



# Vitae annual report 2015/16



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## Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this year's annual report for Vitae. It is well recognised that there is a global ambition for excellence in research and much demand for excellence in researchers. Vitae continues to take the lead in responding to this demand.

Enabling researchers to realise their potential through continuing professional development is a key component of success within the global research talent ecosystem, to retain and grow quality research with impact, creating benefit for research, the economy and society.

Within the global ecosystem it is no longer enough to just deliver excellent research, as institutions that also provide great infrastructure to support the professional development of researchers are increasingly attractive for discerning researchers.

Successful researchers have more responsibilities than ever before to contribute to innovation and business collaboration, research uptake, engaging the public with their research, working in an open science environment, and influencing policy.

In addition, successful researchers need to be able to work effectively through interdisciplinary, international and intersectoral exchanges as a necessary part of addressing major world challenges.

There is a wide range of competencies required of successful researchers in the modern world and we have responsibilities to equip them for their future careers in a global context.

At Vitae we have been developing researchers across the world for almost 50 years and this past year has seen a new era in terms of our offerings, primarily through our expanding membership programme and consultancy. I am sure you will agree that our transition from being funded by the Research Councils UK and the UK funding bodies to being self-sustainable has been a successful one.



Indi Sehra

Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC)  
 Director of Human Resources, London School of Economics and Political Science

# About us

Realising the potential of researchers around the world.

Vitae is the global leader in the professional development of researchers, working with universities and research institutions as they strive for increased research excellence, innovation and impact. Vitae is part of the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC), an independent UK registered charity with almost 50 years' experience in enhancing the skills and careers of researchers.

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## Vitae aims to:

- o **Influence the development and implementation of effective policy relating to researcher development**
- o **Enhance higher education provision to train and develop researchers**
- o **Empower researchers to make an impact in their careers**
- o **Evidence the impact of professional and career development support for researchers.**

Vitae has transformed support for researchers by working with higher education institutions, researchers, supervisors and principal investigators, employers and other stakeholders to develop coherent policy, support effective implementation and enhance researcher development provision. We have ensured that UK and international institutions will have a supply of talented, productive researchers able to deliver research impact.

Our aim, delivered through our range of innovative products and services, is to create a truly international community dedicated to building researcher development capacity and excellence in the professional development of researchers.

The Vitae organisational and affiliate membership scheme was launched in January 2015 and has gone from strength to strength, comprising 175 organisations worldwide (the majority in the UK). Vitae organisational membership enables staff and researchers at all levels to access the wealth of Vitae online resources and gain discounts for Vitae events. We deliver value by listening carefully to our members through many different channels, such as organisational key contacts, regional representatives, through meetings and online consultations. Our annual programme reflects sector interests and challenges. We highlight emerging issues, and lead debate about sector challenges such as researcher development for open science, leadership development for the next generation, and continuing professional development for professionals working in researcher development. Our annual programme informs and catalyses our community, and enables networking and sharing of best practice to create efficiencies in the pursuit of excellence in researcher development for the research base as a whole. Organisational membership reaches researchers across the world through 'Focus on' themes delivered through online webinars, discussions and practical resources.

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*With a long standing track record in leading the internationally acclaimed UK researcher development agenda, Vitae holds a unique strategic position, continuing to add value to both the UK research base, and internationally through our vibrant membership community.*

*Alison Mitchell, Director of Development, Vitae*

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# How we work

We work around the world through membership and by delivering a range of products and services for universities and research institutions.

<b>Membership</b> Organisational membership provides access to resources, advice, training and events to strengthen researcher development capacity.	<b>Events and Resources</b> We develop tailored events and resources, for and in collaboration with institutions, to meet specific demands.	<b>Training and Development</b> We provide a large number of training courses (including train the trainer) ready to be delivered by experienced trainers
<b>RDF professional development and RDF Planner</b> Our Researcher Development Framework and tools provide 24/7 online support for researchers to manage their development.	<b>Collaboration</b> We partner with many institutions on projects and initiatives to promote researchers' professional development.	<b>Consultancy</b> We work with institutions in an advisory role to address specific needs on policy and researcher development provision.



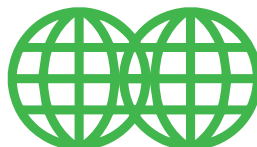
**175**  
Vitae members



**1,220**  
people attended 29  
events



**40%**  
increase in Twitter &  
Facebook followers to  
**6,700**



doubled registered  
web users to  
**31,900**



**120**  
RDF Planner subscribers  
**15,450**  
researchers



**28**  
new publications on  
researcher  
development



**32**  
training programmes  
delivered

# Vitae membership

Vitae membership enables universities, research institutes, research funders and other organisations, with a stake in realising the potential of researchers across the world, to build capacity in developing excellent researchers. During this first year Vitae's membership programme has grown to 175 member organisations from both the UK and around the world, building a growing global network of member organisations committed to excellence in developing research talent.

Vitae membership provides access to best practice, high quality resources, online advice and networking opportunities to support institutions to:

- attract, retain and develop researchers who will deliver world class research
- provide internationally competitive doctoral training
- develop their institutional capacity to train researchers
- inspire researchers to plan their professional development.

Our multi-functional offer across five 'strands' of organisational capacity building, uniquely positions Vitae to enable universities and research institutes to make a significant impact in researcher development, for the benefit of research outputs, innovation, society and the economy.

