

# PhD Career development programme 2020-21



[lse.ac.uk/careers](https://lse.ac.uk/careers)

# Introduction

## Welcome from LSE Careers

I would like to extend a warm welcome from LSE Careers. We have many years' experience of working with PhD students from all departments and we offer a substantial programme of career development for PhD students looking to further their career in academia or in other employment sectors. Here you'll find a guide to the various specialist events, seminars, and additional activities available over the year, as well as details of one-to-one help, where jobs are advertised, and where you can find careers information useful during and after your PhD. Make the most of your time at LSE; the skills and experience you gain alongside your PhD studies will shape your career progression. Many students stay in touch with each other after they leave and the professional network you develop whilst you are here will form the basis of your future working life. Finally, I hope you find the alumni stories published here interesting.

**Catherine Reynolds, Careers Consultant, LSE ([c.reynolds1@lse.ac.uk](mailto:c.reynolds1@lse.ac.uk))**

## Welcome from the PhD Academy

As Director of the PhD Academy, I have had the pleasure to participate in some of the events organised by LSE Careers. This has given me the opportunity to meet some of our graduates, who are teaching, researching, innovating, consulting, and exploring a range of career paths in university departments, research institutions, NGOs, government departments, international organisations, the public sector, and the commercial sector. It's been inspiring! The PhD Academy aims to support all our students in developing rewarding and meaningful careers. Many PhD students build up a network of contacts while at the LSE and the help they receive from LSE Careers is invaluable in facilitating this. Whether by attending a careers event, talking with Catherine at one of her dedicated sessions, arranging a practice interview, or simply consulting the information sources online, there are plenty of ways to build your career and create opportunities. Your PhD is one big step along the way, and we hope that your career and professional development will be an integral part of your time at the LSE, taking you to where you want to be in a few years' time!

**Rita Astuti, PhD Academy Director**



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## LSE Careers

LSE Careers is here to help guide and support you throughout your time at LSE. Whether you have a clear idea of what you want to do after your PhD or haven't started thinking about it yet, LSE Careers can help.

We provide a range of careers services and events, information and advice and a jobs board with UK and international full-time, part-time, graduate, internship, experienced hire, and volunteering opportunities. It can be overwhelming to balance your career search with PhD work, but we can help you manage your time and find focus and direction.

### Services for disabled students

LSE Careers has a dedicated Careers Consultant whose focus is on the transition from education to employment for students who have a disability or a neurodiverse condition. You can find more information for **disabled students** on the LSE Careers website, and please contact us ([careers.disability@lse.ac.uk](mailto:careers.disability@lse.ac.uk)).

**Dr Simona Milio**  
PhD European Institute,  
2007

**Director in Public Policy at  
ICF, London**

I lead the Employment, Skills and Education team of 30 professionals, providing analysis and recommendations to the EU and UK government, which often involves collaboration or partnerships with academic colleagues at LSE and elsewhere.



Leaving academia at the right time and for the right reasons was important for me and I worked at LSE as Associate Director of the Economic and Social Policy Unit until 2015 while looking for my next move. Through the selection process, I realised that my research skills and academic network, rather than specific topics, were of most value to people recruiting. It's important to not undersell what you can do as well as showing what you know. Striking the balance between being confident about what you can do, while also being humble about what can be learnt from others in the organisation, has helped me settle and thrive at ICF.

# Getting started

## LSE CareerHub

**CareerHub** is your gateway to our careers events (including seminars, fairs, employer presentations and more), one-to-one appointments, the organisations we work with, and our vacancy board.

First time on CareerHub? Log in with your LSE IT account and then go to the 'Preferences' section to let us know what you're interested in. This will ensure you receive the most relevant information about jobs, opportunities, and events.

## LSE Careers online

On our website ([lse.ac.uk/careers](https://lse.ac.uk/careers)) you'll find useful advice about career planning, CVs, application forms, interviews, and assessment centres for roles in and outside academia, as well as information on searching for jobs, employment sectors and international careers.

To keep up-to-date with careers news, events, opportunities and advice, find us on Student Hub, look out for our newsletter, subscribe to the PhD Careers blog, and follow us on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. You can find us @LSECareers.

## LSE Volunteer Centre

Whether you have an hour or two days a week to spare, there are a range of one-off, long-term, and overseas opportunities advertised on CareerHub at any time. If you'd like support finding the right opportunity for you, book a one-to-one appointment on CareerHub. The LSE Volunteer Centre website ([lse.ac.uk/volunteercentre](https://lse.ac.uk/volunteercentre)) also has a wealth of information and advice.

## LSE Generate

LSE Generate ([lse.ac.uk/generate](https://lse.ac.uk/generate)) is the home of entrepreneurship at LSE, helping students and alumni create impact through innovation and the commercialisation of research. Keep up-to-date with all things enterprise @LSEGenerate.

