



Career Pathways

Working at
John Innes Centre
- Your career, your choice

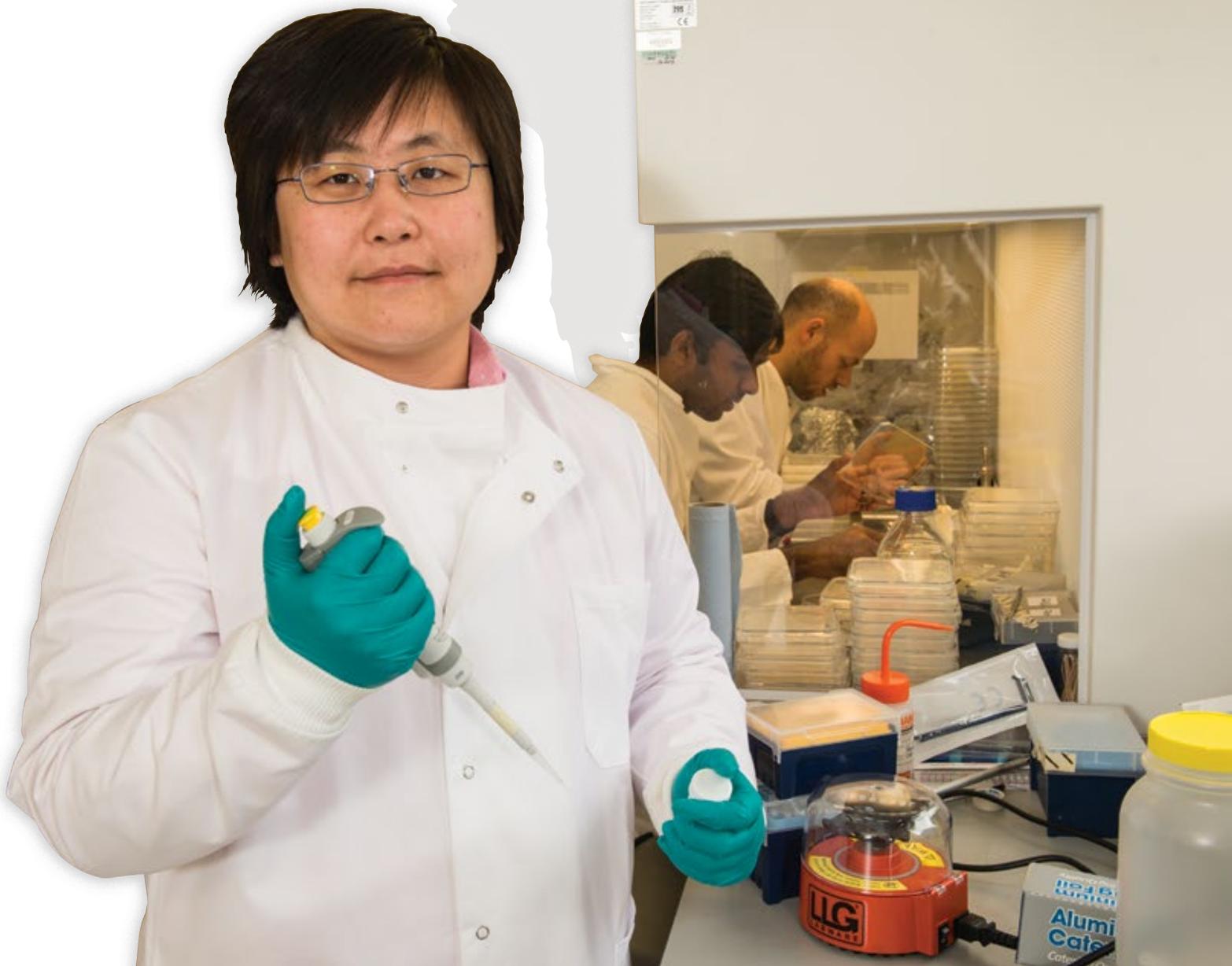
Introduction

The John Innes Centre is renowned as an independent international centre of excellence in plant and microbial science. Its scientific reputation is built on commitment to excellence, to training future generations of scientists and to developing all our staff to their full potential.

As part of this commitment JIC provides a broad range of opportunities for personal and career development for all staff in order to achieve 'lifelong employability.' It supports the gaining of transferable skills to equip staff for their chosen career pathway, be that in academia or other professions.

JIC holds an Athena SWAN Silver Award in recognition for its commitment to supporting women's careers in science and creating a supportive environment that ultimately benefits everyone.

The 'Career Pathways – your career, your choice' document builds on this foundation and is intended to provide an outline of the career pathways available at the John Innes Centre and the career and personal development support available to all staff.