## The strands of Vitae: world-class professional development of researchers



**“** *Being a Vitae member helps position us as a leading organisation in researcher development and contributes to keeping us abreast of innovations and best practice.*

*Prof. David Bogle, Head of Graduate School, University College London, UK*

**“** *It has enabled us to stay relevant, and on a par with others as we share best practice through the events and on the Forum. It has pushed our boundaries to consider new avenues for training, whether topic or method of training.*

*UK Vitae Member*

**“** *The advice available online is very useful for all our stakeholders in understanding the sector and the wider aspects of development.*

*UK Vitae Member*



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## Key achievements for 2015/16

Vitae continues to lead the world in researcher development. We have made a significant contribution to ensuring that the UK remains an attractive environment for the training and professional development of researchers. During 2015/16 Vitae has worked to consolidate this leading position in the UK through Vitae membership, and increasingly working internationally to create a global community committed to researcher development, sharing practice, experiences and challenges.

Vitae engages with key stakeholders in the UK and European Union (EU) to ensure that researcher careers remain high on policymakers' agendas. The UK Research Councils, UK funding bodies, major research funders and professional bodies are members of the Concordat Strategy Group and Vitae Affiliate Members. Vitae provided consultation responses to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) on the Higher Education Green Paper, the Review of Support for Postgraduate Study, the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the Review of the UK Research Councils. Vitae is a member of the Quality Assurance Agency Postgraduate Advisory Group responsible for updating the Doctoral Degree Characteristics (2015), describing the distinctive features of doctoral degrees in the UK.

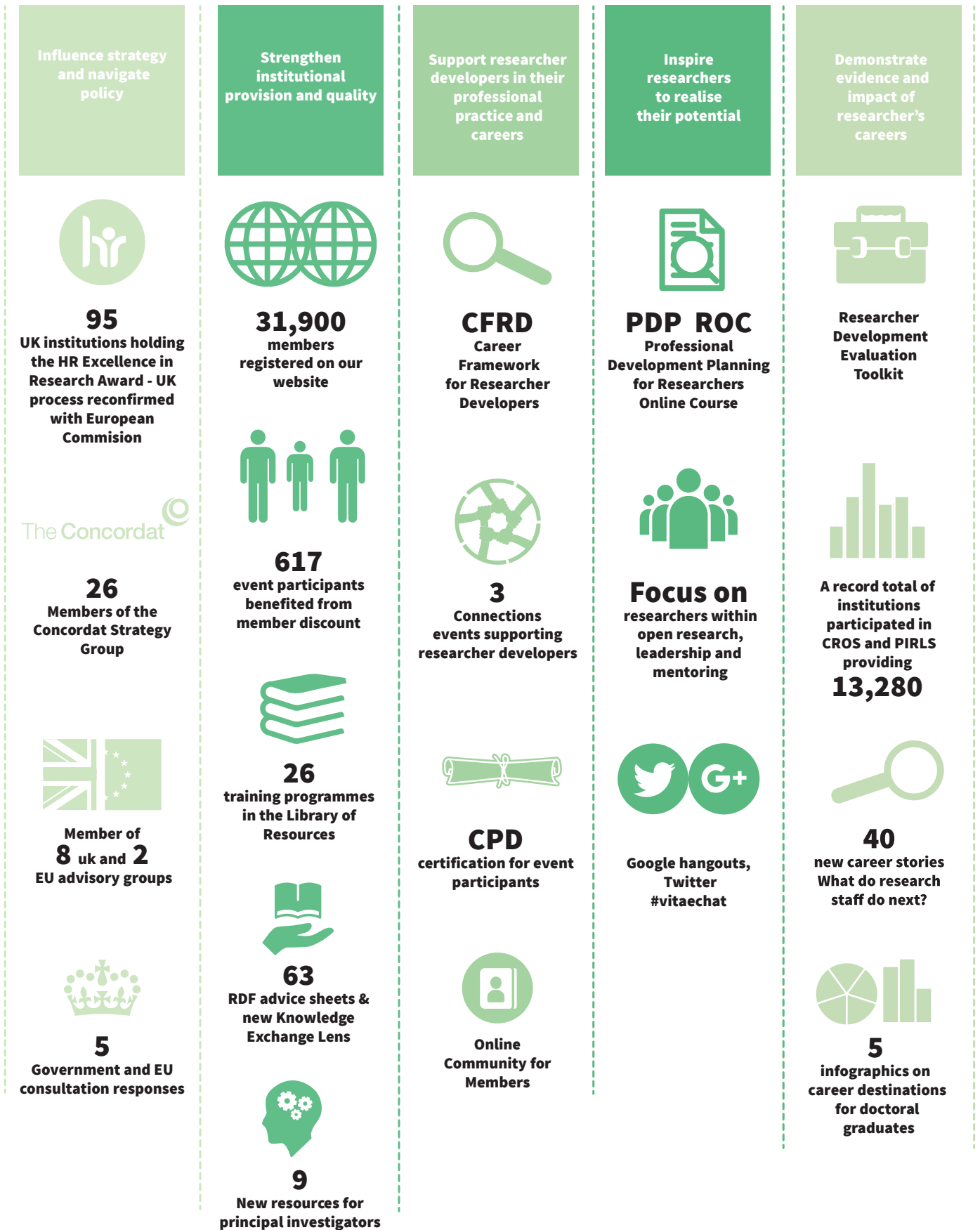
Vitae was represented on key working groups for the European Steering Group for Human Resources and Mobility and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Advisory Group within the Horizon 2020 funding programme. Vitae input to the European Commission's Expert Review of the HR Excellence in Research Award process and reconfirmed Vitae's ongoing management of the HR Excellence in Research Award for UK institutions. Ninety-five UK organisations hold the European HR Excellence in Research Award, more than any other European country.

