University of Liverpool

Posgraduate Researchers' Network (PGRDevNet)

Annual Evaluation Report

December 2023

Current members of the PGRDevNet

- **Sarah Ellis** (she/her) | Co-Lead | Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences |School of Histories, Languages & Cultures
- **Mazen Alzahrani** (he/him) | Co-Lead | Faculty of Science and Engineering | Department of Computer Science
- **Sarah Boardman** (she/her) | Co-Lead | Faculty of Health & Life Sciences | Institute of Infection, Veterinary & Ecological Sciences
- **Xiaoxiao Hou** (they/them) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences | School of the Arts
- **Fajer Alqahtani** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Science and Engineering | Department of Physics
- **Muath Alobaida** (he/him) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Health and Life Sciences |Institute of Life Course and Medical Sciences
- **Nina Himmelreich** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences | School of the Arts
- **Salem Alotaibi** (he/him) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Science and Engineering | Department of Computer Science
- **Malika Ben Kahla** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences |University of Liverpool Management School
- **Unik Limbu** (He/Him) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Science and Engineering |Department of Physics
- **Anna Vichnevetskaia** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Urban Planning Department (XJTLU) |School of Architecture
- **Jacob Simmons** (he/him) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences |School of the Arts
- **Kate Williams** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Science and Engineering |Department of Earth, Oceans and Ecological Sciences
- **Faye Lynch** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences |School of the Arts
- **Isobel Kevan** (she/her) | Deputy Co-Lead | Faculty of Health and Life Sciences |Department of Psychology

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The PGR Development Network (PGRDevNet) was established in November/December 2022, with the immediate intention of broadly improving the quality of development opportunities provided to PGRs at the University of Liverpool. The initiative has been supported and managed by The Leadership, Organisational, Staff and Academic Development Academy (The Academy).

Summaries of our key activities include:

Weekly PGR Development E-bulletins: The PGRDevNet has been sending weekly e-bulletins since early February, showcasing a total of 46 in 2023. These bulletins advertise a diverse range of events, including those organized by the university and external entities. The content has evolved based on community feedback, with improvements such as a colour scheme change, introduction of a sign-off image, and categorization of events.

Monthly Welcome Emails: Since February 2023, the PGRDevNet has sent 10 monthly welcome emails to new PGR students. These emails introduce the network, provide information about PGR activities, and highlight resources and events tailored for early-stage PGRs.

Monthly Virtual Coffees: Commencing in April 2023, the PGRDevNet has organized nine virtual coffee sessions, facilitating interaction among PGRs. These sessions cover a broad range of topics, fostering a sense of community and support among international and off-campus PGR students.

Meetings with Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for the Research Environment and Postgraduate Research: The Co-Leads of the PGRDevNet hold monthly meetings with Professor Georgina Endfield, the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for the Research Environment and Postgraduate Research. These meetings serve as a platform to update on current activities, seek support, and share feedback gathered during virtual coffees and other channels.

Lunch and Learn Sessions: Two lunch and learn sessions were held in 2023, covering topics like networking and science policy essentials. These sessions provide PGRs with opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in an informal setting.

PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme: The PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme connects PGRs with postdocs, fostering networking and enriching experiences. Feedback from 23 PGRs and 13 postdocs highlighted the positive impact, with plans to improve future iterations based on suggestions.

Researcher Development Concordat Meetings: PGR representatives participate in key meetings shaping the university's research community, providing insights, and contributing to discussions to help shape the postdoc experience at Liverpool.

Social Media Engagement: Effective use of social media platforms, including Twitter/X and Instagram, has been crucial for outreach. The Twitter/X account has gained over 215 followers, showcasing PGRDevNet events and initiatives.

Promotional/Campaign Work: Engagement in roadshows, researcher room initiatives, RSA conference participation, faculty inductions, and collaboration with The Academy for various events, including the launch of the new PGR development program and the Three Minute Thesis competition.