## Other services at LSE

### PhD Academy

We work closely with colleagues in the PhD Academy to support you throughout your studies. Our specialist PhD services are currently delivered online.

### International Student Visa Team

The International Student Visa Advice Team (ISVAT) is the only team at LSE able to advise on student immigration and the Doctoral Extension Scheme.

### Language Centre

The LSE Language Centre offers modern foreign language and English language programmes, as well as providing proof-reading services (for a fee).

### LSE Alumni

Alumni have access to LSE Careers for up to five years after course completion. You can also join 80+ regional and 10+ special interest alumni groups. Find out how to make the most of the LSE Alumni network, benefits and services after graduation, and follow LSE Alumni on social media to get the latest information and advice.

# During your PhD

## **You will be looking for ways to build your skills and experience by:**

- developing research skills, presenting work, and contributing to your field
- attending and speaking at conferences, and preparing papers for publication
- engaging with the public outside academia, blogging, media work, events
- organising conferences, editing journals, and giving research assistance
- teaching undergraduates and master's students, marking work, developing courses; undertaking a teaching qualification.

## **You will also prepare by:**

- doing consultancy, freelance or internship work
- building your network of contacts; collaborating with others
- understanding the organisations who might recruit you
- signing up for job alerts from specialist websites and monitoring vacancies
- preparing alternative ways to present yourself and your work for different contexts.

## **But don't be overwhelmed!**

One-to-one career discussions, which you can book online through CareerHub ([careers.lse.ac.uk](https://careers.lse.ac.uk)), are available every week and can help you set your priorities and plan your time efficiently. Our core programme of careers events is open to all students so you are welcome to attend these as well as specialist PhD ones (browse and book on CareerHub).



## **David Brenner PhD International Relations, 2016**

### **Lecturer in International Relations, Goldsmiths, University of London**

I was very fortunate to start as a lecturer at the end of my PhD, which allowed me to continue with academic research on political violence in Southeast Asia. I first worked as a fixed-term lecturer at the University of Surrey for two years and then moved to a permanent role at Goldsmiths, University of London.



Studying at LSE was great for developing my interests. The best part was the large PhD community and I learned a lot from likeminded peers in a variety of disciplines. While publishing and teaching during my PhD was key for finding academic employment, LSE also provided a good platform for pursuing some of my other interests, including extensive fieldwork, journalism, photography, and policy engagement. I feel that this is equally important at a time where PhD students have to prepare themselves for a career that will most likely not be at the university.





# Seminars and events

To help you learn about careers, throughout the year we run seminars and events:

**Sessions include:**

- **Preparing for an academic career in the UK**
- **CVs for academic posts**
- **CVs for outside academia**
- International Organisations Week (IOW, 2-7 November, for all students) including major UN organisations, development banks and other agencies
- Career options after your PhD
- Interviews for academic posts
- Finding and applying for research fellowships
- PhD careers employer networking
- **Meet our Alum** (for all students, taking place every week during Michaelmas and Lent Terms with a range of career sectors represented)
- **Discover International Development** (throughout Michaelmas and Lent)
- **Careers in Creative Industries Week**

**Fairs:**

- Consulting, Banking and Financial Services Fair
- Public Sector and Policy Fair

**Employer presentations:** ongoing

Browse the full listings and book on CareerHub ([careers.lse.ac.uk](https://careers.lse.ac.uk)).

## Jas Ellis, PhD International Development, 2008

Private Secretary and Policy Assistant to the Governor of the Bank of England



It's pretty safe to say that I wouldn't be in this job without my PhD. It's harder to say why. Did my prestigious doctoral qualification open doors? To be blunt: it didn't. Beyond a few research-focussed jobs, the anticipated benefit of that qualification is close to zero – and for some recruiters, it's less than zero.

Instead, the value of my PhD was in the skills I acquired. Analytical skills. Communication skills. Presentation skills. It's those skills that got me my first job as an economic consultant, and they've also underpinned my success at the Bank of England and ECB. Sometimes the research training helps, but not nearly as much as the intellectual confidence.

My doctorate didn't get me out of reformatting spreadsheets (although people asked more politely). But applying what I learnt at LSE has consistently helped me find bigger and higher-profile projects. And that's opened a lot of doors.



# Appointments and vacancies

## One-to-one appointments

We offer appointments every week which you can book up to one month in advance on CareerHub ([careers.lse.ac.uk](https://careers.lse.ac.uk)). Use appointments to review your career, develop your ideas, assess your plans, or get feedback on your approach, written applications, and interview preparation.

## Opportunities

There are numerous part-time jobs, internships, and other vacancies listed on CareerHub. If you are Research Council funded student, also look for RCUK internships in government, policy, and public service. Part-time jobs include research roles, academic administration, internships, teaching and tutoring amongst others.

