

University of Warwick – Research Culture Action Plan 2026 - 2031

Community and Connections						
Our Commitments	Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Years	Lead(s)	Potential Indicators
Create meaningful opportunities for connection and space to build relationships, learn from others, share ideas, and co-create research. Support staff to build mutually beneficial partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders and communities. Champion collaboration across and between disciplines to innovate and tackle complex challenges. Connect people and ideas to showcase, share and shape good practice in research culture through local, national and international initiatives.	1: We will support researchers to make connections across the wider institution, through networks and communities of practice.	ERCF supported networks and communities of practice. Networking activities Collaboration with other initiatives and organisational units, including Spotlights, Research Centres, IAS, Doctoral College, and academic departments Writing retreats	Enhanced research environment, with teams fostering connections across traditional boundaries and an increased sense of belonging to the wider research community.	Ongoing	RC team, Institute of Advanced Study (IAS); Doctoral College; Researcher Development	Engagement data Survey items: “I have opportunities to connect with peers across the wider institution” (64% agree/strongly agree) I feel like I belong in the research community in the wider institution (51% agree/strongly agree) “I am supported to explore opportunities for interdisciplinary research” (54% agree/strongly agree)
	2: We will co-create and embed an institution-wide Public, Patient and Community Involvement and Engagement (PPCIE) strategy to ensure meaningful and inclusive involvement across the entire research lifecycle.	Institutional PPCIE strategy	PPCIE becomes embedded into normal research practice, resulting in stronger partnerships with the public.	26-31	PPCIE Project Team Warwick Institute for Engagement	Survey item: I have opportunities to engage with other research stakeholders outside academia (i.e. public, policymakers, industry, healthcare and others) (50% agree/strongly agree)
	3: We will host an annual Research Culture Week to share best practice and foster collaboration on research culture initiatives across the institution.	Annual Research Culture Week	Enhanced institutional visibility, coordination, and adoption of effective research culture practices.	Ongoing	RC Team	Engagement analytics; feedback RC survey data “I have opportunities to connect with others in the research environment outside my immediate team” (76% agree/strongly agree) and “I have opportunities to connect with peers across the wider institution” (64% agree/strongly agree)
	4: We will establish a Research Culture Enablers network (RCEN@Warwick) to convene colleagues committed to improving research culture, initiating challenge-led groups to address institutional priorities.	RCEN@Warwick Events RCEN@Warwick Task and Finish Groups	A connected community of colleagues collaboratively driving informed, coordinated actions on institutional research culture priorities.	26-31	RC Team	Engagement data; feedback; progress reports on task and finish groups
	5: We will deliver an annual International Research Culture Conference (IRCC) and Research Culture Special Issue (Exchanges) through the National Centre for Research Culture (NCRC).	Annual international conference & RC Special Issue (Exchanges)	Increased international knowledge exchange and visibility of research culture challenges and priorities, showcasing best practice and providing opportunity for collaboration.	Ongoing	NCRC	Engagement data (events); events feedback; network size and contributions; website analytics; reports
	6: We will provide regular opportunities for sector wide dialogue and sharing best practice through the NCRC conversation series and Research Culture Enablers Network (RCEN).	Conversation events Research Culture Enablers network and reports	Enhanced sector dialogue on emerging research culture issues, building a connected and informed community of practice.	26-31	NCRC	Engagement stats (events); RCEN feedback survey; reports
	7: We will strengthen international exchange of evidence, expertise, and models to enhance research culture worldwide through the International Consortium for Research Culture through the NCRC.	ICRC Workshops Project Reports	Greater international exchange of evidence, expertise, and models that enhance research culture worldwide.	26-31	NCRC	Engagement stats (events); events feedback; network sizes and contributions; website analytics; reports