More institutions than ever participated in the 2015 Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) and Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) generating more than 13,000 responses. These surveys evidence clear progress by institutions in implementing the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and consolidate the UK position as leading the world in the talent management and career development of researchers.

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) continues to be the fundamental underpinning framework for the professional development of researchers. The RDF Planner is being used in four continents. During 2015/16 Vitae added to the suite of RDF resources, including the Professional Development Planning for Researchers Online Course (PDP ROC).

Vitae has extended its commitment to the professional development of staff and trainers responsible for supporting researchers, by launching the Vitae Career Development Framework for Researcher Developers (CFRD). We also ran three 'Connections' events and provided Continual Professional Development (CPD) certification for researcher developers.

Vitae's membership programme also delivered a broad range of activity to support the professional development of members' researchers including online resources, face to face and online events, facilitated HR Excellence in Research processes, surveys and member communications. The key highlights are:



**“** My learning at this event, will influence the design and delivery of activities to support researchers at my institution adapt to the open environment **”**



# Vitae annual programme

The 2015 Vitae Researcher Development International Conference was the largest gathering of researcher developers in the world and a key event in the Vitae calendar. It was a resounding success with more researcher developers and academic staff from across the world attending than ever before, indicating a real commitment to the field.

In addition to this flagship event, the 2015/16 Vitae annual programme consists of quarterly 'Focus on' themes aimed at researchers, principal investigators, supervisors and staff supporting researchers. The Vitae annual programme integrates all the ways we work into a vibrant thematic approach, which can involve our members across the world in pursuing research excellence through developing researchers.

Our 'Focus on' themes were informed by a series of regional member networking seminars and online consultation. Each campaign included a combination of new web content on the relevant topic, face to face and online events, downloadable print-ready publications and polls. The 2015/16 'Focus on' campaigns provide examples of the varied ways that people can engage with the themes.

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# Induction

At the start of the academic year, this 'Focus on' campaign provided a 'one stop shop' of online resources and development tools for induction. A set of online route maps promote professional development planning for early career researchers, as well as those supporting their development, and press-ready resources support institutional delivery.

Resources to help new doctoral researchers to make a successful start including a 'Focus on starting your PhD' web page.

Professional Development Planning for Researchers Online Course (PDP ROC) an online course promoting ownership and proactive planning.

An event exploring professional development support for the non-linear career paths of researchers.

The screenshot shows the Vitae website interface. On the left, there are navigation links: 'How we work with your organisation', 'You're a researcher', 'Routemaps for new researchers', 'If you're a researcher development role', 'Vitae programme 2015/16', 'Vitae membership subscribers list', and 'Be in touch with other members'. The main content area is titled 'Routemaps for new researchers' and includes a welcome message, a 'Thank you for visiting our website' note, and a list of resources: 'Routemap for new researchers PDF format', 'Routemap for new researchers interactive presentation (PDP)', and 'Vitae member routemap for new researchers'. On the right, the 'Member Content' section lists highlights such as 'Schedule for Success - downloadable planning format', 'Online hangout (recording)', 'Vitae successful start in your research - our panel of researchers answer questions and give their tips for success', 'Getting started in Research - links on the Vitae PCF', and 'Focus on the knowledge and skills necessary to develop as a successful researcher'. There are also 'Manage portals' links.

The grid contains six modules, each with a title, a brief description, and a list of key points:

- MODULE 1: Introducing PDP for researchers**
  - Explore the meaning of professional development planning in your own professional area
  - You will be introduced to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF)
- MODULE 2: Analyse your experience and expertise**
  - Consider what broader expertise and experiences you are developing through your research activities
  - Carry out an analysis of your own professional experience and expertise
  - Explore your learning preferences
- MODULE 3: Collect and organise your evidence**
  - You will be encouraged to take a systematic approach to gathering evidence of your achievements
  - Practise communicating evidence of your developing expertise and experience
- MODULE 4: Select and prioritise areas for further development**
  - You will survey the upcoming research activities that you are likely to undertake
  - Identify expertise areas for further development
  - Prioritise your development in the context of broader goals
- MODULE 5: Plan and achieve your professional development goals**
  - Set development goals
  - Find and select opportunities for development
  - Plan to achieve development goals
- MODULE 6: Professional Development Planning for Researchers: Your feedback**
  - Please provide Vitae with formative feedback on the course Professional Development Planning for Researchers.

# Our 'Focus on' campaigns enable us to build shared sector intelligence through a combination of Vitae resources and community engagement.