Making an Impact 2023: Active involvement in the Making an Impact series with increased PGR attendance, utilizing the PGRDevNet e-bulletin for promotion.

Upcoming PGR Development Conference 2024: Planning the University of Liverpool's first annual Postgraduate Research Conference in 2024, aiming to unite postgraduate researchers, academics, and leadership staff in a dynamic, hybrid format.

On the whole, we have received significant positive feedback about the impact of the PGRDevNet, creating a positive environment for PGRs and strengthening the university's reputation for supporting doctoral researchers.

Overview of the PGRDevNet's work

Upon registration of their doctoral studies, all PGRs automatically become members of the UoL PGRDevNet. The PGRDevNet members quickly established 3 main aims:

- Provide a cross-university platform for communication, networking, and professional development opportunities for postgraduate researchers both within the schools, institutes and across Faculties and the wider University community.

- Facilitate a borderless community of postgraduate researchers to make the most of their time at the University of Liverpool.

- Represent postgraduate researchers from all Faculties, Schools and Institutes on personal and professional development matters affecting postgraduate researchers.

More information about the expectations of PGRDevNet members, our association with The Academy and more can be found on our university website page: https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/pgr-development-network/

Backgrounds and experiences of current PGRDevNet/NLG Leads

When first formed in December 2022, the PGRDevNet had 8 NLG members: 3 Co-Leads and 5 Deputy Co-Leads. Currently we now have 17 NLG members: 3 Co-Leads and 14 Deputy Co-Leads. To date we've had a total of 22 members. Listed below are the current members of the PGRDevNet, their faculties/schools/institutes/departments, their type of funding, whether they're full-time/part-time, their current year of study, where they're based and their nationality/ethnicity. We're extremely proud of the diversity of PGRs on our team and highlights our integrity of being inclusive to all backgrounds making sure that we represent our PGR community at the University of Liverpool.

> *Feedback from previous PGRDevNet Leadership Group members about their experience:*
>
> "I didn't have time to get involved in many activities as I went on maternity leave a few months after the start of the network. However, it was great to take part in an initiative that involved PGRs from different disciplines and that seeks to capture and support the different realities and journeys across the University." (Julia Marcet Alonso)

> "I thoroughly enjoyed my time spent as a deputy co-lead for the NLG. The role provided an opportunity to work within a dynamic team and make connections across campus and beyond while simultaneously expanding my leadership, marketing, administration and interpersonal skills." (Michelle Girvan)

Co-Leads

Sarah Ellis	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	School of Histories, Languages & Cultures	Funded by the Newton Bequest GTA Scholarship in Hispanic Studies	Full-Time	2nd Year	UoL Main Campus	White British
Mazen Alzahrani	Faculty of Science and Engineering	Department of Computer Science	Funded by Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Cultural Bureau	Full-Time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	Saudi/ Arab
Sarah Boardman	Faculty of Health & Life Sciences	Institute of Infection, Veterinary & Ecological Sciences	Half MRC, Half UoL funded	Full-Time	2nd Year	Aintree Hospital, Liverpool	White British

Deputy Co-Leads

Xiaoxiao Hou	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	School of the Arts	Self-funded international student (Teaching alongside)	Full-Time	5th Year	UoL Main Campus	Chinese
Emeka Ogiji	Faculty of Health & Life Sciences	Institute of Systems, Molecular & Integrative Biology - Wolfson Centre for Personalised Medicine	Funded by Commonwealth Scholarships Commission	Full-Time	3rd Year	UoL Main Campus	Black African
Fajer Alqahtani	Faculty of Science and Engineering	Department of Physics	Funded by the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia	Full-Time	3rd Year	UoL Main Campus	Saudi/ Arab

Deputy Co-Leads (continued)

