

Open Research Training: What, Who, When, Where, How, and Why

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Introduction

As open research (OR) becomes the norm in both research practice and policy we must ensure that postgraduate researchers (PGRs) are equipped with the skills to become Open Researchers.

Currently, OR support is uneven with the focus on specific fields or even research groups. As a result, PGRs face disparities and a 'postcode lottery' in quantity and quality of training.

We asked 7 PGRs from across all 3 of University of Edinburgh's colleges to tell us about their OR experiences and help us formulate recommendations for how we can best support them and the fellow students in the future.



What (should be covered?)

- Need both easy to understand overviews of OR practices (for established researchers) and domain-specific practical guidance (for ECRs)
- This requires paid roles to develop training material where it may be lacking (e.g. arts and humanities)

Who (should get training?)

- Everyone should have access to OR training suitable for their career stage
- Need to engage established researchers not just ECRs/PGRs
- PGRs deserve to be supported in OR as part of their development

When (to do training?)

- There was disagreement from PGRs about the best time to deliver OR training (e.g. beginning of PhD or further in)
- Need consistent PhD inductions (some PGRs get OR training as part of their induction, some don't - and some don't get an formal induction)

Where (to deliver training?)

- Need mix of in-person and online for accessibility
- Training offered at the school-level may allow researchers to receive more targeted support, but a central supporting body is required to ensure disparities between schools and student experience do not remain

How (should it be offered?)

- Need group training for introductory topics and one-to-one support for project-specific guidance
- This requires funding and resource to hire professional services staff to provide one-to-one support

Why (is training important?)

- Highlight benefits to researchers' career, research communities, and communities impacted by research
- The University of Edinburgh urgently needs to support open research to retain its reputation as a world-leader in research

Summary

We discovered several key themes related to (1) time and resource required to adopt OR practices (2) the need for discipline-specific training (3) the need for one-to-one support, and (4) the need to alleviate reliance on ECRs to lead on OR adoption.