## Open researcher

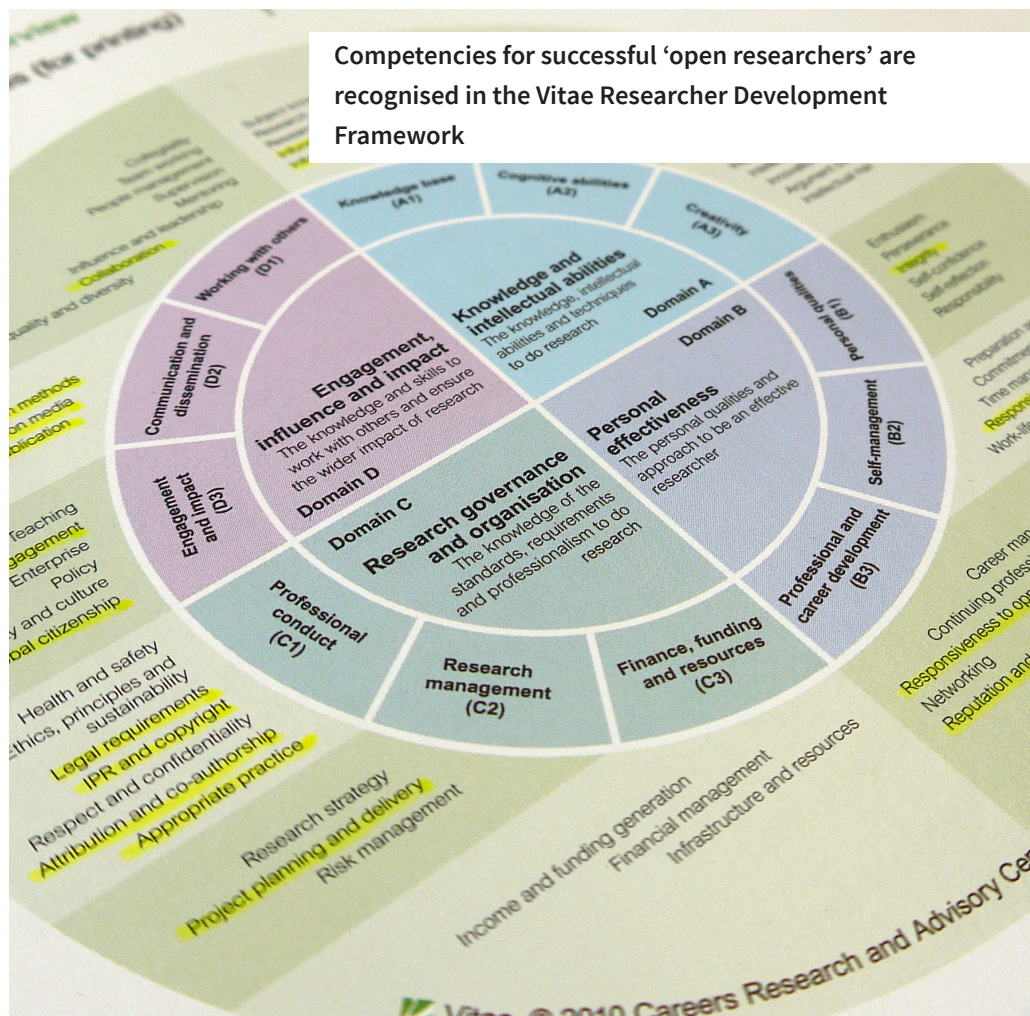
Vitae is leading sector understanding of the competencies for success in the open research environment, as researchers are under increasing pressure to be more 'open' in their research, through open access publications, open data and having a social media presence. This campaign provided support for doctoral candidates and research staff to navigate the changing expectations of being an 'open researcher', at all stages of their career.

An event for researcher developers on supporting open researchers and an online event for researchers themed: 'open doors in your career through open research'.

An online poll of members, from which 64% of researcher responses indicated that 'open research skills are something they could work on or mean to address'.

New web section on open research including a new lens on the RDF drafted to describe the competences needed to thrive in an open research environment.

Competencies for successful 'open researchers' are recognised in the Vitae Researcher Development Framework



# “I would have quit without the substantial support of my (informal, but powerful) mentor.”

Member response to ‘Focus on’ poll

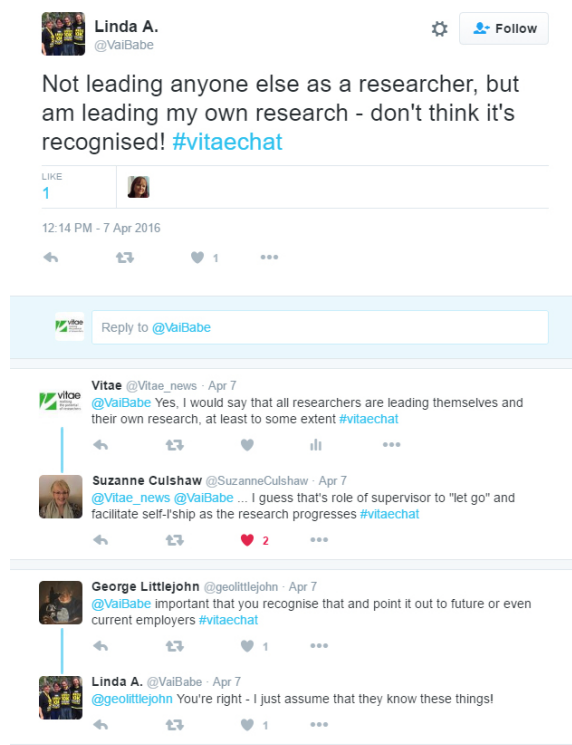
## Leadership

All researchers are leaders; of knowledge, of others and of themselves. Vitae is strongly focused on researchers’ potential as leaders, and the competencies of leadership, in a range of different sectors. This campaign provided support to those aspiring to leadership, in research and beyond, including for the first time, exploration of the leadership qualities of professionals in researcher development.

Events focused on the strategic aspects of leadership development for future research leaders and on leadership from the researcher development practitioner perspective.