Muath Alobaida	Faculty of Health and Life Sciences	Institute of Life Course and Medical Sciences	Funded by King Saud University, Saudi Arabia	Full-Time	3rd Year	UoL Campus	Saudi/ Arab
Nina Himmelreich	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	School of the Arts	Self-Funded	Full-Time (Part-Time starting January)	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	White German
Salem Alotaibi	Faculty of Science and Engineering	Department of Computer Science	Funded by University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia	Full-Time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	Saudi/ Arab
Malika Ben Kahla	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	Management School	GTF programme from UoL	Full-Time	3rd Year	UoL Main Campus	North African/White British
Unik Limbu	Faculty of Science and Engineering	Department of Physics	Funded by Science and Technology Facilities Council	Full-Time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	Asian British (Nepali)
Anna Vichnevetskaia	Urban Planning Department (XJTLU)	School of Architecture	XJTLU scholarship	Full-Time	1st Year	XJTLU Campus, Suzhou, China	White Canadian
Jacob Simmons	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	School of the Arts	Self-funded	Full-Time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	White British
Kate Williams	Faculty of Science and Engineering	Department of Earth, Oceans and Ecological Sciences	GTA scholarship from UoL	Part-Time (Part-Time graduate teaching assistant)	5th Year	UoL Main Campus	White British
Faye Lynch	Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences	School of the Arts	Self-funded	Full-time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	White British

Deputy Co-Leads (continued)							
Isobel Kevan	Faculty of Health and Life Sciences	Department of Psychology	Funded by BBSRC DTP and Unilever	Full-Time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	White British
Clark Gray	Faculty of Health and Life Sciences	Institute of Systems, Molecular & Integrative Biology	Funded by the Industrial CASE PhD award with EPSRC (Industrial partner is Renishaw plc.)	Full-Time	1st Year	UoL Main Campus	N/A

Specific Activities

> **Feedback from a PGR about our activities**
>
> "I think the best thing about [the PGRDevNet] is the newsletter. Newsletter has been really helpful. Great to have so much university- wise PGR info in one place every week. Other schemes are valuable too, e.g. the buddy scheme which I've signed up to" (Andrew Palmer)

Weekly PGR Development E-bulletins

Our e-bulletin has been sent weekly every Friday and begun being sent early February. Since starting we have sent 46 e-bulletins in 2023. The events we advertised in the e-bulletin range from UoL ran events (e.g. academy/library/other), to wider events held by companies and other universities. Our shared inbox is our primary source of events to advertise, we get many emails regularly asking us to share with PGRs, but we also come across other events to advertise as a team that we share for inclusion. We've had many requests from academics and other non-PGRs to join the mailing list for this e-bulletin.

Our e-bulletins have evolved based on feedback received by the community (e.g. colour scheme change for easier reading, introduction of sign-off image, separation of academy events/general/paid events, etc.) and we continue to receive feedback to improve our ability to capture the intended audience.

Monthly Welcome emails

Our monthly emails began in February 2023 and since then we have sent a total of 10 of these emails to new PGR students. These emails include a welcoming message introducing the PGRDevNet, and letting each PGR student know they're registered as a member of the PGRDevNet and will continue to receive helpful information related to development activities for their Portfolio of Activity. These emails also include any resources/events that are target to early-stage PGRs, such as the laptop loan scheme, introductory session for each faculty, library information and more.

We've recently discussed about sending these welcome emails towards the end of the month of their registration month, as we're aware when starting their studies, they'll receive lots of emails and we don't want our email to be missed.

Monthly Virtual Coffees

We started hosting our virtual coffees in April 2023, and since then we've held a total of 9 during 2023. The number of attendees varied session to session, but we were pleased to see attendance from many international, and off-campus PGR students, ranging from XJTLU students to visiting Ukrainian students. The virtual aspect allowed these students to feel more a part of the University of Liverpool network despite not being on campus.

Normally the session starts with introductions, and then follows an informal style with no premade question or discussion points. This allowed the topic of conversation to be broad. We had lots of questions about certain developmental help, or certain helpful resources. During the months of April-June we had frequent questions and feedback surrounding the topics of IPAP and APR. Topics of wellbeing were frequently discussed; sharing tips, how people detach from their university work and different hobbies outside of university.

