

Action plan 2023-25 – The Concordat to support the career development of researchers

Timeframe: From February 2023 to February 2025

Imperial College London became a signatory of the [Concordat for the career development of researchers](#) in March 2020. The initial action plan was published in March 2021, with the subsequent annual report endorsed by the Provost's Board in March 2022.

Between January and July 2022, [the Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre \(PFDC\) initiated and delivered 21 projects](#), including five large-scale scoping projects. All projects were funded by the Research England Enhancing Research Culture funding, of which the PFDC was awarded £432,500 to support efforts in enhancing the research environment. While some of these projects related to outstanding actions from the 2021 Concordat action plan, many, especially the five scoping projects, launched new initiatives.

All five scoping projects gained significant interest across the departments, faculties and support services in the College and resulted in a number of recommendations which align with the Concordat principles. The five scoping projects were:

- [What do women need to progress in academia?](#)
- [The Independent Research Fellows' 'Life-cycle' at Imperial College London: A review of fellows' experience of processes across departments](#)
- [Understanding ECR Career Perceptions](#)
- [Quantifying and describing the experiences of long-term researchers \(LTRs\) at Imperial](#)
- [Improving the wellbeing of early career researchers through tangible actions against bullying and harassment](#)

During 2022, a review was undertaken of the progress made against the 2021 action plan. The initial Concordat gap analysis was re-evaluated through consultation with key stakeholders: the [PFDC Reps Network](#), a thriving community of over 70 reps who represent research staff from every department across all campuses, and the Concordat Implementation and Planning Group (CIPG). The CIPG, which is composed of researchers and key service providers, reports to the Researcher Development Committee. Its purpose is to have oversight of the current Concordat action plans, while also assisting to direct future ones. The 2021 Staff Survey results were released and reviewed against the Concordat action plan and gap analysis. These reviews and the subsequent recommendations from the scoping projects outlined above, led to the 2023-25 Concordat action plan. The action plan continues to group activities according to themes, to ensure that it creates the best culture for its researchers to thrive.

Existing or new themes:

1. Communications of current and new College provision (new)
2. Wellbeing of research staff (existing)
3. PI support to deliver the Concordat principles (existing)
4. How postdocs utilise their 10 development days (existing)
5. Supporting talent (new)

Themes that have been retired, as they are either complete or have been integrated into existing provision:

The actions outlined in the below themes have been completed and are now integrated into annual proceedings, or the next steps have become incorporated into other areas of the College, such as [Imperial's People Strategy 2022+](#).

6. Leadership development for ECRs
7. The Personal Review and Development Plan (PRDP) process
8. Researcher Development Committee responsibilities

Governance

This Concordat action plan has a two-year focus (2023-25). The action plan is monitored and maintained by the [Researcher Development Committee](#) (Chair: Professor Julie McCann, reports to: University Research and Enterprise Board (formally [College Research Committee](#))). The 2023-25 Concordat action plan was shared with the [University Management Board](#) (UMB) during February 2023 as part of the Colleges internal review process for ratification. The annual report for 2022 was confirmed by College Council in May 2023.

The Researcher Development Committee will ensure that the Concordat action plan complements other key initiatives, such as the Race Equality Charter (REC) and Athena Swan, and will oversee the completion of the actions set out below.

Existing or new themes

1. Communications of current and new College provision

While the provision offered by the College via the Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre (PFDC) is extensive, researchers are not necessarily aware of all the initiatives which are in place to help and support their development. This became clear through discussions with key stakeholders (the PFDC Reps Network, senior leaders) and the findings from the 2022 Research England-funded scoping projects. The actions laid out under this theme aim to increase awareness of existing provision amongst both the research staff and the PIs. They will do this by firstly giving research staff permission to engage with their own development (action 1.3) and then by highlighting both current (actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.4) and new provision (actions 1.5, 1.6).

