



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

# ***Transferable skills training for researchers***

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# Why transferable skills?

## Definition:

- Skills learned in one context (e.g. research) that are useful in another context (e.g. business)
- Skills that serve as a bridge from study to work and from one career to another
  
- **From a government perspective**
- **From an institutional perspective**
- **From the researchers' perspective**
- **From a user's perspective**

## Questions

- What kinds of transferable skills are considered most important – for researchers at what stage?
- What awareness is on the need and the ways of learning transferable skills?
- What is the role of the different actors to promote transferable skills?

## RIHR project on transferable skills training project outline

### **The project aims to :**

- study countries' approach to transferable skills
- identify training activities that provide these skills
- Highlight country views and experiences at national and institutional levels
- Identify good practice and potential future policy options

### **The project comprise:**

- A literary study
- A questionnaire to governments and research institutes, HEIs and other organisations

# Literature review: Transferable skills

- What?
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Organisational skills
  - Research competencies
  - Cognitive abilities
  - Communication skills
  - Enterprise skills

# Literature review: Transferable skills

- Who/ at what stage?
  1. Doctoral candidates
  2. Post doctorates
  3. Other early stage researchers
  4. Research personnel
- How?
  - Formal training programmes
  - Work place experience

## RIHR Questionnaire

- **Part A: Government strategies**
- **Part B: Questions for research institutes/universities and other organisations**
- **Part C: Transferable training for Master-level students**
- **Part D: Workplace experience and transferable skills**

## Participants - respondents

- 17 countries
- 11 national level governments
- 10 regional/state level governments
- 12 Research institutions
- 36 higher education institutions
- 5 from other organisations
- Norwegian responses:
  - **Government**
  - **6 universities**
  - 5 research institutes



## Part A: Governments

- Does your government have an overarching strategy or agenda regarding formal transferable skills training for researchers?
- Does your government have formal training programmes for developing researchers' transferable skills?

## A. Government response

No strategy for transferable skills training

Programme

- Industrial PhD

## Part B: Research institutes, universities and other organisations

Does your organisation

- have a role in delivering any national, state or regional government programmes
- have an overarching strategy or agenda? (describe)
- Have its own formal training programmes? (describe 3 programmes)
  - Name of programme
  - Who is the training programme for?
  - What level of researchers is targeted?
  - ETC

## Part B: Goals for university strategies

### University of Oslo UMB and NTNU:

- Enhancing employability of researchers in academia
- Improving research work

### University of Oslo and UMB:

- Preparing researchers for a wider labour market

### University of Oslo :

- Internationalisation of research and education
- More innovation and knowledge transfer
- Improving teaching

## Part B: Programmes

Institution	Programme	Level
NTNU	Academic leadership	4
	Equal opportunities Mentor programme	1-4
	Pedagogical development	3+4
UiO	Research leadership	4
	PhD course "innovation and IPR"	1
	Project management and methods	2-4
UMB	Job seeking workshop	1-4?
	IPR & innovation	1-4?
	Writing EU proposals	1-4?

## Part B: Programmes

Institution	Programmes	Level
UiS	UNIPED	2-4
	English presentation Technique Course	1
	Writing for scholars	2-4
UiA	Ethics and the theory of science	1
	Academic leadership	3-4?
UiB	No programmes reported	

New regulations for PhD training:

*The institution should offer the PhD candidate counselling on future employment opportunities within and outside academia, and under this an underpinning of competence that the candidate has achieved through working with the PhD project.*

## Part D: Workplace experience and transferable skills

- Do you have overarching strategies and/or specific programmes that support the development of researchers transferable skills through workplace experience?
- Describe the overarching strategy
- Programmes for researchers' transferable skills development through workplace experience.

## D. Workplace experience and transferable skills - Government

No over all strategy for workplace experience and transferable skills

### Programmes

- Industrial PhD
- Professor II positions



## D. Workplace experience and transferable skills

Only NTNU reported this:

- The overarching NTNU strategy is general and underlines the NTNUs commitment to be a knowledge partner to the public and private sector.
- There is no explicit strategy to encourage researchers to obtain workplace experience (work outside university) but researchers are encouraged to engage in research and innovation activities with external partners.
- **If we consider impact, far more researchers are engaged in research activities involving external partners (indirect and direct workplace experience).** The formal training programmes for researchers reach few researchers in comparison

## Summary - conclusion

- The Ministry is not involved in transferable skills training, but has arrangements for work place experience
- Among half of the universities report having explicit strategies covering transferable skills training
- The profile on transferable skills training seems to differ among types of institutions
- There seems to be an awareness of the need for transferable skills training for PhDs, however only two institutions mention the new EQF as a driver for transferable skills training
- Only NTNU mentions work place experience and the government's programmes as important

### Conclusion:

- There are several tools for transferable skills training, but there is a lack of awareness...

Inspired by the OECD survey we have decided to realise a plan to map programs and courses providing general skills within the university