Meetings with the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for the Research Environment and Postgraduate Research

The Co-Leads of the PGRDevNet meet monthly with Professor Georgina Endfield, the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for the Research Environment and Postgraduate Research at the University of Liverpool. These meetings are a way for the Co-Leads to feedback updates on current activities we're working on, ask for some support in certain areas, and communicate any feedback received during the virtual coffees, through Twitter/X or email, or through word of mouth. Conversations with Georgina have been vital for sharing all the great things the PGRDevNet is doing with the wider community at the University of Liverpool. In 2023 we've had 5 meetings with Georgina that have opened productive conversations.

Georgina provided us with some feedback on her thoughts of the PGRDevNet and everything we've achieved in the past year.

1) Looking back, as December 2023 is our one-year anniversary, what are your observations about the PGRDevNet and our contribution to a positive and collaborative research culture within our university?

   A) *"I have been so impressed by what the PGRDevNet has achieved in such a short time. Led by PGRs for PGRs, the network has really set the tone and the pace for creating a positive environment in which all of our PGRs can thrive. The PGRDevNet leads have led by example, they are enthusiastic and passionate about positive culture change and have worked so very hard to ensure that there is a growing visibility and presence of PGR activities and events for all our UoL PGRs."*

2) If you had to sum up the impact of the PGRDevNet at the University of Liverpool in once sentence, what would you say?

   A) *"I think the PGRDevNet has brought into relief the importance of PGRs as a core community and a central feature of our university research culture and has made visible the breadth of development and engagement opportunities for PGRs across the University."*

3) Looking ahead, how do you envision the PGRDevNet's unique position as further strengthening our university's reputation for supporting and nurturing emerging researchers?

A) *"PGRs are and will continue to be at the heart of our research culture at the University of Liverpool. They are often at the vanguard of new partnerships and relationships as well as being at the frontier of research. The PGRDevNet creates a context and positive environment in which our PGRs can engage in personal and professional development, can share best practice and network in a positive, trusted, borderless community. I am excited to see what the coming years bring as the network grows in strength, as more PGRs engage with the wide variety of events and development opportunities and as we work collectively to continue to enhance the PGR environment at the University."*

Lunch and Learns

Lunch and Learn sessions offer opportunities for PGRs to enhance their knowledge and skills on a particular development topic over a short, informal, lunchtime session. In 2023 we've held 2 lunch and learn session. Our first lunch and learn was held in May ("Connecting with Confidence: networking for PGRs") on the topic of networking. This session was given by Sarah Ellis, one of the Co-Leads. The session received good feedback and had lots of interactive parts that engaged listeners. In November we held the second lunch and learn (Science policy essentials for PGRs) on the topic of navigating science policy. We organised for Dr Ray Kent, the current COO of The Pandemic Institute, to be our speaker for this session, and Sarah Boardman, another Co-Lead, to host the session. Ray has a long background in being involve in science policy across the UK, and his talk was very informative providing listeners with lots of information and led to some great discussion from our PGRs. Both sessions had a good number of attendees.

During the time from our first lunch and learn to our second, lots of work has been put into working on future lunch and learn. This includes choosing topics for the talks, finding appropriate speakers, designating one of our leads to be a host and choosing a date that works for those involved. In 2024, we expect to run many more lunch and learns. Through our virtual coffees, email inbox, twitter, and word of mouth we've collates topics of interest that our PGR community themselves have suggested they would like to learn more about.

The PGR - Postdoc Buddy Scheme

The PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme offers PGRs a chance to meet new colleagues, expand their networks and enrich their experience of the University's research culture in an informal setting. They will also be joined by a postdoc who will provide their insights of working as a researcher at University of Liverpool and how to make the most of your time here. This scheme was a great opportunity for PGRs to meet peers at similar career stages across the faculties of Health and Life Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Engineering. It is also a fantastic way to build connections outside your research group and enhance your professional, research and social frames of reference.

