

2018 Career Resources Guide

for Higher Degree by Research Candidates

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Singapore
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JCU Graduate Research School
www.jcu.edu.au/graduate-research-school



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Why provide this guide?

Universities produce vastly more graduates than they could ever employ. Postgraduate candidates should consider if the reality of an academic career suits them and, if so, how to make it happen. Candidates should also be aware of the whole range of research-related career options available, and understand the skills needed to gain entry into these careers. There is a wealth of information about how to forge a career based on your postgraduate degree online. So why provide this guide? The amount and range of information available online can be overwhelming. So where do you start? Our goal was to answer that question by providing a curated, hyperlinked guide to some of the most relevant information available online.

Disclaimer

Blogs stop being updated, information goes out of date and website links break. All due care was taken to provide the most up to date information at the time of compilation of this guide (April 2016). While James Cook University has endeavoured to provide accurate material for this document, the material is provided "as-is" and James Cook University makes no representations about the suitability of this material for any purpose. James Cook University disclaims all warranties with regard to this material and there is no guarantee given to accuracy and currency of any individual item in this guide. James Cook University does not accept responsibility for any damage or loss occasioned by the use of the material of the report. All use is at the risk of the user.

About the author

Dr Ian McLeod has had a varied career working for universities, the resource sector, environmental consultancies, regional and central government, video production companies, and non-government organisations. Ian graduated from his PhD in 2015 and is now a Senior Research Scientist and Communications Manager at James Cook University and a co-founder and Director of Cinematic Science, a science-focused media company. Ian teaches workshops about career progression, science communication and video production at James Cook University. Ian is passionate about empowering postgraduate candidates to recognise their powerful suite of transfer skills and to have healthy, happy lives and satisfying careers in or out of academia.

What is available at James Cook University?

Did you know that James Cook University (JCU) provides a range of resources for current students and graduates to increase their career prospects and help them find a job? Follow the links below to learn about the resources available to you.

JCU Careers and Employment - <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment>

JCU Careers and Employment offers a wide range of services and resources to assist with your career planning, decision making and successful transition to employment. Our face-to-face services are available to graduates for 12 months after completion of their course. Our online resources are available to all graduates using a JCU email/login.

Our services include:

- Career planning and decision making <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/students/career-planning-for-success>
- Job search and application support <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/students/job-search>
- Drop-in sessions for career enquiries and job application advice <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/students/appointments-and-drop-in-service>
- Industry and employer events on campus <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/careers-fair>

Our online resources include:

- Career Development Program <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/resources/career-development-program> Develop your employability skills with this program of self-help career management modules.
- CareerHub <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/resources/careerhub> CareerHub is JCU's online job portal. It lists part-time, casual, vacation, volunteer and graduate opportunities.
- Career Action Plan <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/students/career-planning-for-success#cap> The Career Action Plan is a checklist of actions you can take to increase your chances of graduate employment.
- Big Interview <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/resources/big-interview> Learn the best interview techniques and practice just about every question you are likely to get in over 20 industries.
- Develop an Enterprising Mindset – Skills and Attributes for Career Success <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/resources/skills-and-attributes-for-career-success-developing-an-enterprising-mindset> Job markets are becoming more complex and globalized, so employers now target graduates who are innovative thinkers and leaders. This program contains eight self-paced modules to help you gain these key skills and be competitive in the future job market.
- Career tips and information sheets <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/resources/information-sheets>
- Course specific resume examples <https://www.jcu.edu.au/careers-and-employment/resources/example-resumes>

Personal Support

Counselling may be helpful for a variety of issues that could be having an adverse impact on your studies. JCU offers free and confidential counselling for current students.

[Graduate Research School](#)

JCU's Graduate Research School's role is '*empowering tomorrow's researchers*' by supporting research education throughout JCU and developing and refining the University's overall Higher Degree by Research strategy.

[Lynda.com](#)

JCU provides free access to lynda.com, which provides online, course-based video instruction for information technology, business, communication, design, education and creative skills. The 3,000+ courses and 130,000+ videos are geared to beginner, intermediate and advanced users. Some of the courses that offer information relevant to a broad range of jobs and careers include:

- Project Management
- Leadership and Management
- Business Skills
- Communication
- Mindfulness

[Make Your Research Degree Work- \(4-hour workshop\)](#)

Provided by the GRS and for PhD credit, this workshop provides participants with key strategies to plan and prepare for satisfying and rewarding careers. Book through JCU's Graduate Research School.

[The Desk](#)

Aims to support Australian tertiary students to achieve mental and physical health and wellbeing. Being a student can be a challenging time and many students do not access support services for a range of reasons including time pressures, not knowing where to go for help and feeling embarrassed. The Desk offers free access to online modules, tools, quizzes and advice.