Freedom to Grow and Explore

Our Commitments	Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Years	Lead	Potential Indicators
Support and champion diverse career pathways and ambitions across the research community. Provide meaningful and accessible development opportunities across career stages. Encourage and celebrate excellence in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, encouraging curiosity to drive impactful discoveries. Cultivate a supportive environment where setbacks and resilience are explored openly and constructively.	1: We will increase recognition of the diverse contributions that enable research excellence, through: a) Hosting an annual event showcasing peer-nominated excellence in research contributions. b) Showcasing excellent contributions to research culture through regular media and communication updates.	a) Annual Research Celebration ceremony and showcase; nominee catalogue highlighting shortlisted contributions b) Regular communications through mixed platforms showcasing key initiatives	Greater visibility and recognition of the broad range of work and people involved in the delivery of research excellence.	Ongoing	RC Team Events Team	# nominations; #awards # #diversity of nominees, awardees; testimonials; #event attendees; website analytics Survey item “I feel like my contribution to the research environment is appropriately recognised.” (51% agree/strongly agree)
	2: We will ensure that all staff and students from across the research environment are aware of CPD opportunities and encouraged to engage in a range of development activities.	Range of development opportunities made available; clear signposting to CPD (through webpages, induction, PDRs); HR Excellence in Research action plan.	Increased and more consistent engagement with a wide variety of CPD activities across all career stages, with staff and students reporting improved awareness and support to participate in activities.	26-31	ROG group (including R&IS, People team, Doctoral College, IAS, Library).	Survey items: “I feel able to spend time undertaking Continuing Professional Development” (50% agree/strongly agree) “I receive useful feedback on my career development from my line manager” (54% agree/strongly agree) “I have access to training and development opportunities that are relevant to my career aspirations” (54% agree/strongly agree) Engagement and impact analytics Learning needs analysis
	3: We will develop an evidence base to support recommendations for mitigating experiences of failure in higher education.	A formal, evidence-driven report with actionable recommendations for the University.	Greater institutional awareness of the emotional, cultural, and structural impacts of failure, with understanding of initiatives that support resilience and development.	26-27	Safe to Fail Project Team	Survey items: “I feel comfortable sharing my ideas and opinions” (78% agree/strongly agree) “I feel safe to be creative in my research environment” (74% agree/strongly agree) “I feel supported to take calculated risks in my research environment” (56% agree/strongly agree)
	4: We will enable our research communities to develop, lead and disseminate grassroots initiatives that respond to localised or institutional research culture challenges across the institution. <i>Funding dependent</i>	ERCF grassroots funding calls (ERCF dependent); Project catalogue showcasing research culture initiatives; case studies; community of practice.	An empowered research community actively leading and implementing initiatives that drive responsive research culture improvements.	26-31	RC Team	Applications; awards records; # publications; catalogue analytics; # sustained/embedded projects beyond funding period
	5: We will continue to engage with internal and external stakeholders and to explore opportunities to mitigate and/or address career precarity in the research environment.	Representation on national working groups exploring challenges of career precarity RCEN Working Group	Better understanding of approaches to career precarity, enabling stronger alignment between institutional activity and sector-wide expectations.	26-28	RCEN RC Team	Range of solutions explored

Inclusivity and Thriving on Difference

Our Commitments	Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Years	Lead	Potential Indicators
Align structures and behaviours to support inclusion and accountability, embedding clear expectations about conduct within our research environments. Ensure equitable and sustainable wellbeing support for the research community. Require research leaders at all levels to embed inclusive practices and champion wellbeing within their areas of responsibility. Recognise and value diversity in experience, skills and contributions across all career pathways. Actively listen to diverse voices through ongoing community engagement to cultivate belonging.	1: We will embed the PATHWAY programme to address the underrepresentation of Black academics in the early stages of their research career.	PATHWAY programme materials; PATHWAY annual monitoring report	An embedded programme that continues to address underrepresentation of Black researchers at early career stages.	Ongoing	Social Inclusion Team URSS Doctoral College IAS	EDI dashboard; Pathway stats, # participants; monitoring data
	2. We will develop evidence-based guidance to enhance the progression and retention of women in research across the UK through: a) developing knowledge on barriers pertaining to the lived experience of UK women in academia. b) using consensus approaches to generate UK-wide priority recommendations for the sector. c) promoting and supporting the implementation and evaluation of actions. <i>Funding dependent</i>	a) Project report outlining actionable recommendations b) A short-list of prioritised and actionable recommendations for Universities' and funders. c) A toolkit to support the implementation and evaluation of recommendations.	An enhanced, evidence-informed understanding of the barriers and effective interventions that shape the progression and retention of women in academia, informing policy and practice change.	26-28	WinA Project Team	# and reach of dissemination activities; evidence of stakeholder engagement; establishment of implementation or challenge-led groups; uptake of any changes taken forwards by certain groups (i.e. institutions, funders); recommendations implemented at UoW
	3. We will prioritise wellbeing of the research community through: a) implementing and evaluating the co-created Building Wellbeing Literacy Resource for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers b) generating national evidence on the organisational, cultural and structural drivers of wellbeing and occupational stress affecting researchers and research professionals c) developing sector-wide evidence to better understand researcher and research professional wellbeing and create practical and actionable guidance. d) building national and international partnerships to promote shared learning, comparative research and collective action to improve researcher wellbeing and research culture.	a) Wellbeing Literacy Resource and evaluation findings. b) National evidence base on researcher and research professional wellbeing and occupational stress, including survey data, stakeholder insights and sector reports. c&d) Evidence-informed guidance, recommendations and engagement activities developed with universities, funders, policymakers and HSE.	a) Improved wellbeing literacy among doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. b) Enhanced understanding of factors influencing researcher and research professional wellbeing. c) Improved use of evidence to inform policy and practice within research environments. d) Stronger national and international collaboration to advance wellbeing.	26-28	Wellbeing Project Team	# and records of dissemination; wellbeing module data and feedback; new RC survey question on wellbeing literacy; evidence of national and international engagement; evidence of influence on institutional policies.
	4: We will lead the 'culture' work package of the Research Professional Futures (RPF) project, contributing to creating a sector wide strategic Blueprint that strengthens the visibility, capability and long-term sustainability of the UK Research Professional Workforce	Co-creation activities including consultations, workshops and engagement events; Research Professional (RP) Blueprint; supporting resources including case studies, toolkits, professional development framework and guidance materials.	Increased visibility and recognition of the strategic contribution of Research Professionals within the research system.	26-29	RPF Project Team	Participation and engagement data from consultations and workshops; records of sector partners and institutions involved in co-creation; dissemination and communication analytics; feedback from stakeholders; evidence of institutional adoption or implementation
	5: We will foster a culture that recognises and values the diverse expertise of our technicians, through the delivery of our Technicians Commitment (TC) action plan.	TC Action Plan; promotion pathway; implementation of Fair Attribution Policy; skills sessions, events; TC Awards; integration with national leads	Greater recognition, visibility, and career pathways of technical colleagues	Ongoing	Director of Research Technology & Technical Strategy TC Steering Group	TC reporting data; progression data; evidence of attribution of technical contributions in outputs; feedback;