PGRs interested in taking part were asked to fill in a form and answer a few questions, such as who they'd like to meet and what they were hoping to get out of the scheme. PGRs who registered their interest were sent their buddy groups early October 2023, and expected to meet by early November 2023, at which point they were asked to fill out a feedback form.

The survey feedback gathered responses from 23 PGRs and 13 Postdocs. Most groups met in-person, with a few meeting online. 90% of PGRs felt the meeting went good or very good. The other 10% accounted the meetings as being poor due to numerous meeting been arranged but not everyone attending. This is an issue

as a team we've discussed as how to reduce and in the next buddy scheme round hope to improve. The overwhelming majority of feedback was positive and mentioned the discussion between PGRs from different faculties as interesting as well as the ability to talk to a postdoc about their academic experiences. 71% of PGRs would like to meet with their group again but hadn't arranged anything at the time of submitting the form. And 91% of PGRs would take part in the scheme again. Lots of suggestions for improvement where provided, which will be used to consider how the scheme is ran and groups paired together. The Postdoc responses where similar and also cited that more time to organise meeting and multiple meetings before answering the form would be beneficial for everyone involved. 100% of the Postdocs said they would take part in the scheme again. More information about the PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme Oct 2023 can be found in the PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme 2023 Report.

The next set of buddy scheme will run differently in 2024. In early 2024, we plan to run a PGR only buddy scheme, connecting PGRs to PGRs. And later in the year, we will run the PGR-Postdoc buddy scheme again. We hope to improve these sessions based off the feedback.

Other activities

Researcher Development Concordat Meetings

As PGR representatives, we have recently been invited to participate in key meetings that shape the direction of our research community. So far, our Co-Leads have attended such meeting, an experience that has been both enlightening and constructive. We eagerly anticipate future meetings, where we aim to further our understanding and contribute valuable insights gleaned from our unique perspectives as postgraduate researchers. These opportunities not only allow us to represent our fellow researchers but also offer us a platform to learn from the wider group, enriching our collective journey.

Social Media: Twitter/X and Instagram

One of the crucial ways we have maintained a successful outreach with our PGR cohort is through effective communication strategies implemented through social media channels. Generally speaking, our comms packs have been managed by The Academy with regard to tying into Academy-led events such as MAI Week and the 3MT, but we've prided ourselves in managing our own comms for PGRDevNet events such as the monthly virtual coffees and our roadshows around campus.

In the initial stages of establishing the PGRDevNet, we agreed to set up and oversee a Twitter (now X) account as our first social media endeavour, and it was quick to gain traction and draw in followers. One of our first series of Tweets was to introduce the Network Leadership Group (NLG) through photos and personalised biographies, and this was such a hit with followers and the wider audience that we have decided to repeat this format every time a new co-lead or deputy co-lead joins the cohort. Our Instagram page, launching in January 2024, is looking to emulate this through a series of short, memorable reels and will look to roll out our content further whilst potentially partnering with other UoL channels.

The Twitter/X account has gone from strength to strength, and we have amassed over 215 followers as of December 2023, of which engagement and interaction with posts stands at around 5%. Some of the highlights have been: the interaction with polls and advertised events such as Lunch & Learns (including a correlation between engagement and subsequent attendance), the individualised PGR-focused approach we have taken to our comms whilst maintaining our house brand which aligns with The Academy's brand and

vision, and having our most recent Tweet liked by the official University of Liverpool account and reposted by the Library, as well as a recent repost liked by John Corish, the Associate Director at UoL.

