Lens development

The enterprise lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework has been developed with Research Councils UK (RCUK) and through consultation with Enterprise Educators UK (E2UK), the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education (NCEE) and other key organisations working in the area of enterprise.

Enterprising researcher quotes

1. “You do need to have a certain work ethic to drive through the completion of a doctorate, and I think this has served me well in my working life too.” Dr Emma Heathcote-James

2. “I think that successful academics are the ones who are able to know what is feasible in a context; what kinds of ideas are palatable... to be able to know when it’s worth taking a risk...to know which strings to pull in order to bring through an innovation.” Research Fellow

3. “My years as a doctoral researcher taught me to think critically and academically – highly useful for those embarking on their own business.” Dr Alexander Griekspoor

How to use the enterprise lens

Researchers may wish to use this lens to:
- identify how enterprise can contribute to their professional development as a researcher
- identify how the skills and attributes they have developed through research can contribute to, or underpin their development in enterprise activities
- select areas that they need to develop to be more effective in enterprise activities and use this to inform development reviews
- provide evidence of the transferability of their enterprise skills in their CV, in job applications and at interviews.

Researcher developers may wish to use this lens to:
- demonstrate to researchers and other stakeholders how enterprise activities can contribute towards the overall professional development of researchers
- enable researchers to recognise the learning they have acquired through enterprise related activities and highlight the transferability of these abilities
- strategically align enterprise learning and development provision around the lens.

Enterprise lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework

Overview

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) underpins a major new approach to developing world-class researchers. The framework has been developed by and for researchers working in higher education as an aid to planning, promoting and enhancing professional and career development. It articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages all researchers to realise their potential.

This is one of a series of lenses on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. For further information about the Vitae Researcher Development Framework visit www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

Supporting materials relating to this lens are available at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdflenses

Purpose of a lens

Using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, the enterprise lens provides an overview of the key knowledge, behaviours and attributes typically developed by researchers that can be acquired through, or used in, enterprise activities.

Context

With increasing international competition, economic challenges, social change and the growing pressures of a complex and uncertain world, unlocking the enterprising abilities of researchers is vital to maximise the benefits gained from excellent research. The Vitae Researcher Development Framework demonstrates to researchers and higher education institutions how that potential can be unlocked.

Describing enterprise

Within this lens, enterprise is described as ‘the application of creative ideas and innovations to practical situations’. It uses a set of skills and attitudes that can enable a culture of innovation, creativity, risk taking, opportunism... etc. that underpins employability, enables entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship and facilitates knowledge exchange.

“The act of undertaking a doctorate is a good training ground for the development of enterprise skills. Research by its nature requires creativity, determination and problem-solving. These skills are likely to be useful wherever a researchers’ career journey takes them.”

Footnotes:
1. QAA ‘Enterprise and entrepreneurship education guidance for UK higher education providers’ draft for consultation February 2012
2. Definition used at the ‘Enterprise Skills Workshop’, April 2007 arranged by CRAC in conjunction with the UK GRAD Programme (now Vitae), RCUK and EPSRC

To protect and maintain the integrity of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and the Researcher Development Statement (RDS) and to ensure a consistent approach to the development of lenses on the RDF, anyone wishing to create a lens on the RDF should seek permission from Vitae, and must adhere to the RDF conditions of use. Enquiries regarding the development of a lens on the RDF should be directed to rdf@vitae.ac.uk

For further information about the range of Vitae activities go to www.vitae.ac.uk or contact website@vitae.ac.uk

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