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action Progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
Increase awareness amongst the researcher community of the support that the PFDC offers and how they can access these services	<p>1.1 Increase awareness of the PFDC</p> <p>A proportion of the recommendations from the five scoping projects funded by Research England that were commissioned by the PFDC pointed to a lack of awareness of the support that the PFDC offers to researchers.</p> <p>To address this the PFDC will do the following:</p> <p>a) PFDC communications plan. The PFDC will evaluate all communications and identify areas of improvement.</p> <p>b) Update email distribution lists. To ensure that the PFDC is reaching the whole community, the PFDC will update the PFDC mailing lists. This will include a new list for PFDC events, which will be used to invite all researchers, unless they opt out, to relevant events.</p>	PFDC	<p>Spring 2023</p> <p>Spring 2023</p>	New action	<p>Communications plan to be in place and executed by 2024.</p> <p>Pulse survey to be in place by spring 2023 and annual results to show an increase in awareness of the PFDC by 10% each year.</p> <p>All departments and campuses to have been visited by winter 2024.</p> <p>Hit rates on the PFDC website to have increased by at least 15% by 2025.</p>

	<p>c) PFDC departmental roadshow. The PFDC will visit every department and all campuses to increase awareness amongst the community of how the PFDC can support them.</p> <p>d) PFDC website relaunch. Following feedback from the Postdoc Reps Network, the PFDC website is being upgraded to better meet its users' needs and be more accessible.</p>		<p>2023-24</p> <p>Spring 2023</p>		
For all those involved in research to be aware of the Concordat	<p>1.2 Increase awareness of the Concordat across Imperial</p> <p>The profile of the Concordat, and the committee that services it, needs to be raised. This will be done by the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Announce the 2023-25 Concordat action plan in the College Staff Briefing: article by Professor Julie McCann to announce the Researcher Development Committee (RDC), its remit and the Concordat action plan. Concordat webpage to be updated RDC webpage to be updated Briefing paper of the Concordat and action plan to be sent to all HoDs to distribute to all staff Completed actions from this action plan to be shared from the RDC to all staff via the Staff Briefing. 	RDC	<p>Spring 2023</p> <p>Spring 2023 Spring 2023 Summer 2023</p> <p>2023-24</p>	New action	<p>Pulse survey to be in place to coincide with the launch of the 2023-35 Concordat action plan.</p> <p>Awareness of the Concordat within the researcher community to increase by 5% year on year.</p>

Encourage ECRs to proactively engage in professional and career development activities	<p>1.3 Give ECRs permission to engage with professional and career development activities.</p> <p>The President to produce a video that is shared with all staff via the Staff Briefing, actively encouraging research staff to engage in their development and encouraging all PIs to support their researchers to take up opportunities.</p>	President/ PFDC	Summer 2023	New action	<p>Video to be produced and receive at least 250 views.</p> <p>5% increase year on year of engagement with CPD.</p>
Increase awareness amongst research staff of key College initiatives that affect their environment, such as the Imperial Values, Report and Support, and wellbeing provision	<p>1.4 Communications plan for key College initiatives that relate to research environment and wellbeing</p> <p>Produce a joint communication brief with the PFDC, POD and DD ODI that will be shared via the HoDs to the ECR community in their departments. This will contain information about key College initiatives that the ECRs could engage with such as Imperial Values, Report and Support and Wellbeing action plan.</p> <p><u>Wellbeing action plan</u> To be shared with the PFDC Reps Network and the PFDC Champions for discussion and dissemination.</p>	POD/ DD ODI/ PFDC	Spring 2023 Summer 2023	New action	<p>In the 2022 staff survey, researchers had an average satisfaction rate for Health and Wellbeing of 58% (4% below the overall college value at 62%). The measurement of success will be a narrowing of the delta between the two scores.</p> <p>Wellbeing action plan to be supported by the ECRs and for there to be an increase in engagement with the support on offer/under development.</p>
Enhancing the academic experience for independently funded fellows	<p>1.5 Departmental information on fellowship and fellows</p> <p>A recommendation from the Research England Funded report, The Independent</p>	PFDC	Summer 2024	New action	<p>The template to be developed and shared with departments.</p> <p>50% of departments to have adapted the template by 2025.</p>

	Research Fellows' 'Life-cycle' at Imperial College London: A review of fellows' experience of processes across departments , was to draw on best practice from across the College to produce a standardised website template. This would be for departments to adapt to showcase the support available during the fellows' life-cycle.				
Making all PIs aware of the resources that have been developed to help them deliver the Concordat principles	1.6 PI resources launch Following the development of the PI resources, their launch will be communicated in the following ways: a. Announcement in the Staff Briefing b. Email to HoDs c. Email to PIs d. Launch in Departments during all staff meetings	POD/PFDC	early 2023	New action	Emails to be sent and for the website to be receiving regular hits, with a 5% increase year on year. All departments to be visited by 2024.

2. Wellbeing of research staff

The continued pressures due to Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis have put the wellbeing of all Imperial's researchers, especially research staff, at the centre of this action plan. The actions that have been put forward below build upon the work that the College has undertaken in this area since 2020. In the 2022 Staff Survey, only 52% of research staff who responded thought that "*Imperial does enough to support my health and wellbeing at work*", so it is evident that there is still room for improvement. The focus for the next two years is to increase the recognition of the research staff community, help them to build support networks and enhance awareness of issues that some may face across all staff groups.

