Scottish Research Leaders Network

Purpose

The Scottish Research Leaders Network is a collaborative initiative advancing research leadership across Scottish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The network aims to make research leadership training accessible and available to all Scottish researchers and build a connected community of research leaders who collectively strengthen Scotland's research cultures.

Drawing on resources provided by the UKRI Future Leaders Fellows Development Network (FLFDN) for research leadership, participants will benefit from the collective expertise of facilitators and opportunities to connect and learn from peers across Scottish HEIs. The network is open to all staff in participating institutions who are aspiring, new or established research leaders.

The Scottish Research Leaders Network begins in January each year, with short monthly online sessions. Attendance is optional, and each session will provide tools and ideas for leadership and the opportunity for peer learning and networking. Part of the session will be recorded to create a sustainable resource that participants can revisit and use beyond the live programme. As an optional extra, individual institutions may run a cohort integrated with the sessions.

Scottish Research Leaders Network
Programme Schedule 2027

Please watch this short introduction to the SRLN before you attend: (YouTube link TBD)

Date (9.30 - 11.00)	Title	Description	Eventbrite events
Thur 21 Jan	**What is leadership?**	New leaders are often in a transition phase from doing everything themselves and for themselves, to enabling the success of others. To speed up this transition, this session will provide definitions to understand what leadership is in the context of research, and supports attendees to identify where they are already leading and where they might need to develop further through a stock-take exercise.	
Thur 25 Feb	**Self-leadership**	Successful leadership requires us to continually reflect and renew our thinking patterns. This includes being intentional in challenging our own assumptions and inferences, understanding our own cognitive bias and how we respond to others behaviour. The ideas of self-leadership introduced in this session put the concept of self-reflection in a new (ethical) context by asking participants to consider the effects of cognitive bias, and providing participants with further tools to guide their reflective practice.	
Thur 25 Mar	**Self-doubt and the inner-critic**	It is particularly common for research leaders to have a strong inner critic and imposter feelings, which can impede progress. This event aims to equip leaders with a greater understanding of why they might experience self-doubt, and how to reduce or manage their inner critic to enhance performance.	
Thur 22 Apr	**Team dysfunction**	Addressing team dynamics and dysfunction is stretching for most new leaders. This event aims to develop leaders understanding of what causes team dysfunction, and consider practical things that leaders can do and say to prevent it by building trust and healthy conflict.	
Thur 20 May	**Leadership styles**	Good leadership often entails a degree of agility – the willingness and ability to change approach, based on the ever-emerging picture of what our team or individuals are needing, wanting, expecting. This event aims to provide three frameworks to help leaders decide which leadership style to use and when to suit the needs or context their teams or individuals are working in.	
Thur 24 Jun	**Coaching for leaders**	As leaders we cannot know everything or have all the answers. Using coaching approaches helps our team to help themselves, enabling them to find answers for themselves. This session looks at how coaching and listening skills set us up to be effective at asking the right questions to get information that will help us to be a better leader: it gives us data with which to enable other people's success.	
Thur 23 Sep	**Important conversations**	Planning a difficult conversation and giving feedback often comes up as a key challenge for new leaders. Having important and respectful conversations requires very careful planning to make them effective. This event aims to provide a structure for having challenging or important conversations, and provides space to plan for a real conversation you want to have.	**Eventbrite bookings page**
Thur 21 Oct	**Values and purpose**	It is important for leaders to understand and articulate their own and their teams values, as this will impact the types of research projects they undertake and the types of cultures they create. Leaders also need to be able to articulate their research purpose in a single narrative, which others such as their teams or funders will be able to understand and buy into. This event aims to provide tools for uncovering individual and collective values and looks at ways to effectively define and articulate a research purpose, helping leaders to bring others with them toward a common goal.	
Thur 25 Nov	**Being strategic and sustaining momentum**	Leadership requires us to know where we are heading, scan the horizon, and plan for the future. It involves planning, prioritising, and adapting your research to achieve specific, well-defined objectives. This final event aims to explore tools and techniques to help researchers define their future goals, prioritise activities, and horizon scan to prepare for the future. It will also look at how to sustain your momentum and to put learning into action post-programme.	

These sessions are based on the Future Leaders Fellows Development Network leadership retreat materials, developed by Tracey Stead and Steve Joy, funded by UKRI, and shared under a CC-BY-NC licence.