

Pathways: Career Decisions for Researchers, 7th June 2019

What the sessions are about:

Session 1 (Plenary)

Introduction: The Big Decisions

How the day will run, how to get the most out of the day, and all the practical logistics to get you through the day (including food arrangements).

Session 2 (three alternatives)

The Employment Landscape for BMH Researchers

Brief introduction to the job market for researchers from the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health, followed by the chance to hear from, and question, former PhDs in BMH disciplines, now in a range of academic and non-academic careers.

The Employment Landscape for Humanities Researchers

Brief introduction to the job market for researchers from the Faculty of Humanities, followed by the chance to hear from, and question, former PhDs in Humanities disciplines, now in a range of academic and non-academic careers.

The Employment Landscape for FSE Researchers

Brief introduction to the job market for researchers from the Faculty of Science and Engineering, followed by the chance to hear from, and question, former PhDs in FSE disciplines, now in a range of academic and non-academic careers.

Session 3 (three alternatives – choose which describes you best)

“I’m open to a change or want something different – where do I start?”

If you think it might be time for a complete change or a move away from academia (or, whisper it, you really don’t know what you want to do), come and hear from researchers who moved outside their academic comfort zone, and thrived.

“I still like my discipline or being at a university, but not sure about being an academic...”

If you still find your discipline or the academic environment appealing, but are having doubts about being an academic, there are lots of options. Hear from researchers who haven’t cut loose completely from their academic roots but have reinvented themselves and found new careers.

“Academic or bust! I’m looking for smart strategies for making it as an academic.”

You know it’s tough, you know the competition’s fierce – but someone’s going to make it as an academic, and it *might* be you. Be inspired by our panellists who are well on their way to academic success – or have made it. This is your chance to learn from their experience.

Session 4 (four alternatives)

Tales from the other side of the fence – leaving academia after your viva ...

Sometimes, you just know that it's time to move on. Once you've pushed back the frontiers of human knowledge with your PhD, what else do you want to do with your life? Hear from researchers who decided a post-doc wasn't for them, and spread their wings straight away.

Starting to climb the academic ladder – my post-doc story, so far ...

Straight after your PhD, sometimes you just fall into being a post-doc. Sometimes you have to fight for every opportunity to get the next research or teaching position. What's it *really* like in these transitional roles, are they the right move for you and how do you make the most of them?

Finding another way – enterprise, freelancing, portfolio careers

Being a long-term employee of one organisation in one job isn't the only way of working. Our panellists have integrated working for themselves, working in multiple roles concurrently (portfolio careers), and being an entrepreneur into how they make a living.

Session 5 (Plenary)

Earning a living – employers' views and beyond

Few of us have independent means so earning a living is a given for most of us. In this session you can hear from employers about what they look for and how your PhD will be viewed, and we'll cover issues like freelancing, self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Session 6 (Plenary)

How to take control of your career in the face of uncertainty

You've heard how others have managed their careers, post-PhD – but what about you? Who are you, what do you have to offer, and how can you talk about yourself and still be fascinating? How do you network, even (especially?) if you hate networking? This interactive workshop gives you the tools to turn careers inspiration into actions, build your confidence and send you out on a high.