



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

for WTSA Researchers

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name of WTSA Researcher:

Department:

Institution:

Name of Supervisor(s):

Date:

Year of Contract:

Length of Contract:

PART A: SHORT OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH PROJECT EMPHASIZING THE MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS ACHIEVED/EXPECTED

PART B: LONG TERM CAREER OBJECTIVE(S) (AFTER 5-10 YEARS):

PART C: ANTICIPATED STEPS IN CAREER PATH (OVER 5-10 YEARS):

PART D: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE THESE 5-10 YEAR OBJECTIVES?

PART E: WHAT IS YOUR PLAN IN THE SHORT TERM (1-2 YEARS)?

1. *Research results:*
 - a. What key results do you expect to publish?

 - b. Which conferences do you plan to attend to present this research?

2. *Research skills and techniques:* What new skills are required to achieve your objectives?

3. *Research management:* Have you considered applying for research and/or travel funds? Have you considered training courses in Project Management?

4. *Communication skills:* What opportunities would best help you to communicate your work in written and/or oral modes? Have you considered training courses in communication and writing skills?

5. *Training in transferable skills:* What training opportunities would complement your research activities, enhance your transferable skills and promote your career objectives?
6. *Networking opportunities:* How might you enhance your professional network with a view to strengthening your research training and/or identifying potential career opportunities?

Signature of Fellow

Date

Signature of Supervisor 1:

Date

Signature of Supervisor 2:

Date

Guidance Notes

Introduction

A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is an effective method for setting your own personal targets, and finding the best way to achieve them. The central objective of your work is your research project, and the integration of this research into the WTSA network objectives. Nevertheless, some meetings with your supervisor will lead to the identification of generic complementary skills that will contribute to your personal development goals. For example, research students often contribute to academic forums such as symposiums, conferences and seminars. Generic training on presentation skills can support and develop your abilities to give an effective presentation. However, this type of training is often transferable to other aspects of your life and is highly valued by employers. Training in such transferable skills is provided by host institutions in the WTSA Consortium and by the Consortium itself, and is representative of achievable skills that you can include in your Personal Development Plan.

This proforma provides the basis for your PDP. Through support and meetings with your supervisor, it is designed to be an effective method for setting your own personal targets and finding the best way to achieve them. A PDP is a dynamic plan, designed to be periodically reviewed and updated throughout your fellowship. Please record your progress in these areas and save all updates of your PDP.

Completing the PDP

The PDP should be completed in your first year, and then reviewed and updated in each subsequent year of your membership of the WTSA. In the first year your objectives should reflect the skills and expertise that you aim to acquire. In subsequent years these objectives should be revised in light of your training, and should be used to monitor the progress of your career. There are three main parts to each PDP.

Part A. To start your PDP, write a brief overview of your research project, and what you expect to achieve / have achieved from it. You could summarise your scientific objectives, the wider significance of your research to the WTSA network objectives, and the types of publications that your data generate.

Part B. Where do you hope to be in your career in the next 5-10 years? Have your goals changed over time?

Part C. What key steps will be required to achieve your current career objective(s). For example, will you need to do a postdoc (in what area)?, or will you need to land a fellowship (to study what?). You can consider these steps as your major goals over the next 5-10 years.

Part D. List key expertise and training you will require to achieve these goals?

Part E. How do these long term goals translate into the short term? Your short term objectives are probably bound within a timeframe, and can be represented as a series of specific skills and achievements that you plan to achieve in the next 1-2 years: For example:

1. *Research results:* What outcomes do you expect from your research – e.g. a thesis, scientific papers (indicate how many, in which journals, etc.)? Consider what contribution your research will make to the wider academic community. Perhaps you will also disseminate your findings at conferences or by giving seminars within your host Institute, to other WTSA partners, and to external

audiences.

2. *Research skills and techniques:* For example, are there any new technical skills you need to acquire? Perhaps you need to gain experience of some specialized software? Are there workshops available that would provide you with these new skills, and allow you to meet other researchers with similar interests? Would you benefit from training in critical thinking, analytical skills, data capture techniques, etc?
3. *Research management:* Have you planned any funding applications (indicate name of award if known; grants written/applied for/received, professional society presentation awards or travel awards, etc.)? Do you need help in financial planning, negotiation skills, project management skills etc?
4. *Communication skills:* Consider how you would communicate your work to academics, industrial partners, and lay audiences, both in written and oral format. Will you present your work at a conference? Are you able to confidently interpret and discuss your findings with colleagues?
5. *Training in complementary skills:* Perhaps institutional or WTSA training in complementary skills is relevant here (e.g. courses on time management, research ethics, careers in research)? You could also do some teaching activities.
6. *Networking opportunities:* Collaborative visits to other laboratories might provide you with new research techniques and knowledge that would complement your core work programme. Also, consider your working relationship with supervisors / peers / colleagues both within your Institute and in the wider research community.