UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

MATHEMATICAL, PHYSICAL, ENGINEERING, COMPUTING AND LIFE SCIENCE

MPLS RESEARCHER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MPLS Division Hilary Term 2025

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HOW TO BOOK

Click on the course titles in the online brochure which will take you to the course booking page or visit http://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training and click on 'Course Bookings', which is a list of all upcoming courses sorted by date. Booking details are contained in the individual course pages. Most of our courses are booked via the Cosy booking system, but some may require application forms and / or deposits.

Equality, diversity and inclusion courses are taking place online and bookable via the ED&I training programme: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-in-mpls/mpls-ed-i-training-programme

Our courses this term are a mixture of online and in person. Details will be available on the booking pages.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

We also have a range of self-access online resources for DPhil students and research staff. These cover topics such as orientation to the University, Time Management, working with others, Career Development, and many more. You can access them on our website: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/resources-for-researcher-and-career-development

KEYS

RS: research staff, post-docs or early career researchers.

DPhil: DPhil students or post-graduate researchers.

All: All researchers.

In Person   *Online*

Disclaimer: some courses may be changed from their advertised setting due to unforeseen circumstances.

OPTIMISE YOUR TIME AT OXFORD 👤

Wed 15th Jan 12.00-14.00

Congratulations, you have got a research post at Oxford. But, what next? How do you manage your time at Oxford? This session looks at what being a post-doc means, what the opportunities and constraints are. It outlines the support available to help you make the most of your time at the University. You will hear from the Careers Service, Research Services, the Oxford Research Staff Society, and about Public Engagement & Impact, Research Integrity and Enterprise.

RisingWISE 🖥️👤

18th & 25th Jan, 8th Feb, 1st, 21st & 22nd Mar

RisingWISE is an award-winning programme for women STEM researchers from Oxford and Cambridge university. It offers opportunities for networking with fellow researchers and with industry professionals. It equips participants with an entrepreneurial mindset to apply in leadership, academia and career development.

Expressions of interest for the next iteration of the programme should be sent to mpls.enterprise@ mpls.ox.ac.uk. You will be added to a mailing list and notified when applications go live in September.

All

RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION 👤

Mon 20th Jan 09.30-16.30

Modern research, even that not involving humans or animals directly, can potentially be used in a wide variety of both positive and negative ways. It is the researcher's responsibility to think about, and plan for the potential impact of their work, and how their work can be carried out in an appropriately ethical and responsible manner.

In this course we will discuss a variety of case studies to understand responsible research and innovation principles and practice and plan our research according to ethical and professional standards, avoiding and mitigating the risks of negative impacts.

IMPORTANT: Pre-course work: please note that you will need to complete the online core Responsible Research and Innovation course before attending this face-to-face session.

All

AN INTRODUCTION TO NEURO-INCLUSION 🖥

Thurs 23rd Jan 10.30-11.30

We will look at what neuro-inclusion is, better understand some of the common challenges neurodivergent people face and identify some practical steps that will ultimately help to create a more inclusive environment.

DPhil
YOUR SUCCESSFUL DPHIL
Tue 28th Jan *09.30-12.30*

This session will set you up to make a success of your DPhil. It will familiarise you with University structures, information and resources, and get you thinking about how best to set yourself up now for a successful DPhil.

You'll find out about:

- The context of your DPhil and the support available to you.

- How to take control, assess your skills and develop them further.

- How to approach your supervisory relationship.

- How to plan and manage your DPhil project.

All
ADVANCED PRESENTATION SKILLS
Wed 29th Jan *09.30-12.30*

You will learn how to read a group, deal with difficult situations, use humour, match your presentation to the audience, and make impact. You will learn how to get your message across, so it is remembered. You will learn about timing and when you should deliver key messages. You will develop your self-awareness and understand its role in presenting.

All

GROW: OXFORD VENTURE BUILDER (OVB) DISCOVERY SESSION 🖥

Wed 29th Jan *12.30-14.00*

Join our Oxford Venture Builder (OVB) Discovery Session, an online event designed to answer any questions you have about OVB and help you decide if this programme is for you.

This session will provide an overview of the programme's structure, key benefits, success stories of previous participants and allow you to ask any questions that you have about the programme.

If you have a business idea you're eager to explore or if you're curious about turning your research into one, this session will help you understand how OVB can guide and support you on your entrepreneurial journey.

All

GETTING STARTED WITH PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH RESEARCH 🖥

Thurs 30th Jan *14.00-15.00*

Engagement describes the ways in which we can share our research and its value by interacting with wider public audiences, generating mutual benefit.

