

## York Graduate Research School newsletter - 20 October 2023

### Update from the Dean



So, what has been happening in PGR-world in the last few weeks? Well, UKRI have released their response to the call for input on the [New Deal for PG research](#). In a nutshell, - nothing unexpected or headline grabbing (in my view). UKRI funds about 20% of our PGRs at York - and the good news is that they are very committed to investing in training the next generation of researchers. The UKRI basic stipend has risen 20% over the last couple of years. Plus, they are looking to review stipends again especially for PGRs with caring responsibilities or disabilities, though there is no clear timeframe for this. If you do find yourself struggling, you can see details of our [cost of living support for students](#) on the website.

Perhaps more contentious (for some) is the debate over whether PGRs should be considered as staff rather than students (see also a [WonkHE article](#) by YUSU's CEO). No change to this is planned, but both UKRI and York are looking at how we can ensure that you are aware of your current rights (e.g. to [sick leave](#)) and how we can better support you. Expect further announcements from us over the coming months.

The New Deal report did reference a new project that has been awarded to someone who will be familiar to those who have done [researcher training with BRIC](#). The marvellous Dr Karen Clegg has been awarded funding for a [culture-change project called RSVP](#) on research supervision involving over 20 universities and over 400 doctoral students. This, along with our [YCEDE](#) project working to widen access to PGR for ethnically minoritised applicants, means that York now has become a national focus for research into PGR policy and support. YGRS will be ensuring that York's PGRs and supervisors benefit from these high profile projects.

It was amazing to welcome ~200 new PGRs to York at the [YGRS induction](#) on 4 October. The event had a real buzz about it. The best bit (apart from the cake and plants!) was talking to new PGRs about their planned projects - such an interesting group of people and great ambassadors for their disciplines.

We are also marking [Black History Month](#). Our Chair of YCEDE's external Advisory Board, Ayo Barley, has written a blog on [Why Black Women need recognition all year round](#). York has been running lots of events, too.

Finally, you might have seen the announcement that [York is proud to have been awarded Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework \(TEF\)](#). York's delivery of amazing teaching would not be possible without you - our PGR community - who have worked tirelessly throughout some challenging years. So, many thanks on behalf of the University to all of you who are Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)!

Best wishes,  
Kate

### YGRS and University news

#### University of York response to recent events in Israel, Gaza and the Middle East

News of the conflict is very upsetting, particularly for our students and colleagues with connections to the area. See details of the [support available to all students](#), as well as a reminder that we are a [community of respect](#).

## Staying well this winter

As we approach the winter season, it is important we take care of ourselves and our community to help stop the spread of infectious illnesses. See official advice on [what to do if you have - or think you may have - Covid-19, influenza \(flu\) or any other respiratory infection](#) and see our information and advice on [student healthcare](#).

## Support for the cost of living

We know that the increased cost of living continues to affect students and our information on [cost of living support for students](#) has been updated for the new academic year. There is a range of support available. Our new [Off-Campus Rent Grant](#) is now open to eligible continuing students or the [Student Support Fund](#) is available to all full time students, UK and international, undergraduate and postgraduate. If you find yourself struggling, please get in touch with the [Student Hub](#).

## Induction event - video and slides

Thank you to everyone who came to the YGRS October Induction. For those of you who couldn't attend, or would like to recap on the information provided, you can view the slides and a full recording of the event on the [YGRS Induction web page](#).

## Fees and accommodation payment reminder - Tuesday 31 October

A quick reminder that if you pay your own tuition fees or campus accommodation costs, a payment instalment is due at the end of this month. The easiest way to pay is via the ['My Finance' section in e:Vision](#). If you have set up a direct debit to pay your fees/accommodation, this will be automatically taken from your chosen bank account around the due date and you'll receive a notification of the amount beforehand.

## How was your journey to becoming a PGR?

Our [Supporting Transitions into PGR Project \(STiPP\)](#) is investigating how offer holders can be better supported to make the transition from study or work to starting a postgraduate research project. If you are a new or current PGR, please [take part in our short survey](#) to improve things for future applicants. Deadline: 10 November 2023.

## Black History Month

Throughout October, we're marking [Black History Month](#) which this year has the theme 'Saluting our Sisters'. Find out more about our actions as a University, about local and national groups and networks, and about the events on offer.

## Demolition of buildings on Student Centre site

The former IT Services building on the planned site of the new Student Centre is being demolished. Please expect some disruption in the area. Keep up to date with our [campus disruptions page](#).

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## Support and wellbeing

### Please complete the SWANS survey into student wellbeing

We're asking students to get involved with York PGR Paul Heron's research at York by completing the SWANS survey into student wellbeing. You'll contribute to much-needed research into student wellbeing so that we can inform effective strategies to support students generally and make positive developments in our student support services. Check your UoY inbox for [your invitation to take part in the SWANS survey](#). You can enter a prize draw to win vouchers up to £50.