Early in your PhD these roles will generate income and help to build evidence of skills and experience. We can help you network with employers, organisations, and alumni and support speculative applications. Later in your PhD, familiarise yourself with the requirements for roles advertised on academic and other specialist job sites. There are lists of these on our website ([lse.ac.uk/careers](https://lse.ac.uk/careers)) for UK, European, and international labour markets.

## Claudia Mollidor, PhD Social Psychology, 2013

### Associate Director, Public Affairs, Ipsos MORI

During my MSc I realised I wasn't quite ready to leave academia yet, though I never saw myself 'becoming an academic' after my PhD.



Ever since leaving school I worked part-time in office-based environments (in France, the UK and Australia) and very much valued the experience as well as the perspective on life and the job market this afforded me. I strongly believe that work experience got me a place on the MSc programme in the first place, helped me focus on my thesis on 'PhD days' and meant that I had a smooth transition into meaningful and enjoyable employment afterwards.

Finally taking a year out after non-stop study and work gave me the space to scope out and plan my next career move. Landing in the Social Research Institute at Ipsos MORI couldn't suit me better, providing both academic rigour and the opportunity to influence policy and practice in a fast-paced, exciting environment.

# Other events and training

## Key events

- LSE Research Festival - a celebration of social science research
- Professional development for PhDs - training throughout the year by the PhD Academy
- PGCert HE and other teacher training opportunities
- Research methodology - courses run throughout the year
- Information literacy courses - run by the Library, including online presence

## Opportunities to grow your network

- visiting scholar
- collaborations with non-Higher Education partners
- internship, consultant or research assistant roles
- conference organiser, presenter, speaker
- journal reviewer or editor
- staff/student liaison

Many opportunities and events for Academic and Professional Development are advertised at [lse.ac.uk/phdacademy](https://lse.ac.uk/phdacademy) (see the events, courses and training page). Use a one-to-one careers appointment to review activities aligned with your career development.

“I got the job! Thank you so much for all your help with my job pack and with the practice interview. it all really helped! Not only did it boost my performance, but some of your questions and suggestions really helped me to focus on the key messages in my thesis. This job is so perfect for me - I can't believe they are actually going to pay me to do it. ”

“I am very happy to share that I now have a full-time, permanent job and I am starting in September! I cannot express how grateful I am for all your help and support, thank you very much! It was extremely helpful, and this time I managed to give answers exactly the way we practised. ”



## Nikola Belakova, PhD Media and Communications, 2018

### Trainee, Project Delivery Fast Stream to Civil Service

I held several part-time jobs during my PhD, including being a Project Coordinator for the LSE Media Policy Project. I realised that seeing tangible impact of my work really motivates me and that project delivery rather than academia is where I can see myself thrive.



I joined the Government Project Delivery Profession four days after submitting my thesis. My first posting as EU Exit Portfolio Analyst in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy proved exciting and stretching at the same time. Although I did not need a PhD to apply, the intellectual confidence, analytical, communication, influencing and presentation skills together with the resilience and flexibility I acquired during my doctorate at LSE were indispensable for my ability to pass the rigorous application process and to flourish in the fast-paced, reactive and uncertain environment of EU Exit.

While I occasionally miss my academic life, I'm sure I made the right choice. And who knows? I might meander back at some point.





# PhD career progression

LSE PhD graduates move into a wide range of interesting initial roles in many different sectors and organisations. Graduate destination data is searchable by department at [lse.ac.uk/graduate-destinations](https://lse.ac.uk/graduate-destinations). [Vitae.ac.uk](https://vitae.ac.uk) also provides national data and an interesting range of PhD careers stories. Some examples of recent destinations from LSE PhDs include:

## Roles in academia

LSE Fellow; Teaching Fellow; Research Fellow; Research Assistant; Research Officer; Post-doctoral Research Fellow; Assistant Professor; Lecturer.

## Roles outside academia

Advocacy Manager; Research Manager; Project Manager; Associate; Civil Servant; Consultant; Diplomat; Economist; Editorial Manager; Grants Facilitator; Programme Manager; Special Adviser; Researcher; Policy Adviser; Quantitative Analyst; Research Analyst; Statistician; Strategist; Social Researcher; Writer.

## Organisations

London School of Economics; Max Planck Institute; Cass Business School; Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; SOAS; Princeton University; Durham University; Hertfordshire University.

## Organisations

Government departments; European Commission; International Monetary Fund; Overseas Development Institute; OECD; Women's Foundation; Social Market Foundation; Work Foundation; World Bank; European Central Bank; Bank of England; PwC; Barclays Bank; Citigroup; Morgan Stanley.