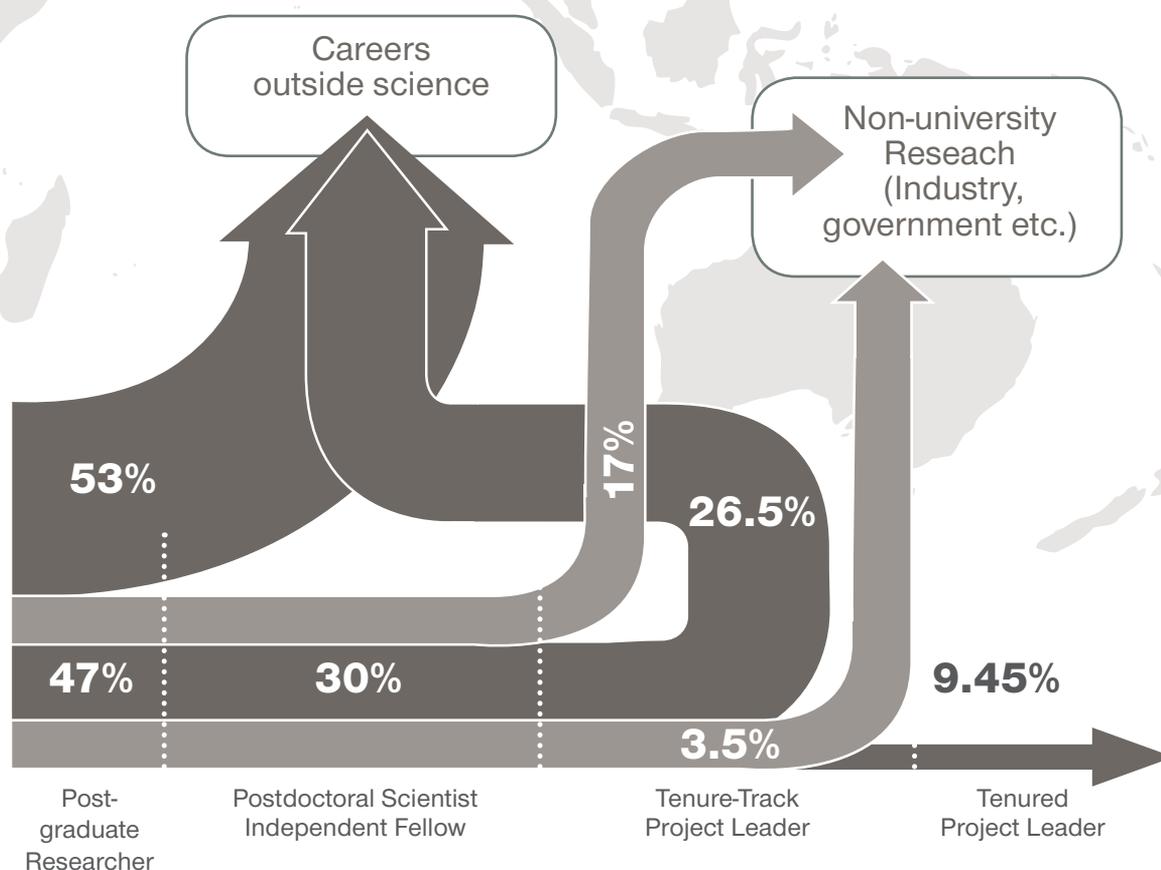
Scientific leadership

Our focus on identifying, nurturing and training future research leaders is a primary driver of our scientific effectiveness. Experience gained at the John Innes Centre is highly valued, and provides a springboard for career development in the scientific community both nationally and internationally.

It is important for early career researchers to recognise the flat career structure within the academic community, with typically fewer Project Leader positions available than early career researcher positions.

As a consequence only a small percentage of early career researchers will become Project Leaders. The Royal Society 'The Scientific Century: securing our future prosperity' highlighted the fact that although a PhD can be a stepping stone to a scientific career the majority of people undertaking a PhD go on to have successful and fulfilling careers outside scientific research, with only a small proportion ending up either as University academics or JIC Senior Project Leaders.

Transition points in a typical academic career



An illustration of the transition points in typical academic scientific careers following a PhD showing the flow of scientifically trained people into other sectors. Equivalent JIC Career Paths are indicated.

Source: 'The Scientific Century: securing our future prosperity' (The Royal Society, 2010)

It is therefore essential, given the position outlined by the Royal Society, that individuals make the most of the opportunities provided to them at the John Innes Centre, taking responsibility for their own career development.

Personal development for all staff

The institute encourages all staff to participate in training and development in order to improve skills in use in their current role or to enhance transferable skills.