Promotional/campaign work

Roadshow

The idea of putting on a pop-up roadshow event came to the team in early spring. We pondered over some of the more innovative ways we could reach out to PGRs and ultimately recruit new members to onboard as part of the Network Leadership Group (NLG) and decided to try an approach where members of the NLG were at a stand with posters, flyers, and information at hand for PGRs walking past. The first roadshow event took place in the School of Engineering building, as this was an area of study and research, we wanted to see representation and engagement with the PGRDevNet increase from; and we used this as a tester to gauge what worked and what didn't. The roadshow was conducted by co-leads Sarah Boardman and Sarah Ellis, who were assisted in setting up by co-lead Mazen Alzahrani, and although relatively successful, we decided that future roadshows should be tied more closely into either time periods (e.g. Postgraduate Open week) or spaces (e.g. Researcher Reading Room in the Sydney Jones Library) where PGR frequenting/attendance would be high.

Researcher Room

At the meetings held between the co-leads of the PGRDevNet and AVPC Georgina Endfield, a recurring theme in PGR feedback was the need for a specific space where PGRs could have the chance to study, but mostly network and socialise with other PGRs in a cross-collaborative and borderless way, as many said they felt cut off from other departments and did not have a designated PGR-focused space to go to. Amongst other departments, institutions, and university buildings, this was passed on to the libraries who also wanted to increase awareness of their Researcher Room based at the Sydney Jones and encourage PGRs to make use of it.

Hence the inauguration of the Researcher Room through an event that hailed it as a space that could not only be used for studying but could also host PGR-focused social events and workshops. During this landmark event, the PGRDevNet were offered to set up a stand to talk to attendees about their work on creating a PGR community and research development opportunities for all. It was a big success and allowed many attending PGRs to reflect on their development needs and consider which PGRDevNet-supported/affiliated and Academy-led events could help to support those.

RSA Conference

At the annual Researcher Staff Association Conference, the PGRDevNet were invited to set up a stand to talk to the conference attendees about the job they do as an almost small-scale emulation of the RSA on a PGR-level. This was met with admiration and positivity by researcher staff who applauded the work being carried down to a postgraduate level, and who were also keen to know how they could work with the PGRDevNet to support their own postgraduate supervisees, team members or buddy scheme affiliates.

Faculty Inductions

In the past year, the PGR Development Network significantly expanded its outreach and impact within the University of Liverpool, notably through our active participation in faculty induction events across various departments. A highlight included our involvement in the School of Physical Sciences and School of Electrical

Engineering, Electronics and Computer Science. These events presented prime opportunities to engage directly with new postgraduate researchers. At each induction, we interacted with approximately 30-40 PhD students, introducing them to the extensive support and resources offered by the University, specifically through the PGR Development Network. These induction sessions have proven invaluable in building foundational understanding and promoting a sense of community among the University's burgeoning researcher population. Our participation aimed not only to familiarize these students with the Network's role in fostering academic and professional development but also to demonstrate our commitment to enhancing their overall research experience at the University.

Academy events that we help co-create and co-design

Shaping PGR Success (Co-creating and Co-designing the Academy's New PGR Development Programme)

The Taking Charge of your Development event held in late February 2023 introduced The Academy as taking over the PGR development programme at the University of Liverpool. It was the first in-person event attended by the PGRDevNet and allow the team to introduce themselves to some of the university community. This event focused on the ongoing design of a new, high quality development offer for PGRs.

The session itself allowed much conversation and collaboration between PGRs and the staff who support them. Each person shared their ideas and helped to shape the future of PGR development at the university.

Taking Charge of Your Development (Launch of the Academy's New PGR Development Programme)

September 2023 marked the successful launch of the new University of Liverpool development programme by the Researcher Development Team at The Academy. Central to this initiative was the comprehensive offering of over 100 diverse sessions, including online modules, workshops, and masterclasses, complemented by the innovative PGR Development Canvas and responsive pop-up development activities.

Integral to the programme's reach was the PGRDevNet e-bulletin, which shared the launch event to PGRs across the university. The number of registrations made led to the event being held twice in the day (one morning and one afternoon session). The PGRDevNet Co-Leads showed the resources and hard work being done by the team, which was greatly received. After their presentation numerous staff and students approached many members of the team to community great feedback and also discuss how best to utilise the PGRDevNet and work together to promote all the development opportunities available across the university.