In this introductory session tailored to those new to engagement, we look at what public engagement is and some of the reasons why you might want to do it. We'll highlight the multitude of different approaches you can take and provide tips on getting started and where to get support.

RS

GET THAT GRANT 👤

Wed 5th Feb *09.30-12.30*

External research funding is a crucial part of the research profile of universities and is a major issue for academic staff. The key factors in developing successful proposals will be identified as will the requirements of specific research councils. You will hear advice and tips from an experienced grant winner from an MPLS department.

RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

Weds 5th Feb **12.30-14.00**

Research data is often at the heart of scientific projects, it's what you spend hours in the lab generating or in the field collecting. It forms the basis of your analysis and underpins your arguments in papers and theses. But how often do you consider how you're managing this vital resource? Is your data secure and backed up? How can you demonstrate its integrity if challenged? Could your research make a greater impact by sharing data? What happens to your hard-won data when your project ends?

Research Data Management (RDM) considers these questions and more. In this session we introduce RDM and the practical skill of developing Data Management Plans to manage your own data successfully.

All

FIRST PRINCIPLES FOR SCIENTISTS: ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION

6th, 13th, 20th & 27th Feb & 6th March **14.00-16.00**

Explore your research through the lens of core enterprise and innovation concepts. Learn how to spot ideas that could lay the foundations for impactful deliverables.

This is a foundation programme for STEM researchers to enable you to build these 1st principles into every project and build stronger collaborations.

The course will cover the core concepts of idea validation: desirability, feasibility & viability, along with self-awareness and communication fundamentals.

8

All

IDEAS TO ACTION: EFFECTIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH RESEARCH 🖥

Thurs 6th Feb 13.00-16.00

Ready to bring your engagement idea to life? This 3-hour session is tailored to those looking to explore evidence-based strategies for designing activities/events, apply for PER funding, or get practical tips for organising an activity.

THRIVING IN RESEARCH: CORE STRATEGIC SKILLS AND MINDSETS FOR RESEARCH IMPACT 👤

Fri 7th Feb 10.00-15.00

A powerful workshop for senior postdocs, aspiring PIs, new PIs, and research group leaders wanting to increase their impact and agility at a strategic time.

Join this highly participative, in-person workshop, facilitated by Natacha Wilson, to explore three core skills and mindsets to thrive in research and positively influence your ecosystem:

• Developing and nurturing effective interdisciplinary and multi-sectorial collaborations for impact

• Embracing openness and visibility in research across specific stakeholder groups to increase reach (including open science practices)

• Boosting creativity and innovation in your research project and team to overcome challenges

All

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK 🖥

Tue 11th Feb 10.30-11.30

We will look at the core components of how to give and receive feedback and why this not doing this can sometimes lead to avoiding having some conversations. We will identify some clear, practical steps to help people feel more confident in having these potentially more difficult conversations.

GROW: MEET THE SCIENCE FOUNDERS WITH WILBE 🏃

Tues 11th Feb 12.00-14.00

If you're considering spinning out or already exploring entrepreneurial opportunities then this session is designed to inspire and guide you on your journey.

Hear insights from founders who've had practical experience of building start-ups. What are the resources that they've found helpful and the pitfalls they've navigated?

Hosted by Wilbe who specialise in supporting Science Founders. Wilbe will also be showcasing their new online community for academic researchers looking to action their ideas and create impact through enterprise.

RS

HOW TO DO A CAREER DEVELOPMENT REVIEW, FOR REVIEWERS 🏃

Tues 11th Feb 14.00-15.30

Regular meaningful Career Development Reviews are an important part of developing a positive research culture. This session looks at the way in which we can have useful conversations in career development reviews. It examines the blockages to such conversations and how we can overcome them using active listening and coaching techniques. There will be an opportunity to discuss the policy and process surrounding CDRs.

All

COACHING SKILLS FOR LEADERS 🏃

Wed 12th Feb 09.30-13.00

Coaching is a highly impactful approach to people development and can support individuals to identify goals, gain insights into challenges, consider options and plan actions. Coaching skills are a valuable asset to leaders and managers and can be useful in a range of workplace conversations, such as feedback, delegation and career development reviews. This workshop will introduce key coaching concepts, approaches and skills. We will explore when and how coaching skills can be used to support effective leadership and management practice. Participants will take part in a practice coaching conversation using real-life examples, topics and challenges.