A wide range of specific technical, personal and professional development training initiatives are available to support essential career development for staff at all levels. A broad programme of training is described in the Norwich Bioscience Institutes (NBI) Training Events calendar, ranging from technical scientific skills such as Image processing, or bioinformatics to personal and career development such as Fresh Steps or presentation skills.

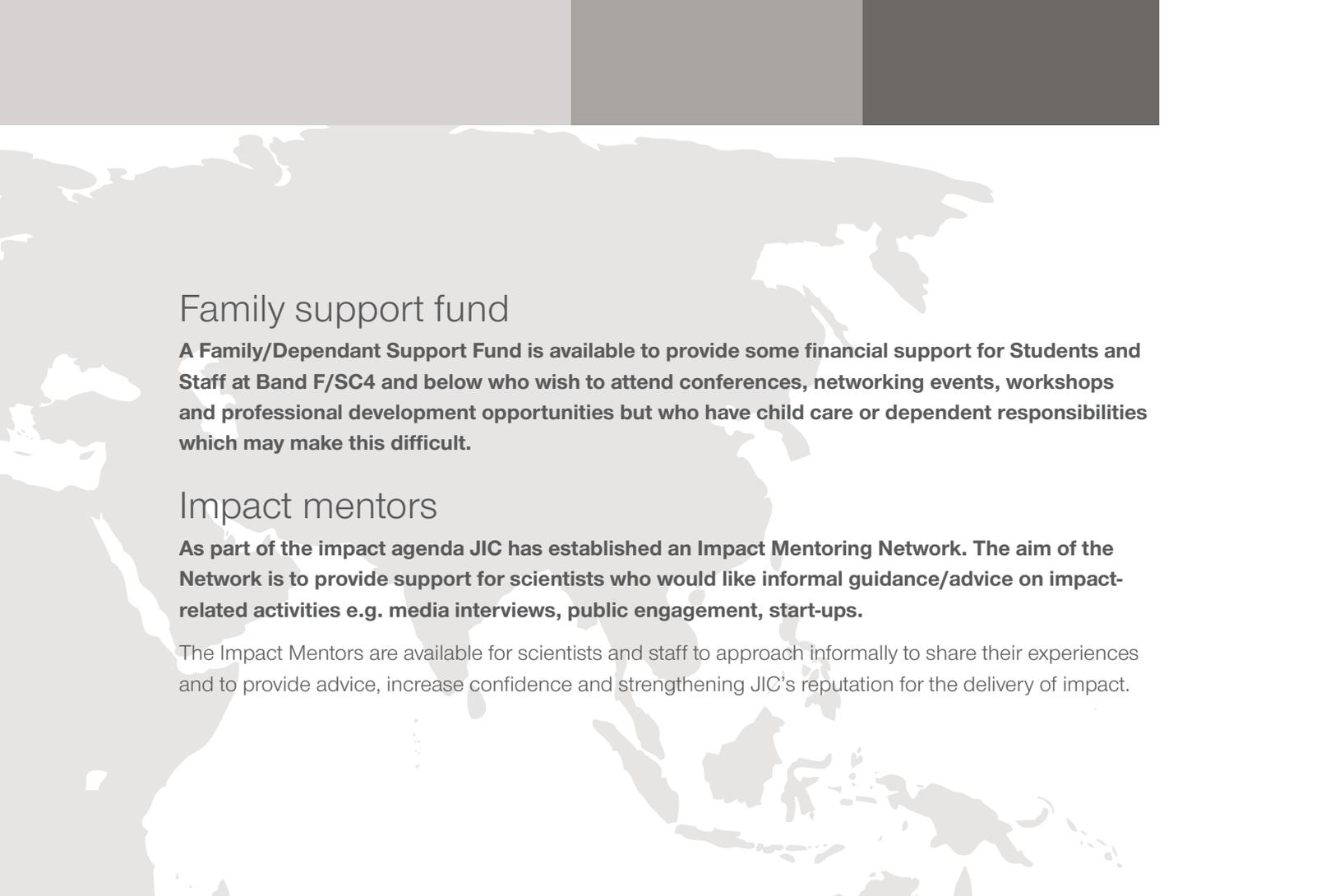
Personal development programmes available to staff include the following:

- **Fresh Steps** is a mid-career review programme for anyone who wants to reassess where they are in their lives and work, review their priorities, explore new possibilities and set new goals. This benefits those with substantial work experience who have lots to offer but may underestimate their value and undersell their achievements, skills and abilities.
- **Springboard Women's Development Programme** is designed for women from all backgrounds, ages and stages of their lives. Although the programme was initially written and developed for women in non-management grades, it has a lot to offer women at all levels, helping them to work out what's important to them, set new goals and learn the tools and techniques to take action towards achieving them.
- **Navigator Development Programme** is designed for men from all backgrounds, ages and stages of their lives, who want to examine their home and work life in order to take their next steps more consciously. It helps men to gain a better balance between home and work, decide on their priorities and then create a plan to achieve their version of success.
- **Spring Forward** is for senior and middle grade women who are new to management, considering a move into a management or leadership role or eager to progress further in their management or leadership role. It helps women decide on their leadership strengths and priorities and build a clear plan for getting their message across, projecting the right image and getting results.
- **Sprint** is a development programme focusing on personal and professional development. It helps women research students achieve their potential and ensure they are able to make the most of wide career opportunities after their research degree.