Choosing your path

The days of moving from a PhD into a guaranteed academic career are long gone. Indeed, an academic career should be viewed as an 'alternative career'. The goal of this section is to provide links to information to help you find your path to a satisfying and rewarding career.

[Beyond the PhD](#)

This website provided by the University of Reading features profiles of PhD students who have gone into both academic and non-academic careers.

[From PhD to life](#)

A website provided by Jen Polk who "helps graduate students and PhDs achieve their career and life goals, especially when it comes to launching meaningful-to-them careers." Her site includes interviews with people who have made the transition into a fulfilling career outside academia and many useful links to other relevant resources.

[Graduate stats and salaries](#)

A guide to salaries and other employment related statistics broken down by field of research. Provided by Graduate Careers Australia.

[Hortensii](#)

A website dedicated to improving the situation for PhDs without permanent academic jobs. Notable for the results of a very detailed survey into the difficulties facing PhDs when it comes to securing academic employment, and the request for help with solutions from inside and outside the academic community.

[Jobs on toast](#)

Chris Humphrey, a PhD in medieval studies, offers "positive & practical support for PhD careers outside academia."

[Know thyself](#)

An article about the use of career assessment tools to provide information about career direction choices. Provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Lilli Research Group](#)

This website offers career coaching for PhDs, has a useful blog and even offers a boot camp for post-academic jobseekers.

[My individual development plan by Science Careers](#)

An individual development plan helps you explore career possibilities and set goals to follow the career path that fits you best. This website provides:

- Exercises to help you examine your skills, interests, and values
- A list of 20 scientific career paths with a prediction of which ones best fit your skills and interests
- A tool for setting strategic goals for the coming year, with optional reminders to keep you on track
- Articles and resources to guide you through the process

[PhDs at work](#)

In this blog and podcast, PhDs working in corporate and non-profit sectors give accounts of what they do in their day jobs, showing how skills learned in the PhD are put to use outside of academia.

[PhD students: Is academia for me?](#)

A set of webpages describing the pros and cons of academic life. Provided by the Australian National University.

[Sciencemag – Careers](#)

Career news from Sciencemag.

[Sell out your soul](#)

Billed as 'A career guide for lost humanities majors', this blog has lots of useful and inspiring material for anyone with a humanities degree who is looking for work.

[So what are you going to do with that?" Finding careers outside academia](#)

A guide to figuring out your life post-PhD written by two humanities doctorates who've been there, done that. Includes many profiles of fellow (former) academics who have transitioned to careers beyond the tenure-track.

[Thanks academia, soon I will join a generation of jobless PhDs](#)

An article in 'The Conversation'.

[The PhD Career Ladder Program](#)

A career exploration and job readiness program that is free to use. The website gives you all the instructions you need, plus links to many useful resources to help you make it through. The program was designed with STEM students in mind, but is broad enough to be useful much more widely.

[The versatile PhD](#)

Versatile PhD is the oldest, largest online community dedicated to non-academic and non-faculty careers for PhDs in humanities, social science and STEM.

[Top 11 alternative entry-level PhD science careers to skip the PostDoc](#)

A blog post on The Grad Student Way blog.

[Vitae](#)

A UK site for students and graduates that includes a wealth of information for academic, research and non-research careers.

[What can I do with a graduate degree in history? A step-by-step guide to finding a post-academic job](#) (Note clicking on this link downloads the booklet)

The author left a PhD program at York University and never looked back. She offers "tips and tricks" and relevant resources. The information and advice applies broadly to humanities and social science graduates.

[What color is your parachute: A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers](#)

A classic (updated yearly). If you read only one book on how to get a job and change careers, make it this one.

[What jobs are there for science graduates?](#)

A list of industries and sectors where graduates from The University of Sydney have found work. Each industry/ sector has information about the kind of jobs available for science graduates and starting salaries.

[Where grads go](#)

Where Grads Go is dedicated to helping you make informed choices through providing the latest information on things like what Australian graduates do and how much they earn shortly after graduating, as well as providing guidance on where to find further information.

What is an academic career like and how to succeed in one?

[Are PhD graduates expecting too much?](#)

An article in 'The Conversation'.

[Career planning: The next five years](#)

Nature jobs author recommends a three-step process to laying the foundations for the next five years of your research career.

[Career management for researchers](#)

A range of career development resources for researchers provided by Vitae.com.

[Culture of cruelty: why bullying thrives in higher education](#)

An article in 'The Guardian'.

[Doctoral students' career expectations: principles and responsibilities](#)

A set of principles and responsibilities for students, supervisory teams, careers, and training services published by the Royal Society in December 2014.

[Exploring academic careers](#)

This online guide provided by the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow describes the pros and cons of modern academic careers and provides a guide to the academic hierarchy from Postdoctoral fellow to Professor.