All

TELLING STORIES THAT MATTER: COMMUNICATING YOUR RESEARCH THROUGH STORY

Thurs 13th Feb **10.00-16.00**

Discover what elements of storytelling and narrative can be used to enhance a profession in the sciences. Craft compelling and moving stories from your experiences as a scientist using these key story elements: • Character • Conflict • Structure • Description

Apply these storytelling and narrative skills to working in the science:

• Communicating research to a range of audiences (including publics, media and funding bodies).

• Enhancing presentation skills.

• Telling scientific stories across a range of media.

Robert Holtom is a professional storyteller and consultant who has worked with a range of organisations to help them refine and hone their stories for a variety of audiences.

All

ENGAGING WITH CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE TOPICS

Tues 18th Feb **13.00-15.30**

Engaging with sensitive or controversial topics in research requires a thoughtful and strategic approach, especially when communicating with diverse audience groups.

Join us for an insightful session that aims to equip researchers with the tools needed to engage confidently and effectively with the public on controversial and sensitive topics.

In this interactive online session, Science Communicator Hana Ayoob will take us through the importance of engaging with these topics, aiming to equip researchers with the skills and knowledge to engage confidently in an empathetic and effective way.

RS

MANAGING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS 👤

Thurs 20th Feb 9.30-12.30

From time to time we all face difficult situations, or behaviour in others that we find difficult. This session will cover the factors that underlie these situations and provide a set of skills for managing the difficult conversation that needs to be had.

The most important part of the session will be an opportunity to practice the skills in a safe space. As this is so important, it is crucial that you come ready to take part. We will provide some example situations you can use for practice, or if you are comfortable doing so you may practice on one of your own situations. However, if you choose to do this please make sure the situation you bring does not have significant emotional investment for you, or is not currently live or unresolved.

All

PODCAST YOUR SCIENCE 💻

Thurs 20th Feb 09.30-12.30

From inception to publication; this practical session delivered by Emily Elias, journalist and producer of the Oxford Sparks podcast series, is a whirlwind tour through the basics of how to share your research in an engaging manner through podcasting. The session will introduce approaches to podcasting, present inspiration from a range of different podcast styles, and take you step-by-step through the basic technical skills of recording, editing and publishing audio files; you'll have the chance to develop an idea and have a go recording it with support and feedback during the day.

All

THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY 🖥

Mon 24th Feb *10.30-11.30*

In this course we will consider:

- What is psychological safety?

- How can we create it?

- What needs to be in place to enable it to exist at all?

- What happens when it isn't there?

RS

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CAREER DEVELOPMENT REVIEW, FOR REVIEWEES 👤

Tues 25th Feb *09.30-11.00*

A positive Career Development Review conversation can play a really positive role in your professional development. This short practical session will help you understand more about the career context for research staff at Oxford and beyond. It will enable you to identify the skills and abilities that you need to develop and give you guidance on how to enhance them so you are prepared for a useful conversation in your next CDR.

All

GET THAT JOB 👤

Wed 26 Feb *9.30-13.00*

An interactive workshop for researchers on making successful job applications. Topics will include presenting your CV, how to approach employers, writing covering letters and interview skills.

DPhil

YOU AND YOUR SUPERVISOR 👤

Wed 26 Feb *10.00-13.00*

The supervisory relationship is key to the success of your DPhil, and we know that positive and effective relationships contribute to the timely completion of the doctorate.

As with many things, the more you put into the relationship with your supervisor, the more you will benefit from it.

Join Dr Molly Grace for this course which will provide information and introduce strategies to enable you to develop an effective working relationship with your supervisor.

All

PROJECT MANAGEMENT: THE ESSENTIALS 👤

Thur 27th Feb *09.30-16.00*

The focus of the day will be to provide a practical 'project management toolbox' that you can use in your daily work. During the course you will have the opportunity to manage a project. You will be able to apply the techniques you learn to a project that you bring along.

Topics covered:

- Project initiation.

- Managing stakeholders and risk.

- Time estimation.

- Planning.

All

HANDS-ON SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT 👤

Thurs 27th Feb 13.00-16.00

Dive into the world of experiential learning with our immersive course, 'Hands-On Science.' This programme is designed to equip you with the practical skills and insights needed to effectively communicate your research through engaging desktop activities.

Uncover the art of facilitating interactive science demonstrations that captivate and educate. Learn the pivotal elements of event design and planning specifically tailored for public engagement activities.

By the end of this course, you'll not only have a repertoire of engaging activities at your disposal, but you'll also possess the skills to thoughtfully design, execute, and adapt events that leave lasting impressions.