### Support for postgraduates with a disability

The Joan Samuels Scholarship offers one award of £2,000 to be paid as a living cost stipend for one postgraduate taught student or postgraduate researcher with a disability each academic year. Applications to the [Joan Samuels Scholarship](#) close on Friday 3 November.

## Rate your Landlord has arrived in York

We've teamed up with YUSU, York St John University and Unipol Student Homes to launch Rate Your Landlord York, a review and ratings website that allows student tenants to leave feedback about their renting experiences. It's an open, fair and balanced forum for tenants to have their say and for landlords to respond. Whether it's good or bad experiences, head to [Rate Your Landlord York](#) now to have your say - every review is an entry into a prize draw to win £250 cash!

## Researcher development

### York Researcher Festival 2023

The York Researcher Festival is a celebration for all researchers here at York. Running from 6-10 November, this is an opportunity to come together across disciplines to share experiences, learn, network and develop new skills. [Browse the York Researcher Festival 2023 Programme \(featuring a number of PGR-led events\) and book your place.](#)

### Forthcoming skills development sessions

- 24 Oct: [Posters with a Power\(ful\) Point](#) - explaining the approach to use when creating research posters
- 24 Oct: [Making your Publications Open Access](#) - an introduction to why Open Access is important
- 25 Oct: [Effective Project Management](#) - a guide to planning, time management and communication
- 26 Oct: [Your research profile, reputation and impact - An introduction to Bibliometrics](#) - how to improve your research profile and evidence your strengths
- 31 Oct: [How to Prepare a Presentation](#) - an introduction to various presentation styles

### Open research at York: newsletter, survey and International Open Access Week

The Open Research team (Library, Archives and Learning Services) has launched a newsletter to keep staff and postgraduate researchers updated on open research activities across disciplines at York and elsewhere. Find out more about the [open research newsletter, a survey and International Open Access Week.](#)

### Come to a Virtual Writing Retreat

Online writing retreats give you time, peace, and space to fend off procrastination and beat writer's block. Each session provides a chance to discuss challenges and work in a focused way using the established Pomodoro technique. This is an ongoing series run by York and a number of other universities - you are welcome to attend any of these sessions, and as many as you wish. [View the full list of writing retreat sessions.](#)

### Learning from Human Rights Defenders autumn talks

Each year the University's Centre for Applied Human Rights (CAHR) hosts human rights defenders at risk through its Protective Fellowship schemes. Participants engage in human rights learning and teaching, develop their research capacity, and share their experiences through the Learning from Human Rights Defenders event series. Join the next event on 24 October on [Fighting for Human Rights in Kashmir.](#)

### Try out tech for free

Explore Augmented Reality (AR), 3D design, podcasting, 360 filming and recording, video editing, plus much more, for FREE at the Creativity Lab in the Library. There are events and training sessions and drop-in days throughout the week that are a great way to build on digital skills and experience. [Find out what you could do with the Creativity Lab.](#)

## Careers

### Medical statistics careers event

Considering working in the field of medical statistics, for example within pharmaceuticals, healthcare and/or medical research? Then [come to the medical statistics careers event](#) on 29 November. Travel expenses within the UK can be reimbursed and registration closes on 1 November.

## UK public sector recruitment and careers events

Recruitment to the UK Civil Service Fast Stream closes on 9 November. There are 15 streams in total covering a wide range of departments and specialisms, but also including a Generalist stream. Four of the streams require a postgraduate qualification. [Find out more about the UK public sector recruitment and careers events.](#)

## Teaching

### York gets Gold award for our teaching

Thanks to all of you who contribute to teaching at the University. Our outstanding teaching, learning and student experience has been recognised by a second consecutive Gold rating from the Office for Students in Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023. [Find out why we were awarded Gold in TEF 2023.](#)

### Get recognition of your teaching skills

The York Professional and Academic Development scheme (YPAD) is a professional development and recognition scheme for staff members who teach or support student learning, including Graduate Teaching Assistants. Participants work to develop their teaching practice and the scheme is accredited by Advance HE. [Register for the Introduction to YPAD workshop on 1 November to find out more.](#)

## PGR public engagement activities

### PhD Spotlight 2024 - applications now open!

The York Graduate Research School (YGRS) invites all University of York postgraduate researchers (PhD, MPhil and Masters by Research candidates) to enter our annual PhD Spotlight Competition. This competition gives researchers an opportunity to engage the public with original and cutting edge research through the medium of an interactive display/experience, as part of the York Talks public engagement event on 10 January 2024. [Learn more about PhD Spotlight 2024 and apply by Friday 3 November.](#)

## Events and opportunities:

- [Funding available for student-led groups and projects](#)
- [Get software for free or at a discount](#) as a UoY student
- A chance to [win £1000 with the Santander Universities Brighter Futures Grants](#)

More news and opportunities can be found on the [Research Student Community blog](#)

[YGRS newsletter archive](#)

[www.york.ac.uk/YGRS](http://www.york.ac.uk/YGRS)

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