[Hanging up their labcoats: Australia's new brain drain](#)

An article on the ABC Science website.

[If postdoctoral life is about playing by the rules, what are the rules?](#)

An article in 'The Guardian'.

[Job-Market Boot Camp](#)

The aim of this boot camp is to share and discuss information and advice on how to succeed in the academic job market. Provided by The Philosophers' Cocoon.

[PhD students: What do academics do?](#)

A guide to modern academic careers put together by the Australian National University.

[Smartsciencecareer.com](#)

A blog put together by Sven Handrix a neuroanatomy professor. The blog's stated goals are to help people understand academic career options and to make smart choices as they develop.

[The awesomest 7-year postdoc or: How I learned to stop worrying and love the tenure-track faculty life](#)

A blog post on the Scientific American blog.

[The changing Australian academic profession](#)

LH Martin Institute, in collaboration with the Australian Council for Educational Research conducted a project to examine the nature and extent of the changes experienced by the academic profession in recent years. The project explores the reasons for and the consequences of these changes.

[The Chronicle of Higher Education -advice](#)

A range of articles dispensing advice about academic careers.

[The disposable academic: Why doing a PhD is often a waste of time](#)

An article on 'The Economist' magazine's website.

[Times Higher Education](#)

A news feed from Times Magazine.

[Want to be a PI? What are the odds?](#)

This article includes a model where you input your publications statistics and how many years since your first article and it predicts the odds of you becoming a principal investigator.

[Why you'll want a mentor outside the ivory tower, too](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

The non-academic job market

[Alternative careers for PhDs](#)

A blog post provided by About Education.

[Alternative careers in science \(second edition\): leaving the ivory tower.](#)

Edited by Cynthia Robbins-Roth. This book gives first-hand descriptions of the evolution of a band of hardy scientists out of the lab and into just about every career you can imagine.

[Beyond academia: career options for PhDs in the humanities and social sciences.](#)

A guide provided by Columbia University Centre for Career Education.

[BeyondthePhD](#)

This website contains audio recordings of individuals sharing their experiences of completing PhDs in the arts and humanities and moving into a range of careers afterwards.

[Career information booklets](#)

You can download industry career information booklets from this webpage provided by GraduateOpportunities.com.

[Graduate students' skills translate to non-academic careers](#)

A blog post provided by About Education.

[Jobs.ac.uk – careers advice](#)

This link takes you to the research careers advice page.

[Self-employment](#)

A series of links to information about self-employment provided by the Australian National University.

[The cheeky scientist](#)

Self-described as 'An industry training platform for PhDs who want to be confident and successful industry professionals'. This organisation appears to be very much for profit but provides a wealth of free information without forcing you to become a member.

[The Plan-B Job market check-in thread – searching for non-academic jobs](#)

A well-used forum hosted by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

[The unemployed philosopher's podcast](#)

An unemployed philosopher interviews people who are making philosophy accessible to the general public and developing innovative strategies and resources for unemployed philosophers.

[Where to find information on non-academic careers](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Why PhDs should stop applying for Postdocs and start applying for Research Scientist positions](#)

An article by The Cheeky Scientist.

[Why professors do not train you for the non-academic job market – and how to handle it!](#)

A guide by smartsciencecareer.com.

[So what are you going to do with that? Finding careers outside academia](#)

A book by Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelis (updated in 2014). This book covers topics ranging from career counselling to interview etiquette.

Job seeking strategies and marketing yourself

[10 Tips to dramatically increase your LinkedIn profile views and rank](#)

An article provided through LinkedIn.

[Author Hub](#)

Produced by Cambridge University, Author Hub claims to provide you with the tools you need to interact with the academic community, raise your profile and make your work more discoverable. Author Hub includes resources for:

- A guide to using Twitter
- A guide to improving your search engine rankings
- A guide to working with the media
- Social media tips for authors

[Brag: the art of tooting your own horn without blowing it](#)

A book written by Peggy Klaus in 2004. Many PhDs are excellent at not tooting their own horns, for lots of reasons, good and less good. Here's how you can talk about yourself appropriately in hopes of moving forward in your career.

[Career trends: developing your skills](#)

A booklet provided by Sciencemag.

[Coffee in 2002, a job offer in 2004](#)

Advice about networking provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Five steps for a great LinkedIn profile](#)

Provided by MIT Global Education and Career Development.

[How to promote your academic career](#)

A guide by WikiHow.

[Improving your employment opportunities](#)

Vitae's advice about networking.

[Navigating the path to industry: a hiring manager's advice for academics looking for a job in industry](#)

A book by Melanie Nelson aimed at STEM PhDs who already know where they're headed. She earned a PhD in the biosciences and has worked as a hiring manager in industry for over a decade.

[ResearchGate](#)

Facebook for academics. This site also provides specialised job opportunities.