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action Progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
College-wide evaluation of the provision for	2.1 Mental health and wellbeing provision evaluation	Director (HR)/ POD/Occupational Health/PFDC	2021	Completed	In 2022, Imperial appointed a Staff Wellbeing Manager. Following an extensive review of

<p>mental health and wellbeing</p>	<p>The College has an extensive online provision for health and wellbeing.</p> <p>A small project group, including those already working on wellbeing across HR, is meeting to coordinate and consolidate work on wellbeing, so it is comprehensive and easier to access.</p> <p>The goal is to produce a centralised resource for all staff, including researchers.</p>				<p>current provision, they have designed and will be implementing a College-wide evidence-based mental health and wellbeing strategy in 2023. A central hub for health and wellbeing has also been created.</p> <p>During 2021-22, the POD Wellbeing offering included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 sessions with 234 attendees • Feedback: Usefulness - 4.6 out of 5 • Feedback: Likelihood to apply learnings - 4.6 out of 5 • 48 events during the 2022 Mental Health Awareness Week, with 330 registrations. <p>This completes this outstanding action.</p>
<p>Review the use of open-ended contracts for long-serving ECRs to ensure the College adheres to employment practices</p>	<p>2.2 Open-ended contracts use for ECRs</p> <p>Undertake a review of fixed-term contract (FTCs) employment practices of postdoc staff, with a view to reducing the use of FTCs wherever possible.</p> <p>The review to have a focus on employees with over four years'</p>	<p>Head (Reward, Engagement and Policy)</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>A cross-College working group has been established to review the Learning and Teaching and Research terms and conditions and the use of fixed-term contracts. Their review will be shared with the University Management Board in early 2023.</p>

	service on two or more successive contracts, to ensure that all eligible staff are offered an open-ended contract in accordance with UK legislation.				
Introduce a mechanism for research staff to recognise, thank and celebrate individuals or teams who promote a positive research environment, and care for wellbeing	<p>2.3 Researcher recognition</p> <p>PFDC Researcher Awards In recognition of the significant contributions that research staff make to Imperial, the PFDC will host a ‘Thank you’ event. During this event, the annual PFDC Reps Award will take place, as well as the addition of new awards that will recognise contributions to research environment and wellbeing.</p> <p>Appreciation board Following the success of the Postdoc appreciation board during Postdoc Appreciation Week (PAW) in 2022, this will be made an annual fixture during PAW.</p>	PFDC	<p>Summer 2023</p> <p>Autumn 2023</p>	New action	<p>The ‘Thank you’ event to take place and be attended by at least 75 researchers.</p> <p>The new awards to receive at least 20 nominations and the results to be celebrated across departments/faculties/College.</p> <p>Postdoc appreciation board posts to increase 15% year on year.</p> <p>A 3% increase (currently at 58% increase to <60%) in Reward and recognition in the next Staff Survey.</p>
Use case studies to improve ECRs’ understanding of what behaviour is (un)acceptable	<p>2.4 What is (un)acceptable behaviour?</p> <p>Incorporate scenarios/examples into core PFDC courses to highlight what is (un)acceptable behaviour and to empower ECRs to feel like they can</p>	PFDC/EDIC	Incorporated into the 2023-24 course provision	New action	Case studies to be incorporated into the PFDC courses.

	<p>act when they witness behaviours that do not adhere to Imperial values.</p> <p>Case studies to be incorporated into the “Making the most of your postdoc” and “Managing your first research group” courses. The areas to be covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spectrum of sexist behaviour and gender-based microaggressions. • Discrimination 				
Reverse mentoring groups for HoDs composed of research staff from underrepresented groups in their departments	<p>2.5 HoD ECR shadowing scheme for underrepresented groups</p> <p>Building on the success of the reverse mentoring scheme for the senior leadership team, assign a group of research staff who are underrepresented as reverse mentors to HoDs, to allow them access to first-person insights into the experiences of minoritized researchers within their departments. The researchers in turn will get a better understanding of how a department works and the leadership skills that are required.</p>	PFDC/EDIC/POD/DD (ODI)	To start in spring 2024		<p>To be piloted in one department during 2024. Pilot to be evaluated through surveys which will be undertaken throughout the process.</p> <p>Depending on the success of the scheme, rolled out across faculties/College.</p>
Support researchers to better manage their time, so they can prioritise work that will lead to personal success	<p>2.6 Time management resources</p> <p>In addition to the PFDC Time Management course, the PFDC to produce a series of time management resources, such as a video and</p>	PFDC	Spring 2024	New action	<p>Resources produced and widely promoted to the community.</p> <p>Resources to be accessed by at least 100 users in the first year,</p>

