



Yorkshire Consortium for Equity in Doctoral Education

LinkedIn Top Tips for Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers

A short guide produced by colleagues at The University of Sheffield, highlighting their top tips to maximise the potential of LinkedIn to make useful connections, discover new opportunities, and promote your research. In 2023, YCEDE launched the Inclusive Research Network on LinkedIn; this document is intended to help researchers discover and utilise similar networks and enhance the reach of their profile.

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YCEDE cannot guarantee that all information contained in this resource is accurate at the time of reading, particularly with regard to dates, deadlines, and funding availability.

Suggested Audience: Staff / Students

Suggested Sub-Audience: Academic Staff / Current PGRs / Prospective P

This resource is intended for use in improving equity and outcomes for ethnically minoritised individuals interested in doctoral study or careers in research.

This resource was produced by the staff named above on behalf of the YCEDE project. Please ensure appropriate credits are clearly included in any external use of this resource.

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<https://ycede.ac.uk/toolkit/pgr-recruitment-selection-and-admissions/university-strategy/developing-and-launching-a-network-2/>

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LinkedIn Top Tips for Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) and Early Career Researchers (ECRs)

Produced by Dr Asha Akram (The University of Sheffield)

1. Enhance Your Profile: Your Digital Research Hub

Your LinkedIn profile is more than a CV; it's your professional research showcase. Make it shine to attract collaborations, opportunities, and recognition.

- **Professional Photo & Banner:** Use a clear, professional headshot. Your banner can visually represent your research field or highlight a key publication.
- **Headline:** Go beyond your title. Example: "PhD Candidate in Neuroscience | Specialising in fMRI Data Analysis | Seeking Collaborative Research Opportunities." Include your key research area and methodologies.
- **Engaging 'About' Section:** Craft a concise narrative about your research journey. Highlight your **research interests, key skills** (both technical and transferable like data analysis, scientific writing, project management), and **career aspirations**. Quantify achievements (e.g., "Published X papers," "presented at X conference").
- **Detailed Experience & Publications:** Don't just list jobs; describe your specific **research projects, methodologies, and impactful findings**. Link to your **publications, pre-prints, and conference presentations** (using the dedicated 'Publications' and 'Projects' sections).
- **Skills & Endorsements:** List **highly relevant research skills** (e.g., specific software, lab techniques, statistical analysis) and **transferable skills** (e.g., critical thinking, presentation skills). Seek endorsements from supervisors, peers, mentors/mentees and collaborators.

2. Boost Engagement: Share Your Research Story

Be an active voice in the research community. Engagement increases your visibility and influence.

- **Consistent Content:** Share updates on your **research progress, new publications, conference attendance, or insights from your field**. Translate complex ideas into accessible language.
- **Mix Formats:** Use text, images (charts, lab photos), short videos, and even polls to keep your content dynamic.
- **Active Interaction:** **Comment thoughtfully** on posts by other researchers, academics, and collaborators. Ask insightful questions and offer constructive feedback.
- **Join & Participate in Groups:** Engage in LinkedIn groups related to your **specific research area, academic career development, or professional organisations**.

- **Strategic Hashtags:** Use a mix of broad (#Research, #PhDLife, #ScienceCommunication) and niche hashtags relevant to your discipline.
- **Tagging:** Tag co-authors, your institution, or relevant journals/organisations when appropriate to broaden your reach.

3. Grow Your Network: Build Meaningful Connections

Your network is a vital resource for collaborations, mentorship, and career opportunities.

- **Personalise Connection Requests:** Always include a brief, personalised note when connecting. Explain why you'd like to connect (e.g., shared research interest, admired their work, mutual connection, attended the same event).
- **Leverage Existing Connections:** Connect with current/former colleagues, supervisors, lab mates, and university alumni.
- **Attend Virtual Events:** Participate in LinkedIn webinars and academic events. Connect with other attendees and speakers.
- **Identify Mentors & Collaborators:** Use LinkedIn search to find researchers or professionals in your field. Consider politely requesting an informational interview to learn about their work.
- **Connect with Industry:** If exploring non-academic paths, proactively connect with professionals in industry R&D, data science, or other relevant sectors.

4. Raise Your Profile: Establish Your Research Brand

Position yourself as a recognised expert in your field.

- **Thought Leadership (Articles):** Use LinkedIn's article feature to write longer-form pieces discussing your research, academic challenges, or synthesising key findings. This showcases your in-depth knowledge and communication skills.
- **Seek & Give Recommendations:** Actively ask supervisors, collaborators, and mentors for **recommendations** that speak to your research abilities and work ethic. Offer to write them for others.
- **Showcase Your Best Work:** Use the 'Featured' section of your profile to highlight your most impactful publications, significant presentations, or media coverage of your research.
- **Use LinkedIn Features:** Consider 'Creator Mode' for content analytics. Use the 'Open to Work' frame when actively job searching, clearly stating your ideal roles (e.g., "Postdoctoral Researcher," "Research Scientist," "Data Analyst").
- **Consistency:** Regularly update your profile, post content, and engage with your network. A consistent, professional presence is key to building your reputation.