As a result of the above training individuals have reflected on their career goals and opportunities within the institute, and some have decided that their next steps for a successful and fulfilling career lie outside JIC.

"I feel relieved to know that research is not the only path post-PhD and now feel more comfortable about considering different options for the future. I feel more confident as a professional and am more realistic about what I want to achieve, and able to focus on doing the best for "me", including a better work-life balance."

Sprint Participant



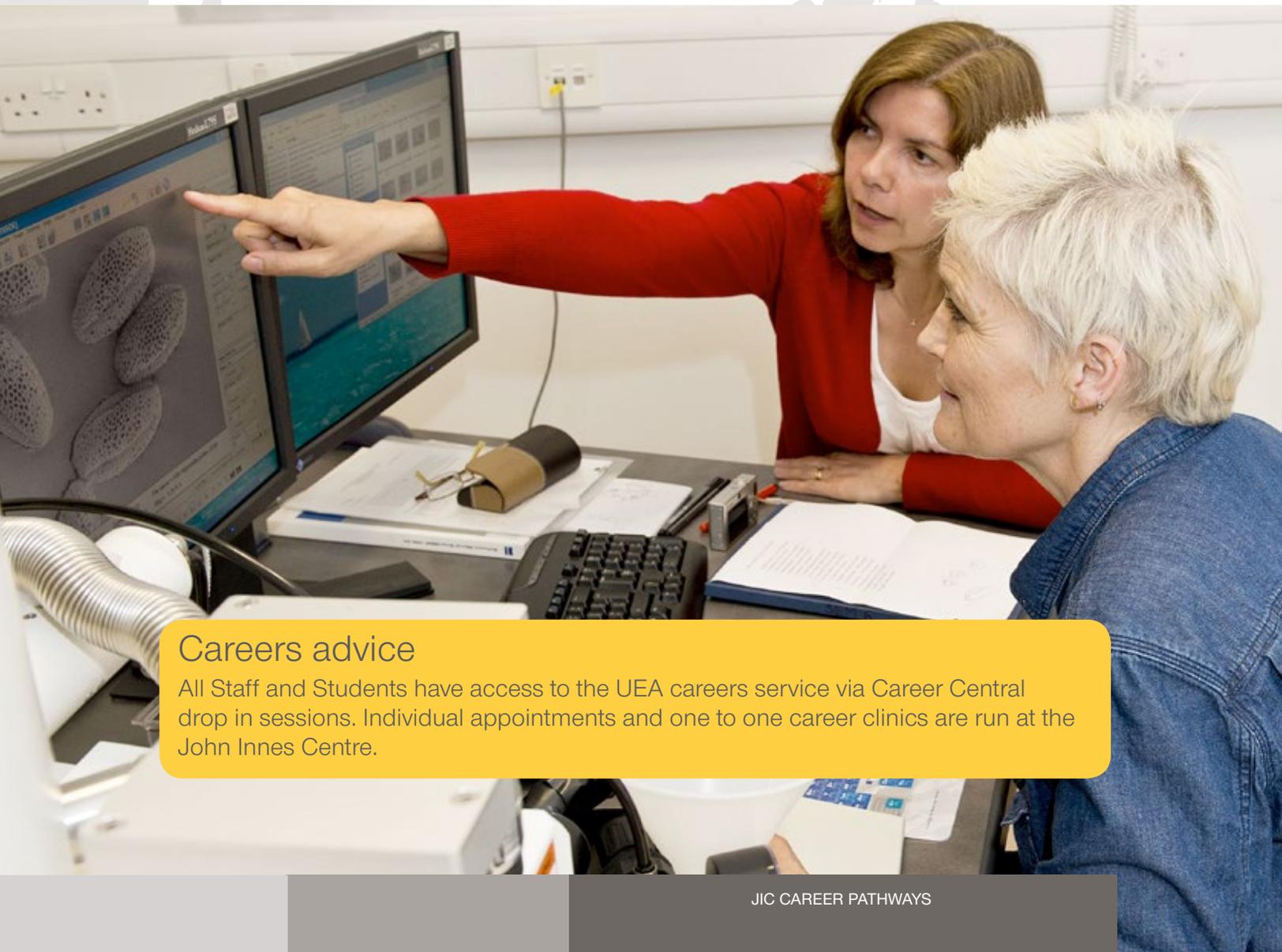
Family support fund

A Family/Dependant Support Fund is available to provide some financial support for Students and Staff at Band F/SC4 and below who wish to attend conferences, networking events, workshops and professional development opportunities but who have child care or dependent responsibilities which may make this difficult.