	tipsheet which researchers can access when needed.				and increase this by 15% the following year.
Researchers who join Imperial to have access to a peer “buddy” from another research group within their department	<p>2.7 Researcher buddy system</p> <p>Introduce a buddy system within a department to help diminish the feeling of isolation or loneliness amongst researchers. It is an opportunity to increase interactions across the departments and to foster a sense of community.</p>	PFDC/Postdoc Champion/DoM	Pilot in 2024	New action	<p>System in place to identify buddies within the department. Guidelines to be generated. Buddies to be paired up as new starters join the department. Evaluation to be carried out over the remaining period.</p> <p>After initial trial, if successful, rolled out across a faculty.</p>
Increase awareness of sexist behaviours and gender based microaggressions	<p>2.8 Develop training on sexist behaviours and gender based microaggressions</p> <p>Using the resources that were developed as part of the Research England funded scoping project, What do women need to progress in academia, develop a short training session that could be shared with the researcher community.</p>	PFDC/EDIC	2023-24	New action	<p>Training to be piloted in 2023 with the Postdoc Reps Network, feedback to be incorporated.</p> <p>Wider roll out to take place during 2023-24.</p> <p>Feedback scores to be evaluated and 80% of participants to know more about the issues because of the training.</p>
Encourage collective reflection on issues of gender equity amongst all members of the Imperial community, starting with research staff.	<p>2.9 Facilitating factors for women in academia</p> <p>Develop a ‘checklist’ and reflective questions for the ten facilitating factors discussed in What do women need to progress in academia.</p>	PFDC/EDIC	Autumn 2024	New action	<p>Develop the ‘checklist’ and pilot amongst research staff.</p> <p>Feedback scores to be evaluated and 80% of participants to know more about the ten facilitating factors after the training.</p>

	Invite individual research staff to consider the actions they will take to integrate these practices into their own working environments.				Investigate how this could be rolled out more widely across College during 2024-25.
Organise events to tackle loneliness and isolation amongst the research staff community	<p>2.10 Networking and development events for researchers across the College</p> <p>Combining both networking and development elements, this series of events aims to increase researchers' feeling of belonging to the Imperial researcher community and enable them to build positive connections with other postdocs from across the College.</p>	PFDC	Spring-summer 2023	New action	<p>Aim to host at least one event at each of the three largest campuses (South Kensington, White City, Hammersmith).</p> <p>Success will be measured through evaluation forms at the end of the events.</p>
Help researchers recognise and overcome the sense of grief that some may feel towards leaving academia	<p>2.11 Support researchers with the feelings that some may feel when leaving academia</p> <p>Develop resources to help support researchers with the feeling that this may arise when leaving academia.</p>	PFDC	Autumn 2024	New action	Resources to be in place and accessed by 2025
Clearly explain all the terms that are found in a research-only contract	<p>2.12 Contract terms explained</p> <p>Conduct a focus group with the PFDC Postdoc Reps Network. Together with HR, identify the terms within a standard contract that may not be</p>	PFDC / HR	Autumn 2024	New action	<p>The glossary of terms to be drawn up and shared with the community.</p> <p>The glossary to be incorporated into HR new starter information.</p>

	understood and develop a glossary to help explain these terms.				
Build a community for independently funded fellows	<p>2.13 Group coaching sessions for fellows</p> <p>Pilot facilitated peer support sessions for personal and professional development towards research independence within departments/faculties/campuses. This is so that participating researchers can build better connections and support networks.</p>	PFDC	Spring 2023	New action	<p>Aim to host at least one group at each of the three largest campuses (South Kensington, White City, Hammersmith).</p> <p>Success will be measured through evaluation at the end of the programme.</p>

3. PI support to deliver the Concordat principles

During 2022, Imperial commissioned a project to generate a suite of resources to equip PIs with the information they need to create a positive working environment for both themselves and the researchers they support: [Resources for PIs](#). Action 1.6 will concentrate on ensuring that these resources are known to and accessed by PIs. Following the creation of the [PI code of practice](#), an equivalent for both research staff and independently funded fellows will be generated.