Online events for researchers on ‘presenting yourself as a leader’ and ‘making the most of your leadership experience’.

New web content on ‘developing the next generation’ which includes guidance for early career researchers and academics and a developer’s toolkit, produced with funding from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (UK).



## Developing the next generation

Guidance and good practice in the leadership development of early career researchers and academics

Dr Fiona Denney, Brunel University London  
Alison Mitchell, Vitae  
Dr Katie Wheat, Vitae





## Mentoring and coaching

This campaign underlined the importance of mentoring and coaching to support professional development, by exploring the structures and competencies for successful mentoring of early career researchers, to help improve institutional provision. In addition, resources were also provided for those being coached and those who coach.

Online events exploring the benefits of mentoring to boost researcher careers and institutional capacity building through mentoring for researcher developers.

Collection of institutional case studies on mentoring and coaching.

Collation of web content relating to mentoring and coaching to support researchers.



Will getting a mentor boost your career? 16 June, 2-3 pm (UK time)

### Principal investigators on mentoring research staff: a series of short videos



# Vitae training and development


Around the world, we have delivered workshops tailored to specific requirements, making full use of our in-house expertise in delivering experiential learning and our extensive high-quality training resources; including programmes for all stages of the researcher journey, from beginning research to developing a research career. We have provided leading edge, high quality training courses, specifically designed for researchers, and 'train the trainer' programmes to build sustainable capacity using a variety of delivery methods.

Our customised 'train the trainer' programmes, with mentoring and recognition by Vitae, enable institutions to build their internal capability to deliver and drive innovation in the training of researchers to suit their local requirements.

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## GRADschool, Spain


Vitae runs the highly successful **Fundación Barrié GRADschool** annually in Galicia. GRADschool is one of our flagship programmes for doctoral candidates in the middle to later years of a doctorate.

 *I will strongly recommend other PhD students to take it. It was a wonderful experience and I can't wait to put all the knowledge learnt to work!*

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## Public engagement, Poland

Interdisciplinary training on public engagement for scientists, was delivered for the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP) for their funded researchers, including topics such as why engage the public, and how to design a public engagement activity.


 *Actually that was the best course that I've taken part in so far - lots of knowledge, also exercises that improve some useful skills. Trainer - so enthusiastic and optimistic - but also professional, helpful and with huge knowledge in the topic of public engagement. Excellent!*

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## Open researcher, Italy

'Scientific Café' at Politecnico di Milano for early career researchers, entitled 'Every Researcher Counts', included: introducing the RDF, understanding the open research environment and exploring the competences of open researchers.

'Maximizing your career opportunities' workshop for researchers in SINCEM Winter School 2016 of Bologna University.

 *Many thanks for the time you dedicated us. The two days with you let us understand many things that will foster our active support to researchers.*

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## Career development, Denmark

A career development workshop for Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies Fellows explored their professional competencies using the RDF, research staff careers and succeeding in a competitive, complex research environment.

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*I found the one on one time with [trainer] to be much more valuable and that actually has made a real difference in my daily approach to my career since the workshop. For this alone, I feel the workshop was a great success for me!*