Other aspects of the sessions focused on the practical applications, leadership development, and research communication exemplified through initiatives like the PGR-Postdoc Buddy Scheme, the LEAP Leadership Programme, and the Three Minute Thesis competition. Feedback and continuous improvement were prioritized, with evaluation surveys informing future activities. The programme's impact was further augmented by active engagement on social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn, ensuring a wide-reaching dissemination of resources, news, and development opportunities for researchers at all career stages.

Three Minute Thesis (3MT®)

2023 marked the University of Liverpool's watershed entrance into the Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition, the delivery of which was overseen and ran by The Academy and supported in a small-scale capacity by the PGRDevNet. Not only did the PGRDevNet have their very own co-lead Sarah Ellis make the

final of the competition, but the majority of the deputy co-lead cohort were on hand on the day to help set up for the event, take registrations from speakers and attendees and guide them to the relevant rooms/to their tables at the event etc. An overwhelmingly positive array of feedback about the supportive nature of the roles our PGRDevNet members played on the day was received following the event.

As a result of this, the Academy and the PGRDevNet will liaise together for the upcoming 2024 3MT® event, and the final is set to be carried out as a special segment in the wider PGRDevNet conference which will take place on Tuesday 18th June 2024. Once again, the PGRDevNet will help distribute the comms for this #event over the relevant social media channels and will also offer up our organisation and support in setting up the event, not to mention signposting our fellow PGR peers to the admission and entry process and on how to attend the final.

Making an Impact 2023

The Making an Impact series is an opportunity for colleagues to engage with sessions that enable them to boost research impact productivity, develop their personal and professional research impact attributes, and strengthen the cohesion, resilience, and sustainability of our university's knowledge exchange potential. The 2023 programme included keynotes, 1:1 surgeries, research facility tours, masterclasses, research impact bootcamps, workshops, live podcasts, panel discussions, webinars, and fringe events.

There was an increase from 24% (2022) to 30% (2023) PGR attendance for this year's Making an Impact. The PGRDevNet e-bulletin helped to advertise the different session held, which hopefully attributed to this increase in participation. Many of the co-leads and deputies opened conversations with other PGRs, post-docs and academics, which promoted more awareness of the development network.

In 2024, we hope to contribute more to the sessions that are held and influence the type of sessions based on PGR feedback.

Coming Soon

PGR Development Conference 2024

Looking ahead to 2024, the University of Liverpool is set to host its first annual Postgraduate Research Conference, a visionary initiative spearheaded by the Postgraduate Researchers' Development Network (**PGRDevNet**). With the theme **'Thrive & Grow in Community'**, this ground-breaking event aims to unite postgraduate researchers, academics, and leadership staff from across the UK in a dynamic, hybrid format. Planned highlights include panel discussions on diverse career pathways, visionary research talks, a wellbeing area, and the innovative 'Images of Research' competition. The conference is poised to become a pivotal platform for collaborative engagement, intellectual exchange, and career development. Its anticipated success will be measured by participant engagement, feedback, and the long-term impact on attendees' professional journeys, reinforcing the University's dedication to nurturing the next generation of researchers.

Previous PGRDevNet/NLG Members

We'd like to acknowledge past members who were deeply important to helping the success of the PGRDevNet over the past year. Their names are mentioned on the following page.

Co-Leads		
Adele Moore **(2022-23)**	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Department of Sociology, Social Policy, and Criminology
Lara Maclachlan **(2022-23)**	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Department of Sociology, Social Policy, and Criminology
Deputy Co-Leads		
Michelle Girvan **(2022-23)**	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Department of History
Andrew Palmer **(2022-23)**	Faculty of Health and Life Sciences	Department of Psychology
Julia Marcet Alonso **(2022-23)**	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Management School