Impact mentors

As part of the impact agenda JIC has established an Impact Mentoring Network. The aim of the Network is to provide support for scientists who would like informal guidance/advice on impact-related activities e.g. media interviews, public engagement, start-ups.

The Impact Mentors are available for scientists and staff to approach informally to share their experiences and to provide advice, increase confidence and strengthening JIC's reputation for the delivery of impact.



Careers advice

All Staff and Students have access to the UEA careers service via Career Central drop in sessions. Individual appointments and one to one career clinics are run at the John Innes Centre.

What our staff say

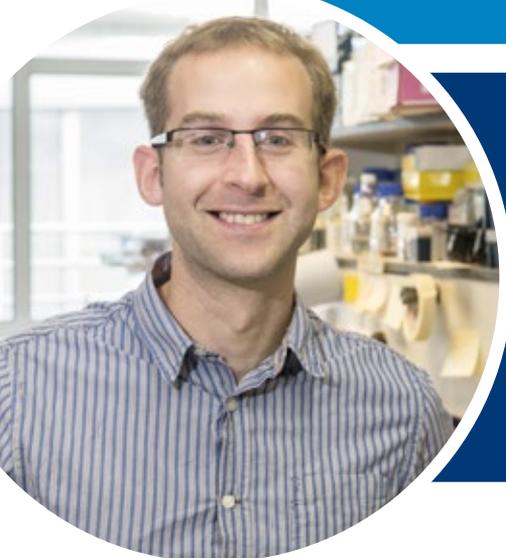


"I developed an interest in science from studying agriculture. Although I was young and relatively inexperienced JIC project leaders were willing to give me an opportunity to work at JIC. Since starting at JIC I've been involved in some very big projects on wheat, and have built up a trail of work and resources. Projects benefit from the continuity of knowledge and expertise I can contribute because of this. I have a supervisor who encourages me to explore different areas, such as outreach and working with schools, and to line manage other staff. I feel there is a lot of trust from people above me."

Simon Orford, Research Assistant

"JIC is a fantastic place to be a PhD student; there is so much support both scientifically and socially because there is such a high concentration of scientists who all collaborate with each other in the same place. It's a real melting pot of ideas! The travel to amazing places associated with communicating my science is incredible."

Annis Richardson, Postgraduate Researcher



"I've been really impressed with the support I've received at JIC - the equipment, funding and lab space is all excellent.

Also, I've found the scientific environment highly stimulating. JIC is a highly supportive and aspirational environment for my science, and there's a strong culture of collaboration and resource sharing, which is really valuable when you're establishing a research group."

Andy Truman, Project Leader





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John Innes Foundation

The John Innes Centre is supported by the John Innes Foundation

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Research and Support Staff

Research and Support Staff (RSS) play a pivotal role in the success of the institute and their continual personal development is important to ensure that JIC remains at the cutting edge of science. This staff grouping covers a diverse range of staff with a wide variety of skills and experience and technical skills. Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs), Postdoctoral Scientists (PDs), Independent Fellows, Tenure-Track and Tenured Project Leaders are not included in this group.

Some of the RSS roles offer an alternative career opportunity for PGRs or PDs who wish to stay in science but who have chosen not to pursue the aspiration of being a Project Leader.

Training and development

On-going investment in the learning, achievements and career aspirations of Research and Support Staff continues to be a high priority for JIC. However in doing so RSS are encouraged to take responsibility for their own career development and access appropriate development opportunities to create a flexible individual training plan that meets their needs. A suite of professional personal development courses available to staff include:

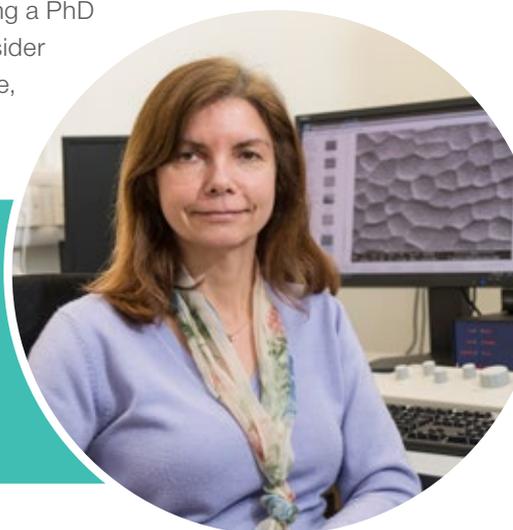
- **Fresh Steps** is a mid-career review programme for anyone who wants to reassess where they are in their lives and work, review their priorities, explore new possibilities and set new goals.
- **Springboard Women's Development Programme** is designed for women from all backgrounds, ages and stages of their lives.
- **Navigator Development Programme** is designed for men from all backgrounds, ages and stages of their lives, who want to examine their home and work life in order to take their next steps more consciously.
- **Spring Forward** is for senior and middle grade women who are new to management, considering a move into a management or leadership role or eager to progress further in their management or leadership role.

