

Networking – Top Tips – Transcript

Dr Lucy Robinson

Build yourself a community, find yourself a group of people who you're going to grow together. They might not all be brand new, first years but find yourself a group of people who are going to cook for each other, are going to go out and are going to drink together, cry together, support each other. There are different ways to do this job but for me, one of the really important ways is to see it as a collective experience, that we are all in it together and we are a community and that we can help each other out and I think really helps sometimes get you out of a hole.

You're not going to be the only one who is having a crisis and is struggling to write, you're not going to be the only one who feels really, really under pressure at submission time, those kind of things. So just seeing other people go through it, is really good. But I think more than that, I think it's about – how do you want to do this job? And I want to do this job in a community with colleagues and collaboratively and the community that I built with me and around me when I was first doing my PhD are still my peer community, they're still the people that I go to, so yeah, find yourself some mates.

Christine Wanjala

The one piece of advice that I wish to share with any new researcher is the PhD is not a solitary adventure as it's always thought.

PhD, like other learning, requires some sharing, it requires collaboration right from the start because when you come in and everyone seems to be going their own way, it's like, you think everyone is doing right and you're doing wrong and you feel like everybody's moving and you're not.

If you're in discussions sometimes it feels like a competition but later after like one or two months, we realise no one is moving at all. So we came together, students in our cohort, and we decided we can take on this as a group and you can help each other, we can share and we can discuss.

Rose Taylor

Get involved in as much as you can. I know that particularly for doctoral researchers, people can have this attitude that you're here to study, you've got to get your research done and get through it all at once but university can be such an enriching experience and there's so much going on. There's not many times when you're going to have so much opportunities and so many things on offer so I think just get involved in as many things as you can, because it's good for your wellbeing as well and it can help

your concentration with your research and studies if you're getting involved in extracurricular activities as well.

Maria-Silvia D'Avolio

First of all, I found it really important to be part of the community, so try to involve yourself with other researchers as much as you can because you learn a lot from articles, from books, from your own thinking but it's from the moment you share your ideas and you challenge your way of thinking with other people that you really grasp the meaning of being a PhD student.