groups? Who will lead on this?
- Does the new programme need to be managed by a central provider or locally within each department?
- Do you need additional trainers? Can you build capacity by training others to deliver?
- How will the programme be managed? What about wider administration?
- What would be the cost of running a large-scale programme? Do you have access to funding and resources?
- What other resources can you provide? Can other departments contribute?

When scaling up workshops to programmes, you need to think about how to ensure that learning and outcomes are embedded across your institution and that responsibility is shared and disseminated outside of your Implementation Group. This will help to ensure that training programmes are sustainable and do not rely on the activities within the ISP.

Experience from CIRCLE

Our CIRCLE ISP Implementation Groups outlined over 200 actions related to the establishment or enhancement of Researcher Development Programmes within their institutions. These actions included a mix of activities relating to Career and Professional Development, Mentoring, Research Ethics, Research Outputs, Research(er) Funding, Networking and Dissemination, Stakeholder Engagement and specific training and support on the use of the Vitae RDF.

Implementation Groups reported mixed success in the execution of their actions over the course of the programme. Commonly reported challenges in implementing actions that aimed to enhance researcher development programmes included:

- Difficulty in running sufficient number of workshops and managing over-subscription.
- Need to increase number of trainers able to deliver RDF training.
- Gaining senior institutional support to standardise training and include in wider support offerings.

Actions related to training and support on the use of the RDF and related learning were most commonly reported as successful, with 64% of activities being completed by our groups. This is likely due to the high level of support and resources made available to the CIRCLE ISP Implementation groups, on the RDF, through Vitae, our lead ISP Partner.

The types of activities outlined for each action also determined the level of their success. 82% of planned training sessions and/or workshops were either completed or underway, with the remainder being rescheduled due to internal delays. CIRCLE Implementation Groups who were attempting to develop or change wider institutional policies on researcher development opportunities and support reported long bureaucratic processes that slowed down progress. 25% of the Groups were able to successfully implement or improve policies, while 41% were still in the process of gaining senior approval.



Further support in the CIRCLE ISP Good Practice Guide Series

You may find the following guides useful for the next stage of your ISP:

Guide 1: Designing an Effective Institutional Strengthening Programme for Researcher Career Development

This Guide shows you how to set up your own Institutional Strengthening Programme for Researcher Career Development by introducing each of the design and delivery stages. This includes how to establish your ISP Implementation Group, carrying out your Gap Analysis, preparing and implementing your Action Plan, and how to monitor success.

Guide 2: Engaging People with your Institutional Strengthening Programme

This Guide provides information on how to engage stakeholders with your ISP, how to create a communications plan, and various tips on keeping your institution updated on your progress and achievements and embedding activities into “normal business”.

Guide 3: Enhancing Institutional Researcher Development Programmes

This Guide introduces the concept of Researcher Development Programmes (RDP) and explores how to design an effective training programme using an experiential learning approach. The Guide also covers how you can scale up your workshop to a full-scale institutional programme of training support.

Guide 4: Approaches to Mentoring and Setting up an Institutional Mentoring Programme

This Guide explains the different approaches to mentoring, how they differ from academic supervision, and how to set up institutional mentoring programmes for researchers using tools such as the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF).

Guide 5: Institutions: using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework to enhance researcher development provision and develop researcher competencies

This Guide explains how institutions can use the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) as a framework for supporting the professional development of researchers within their institution.

Guide 6: Researchers: using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework for professional development planning

This Guide explains how individual researchers can use the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) as a framework for supporting their own professional development.

Appendix A: Workshop Aims and Objectives

Target audience for training: _____

Which of the needs identified will you focus on?

Workshop title:	
Workshop purpose:	
Workshop objectives: <i>Use Bloom's Taxonomy and SMART</i>	RDF Descriptors
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Appendix B: Workshop Programme and Content Plan

Title of workshop:

Date:

Venue:

Trainer:

Time	Duration	Title of content, brief outline and type of activity	Objective covered
		<i>Introduction and aims</i> <i>What will this include? Formal presentation, icebreaker, introductions?</i>	
		<i>Session 1</i>	
		BREAK	
		<i>Session 2</i>	
		<i>Session 3</i>	
		<i>Close of session</i>	

Appendix C: Logistics Planning

Workshop title:

Resource	What is required?
Budget	
Timing	
Materials needed for the session	
Type of venue and layout	
Risks	
Communications channels	
Evaluation methods	

Acknowledgements

Africa is particularly vulnerable to the environmental, social and economic impact of changes in climate, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change suggesting that Africa is likely to emerge as the most vulnerable region to climate change by 2100 (IPCC, 2007).

Despite consensus on the current and future impacts of climate change on Africa, there are significant uncertainties on the exact nature of future climatic changes. A better understanding is critical to developing sustainable and cost-effective responses. However, sufficient support and resources to build a solid research-base are lacking. Between 1981 and 2009, African scientists contributed less than 2% of global climate change publications. There are a number of initiatives in Africa helping to address Africa's climate change problems, but the research community remains in need of a boost.

The Climate Impacts Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement in Sub-Saharan Africa (CIRCLE) programme is an initiative of the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), and aims to address the above issues. The project adopted the dual approach of supporting individual academics to undertake research while also working with their institutions to develop better professional development systems for their researchers.

CIRCLE was allocated GBP 4.85 million over 5 years (2014-2019) and facilitated capacity strengthening of African researchers to develop relevant local solutions and improve uptake and use in local, national and regional policy and implementation. It also enhanced the output of African researchers through delivery of focused training and support on grant funding and writing for publications.

The programme does not work in isolation, and seeks to contribute to local, national and regional policy agendas and the initiatives of institutions already working in climate change in Africa, as well as those yet to come. It is important that the individual researchers and academic institutions benefiting from this programme work in conjunction with existing frameworks to maximise their impact. The aim of the programme is not simply to produce a body of research, but to strengthen the mechanisms of research uptake and support institutions to develop and realise a clearly defined strategic approach to climate change research.

The information about CIRCLE ISP in this Guide has been generated by a wide range of programme participants including Senior Champions, professional and academic staff and early career research Fellows during our programme of workshops and in follow-up evaluations and with the support of the AAS and ACU teams.

We would like to thank all who collaborated in the CIRCLE ISP, undertook steps for institutional change and embraced the journey to strengthen institutional provision for the career development of researchers, and especially CIRCLE Fellows who have developed into research leaders for the future.

Alison Mitchell, Director of Development, Vitae

Jen Reynolds, Professional Development Manager, Vitae

Vitae (www.vitae.ac.uk) is the global leader in supporting the professional development of researchers, experienced in working with higher education institutions as they strive for excellence, innovation and impact. Vitae is a non-profit programme, part of The Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Ltd with over 45 years' experience in enhancing the skills and careers.

Verity Buckley, CIRCLE Programme Manager, The ACU

George Lakey, CIRCLE Programme Officer, The ACU

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The ACU is an international organisation dedicated to building a better world through higher education. International collaboration is central to this ambition: by bringing universities together from around the world – and crucially the people who study and work within them – the ACU helps to advance knowledge, promote understanding, broaden minds, and improve lives. The ACU champions higher education as a cornerstone of stronger societies, supporting its members, partners, and stakeholders as they adapt to a changing world.



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