All

SCIENTIFIC WRITING: CORE SKILLS 👤

Tue 4th March 09.30-17.00

This one-day course provides a sound grounding in the core skills needed to produce accurate and effective scientific writing. The course will include:

- Critique of readability in relevant papers.

- Use of tenses in academic papers.

- Writing with impact.

- Concise writing.

- Grammar and proofreading.

- Scientific table and chart technique.

All

NEGOTIATION & INFLUENCING SKILLS

Wed 5th March 09.30-17.00

This workshop will explore the impact of our communication preferences on others when seeking to influence. By also understanding the thinking process that underlies people's decision making, we can use learnable skills to help people say 'yes' to us. The aim is always to influence others to the right decision, not just the decision we may want.

All

INTERVIEWING FOR PODCASTS

Thurs 6th March 09.30-12.30

You are behind the mic, ready to record your first podcast ... but wait! What do you ask? This hands-on training session helps you navigate the world of podcast interviews. The session will cover preparing for interviews, creating a question line, finding your authentic voice and active listening.

Participants will be paired up and asked to conduct short interviews with a fellow participant which will be recorded over Zoom. As a group we'll listen back to them and workshop the interviews for constructive feedback.

This course is aimed at anyone looking at working on interviewing skills as a presenter but is also useful to those asked to be a guest on a podcast.

All

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING FOR ACADEMIC POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Wed 12th March 09.30-11.30

In this workshop, we will help answer this and other questions by equipping researchers and DPhil students to identify and map the people and groups who influence or are impacted by their research, when it comes to policy engagement.

Using stakeholder analysis frameworks and interactive exercises, participants will learn to identify and categorise their relevant audiences across government agencies and other pertinent policy actors.

All

PUTTING STORIES TO WORK

Thurs 13th March 10.00-13.00

This session builds on the introductory workshop Telling Stories that Matter and introduces new elements of great storytelling including metaphor, clarity and message. This highly interactive workshop will be based around an example of writing an explainer or news article for the wider, non-specialist public website.

It is highly recommended that you will have already attended the introductory workshop, or equivalent introductory workshops on storytelling. Brief reading material will be provided to ensure you are up to date with the fundamentals of storytelling that are the basis of this workshop.

RS

INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

17th, 19th, 21st & 26th March

Want to better understand your own leadership strengths? Interested in exploring how your own leadership skills can be used to maximise innovation in your research, with industry or through entrepreneurship? The Innovation and Leadership Programme (ILP) is designed to give postdocs, lecturers and academics enhanced skills and confidence in leadership theory, managing stakeholders and planning for impact. Full details and dates available on the MPLS website.

All

HOW TO PEER REVIEW JOURNAL PAPERS 👤

Tues 18th March 14.00-17.00

The ability to review manuscripts should be a core skill of every research scientist. By participating in exercises and discussions the attendees will learn how to review manuscripts quickly and effectively.

Dphil

COMPLETING YOUR DPHIL 👤

Tues 18th March 14.00-17.00

The session will cover:

- What makes a good DPhil.

- Planning to write up your DPhil., structure, content and what makes good writing.

- What the viva will explore.

- What the examiners are asked to consider.

- Time Management, FAQs and Q&A.

All

TIME MANAGEMENT 🖥

Wed 19th March 10.00-12.00

An essential skill for researchers. Issues covered will include work- life balance, planning, prioritising, the need to differentiate between importance and urgency, and using a range of strategies and time- saving ideas.

DPhil

VIVA PREPARATION AND PRACTICE 👤

Thurs 20th March 10.00-13.00

This participative workshop provides doctoral students in the third year and above with information about the viva, guidance on planning a pro-active approach to it, and opportunities to practice. The course will look at the rules and expectations of the viva exam and identify and practise practical ways to prepare.