## Simon Beard, PhD Philosophy, 2016

**Researcher, Centre for the Study of Existential Risk,  
University of Cambridge**

I am a postdoc at an academic institute researching global catastrophic risk and how to prevent it.



Given the nature of our work my work life is half way between that of an academic researcher and a policy campaigner. So, as well as writing academic papers and blog posts I have also been a BBC New Generation Thinker and helped set up and run an All-Party Parliamentary Group for Future Generations. For me this is the perfect combination and I am no longer trying to pursue a 'standard' academic career.

One of my most marketable skills has been that as well as doing my PhD research I also developed my political career whilst at the LSE and even stood for parliament in 2015. This helped me to keep focused on the practical implications of my philosophical research and how to communicate my thoughts and ideas outside academia.



# Your professional identity

We can help you build and develop an interesting portfolio of experiences and connect these with your life beyond LSE. Professional identity is not a stable entity; how you see yourself and how others see you shifts and people sometimes experience significant changes during a PhD. The beliefs or opinions you have will influence other people and you have some control over how others perceive you.

Before presenting yourself to colleagues and potential employers it's helpful to consider your strengths and prepare different ways to describe yourself and your work. It's never too early to work on your professional reputation!

## As a researcher, think of yourself as a:

- team worker and project manager
- communicator and writer
- creative problem solver

## Develop a web presence:

- Present yourself online - training is offered by LSE's Information Management Team (IMT) team.
- Use LinkedIn and create an interesting and up-to-date profile.

## Ask for feedback:

- Use a one-to-one careers appointment to review your professional identity at any stage of your PhD.

## Roberto Sormani, PhD Economics, 2019

Economist, World Bank,  
Washington DC

During my PhD,  
I also trained  
and worked as a  
Peer Supporter  
and founded an



organisation to support the Italian LGBT+ community in London. These activities, alongside some small consultancy projects, developed a portfolio of skills and experience to draw on during my job selection process.

It was a difficult choice but I realised I am more motivated by projects with immediate impact and so decided not to apply for academic positions. Applying for jobs was time-consuming; lengthy and difficult, especially towards the end preparing for assessment centres and second interviews.

I'd encourage you to use LSE Careers for career support throughout your PhD. Having technical and professional level research skills, excellent references, as well as the LSE brand, helped me but also important were human qualities. Being self-reflective, being able to make and learn from mistakes were qualities seen positively by selectors.



## Careers resources

LSE Careers offers a huge range of resources, online and offline, that can help you get the job you really want. Using a combination of these, you should be able to find and attain the career path you're looking for.

We have specialist resources at [lse.ac.uk/careers](https://lse.ac.uk/careers) to support PhD careers including:

- Academic careers information and advice including getting teaching experience, US academic careers, post-docs, sample CVs, covering letters, research statements and proposals.
- Careers outside academia information including lists of job sites, example CVs and cover letters, and advice on applying for jobs and internships.
- **Employment sector resources** to help you explore sectors beyond academia - you're welcome at all our events to understand the wider labour market.
- International careers: **GoinGlobal** has a fantastic range of resources.
- **PhD careers blog** written by LSE Careers staff, PhD alumni, and some current PhD students. Contact Catherine Reynolds with ideas for topics to cover.

We're open throughout the year, including the summer, for one-to-one appointments and practice interviews. You also have access to LSE Careers services for up to five years after completing your course.

**So make the most of us during your time here and good luck with your career at LSE and beyond!**

**Giulia Pastorella,**  
**PhD European Studies, 2016**

**Associate Director - Tech and Trade, Weber Shandwick, Brussels**



I like the diversity of the client portfolio, the collaboration with other teams such as healthcare or energy, and the excitement of going after new business opportunities.

I moved here from Hewlett Packard, where I worked for 4 and a half years, in a number of Government Relations positions. In the last two years I led on cyber security and data policy in the Global Strategy Program at the American tech company - topics only loosely connected to my PhD on democracy.

I was never 100% sure I wanted to move outside academia. So my strategy was to shift in and out of it, combining work and study, since my early university days. It turns out that 'just' a PhD is not enough for today's job market.

After my master's degree I worked for a year in a public affairs consultancy, only to then come back to academia for my PhD. Faithful to my strategy, I taught, researched, and published but was also freelancing on the side and founded an academia related start-up.

This zig-zag paid off, I transitioned quickly at the end of my PhD into HP and from there to where I am today. And who knows: one day I might go back to academia!



**Email:** [careers@lse.ac.uk](mailto:careers@lse.ac.uk)

**Telephone:** +44 (0)20 7955 7135

**CareerHub:** [careers.lse.ac.uk](https://careers.lse.ac.uk)

**Blog:** [blogs.lse.ac.uk/careers](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/careers)

**[lse.ac.uk/careers](https://lse.ac.uk/careers)**