[Tackling the networking monster for introverts](#)

A blog post provided by Club Sciwri.

[The four ways to maintain your sanity during the job search](#)

A blog post provided by Vault Blogs.

[What should you be doing now to prepare for your next job search?](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Women in academia: what does it take to reach the top?](#)

An article from 'The Guardian'.

Where to find work?

[Academic360](#)

Overseas positions

[Academic Careers](#)

Advertises academic careers in Australia

[Academic jobs in New Zealand](#)

This website shows a table of New Zealand institutions and links to their vacancies pages.

[After College](#)

Advertises postdoctoral opportunities in the US and Canada.

[Career resources - tipsheets](#)

Provided through the Columbia University website.

[CSIRO careers page](#)

Visit this site to explore career and work opportunities at CSIRO.

[Higher Education Recruitment Consortium](#)

Advertised as 'Jobs at smart places' this site offers a database of higher education and related jobs.

[Find a Postdoc](#)

Advertises postdoc positions worldwide.

[Glassdoor](#)

A job website where you can read comments posted by employees working inside organisations. You have to sign up to get full access to reviews.

[Jobs UK](#)

Advertises jobs in academic, science, research and administrative employment in the UK and around the world.

[Monster](#)

One of the world's largest jobs listing websites.

[Nature jobs](#)

Nature Publishing Group features access to job listings, editorial content about scientific careers and other information.

[Seek](#)

Seek is Australia's number one jobs site.

[Unijobs Australia](#)

Advertises university jobs in Australia.

[Vacancies at James Cook University](#)

Log in to see internal vacancies.

CVs, cover letters and résumés

[A CV revised into a résumé](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Creating effective CVs as a researcher](#)

Produced by Vitae.

[How to write a CV](#)

A guide and a range of example CVs provided via the 'Prospectus' website

[Recasting yourself for non-academic jobs](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Researcher CV examples](#)

Eighteen fictional CVs based on real researchers from different disciplines. Produced by Vitae.

[Resume Magic: trade secrets of a professional resume writer](#)

This book explains how to write a good résumé (as opposed to an academic CV).

[Tips for a successful CV](#)

A guide provided by Science Magazine.

[Top 10 formatting hacks to get your CV noticed](#)

A blog post provided by Business 2 Community.

[Writing an effective academic CV](#)

A guide explaining "how to create a science curriculum vitae that is compelling, well-organized and easy to read" by Elsevier.

[Writing an effective CV](#)

An article provided through the Robert Half website.

Work experience and internships

[Despite rorting of internship programs, they're still worthwhile](#)

An article in 'The Conversation'.

[Gradconnection - Internships](#)

A list of graduate internships in Australia.

[Graduate Careers Australia](#)

A website that allows people to search for graduate positions and find out about salaries in different sectors.

[Graduate Program](#)

A webpage with a summary of Australian graduate scheme employers and closing dates.

[GraduateOpportunities.com](#)

This website allows you to fill in your details and will show you what graduate programs are available in your area.

[Graduate students & internships](#)

A guide provided through the Berkeley University of California website.

[How internships can open doors for new careers](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[How to improve research training in Australia – give industry placements to PhD students](#)

A 'The Conversation' article by JCU's Professor Helene Marsh.

[Mid-degree work placements can boost chances of getting a 2.1 or first](#)

An article in 'The Conversation'.

[Web resources for internships](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Work experience during your research](#)

A guide produced by Vitae.

[Unpaid internships: just the job, if your parents can afford it](#)

An article in 'The Conversation'.

Job interviews and negotiation

[5 responses to avoid at your next job interview](#)

An article provided through the Robert Half blog.

[7 Tips to nail a Skype interview](#)

A guide provided through the Forbes website.

[9 Signs you should run away from that job offer](#)

A blog post by Inc.

[Essential interview tips](#)

A guide provided through the GraduateOpportunities.com website.

[Expert performance tips for Skype and video interviews](#)

A guide provided by Target Jobs.

[How to answer: what is your greatest weakness?](#)

An article on the Nature Jobs website.

[How to do an informal interview](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Informal interviewing 101](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Job seekers: How to deal with illegal interview questions](#)

An article provided through the Robert Half blog.

[Job interview tips](#)

An article provided through the Robert Half website.

[Negotiating salary in the non-academic world](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education website.

[Questions to ask employers during interviews](#)

A guide provided through the Virginia Tech website.

[Spin it around: 6 questions to ask in an interview](#)

An article provided through the Robert Half blog.

[The 10 best interview questions to ask](#)

A blog post in U.S. News Money, but relevant for any industry.

[The secret to a successful job interview](#)

An article provided through The Chronicle of Higher Education Website.

[Top 10 practice interview questions](#)

An article provided through the Robert Half blog.

[Top tips for Skype interviews](#)

A guide provided through The Guardian jobs website.