JIC is working with the Science Council to celebrate the professionalism of its Research and Support Staff. RSS are encouraged to access the professional registration opportunities offered through the Science Council, as well as maintaining their level of transferable skills to afford maximum flexibility to develop their careers.

For RSS there is the opportunity to be considered to study for a PhD. Obtaining a PhD provides an opportunity to enhance their current role and enable them to consider developing their career by applying for a PD position, either at JIC or elsewhere, in the future.

"Running the Bioimaging facility means I interact with lots of different people on many different projects, so the job is quite diverse. I enjoy being considered as an expert in a particular field and being able to help JIC scientists achieve the images they need to get their science noticed."

Kim Findlay, Facility Manager



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Supporting future careers

There are options for a variety of different career pathways for RSS at JIC. Some RSS may take up the opportunity of running a technology platform and/or leading on a specific science project.

Other development opportunities for RSS include the experience of presenting and discussing latest research results, aspirations and future challenges with colleagues and visiting scientists in an interactive and informal setting. These include taking part in research group meetings, giving and attending departmental and Institute Strategic Programme seminars and the opportunity to present at the Annual Science Meeting.

However those wishing to develop their career further are encouraged to use their experience and expertise gained at JIC as a springboard to explore the opportunities that arise in the institute, and the wider environment.

"Working in digital communications, you are always looking to do exciting and innovative things. The John Innes Centre is built on those same principles, making it an ideal place to develop and turn ideas into exciting work. The John Innes Centre truly believes in personal and professional development and facilitates a wide range of training courses, far beyond what you'd get anywhere else. It makes it a fantastic place to spend the early part of your career and develop your skills. The diversity of thought and the community atmosphere you find across the campus is easily the best thing about working at the institute. You know that each project will be different, and that diversity pushes you to do your very best work."

Chris Wilson, Digital Channels Specialist



"I thoroughly enjoy my job! The John Innes Centre is a great place to work, with a vibrant and friendly community of people. I love the fact that, despite not being a scientist, I really feel like I am contributing to a common and very worthwhile cause by helping my scientists and reducing their admin burden. I also love that my role is so varied and each day brings something interesting or challenging to deal with."

Sarah Tolland, Scientific Administrator

Careers advice

All RSS have access to the UEA careers service via Career Central drop in sessions. Individual appointments and one to one career clinics are run at the John Innes Centre.

Project Leaders

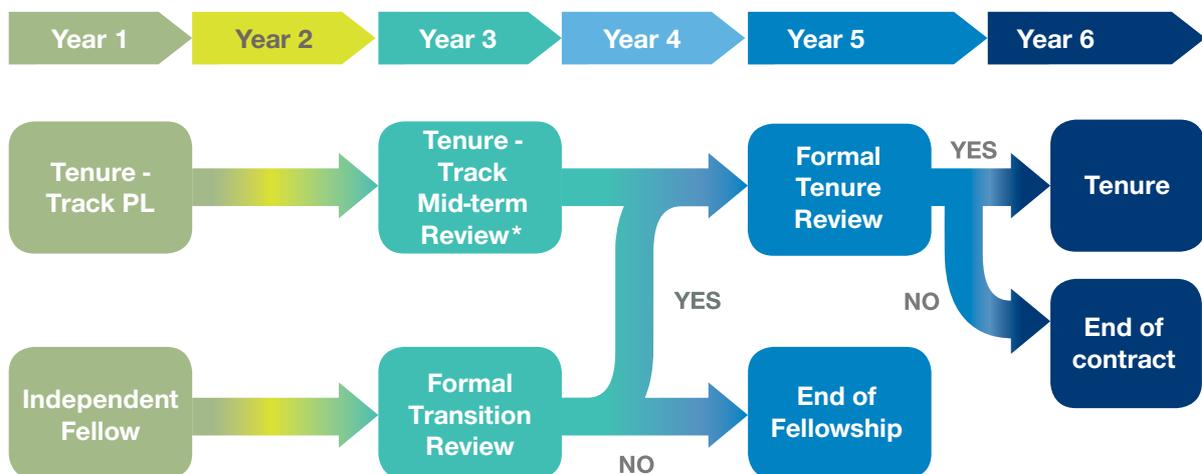
Five year externally funded Independent Fellowship

Undertaking a five-year external funded Independent Fellowship at JIC is seen as a staging towards a formal assessment for a tenured Project Leader post. Fellows who successfully meet all the criteria will have the opportunity to undergo a transition review during their third year to assess suitability for transition to the tenure-track Project Leader programme.