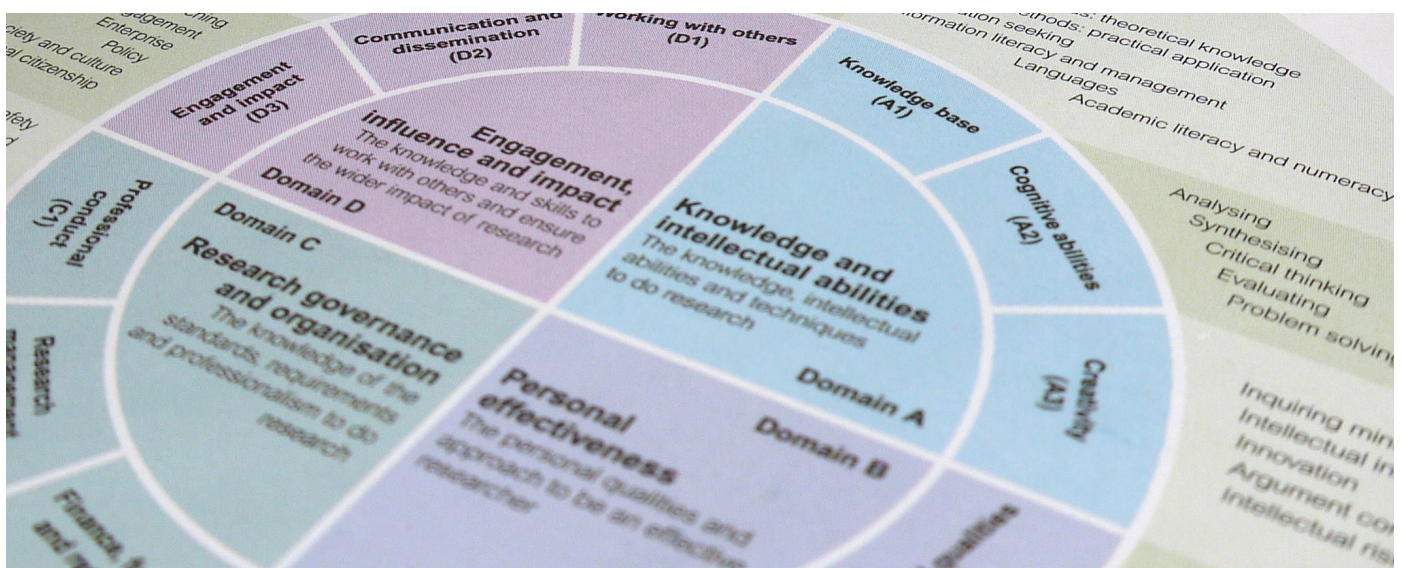


# Vitae Researcher Development Framework and Planner

## Key achievements in 2015/16

- Over 120 organisations, across four continents, including 15,450 researchers have used the Vitae RDF Planner through organisational subscriptions.
- 59 RDF Planner demonstrations and workshops were provided for organisational subscribers in 2015/16. New resources for RDF Planner subscribers include:
  - PDP ROC – Professional Development Planning for Researchers Online Course – taking users through each step of the professional development planning process using the RDF
  - Information sheets covering each of the 63 RDF descriptors explain why each is important and suggest ways to develop further
  - 63 action and evidence sheets provide examples of actions that might be undertaken for that area and evidence of the competency reached, which can be used to form a professional development plan

## Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF)



The internationally acclaimed Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) is a significant strategic approach to developing world class researchers. The RDF maps the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers to further the professional development of researchers globally and provides detailed aspirational phases to inform career development planning.

A comprehensive combination of open access and member only, online resources support the use of the RDF by institutions and researchers.

“ *Embedding the RDF into our Doctoral Development Programme has enabled us to engage PGRs in a dialogue about their professional development.* ”



# RDF Planner: a tool for the professional development of researchers

The RDF Planner is our online professional development planning web based application based on the RDF, available through both organisational or individual subscription.

It is a powerful tool to help individual researchers to identify strengths, review achievements, action plan and create a portable portfolio of evidence.

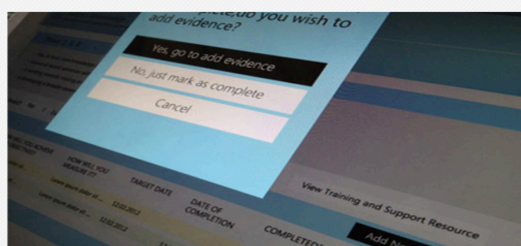
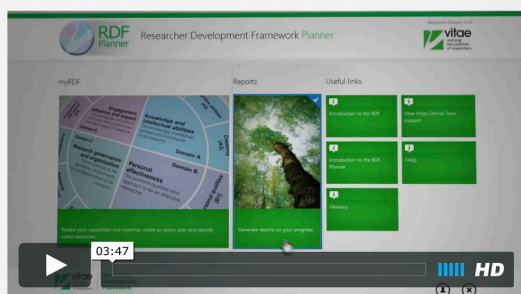
[www.vitae.ac.uk/RDFplanner](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/RDFplanner)



## Researcher Development Framework Planner

### Professional development tool for researchers

Available via organisation or individual subscription



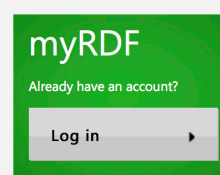
### For individual researchers

Take control of your professional and career development with the Vitae RDF Planner

- Identify your expertise and capabilities
- Plan your career
- Focus your training effort where it is needed most
- Record and showcase your achievements
- Monitor your progress
- Use in professional development review meetings with your supervisor or PI

Ask your institution if you have access. Individual subscription now includes Vitae individual membership. You get Vitae RDF Planner plus access to a wealth of resources on the Vitae website at a charge of £24\* per year. (\*inclusive of UK VAT)

[Subscribe now](#)



### For institutions

The Vitae RDF Planner enables your institution to:

- Underpin policies for supporting the professional development of researchers
- Encourage researchers to take charge of their career development and increase their employability
- Improve the researcher experience
- Join a community of HE institutions to share best practice around the Planner and the internationally recognised RDF
- Monitor organisational use through a straightforward interface
- Generate reports for benchmarking and self-evaluation
- Signpost your development resources to researchers

To discuss organisation subscriptions contact [rdplanner@vitae.ac.uk](mailto:rdplanner@vitae.ac.uk)



*It allows you to think about your career development and skills more efficiently and highlight your training needs; whereas without the tool these may not have been immediately obvious. In essence, it makes you think!*



*It is an excellent tool; it has enhanced my thinking.*

# Collaboration

Alongside Vitae membership, we continue to work collaboratively with other organisations with a stake in researchers' professional development. Recent partnerships have included co-development of new resources, joint research projects, joint events, mutual promotion agreements and advertising.

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## The Vitae Career Framework for Researcher Developers (CFRD)

Beginning in 2012, a working group of professionals in researcher development, from institutions across the UK, was led by Vitae to support the professional aspirations of researcher developers through the development of the Vitae Career Framework for Researcher Developers (CFRD) which was launched in 2015. Whether working exclusively in researcher development or as part of a broader role, the framework helps to identify and articulate the knowledge and expertise being acquired through researcher development activities.


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## EURAXESS

In April 2015 Vitae became the first EURAXESS Career Development Centre (CDC). EURAXESS is a European Research Area initiative which provides information and support services for researchers wishing to pursue research careers in Europe.

The creation of the Vitae national CDC is an extension of the EURAXESS projects that Vitae has been involved with, including developing resources to support cultural integration and a self-assessment tool to enable researchers to review their career values and motivations, their skills, experience and expertise and to consider the full range of career options. Vitae is also leading on a EURAXESS project (EURAXIND) to develop resources to enable researchers and EURAXESS service centres to engage better with businesses.