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
Establish a PI induction so that all new PIs who employ researchers are made aware of the support that is available to them at the College. They will also be made aware of relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms	<p>3.1 PI induction</p> <p>Working with the recommendations from 2.1 and those from the recent evaluation into the provision for probationary lecturers, establish a PI-specific induction for all new PIs, ensuring that the Concordat is at the heart of the induction.</p>	POD	2022-23	Completed	<p>Tailored induction materials and resources for PIs have been developed with a focus on equipping PIs to create a positive working environment for their teams.</p> <p>This is in the form of a web-based platform, which covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigating induction and probation

and conditions of grant funding.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing yourself and your research career • Leading a research group • Managing research projects
Provide PFDC Postdoc Champions with additional training to facilitate constructive career conversation with their departmental ECRs	3.2 PFDC Postdoc Champions – Careers training Offer the PFDC Postdoc Champions training on career guidance to enable them to give an honest appraisal of an ECR’s CV and point them in the direction of where to find career resources. This would potentially help to remove the PI/postdoc conflict that can happen when discussing career objectives.	PFDC/PFDC Champions/ Careers Service	2021	Completed	Thanks to Research England funding, the Careers Service have developed materials to enable the PFDC Postdoc Champions to have career guidance conversations with postdocs. The training session took place in June 2022.
Updated outcome: Develop a code of practice for postdocs and fellows at Imperial.	3.3 Postdocs/Fellows’ roles and responsibilities Following on from the PI Code of practice, develop the equivalent for postdocs and independently funded fellows. These should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline their respective roles and responsibilities in the domains of the research project, working relationship and career development • Be based on examples of best practice, such as those developed by 	PFDC/RD Committee	Generated by autumn 2024	Ongoing	PI Code of Practice has been in place since January 2022. The PFDC will develop a similar code of practice for research staff and independently funded fellows in 2023-24.

	<p>Civil and Environmental Engineering or other Russell Group Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be complemented with links to further information about the provision for postdocs/fellows and training/support available for PI management development. 				
Increase the representation of underrepresented researchers at the College	<p>3.4 Bias training for the recruitment of research staff</p> <p>Working with the data that has been generated for the Race Equality Charter, the College needs to boost the number of BAME staff. An initiative put in place to do this is to introduce bias training for all recruitment panels, with an initial focus on the recruitment of research staff such as postdocs.</p>	DD(ODI)/ EDIC/POD/ Head (Recruitment and Promotions)	2021	Completed	<p>A recruitment workshop – Positive action and Know your pool took place on 8 November 2022.</p> <p>Out of over 80 people who were invited to the workshop, 62 people attended. Nine filled out the feedback form (15% response rate). 4.67 and 4.56 out of 5 average scores in usefulness for first and second half of workshop. 100% said they were more confident in working to improve local recruitment practices.</p> <p>HR have created an Inclusive Recruitment webpage.</p>

4. How postdocs utilise their 10 development days

For over ten years, all Imperial research staff have 10 development days allocated in their contracts. However, the College has not monitored how research staff use these 10 days or compiled evidence-based examples of best practice. The College aims to help research staff to better utilise these development days, first by gaining a better understanding of what they use their days for, and then develop a series of resources which will enable them to better utilise their development days' entitlement.

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
A better understanding as to how Imperial research staff use their 10 development days	<p>Updated action</p> <p>4.1 How do Imperial researchers use their 10 development days?</p> <p>The aim of this study is to get past the idea that the 10 days can be used just for courses, and to identify other ways in which the days could be utilised to allow research staff to achieve their career goals.</p> <p>To do this, research alumni will be interviewed to ascertain, retrospectively, how they used their 10 development days to help them move forward with their careers.</p>	PFDC	To be concluded in summer 2023	Ongoing	<p>The PFDC will tender for an external consultant to conduct a project which will cover actions 4.1 and 4.2.</p> <p>This work will be conducted during 2023-24.</p>
Increase awareness of the 10 development days in all postdoc contracts: resources made available to both postdocs and PIs to inform discussions on how to use the 10 development days.	<p>4.2 Postdoc-10: evidence-based examples</p> <p>a) Building on the work carried out in action 4.1, develop web-based guidance about the wide range of activities that researchers can spend their professional development entitlement on, that goes beyond workshops and courses.</p>	PFDC	Resources to go live in winter 2023	Ongoing	<p>Please see action 4.1.</p> <p>Resources to be accessed by at least 100 users in the first year and increase this by 15% the following year.</p>