Each year the John Innes Centre hosts an Independent Research Fellowship conference for outstanding early career researchers who either hold, or wish to apply for a five year externally funded Independent Research Fellowship. Successful applicants are provided the opportunity to present and discuss their proposed research area. Those candidates who JIC wishes to support are mentored through the process of applying for a Fellowship (including writing the proposal and preparing for the interview) or are offered the opportunity to move their existing Fellowship to the John Innes Centre.

Throughout the five years, fellows are mentored by tenured JIC Project Leaders, and are supported with extensive training opportunities.

Career Pathways - Independent Fellowship to Tenure-Track Project Leader



* Mid-term tenure track review can take place at any time within the first three years of appointment

"My training at the John Innes Centre prepared me for a successful career in plant science, wherever I went and whatever I chose to do"

Steve Penfield, Project Leader



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Tenure-Track Project Leader

Tenure-Track Project Leaders receive mentoring and training to support their career development and undergo a mid-term review and a final review by the end of their fifth year to assess suitability for tenure.

As part of the Athena SWAN initiative; an initiative that recognises commitment to advancing women's careers in STEMM, JIC has introduced two new policies. One of these policies enables an extension of the tenure clock in compelling personal circumstances, and the other provides funding for a senior Postdoctoral scientist for a year during a period maternity leave.

Leadership development

JIC invests in developing leadership and management skills to enable the performance management and development of others. We believe that supporting the development of ambitious and creative PLs through mentoring and encouraging them to take responsibility for winning and managing resources for their research will enable them to achieve their scientific potential.

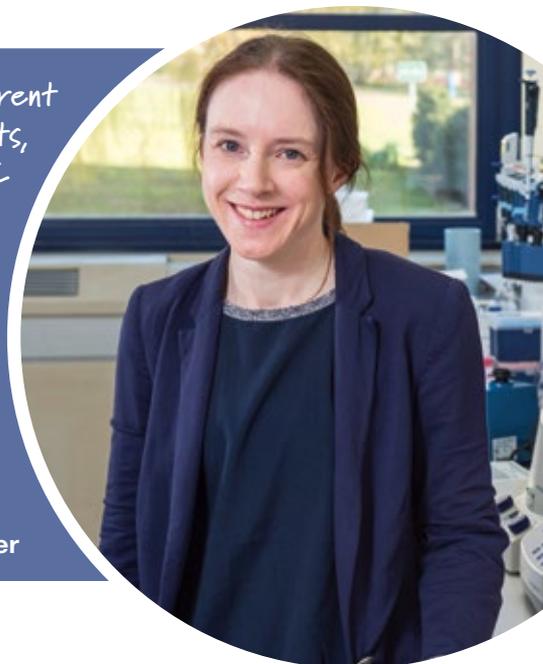
All Project Leaders (Tenured and Tenure-Track) are expected to participate in appropriate leadership training throughout the duration of the career at JIC. JIC has pioneered a leadership development framework that provides clear expectations of the type, frequency and focus of development to be undertaken.

Examples of leadership events include; "EMBO comes to Norwich", bringing a bespoke version of the popular EMBO Laboratory Managers leadership course on site; Roffey Park coaching for newly tenured Project Leaders, 360 degree feedback and associated coaching.

A mentoring programme for Tenure-Track, newly Tenured and newly appointed Tenured Project Leaders is in place.

"Following career opportunities has led me to different places and exposed me to a huge community of scientists, their topics and methodologies. My postdoc at the JIC allowed me significant freedom to develop new research ideas with a safety net of guidance and support, in an environment that offered rich input. After developing my career elsewhere I returned to the JIC as a Project Leader. Now I'm back I intend to make the most of the scientific and intellectual resources at hand to ensure that the research programme I've started develops at the forefront of plant biology."

Christine Faulkner, Project Leader



Postdoctoral Scientists

The John Innes Centre is committed to training the next generation of scientists and as such Postdoctoral scientists (PDs) are encouraged to expand their horizons and move on to other organisations after completion of their Postdoctoral position to further their career.

JIC is committed to supporting PD career development, through training, career advice and encourages individuals to use JIC as a springboard to positions in the wider community.

Training and development

JIC supports all PDs regardless of where they see their career developing, be that research, science-related, or careers in sectors outside science or research. Opportunities are provided to develop technical, scientific or science-related skills in addition to transferable skills.