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 *This is a welcome and natural alliance and we will use the centre to build on the excellent resources already available to support researchers through Vitae and EURAXESS.*

*Janet Metcalfe, Chair and Head, Vitae*

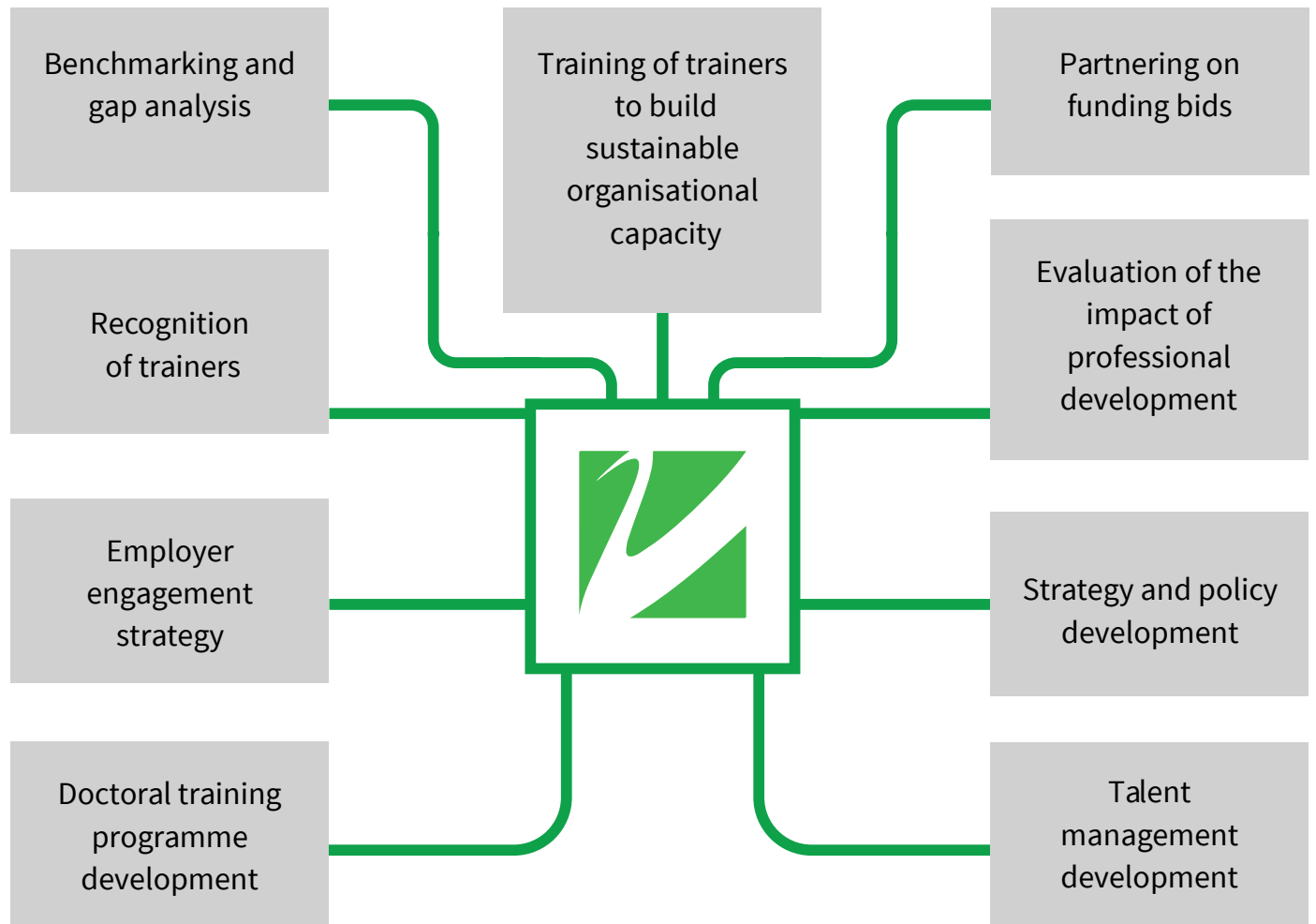
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## Publishing workshops for researchers

Collaborating with Elsevier (an academic publishing company) and host universities across the Vitae UK regions, we have piloted a new workshop, 'Become a Published Researcher: Your Plan for Success'. The workshop is designed to introduce researchers to all the elements of publishing in an academic journal, including the publishing process, building an effective manuscript and ethics for publication.

# Vitae consultancy

Vitae has worked with organisations in an advisory role, to address specific needs on policy and researcher development provision, such as:





## Examples of Vitae consultancy in 2015

### **CIRCLE programme; institutional strengthening, Africa**

A major issue in African countries is how to develop globally competent researchers prepared to live and work in their countries of origin; too many are lost to the global market. The CIRCLE programme, supported by the Association of Commonwealth Universities and African Academy of Sciences, aims to retain researchers on the continent through institutional capacity building in research talent development.

Twenty-nine African institutions from nine countries are involved in the programme. Through a four-year programme of workshops and consultancy for research leaders and researchers, Vitae is supporting institutions to strengthen policies, provision and engagement in the development of early career researchers, including the implementation of action plans in research talent development, mentoring programmes and professional development provision.