	<p>Include real-life case studies (e.g., brief video interviews or profile stories) of Imperial researchers discussing the benefits they have taken from engaging with their professional development, particularly those that highlight using additional resources other than courses provided by the College.</p> <p>The case studies to be a regular feature in the monthly PFDC newsletter.</p> <p>b) '10 development day' resources to be incorporated into all PFDC welcome information and an email to be sent to all ECRs who have been at the College for six months, with additional information about how to utilise their day as a resource for their development.</p>				
<p>Track how many postdocs utilise their 10 development days so that the College is able to generate data to better understand what activities they engage in, and also identify areas within the College where development isn't being undertaken</p>	<p>4.3 Tracking uptake of 10 development days</p> <p>HR to develop a standard approach for research staff to log their professional development activity/days, in a similar way to booking annual leave. This system to be monitored at department-/College-level so that individuals, via their PIs, can be encouraged to regularly engage with their development.</p>	<p>Director (HR)</p>	<p>2021-22</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Imperial is in the process of developing the business case for submission of a new ERP system in the first quarter of 2023, with a view of starting the procurement process at some point afterwards, although timings may change.</p> <p>The new ERP system is expected to be able to record the annual review process (action 7.2) and track the uptake of the 10 development days.</p>

Encourage ECRs to self-reflect and take stock of their achievements	<p>4.4 Incorporate self-reflection into the 10 development days</p> <p>PFDC to highlight that part of the 10 days a year of professional development might be spent on self-reflection ('taking stock').</p> <p>Generate resources to support reflection on values and strengths.</p>	PFDC	Autumn 2024	New action	Resources to be generated and a comms plan in place by winter 2024 as to how to promote them to the community.
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5. Supporting talent

Imperial has a wealth of talent within its researcher community. The 2021 Staff Survey showed that 72% of research staff who responded are “*satisfied with the learning and development I receive for my present job*”. [The scoping projects that were conducted in 2022](#) as part of the Research England funding highlighted particular groups where the support offered by the College could be enhanced (long-term researchers, actions 5.3 and 5.4, and independently funded fellows, actions 5.7 and 5.8). They also showed gaps in current provision that could be filled to boost the support that researchers receive (actions 5.1, 5.2, 5.5 and 5.6).

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
Support research staff to investigate their next career step	<p>5.1 Enhancing opportunities for researchers to investigate their career choices</p> <p>Building on the resources that have been produced to help researchers with their next career move, whether that's staying on an academic route or considering a career in another field via pathways for postdocs, generate the following which will help to fill gaps that have been identified in the PFDC provision.</p>	PFDC		New action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tipsheet to be in place and receive at least 50 hits b) Alumni group to be set up and at least 75 to join within the first year. Increase the group by 10% year on year. c) At least 20 researchers to attend the PhD Careers fair. d) Work with Enterprise to record how many research staff engage with consultancy-style opportunities.

	<p>a) Generate a tipsheet on how to conduct an informational interview</p> <p>b) The PFDC to create a former research staff ('alumni') group on LinkedIn that will over time be able to highlight what careers Imperial researchers pursue.</p> <p>c) Advertise the annual Careers Service PhD Careers fair to all research staff.</p> <p>d) Communicate widely the consultancy-style opportunities that researchers can engage with.</p>		<p>Summer 2023 To be started in 2023</p> <p>2023-24</p> <p>2023-24</p>		
<p>Showcase a wide range of employment opportunities across all sectors, by highlighting where departmental ECRs alumni go.</p>	<p>5.2 Departmental ECR alumni database</p> <p>The PFDC has the PFDC Contacts Database, which is accessible to all Imperial research staff. However, this database only covers a fraction of the researchers who leave the College.</p> <p>To better capture researcher exit data, the PFDC will support a PFDC Champion to establish a department-specific alumni database which highlights the careers and companies that their research staff move on to, potentially generating a list of contacts for researchers to engage with, GDPR-dependent.</p> <p>When collecting this data, also celebrate the diverse range of successful careers that their researchers go on to, by</p>	<p>PFDC/ PFDC Champion/ DoM</p>	<p>To be trialled during 2023-24</p>		<p>Trial to be conducted in one department during 2023-24.</p> <p>Success measures to be determined pre-trial, and if met, initiative to be rolled out across a faculty and then the College during 2025.</p>