Openness, Integrity and Responsibility

Our Commitments	Actions	Outputs	Outcomes	Years	Lead	Potential Indicators
Foster shared responsibility for upholding high ethical standards and striving for good practice in research integrity, embedding streamlined, coherent policies and processes, and tailored training and support. Promote responsible and sustainable (social, economic, environmental) research and innovation, ensuring appropriate oversight and external regulatory compliance. Develop and continually improve robust governance frameworks, with efficient ethics systems that enable proactive risk management and build trust. Equip researchers with the necessary training, shared understanding, and infrastructure to support data sharing and reproducibility. Equip researchers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to support fairness and encourage appropriate recognition of contributions to both traditional and non-traditional outputs.	1: We will ensure that the principles of research integrity are embedded across the institution, and that breaches of research integrity or incidents of research misconduct are addressed appropriately.	Advice and guidance (webpages); Annual Research Integrity Statement; University Research Code of Practice; Procedure for the Investigation of Research Misconduct; Research Integrity training (online and bespoke). Robust and streamlined ethics processes.	Researchers and managers consistently follow research integrity policies, conduct ethical research, adopt good research practices, and take appropriate action when concerns or incidents arise. A supportive environment where the community are not penalised for making mistakes but also feel comfortable reporting breaches of research integrity.	Ongoing	R&IS – Research Integrity Team	Cases reported and resolved (misconduct data); Training data (online/in person); QA monitoring stats Survey item: “My research environment promotes responsible research approaches (i.e. ethics, transparency and accountability)” (77% agree/strongly agree); Survey item: “I understand what is meant by good research practice, and how it applies to the work I do.” (89% agree/strongly agree)
	2: We will implement the CoARA Action Plan, ensuring updated policies, guidance, training, and assessment processes that collectively promote fair, inclusive, and responsible research assessment and recognition.	Policies; guidance; training materials	Fair, consistent, and responsible research assessment practices are embedded across the institution.	Ongoing	CoARA Working Group	Survey item: The University values a broad range of research outputs (within appraisal, promotion etc.) (40% agree/strongly agree)
	3: We will embed and champion open research (OR) across the institution by delivering our open research strategy, including: a) embedding OR principles in university policy and governance frameworks. b) providing training and targeted support to enable OR practices. c) enabling open access publishing through Library-led services and infrastructure. d) recognising and rewarding good OR practice across the research community. e) representing Warwick in national and international open research initiatives.	Open Research Strategy a) OR embedded in key policies and forms part of policy guidance b) Increased academic engagement with Open Research training and training materials c) Streamlined routes enabling gold and diamond open access funding and green open access deposited publications. d) Annual Open Research Awards e) Institutional Membership in UKRN and associated action plan	a) Open research is embedded as a standard and consistent expectation across the institution. b) Researchers have the confidence to adopt open and transparent research practice. c) Outputs are more widely accessible, visible and reusable. d) Open research practices are valued and adopted through incentives and recognition. e) Warwick is recognised as an active contributor to the global open research landscape.	Ongoing	Open Research Group	Achieve 95% confidence uplift among training participants who give feedback, demonstrating the effectiveness and impact of the training Survey item: My research environment promotes a culture of open research practice (e.g. open access data, pre-prints etc.) (71% agree/strongly agree)