

Theme 4: Constructing "other groups, other routes, other ways to be free"

Doctoral researchers emphasised the power of 'outside' interests to create a feeling of 'headspace', giving a sense of separation from the PhD and of a healthy work-life balance. Researchers also emphasised the potential to feel constrained - mentally and physically- during the PhD process and their interest in finding ways to experience an increased sense of freedom. 'Other groups, other routes, other ways to be free' included, therefore, finding activities and groups which were either actually separate to the university or provided a sense of separation from the doctoral research and process.

Theme 5: Curating experiences of research process - seminars and events *"with more of a focus on the people rather than the publications" and that "allow people to express how their time is going, structured in a more focused way to build healthy working practices"*

Doctoral researchers emphasised a desire to share their own and learn about others' experiences of the research process - contrasting this to resources and training packages which may focus on more specific research skills, software, or techniques. The desire to share and learn included wanting to engage in discussing shared experiences of the PhD process with other doctoral researchers including sharing experiences around managing the PhD and personal lives. Researchers also emphasised an interest in hearing PhD completers and researchers that are more senior talk about their experiences of the research process - including the journey, struggles, successes, and tips and tricks for managing the experience.

The activity may be designed initially for the departmental or School level, or for a broader range of researchers across Schools. It will be essential for applications for smaller scale (departmental or School level) initiatives to describe how their proposal could potentially be scaled up to benefit larger groups of researchers.

Funding will not be granted retrospectively to cover initiatives occurring before application deadlines. All applications will be reviewed after the closing date unless your proposed initiative must take place before the deadline. If this is the case, please ensure you apply at least four weeks before the date of your initiative.

Applicants are encouraged to consider how they will evaluate their activity.

Budget

The maximum total amount available to any single project is £750.

A clear budget is required in your application and successful applicants are expected to provide a final statement of expenditure after the initiative. The deadline for the final statement of expenditure is 6 weeks after your initiative has taken place. Any unspent funds should be returned to the Doctoral School.

Please note that funds cannot be used to cover the applicant's time or for travel, course or conference attendance, or staffing costs, and research projects are beyond the scope of this funding stream.

Projects are expected to deliver value for money, and funds can only be used for items that are required for the activity.

Award recipients should make themselves familiar with the University's supply agreements. Costs for catering an event should be reasonable, and where an external caterer is used, in line with hospitality provided by Sussex Food.

If your application is successful, you will be required to identify a School/department budget code to which the funds will be transferred.

Selection process

Membership of the selection panel will be drawn from the