	publishing this information in their departmental newsletter.				
Raising the visibility of long-term researchers (LTRs) at Imperial.	<p>5.3 Establish a network for LTRs</p> <p>One of the key recommendations from the Research England-funded scoping project, Quantifying and describing the experiences of long-term researchers (LTRs) at Imperial, is to begin to raise the visibility of LTRs as a valid, discrete and valuable sub-community of research staff at Imperial.</p> <p>This will start with establishing a mailing list for LTRs and will be followed with a network launch event.</p> <p>A survey will be conducted to ascertain how the LTRs would like to be supported going forward and dedicated provision will be developed.</p>	PFDC/Clare Lloyd	Summer 2023 2024		<p>Mailing list to be established by late spring 2023.</p> <p>Network to be launched in summer 2023.</p> <p>Support to be in place by spring 2024.</p>
LTRs to have an opportunity to discuss their long-term career ambitions with senior management within their department	<p>5.4 LTRs to discuss career options with departmental senior management</p> <p>Extend the good-practice example from the Faculty of Engineering to offer all researchers who have been employed at Imperial for more than four years a discussion with their HoD (or similar), focusing specifically on longer-term career direction.</p>	PFDC Champions/ Faculty Vice-Deans for Research	2024	New action	<p>Guidance to be generated by spring 2024, which can be shared across all departments.</p> <p>Candidates to be identified by summer 2024.</p> <p>Conversations to take place and be logged during autumn 2024.</p>

<p>Academics on the Provost's Visiting Professor Programme to share insights with research staff.</p>	<p>5.5 Provost's Visiting Professor Programme series</p> <p>Building a diverse community at Imperial is one of the cornerstones of Imperial's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. The Provost's Visiting Professor (PVP) Programme, has been established to improve the diversity of our community by bringing to Imperial leading academics who will contribute to the community through scholarship, teaching and programming aligned with their research.</p> <p>As part of their time at Imperial, they will share their career journey with the research staff community through a series of talks. During these talks, they will also share their unique insights into Imperial with the researchers.</p>	<p>PFDC/Assistant Provost EDI</p>	<p>Spring 2023</p>	<p>New action</p>	<p>Talks to take place during spring 2023 and to be attended by over 25 researchers.</p>
<p>Supporting researchers who are coming to the end of their contracts with career decisions</p>	<p>5.6 Tailored cohort support for researchers who are approaching end of contract</p> <p>Pilot a cohort-based, programme of support tailored to research staff who are within eight months of their contract ending.</p> <p>The aim of this programme is to give the researchers the skills and confidence to identify the next tangible steps for their</p>	<p>PFDC</p>	<p>Spring/ summer 2023</p>	<p>New action</p>	<p>The PFDC aim to recruit at least 12 participants.</p> <p>The cohort will be evaluated pre- and post-programme to see the effect of this pilot.</p>

	<p>career. HR data will be utilised so that the programme can be targeted to those whose contracts are due to expire within eight months. This timeframe will allow the participants enough time to carry out an extended programme and for the initial monitoring of the effects of the programme to be recorded.</p>				
<p>Supporting independent research fellows to be leaders</p>	<p>5.7 Coaching provision for independent research fellows</p> <p>Following a successful pilot that took place with Future Leaders Fellows during 2022, each independent fellow at Imperial to have access to three hours of individual executive leadership coaching to develop their research leadership and group management skills.</p>	<p>PFDC</p>	<p>Early 2023</p>	<p>New action</p>	<p>The PFDC aim to recruit at least 15 participants.</p> <p>Success will be measured through evaluation at the end of the programme.</p>

Themes that have been retired

The actions outlined in the below themes have been completed and are now integrated into annual proceedings or have now become incorporated into other areas of the College, such as [Imperial's People Strategy 2022+](#).

6. Leadership development for ECRs

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action Progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
Extend the postdoc collaborative funding model in the Faculty of Engineering to other faculties to provide opportunities for ECRs to form new cross-faculty research networks and collaborations, and bid for research funding separate from their main project so that they can start to show research independence.	<p>6.1 Postdoc collaborative funds</p> <p>The Dame Julia Higgins Postdoc Collaborative Research Fund in the Faculty of Engineering allows postdocs to start building their evidence of independence by working on their own research ideas.</p> <p>Roll out this model to offer the same opportunity in all faculties.</p>	PFDC/Faculty RD Champion	2022	Completed	<p>The postdoc collaborative fund in 2022-23 included all the Faculty of Engineering departments and the following six Faculty of Medicine departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain Sciences • Infectious Diseases • Metabolism, Digestion and Reproduction • NHLI • Surgery and Cancer • Institute of Clinical Sciences <p>The Faculty of Natural Sciences have introduced the Researcher mobility grant for postdocs and fellows. This scheme will support researchers to develop their research capabilities and personal network by visiting research labs in the UK or overseas.</p>
Leadership and management training	6.2 Tailored induction and leadership programme for independently funded fellows	PFDC		Completed	Action progress during 2022: a) completed, as covered by new PI resources.

