

BBSRC VISION FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

PURPOSE

1. BBSRC has a crucial role in supporting the UK's world-leading position in bioscience research. Central to this is the need to ensure a supply of excellent scientists for the UK research base, industry and public bodies.
2. Postdoctoral researchers (postdocs) play a vital role in delivering the UK's world-leading bioscience research outputs, and BBSRC supports a large community of postdocs through research grants. This vision statement gives a view of BBSRC's future interactions with the postdoc community.

INTRODUCTION

3. BBSRC investments in bioscience research and training underpin a large and vibrant community of postdoctoral researchers. This diverse group of experienced and highly-skilled people contains the research leaders of tomorrow and a cumulative body of technical and knowledge expertise required to deliver internationally excellent research leading to economic and social impact, and to sustain a thriving UK bioeconomy. BBSRC recognises the need to engage with and nurture this unique cohort of researchers because:
 - Postdocs are the vital engine of research and without them the UK would be unable to deliver world-leading bioscience research and research outcomes
 - The UK bioeconomy (from academia to SMEs and large research-intensive companies) relies on their high research productivity, and the new knowledge and networks that they create
 - Postdocs benefit wider society by deploying their high-level skills into all sectors of the economy, through knowledge exchange and by engaging the public with science
 - A critical mass of talented postdocs in the UK attracts co-investment from the private and third sectors, including inward investment from international companies, who seek to benefit from the high-level skills of the postdoc workforce
 - Postdocs play important roles in supporting the supply-chain of highly-skilled bioscientists as mentors and trainers for undergraduate and postgraduate students

BBSRC'S VISION FOR THE POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER COMMUNITY

4. BBSRC's vision is of a highly-skilled community of postdocs who make informed career choices, are well networked with each other and have an affinity for BBSRC as a partner within research.
5. In addition to their research, BBSRC also expects the postdocs it funds to:
 - Communicate their research to the public at both the local and national level, and to raise awareness of the role of science and research in any related issues of public interest (as set out in the 2010 Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research¹)

¹ www.ukri.org/files/legacy/scisoc/concordatforengagingthepublicwithresearch-pdf/ [accessed 5/04/18]

- Make every reasonable effort to ensure that the intellectual assets obtained in the course of their research, whether protected by intellectual property rights or not, are used to the benefit of society and the economy
 - Train junior researchers such as undergraduates and PhD students, and have the opportunity, where applicable, to gain teaching experience
6. BBSRC is a signatory of the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*² and expects any Research Organisation in receipt of BBSRC research grants to adopt these principles³. In following these principles, postdocs should have knowledge of the range of future career opportunities available to them, be aware of their training needs, have good access to training opportunities, and make full use of the recommended 10 days of development activities per year⁴.
7. BBSRC has the following vision regarding the BBSRC-supported postdoc community;
- a. Postdoctoral researchers should be highly-skilled and adaptable, and recognised as such
 - b. Postdoctoral researchers should be integrated into their research environment and fully aware of their opportunities for training and development
 - c. Postdoctoral researchers should be empowered through independence, and able to make well-informed decisions about their future career progression from an early stage
 - d. Postdoctoral researchers should embrace an ethos of Continuing Professional Development
 - e. Postdoctoral researchers should associate themselves with BBSRC and other BBSRC-supported researchers, and be connected to a broad network of fellow researchers
 - f. Postdoctoral researchers should be properly treated as employees of their host institution and adequately supported in light of their short-term contracts

² [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, Vitae, 2008](#)

³ www.ukri.org/files/legacy/news/grant-fec-tcs-january-2018-v1-pdf/

⁴ research.aston.ac.uk/portal/files/1008566/RobertReport2011.pdf [all accessed 5/04/18]