PDs have access to a suite of training opportunities developed in collaboration with the JIC PostDoc Voice that specifically meet PD career aspirations and development needs. Specific training opportunities include developing grant writing and reviewing skills delivered by Project Leaders, presentation skills, access to mentoring programmes and opportunities to learn from existing Independent Fellows and the Head of Contracts on how to write successful Fellowship applications.

A range of bioinformatics and computational biology courses are offered at JIC, with more advanced courses available through partnership with The Genome Analysis Centre (TGAC) and Cambridge University.

JIC is committed to supporting the career development of PDs and provides resources to facilitate the training and development of leadership potential through access to the well-respected EMBO Leadership programme. This will enhance future competitiveness for Project Leader positions in academia, industry or equivalent leadership positions in other arena.

All PDs are expected to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning and are supported in doing this by their line managers and Human Resources.



"When I got the opportunity to join the John Innes I jumped at it. The best things about being a postdoctoral scientist are supervising students, working with a great group of people, the challenge of pushing boundaries and thinking out of the box, keeping up with all the cutting edge technology and developments. All this while being surrounded with people full of dedication to do the very best at their jobs."

Xana Rebocho, Postdoctoral Scientist

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Supporting future careers

Opportunities to support outstanding Postdoctoral scientists are available through the annual Independent Research Fellows Conference designed to attract and recruit Postdoctoral scientists who are looking to establish their own research programme. A successful fellowship application is a stepping stone towards research leadership.

Other development opportunities for PDs are available such as the opportunity to present and discussing latest research results, aspirations and challenges with colleagues and visiting scientists in an interactive and informal setting. These include taking part in research group meetings, giving and attending departmental and Institute Strategic Programme seminars and the opportunity to present at the Annual Science Meeting.

"JIC has provided me with fantastic tools and a great environment to broaden my knowledge and develop my science interests. I have been able to collaborate with computer scientists and mathematicians to develop simple models (based on self-organisation of the cytoskeleton) that can account for subcellular patterns observed in plants."

Jordi Chan, Postdoctoral Scientist



Careers advice

All PDs have access to the UEA careers service via Career Central drop in sessions. Individual appointments and one to one career clinics are run at the John Innes Centre.

Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs)

The John Innes Centre offers talented bioscience graduates an opportunity to work in a multidisciplinary research environment and join a vibrant student community; whilst being supported by extensive training and development programmes run both independently and in collaboration with our partners across the Norwich Research Park. Our aim is to equip students for their future career whatever that might be.

Training and development

Together with their supervisory team and the Training and Development Manager, students determine a bespoke training pathway broadly adhering to the RCUK's recommended engagement of 10 days per year. All new students receive mentoring from a more senior student.

The development we provide for students is informed by and related back to the Researcher Development Framework enabling students to develop a rounded portfolio of skills and competencies.

Training is provided in advanced research skills and advanced technologies, mainly within the student's home laboratory; technical skills for research via courses in statistics, technical writing, presentation skills, project management and also personal and professional development. In addition to gaining technical scientific skills students are expected to develop experience in Knowledge Exchange and Commercialisation and Public Engagement.

"The training opportunities at John Innes are second to none, and I take full advantage of them. I have undertaken the Sprint personal development programme that has helped me identify the skills I need to achieve my career aspirations. As a student I have a personal budget for conferences so am able to target the best learning and potential career opportunities for me."

Donna Cousins, Postgraduate Researcher



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Supporting future careers

All students are required to pursue the University of East Anglia Personal and Professional Development (PPD) Programme.

Students funded by the Norwich Research Park Doctoral Training Partnership are required to undertake a three month internship unrelated to their research project to gain transferable skills. Students are provided with support to enable them to prepare for the internship and select the right host and project to suit their aspirations. The aim is for students to develop wider skills to become an effective researcher, making a successful transition to a future career within academia or in other professions.

Students funded on iCASE studentships are also required to spend three months working with their industrial partner.

JIC has several international alliances which offer opportunities for internships; these include the Centre of Excellence in Plant and Microbial Sciences (CEPAMS), through an alliance with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), and the alliance with Bioscience for Eastern and Central Africa (BecA) research Hub based in Nairobi.

The support network for students includes the Director of BioSciences DTP, JIC PGR Director, the Tutor for the Rotation Program, Graduate Studies Office, the Student Voice Committee and ResNet.

"I couldn't think of a better place to be at this stage in my career. There is a lot of support, not only from supervisors but also from other scientists and postgraduate students. I always feel like I am part of something special here."

Daniel Knevitt, Postgraduate Researcher



Careers advice

All students have access to the UEA careers service with specific workshops and clinics run at the John Innes Centre.