<p>for the next generation of fellows</p>	<p>Building on the successful initiatives developed by the PFDC Fellows Consultant, the following will be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Convert the face-to-face induction to a digital format, in consultation with POD. b) Generate a tailored welcome pack for fellows like the one which has been developed for the postdocs. c) Devise a leadership and management programme which utilised action learning sets to help develop cohorts within the fellows community. 		<p>a - Spring 2021</p> <p>b - Summer 2021</p> <p>c - Spring 2021</p>		<p>b) in progress</p> <p>c) to add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Courses on: Managing your first research group (residential); Leadership in research: Vision, strategy and team culture; Resilient leadership in action; - Three hours of individual executive leadership coaching for all independent fellows at Imperial to develop their research leadership and group management skills - Comprehensive online resources on: Navigating induction and probation; Managing yourself and your career; Leading your research group; Managing research projects. This collection of online materials is designed to be a first port of call to provide tailored learning, advice and guidance, linking to relevant information, services and support that the College provides. - The Imperial Fellows' Leadership Network (to be launched in 2023) to provide regular opportunities for bringing Imperial Fellows together as a group of emerging new leaders.
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7. The Personal Review and Development Plan (PRDP) process

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action Progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
Full review of the PRDP process for researchers at the College	<p>7.1 PRDP review</p> <p>A comprehensive review of the PRDP process for researchers will be undertaken to ensure that the PRDP is fit for purpose and implemented consistently across all departments.</p> <p>Concordat principles and the recommendations for the PI support tender (Action 2.1) will be incorporated into the reformed process.</p> <p>This review will consider all PRDP forms for the research community: ECRs through to senior management.</p>	DD(ODI)/ POD/ PFDC	2021-23	Completed	A College-wide PRDP review was undertaken by external consultants and concluded in August 2022. The steering group considered the findings and recommendations, and a further consultation phase took place in October and November 2022. Implementation of changes to the PRDP process will start in early 2023.
An evaluation of how best to log the PRDP process at the College so that meaningful data can be later extracted for evaluation.	<p>7.2 PRDP reporting system</p> <p>The way in which PRDPs are logged at the College needs to be evaluated to identify a way in which the College can ensure that quality conversations are taking place. This is also to ensure that key data are being recorded, such as discussion around how ECRs utilise their ten development days or how PIs are supporting their group member development.</p>	Director (HR)	2022	Ongoing	<p>Imperial is in the process of developing the business case for submission of a new ERP system in the first quarter of 2023, with a view of starting the procurement process at some point afterwards, although timings may change.</p> <p>The new ERP system is expected to be able to record the annual review process and track the uptake of the 10 development days (action 4.3).</p>

	It would also be desirable to have recall from the previous years' PRDP for comparison and to gauge progress.				
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8. Researcher Development Committee responsibilities

Intended outcome	Action	Lead	Timeline	Action progress	Update on action success/outline success indicators
Ensure there is adequate representation of ECRs on departmental decision-making committees.	<p>8.1 Which departmental committees have ECR representation?</p> <p>Gather information, through consultation with the PFDC Reps Network and Postdoc Champions, on ECR representation on departmental committees, to ascertain the proportion of ECRs on decision-making bodies at department-level.</p>	PFDC	Summer 2021	Completed	With the arrival of the New President, Professor Hugh Brady, a full review of all College committees, their purpose, structure, and composition is underway.

Reporting schedule:

Internal progress monitoring: Termly RD Committee meetings and full report submitted annually each January to the [University Management Board \(UMB\)](#)

External reporting: Progress report published annually each February

Key:

DD(ODI)	Deputy Director (Organisational Development and Inclusion)
DoMs	Departmental Operations Managers
ECRs	Early Career Researchers (postdocs and fellows)
EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
EDIC	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Centre
HoDs	Heads of Department
IMPACT	Imperial Positive About Cultural Talent
LTRs	Long-term researchers

PFDC	<u>Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre</u>
PGRs	Postgraduate researchers
POD	<u>People and Organisational Development</u>
PRDP	<u>Personal Review and Development Plan</u>
RD Committee	<u>Researcher Development Committee</u>
REC	<u>Race Equality Charter</u>