### **Provision of professional doctorate programmes in English HEIs, UK**

Vitae, supported by the University of Brighton, undertook research on behalf of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) into the landscape of professional doctorate (PD) provision in English higher education



institutions (HEIs). The project sought perspectives from staff in the institutions, professional doctorate candidates and graduates, employers and professional bodies, in order to:

- explore the strategic basis for PD provision - why do HEIs offer them, and where do they fit into postgraduate and research strategies?
- examine existing and developing models across the range of PD provision
- explore the potential and realised impacts of PD programmes, for graduates, employers/professions and provider institutions.

## **Equality and status of women in research, Global Research Council**

Vitae were commissioned by RCUK and the Science and Engineering Board (SERB) of India to write a discussion paper for the Global Research Council 2016 Annual Meeting on the equality and status of women in research. The project involved researching into policies and practices of 55 national funding agencies who are GRC participants, highlighting regional differences. The report includes recommendations to funders and case studies of funders' gender equality practices in their policies, funding schemes, data collection and the gender dimension within research. The GRC subsequently published a Statement of Principles and Actions promoting the equality and status of women in research.

# Looking forward

Since the launch of Vitae membership, we have made significant progress in championing the career development of researchers both within the UK and internationally within a landscape of continuing political and economic changes. The coming years look as if this dynamic external context will continue to provide ongoing challenges for institutions and researchers. Most countries see research activity, and its translation into innovation, as a significant contributor to economic and social prosperity.

Research is becoming increasingly more competitive with concomitant pressures on researchers to publish, generate funding and translate their research into impact: it is increasingly difficult for early career researchers to obtain academic positions. The drive to create a more open research environment through open access to publications, more open access to research data, and more engagement of society in the formulation and execution of research projects will transform the way research is conducted and hence the competencies needed by researchers to be successful in this environment.

Research is becoming a more global enterprise: researchers need to be internationally mobile and able to work collaboratively, physically and virtually, across all research cultures. There continues to be extraordinary growth in research activity in China and Asia, and building research capacity is high on the agenda for governments and institutions in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. The UK referendum decision in June 2016 to leave the European Union has created significant uncertainty for the UK research system, but also for researchers and institutions across the rest of Europe.

Institutions are responding to these competitive pressures by increasing the numbers of researchers through growth in structured doctoral training programmes and associated professional development requirements. They are introducing talent management programmes to attract and retain the best researchers.

These current and forthcoming challenges strengthen our commitment to extend our reach and work with all organisations, especially institutions and research funders, who are committed to excellence in researcher development and nurturing the careers of researchers. Wherever they are, all higher education organisations are welcome to join our Vitae member community and make a difference to the professional development of researchers both locally and internationally. In the coming year we will continue to drive forward our key aims: to improve the policy environment for researchers and researcher careers; help institutions to implement talent management programmes for researchers and professional development provision; and empower individual researchers to drive their own career development and realise their potential.

## **Vitae annual programme (2016-17)**

Our Vitae annual programme of membership activities aims to continuously advance professionalism in researcher development through innovation, collaboration, and addressing members' needs, and that of the research base more generally. It is designed to meet the needs of all organisations developing researchers, from research-intensive institutions through to those that are developing their research capacity. The annual programme also addresses the researcher journey, changing demographics of those that undertake research and their different professional development needs. A critical aspect of our membership is to promote the continuing professional development of staff who are responsible for the development of researchers.

The 2016-17 annual programme was developed through consultation with our members and comprises four strands, each with several themes. These will be delivered for maximum impact, value and effectiveness through an exciting combination of resources development and showcasing good practice, online discussions and webinars, and face to face events.

The themes are:

- o **Focus on researchers:**  
including doing excellent research, navigating the research environment, managing your career and work-life balance
- o **Insights into structures and organisation:**  
including managing researcher development infrastructures, delivering for different profiles of researchers, engaging supervisors and other stakeholders, understanding the policy landscape and the impact of researcher development
- o **Continuing professional development for researcher developers:**  
including pedagogies and approaches, management of researcher development, leadership retreat, support for collaborative projects and research into researcher development
- o **Regional network meetings:**  
including best practice, sector updates and implications for researcher development

## Expanding global membership

Vitae has been hugely successful in working with UK institutions, research funders and other national stakeholders to transform the environment for doctoral researchers and research staff in the UK. Building on this knowledge and expertise, we are increasingly working with international institutions and organisations to provide strategic and operational input to develop high-quality effective professional development programmes and activities for their researchers. We are expanding our global membership and are delighted to welcome international members to our Vitae community to share their experiences and challenges of developing researchers, and working with them to ensure they achieve best value from their Vitae membership.

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*We continue to be dedicated to researcher development; inspired by the evidence that researchers are making a tangible impact through their careers in all employment sectors and in society.*

*Janet Metcalfe, Chair and Head, Vitae*

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Vitae, is an international programme led and managed by CRAC, a not-for-profit registered UK charity dedicated to active career learning and development. Working in the UK since 1968, when we ran our first project to support transitions of doctoral researchers to industry, Vitae has great expertise at enhancing the skills and career impact of researchers locally, within a global context.

We work in partnership with UK and international higher education institutions, research organisations, funders, and national bodies to meet society's need for high-level skills and innovation.

Vitae aims:

- Influence effective policy development and implementation relating to researcher development to build human capital
- Enhance higher education provision to train and develop researchers
- Empower researchers to make an impact in their careers
- Evidence the impact of professional and career development for researchers

Vitae and its membership programme is managed by CRAC: Careers Research and Advisory Centre. Further information on our activities with HEIs, researchers and employers may be found on this website:

[www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)