COURSE *feedback*

MPLS Training and Development 2023/24 Academic Year

Course Attendances*
1,763
staff and students from any division

Course Offered
94

Average Course Rating
87%

Participant Quotes

"THIS COURSE HELPED ME VIEW THE VIVA AS A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE."
Participant, Viva Practice and Preparation

"I CANNOT RECOMMEND THE COURSE HIGHLY ENOUGH."
Medical Sciences Postdoc, Scientific Entrepreneurship

"I FEEL THAT MANY THINGS HAVE BEEN DEMYSTIFIED ABOUT THIS WORK, SO MANY THANKS."
Participant, Podcast Your Science

"I APPRECIATE ALL OF THE DIFFERENT STRATEGIES AND A BETTER COMPREHENSION OF THE ... ISSUES BEHIND SOME ASPECTS."
Participant, Time Management

"A PHENOMENAL PROGRAMME THAT ALLOWED ME TO ESTABLISH CONNECTIONS... AND EXPLORE DIFFERENT CAREER PATHWAYS."
DPhil, SeedWISE

MPLS HILARY TERM TRAINING TIMETABLE

DATE	TIME	EVENT
Wed 15th Jan	12.00-14.00	Optimise Your Time at Oxford
Sat 18th Jan	09.00-17.00	RisingWISE 1
Mon 20th Jan	09.30-16.30	Responsible Research and Innovation
Thurs 23rd Jan	10.30-11.30	An introduction to neuro-inclusion
Sat 25th Jan	09.00-17.00	RisingWISE 2
Tue 28th Jan	09.30-12.30	Your Successful DPhil
Weds 29th Jan	09.30-12.30	Advanced Presentation Skills
Wed 29th Jan	13.00-14.00	GROW online - Oxford venture builders
Thurs 30th Jan	14.00-15.00	Getting Started in PER
Weds 5th Feb	09.30-12.30	Get that Grant
Weds 5th Feb	12.30-14.00	Research Data Management
Thurs 6th Feb	14.00-16.00	First Principles for Scientists: Enterprise & Innovation 1
Thurs 6th Feb	13.00-16.00	Ideas to Action
Fri 7th Feb	10.00-15:00	Thriving in Research
Sat 8th Feb	09.00-17.00	RisingWISE 3
Tues 11th Feb	10.30-11.30	Difficult conversations and the importance of giving and receiving feedback
Tues 11th Feb	12.30-14.00	GROW: Meet the Science Founders with Wilbe
Tues 11th Feb	14.00-15.30	How to do a Career Development Review, for reviewers
Weds 12th Feb	09.30-13.00	Coaching Skills for Leaders
Thurs 13th Feb	14.00-16.00	First Principles for Scientists: Enterprise & Innovation 2
Thurs 13th Feb	10.00-16.00	Telling Stories that Matter
Tues 18th Feb	13.00-15.30	Engaging with controversial and sensitive topics
Thurs 20th Feb	14.00-16.00	First Principles for Scientists: Enterprise & Innovation 3
Thurs 20th Feb	09.30-12.30	Managing difficult situations
Thurs 20th Feb	09.30-12.30	Podcast Your Science
Mon 24th Feb	10.30-11.30	The importance of psychological safety
Tues 25th Feb	09.30-11.00	How to prepare for a Career Development Review, for reviewees.
Wed 26th Feb	10.00-13.00	You and Your Supervisor
Wed 26th Feb	9.30-13.00	Get that Job
Thur 27th Feb	09.30-16.00	Project Management: the essentials
Thurs 27th Feb	14.00-16.00	First Principles for Scientists: Enterprise & Innovation 4
Thurs 27th Feb	13.00-16.00	Hands-on Science Engagement
Sat 1st Mar	09.00-17.00	RisingWISE 4
Tue 4th Mar	09.30-17.00	Scientific Writing: Core Skills
Wed 5th Mar	09.30-17.00	Negotiation and Influencing Skills
Thurs 6th Mar	14.00-16.00	First Principles for Scientists: Enterprise & Innovation 5
Thurs 6th Mar	09.30-12.30	Interviewing for Podcasts
Wed 12th Mar	09.30-11.30	Stakeholder Mapping for Academic Policy Engagement
Thurs 13th Mar	10.00-13.00	Putting Stories to Work
Mon 17th March	10.00-13.00	Innovation Leadership Programme 1
Tues 18th Mar	14.00-17.00	How to Peer Review Journal Papers
Tues 18th Mar	14.00-17.00	Completing your DPhil
Wed 19th Mar	10.00-12.00	Time Management
Wed 19th Mar	10.00-14.00	Innovation Leadership Programme 2
Thurs 20th Mar	10.00-13.00	Viva Preparation and Practice
Fri 21st Mar	12.00-19.00	RisingWISE 5
Fri 21st Mar	12.00-13.00	Innovation Leadership Programme 3
Sat 22nd Mar	09.00-21.00	RisingWISE 6
Wed 26th Mar	10.00-16.00	Innovation Leadership Programme 4
Wed 26th Mar	13.00-14.00	GROW online - careers

ALL DPHIL RESEARCH STAFF