Welcome from the eGSA Director

Welcome to our June newsletter!
It’s always good to receive feedback, and when it’s positive it makes us realise that what we’re doing is making a difference.

Research Administrators who have undertaken the Leadership and Communication and Project Management modules designed specifically for people in these roles, have reported the benefits of bringing the skills and knowledge gained from their participation, into their workplace. We’re pleased to share some of this feedback from a past participant, with you later in this newsletter. As a result and in response to feedback, we are offering a new module – Research Commercialisation for Research Administrators, in Semester 2. See below for further details.

I wish you well as we near the middle of the year.

Paul Burnett

Professional Development for Professional Staff

As mentioned above, the Semester 2 offering for professional staff will be the Research Commercialisation for Administrators module.

Participants will benefit from this course by better understanding the management of research outcomes, its impact on processes and common research and student agreements, and how to better manage relevant stresses/tensions which may influence key milestones and process requirements.

Date: 27 July (Week 1) to 28 August (Week 5).

Cost per participant - $350 + GST. (ATN university professionals will receive a discount).

Registrations close - 26 June 2015

Register and pay by credit card at the following link:

Talk to your supervisor/employer about financial support to participate in this valuable professional development opportunity.

Tax deductions may be available. Further information about this is available at:

Please contact the e-Gradschool Coordinator at egsacoordinator@qut.edu.au if you have any queries.

Modules for Research Administrators - What the participants are saying….

Elizabeth Stevens, UniSA – has completed Project Management and Leadership and Communication – here’s what she thinks:

Q: What motivated you to do the Project Management and Leadership and Communication modules?
A: After completing a number of free short courses online I really wanted to sink my teeth into something that would provide me with skills to progress in my current position. Project Management was advertised to us as a great tool to have as a Research Administrator. Another colleague and I decided to take this on and found it to be very interesting. We were able to discuss the various modules during the weeks allocated, with a variety of other staff in similar positions around the country. It was great to learn together, sharing ideas and so on. Leadership and Communication has interested me personally. My role at a leading University in South Australia has recently temporarily changed and components being taught were aligned perfectly to those needed. I was lucky to have amazing support by our Schools Management team being able to enrol in both these courses.

Q: What is your background, ie what area are you currently working in and were the resources useful?
A: I have worked in the University sector for many years, with a stint in between in corporate real estate. I am currently a Senior Academic Services Officer within the School of Natural and Built Environments at the University of South Australia. I currently assist with Research Administration, process casual contracts, provide Academic support, and manage School events and other various duties. The resources acquired over both modules have helped me to develop ways to manage and think outside the square. They have empowered our team to run a tight ship and deliver on time. They have also cemented and reaffirmed those personal skills that were a little dusty! It’s nice to have as it boosts your own confidence!

Q: What did you expect to gain from completing the module(s)?
A: Apart from learning the skills outlined in each module over the time allocated, my expectations were to become empowered! In both modules, and having previous knowledge in both, it became apparent there were ways of doing things differently to accommodate most people’s style. I have been able to share this information with fellow colleagues and have felt more valued during team meetings by improving my style of communication, having a confident demeanour and providing detailed roles and timelines where applicable.
Q: Were your expectations met?
A: In a word – YES! Both modules provided excellent tools and notes to really look at the way others can perceive the way things should be done. The modules help you to think outside the box and view things in a new light, which can be intriguing to say the least.

Q: Any other comments you'd like to make?
A: The modules are worth enrolling into. The feedback from the online coordinators varied and I really enjoyed the feedback provided by Annaliza from Leadership and Communication. She was able to reaffirm posts made on the discussion board and offer more advice on how to overcome or rethink concerns raised. I look forward to looking at completing more modules in the future. Do yourself a favour and enrol today!

Ask the Moderators......

Do you have a question you’d like to ask the moderators? If so email them to us at egasacoordinator@qut.edu.au

Here’s what Dr Svenja Kratz, moderator of Practice-led Research in Creative Arts, Media and Design had to say:

Q: What is the single most important piece of advice you would give to someone starting a PhD/Masters by research tomorrow?
A: Based on my own experience, the advice I propose is to be proactive and ask for help or guidance when needed, as well as take up offers of additional assistance. A strong cohort of fellow researchers provides an excellent support network, and was one of the most valuable resources during my candidature. Indeed, my strong networks and relationships with colleagues have continued to help me as I advance my career and practice, providing advice and encouragement as I take up new opportunities.

Q: What do you think that students can do to enhance their online learning experience?
A: To make the online experience more enjoyable, I would recommend that students participate actively in the discussion forum. The board provides an excellent framework to discuss ideas, uncertainties and connect with researchers from numerous institutions. In the Practice-Led Research module, making use of the media options can also allow sharing of creative work, which helps contextualise research questions. However, my most important piece of advice is to use the online modules with an aim in mind. Identify what you want to get out of it, and make it work for you.

Q: What have you enjoyed the most about your career to date?
A: My career has been significantly enhanced through the amazing people I have met and been fortunate enough to collaborate on various creative and research projects. To date, I have worked with visual artists, writers, filmmakers, musicians, scientists and engineers, and I am always surprised and humbled by the richness of their ideas and knowledge, as well as the different perspective they bring to each project.

Why do an eGSA course? We asked our past students to tell us

We recently polled over 280 past and present e-Grad School students about how the knowledge they have gained in eGSA courses has helped them in their research and career paths. Some of the participants of the survey are still undertaking their research higher degree while others have completed their thesis and are now in the workforce. The overwhelming majority of respondents felt that the training they had received from their eGSA courses had helped them improve their research and career prospects. Here is a snapshot of some of the responses:

- over half of all respondents wanted more than just research skills from their research degrees;
- over 71% felt that eGSA courses have helped with their career goals and 65% felt that doing these courses has improved their employability;
- almost 70% have already used skills they have learned from their courses;
- improved confidence in research and better able to liaise with industry were among the responses cited as the most tangible benefits of doing eGSA courses;
- having the support of a supervisor in seeking broader skill sets has a major impact (improves) on a research student’s training experience;
- over a fifth of eGSA alumni who are now graduated from their HDR studies have cited eGSA courses as being a causative factor in gaining new employment or promotion;
- over half of all respondents think that eGSA courses should be compulsory training for Higher Degree Research.

So overall, a great outcome and a solid endorsement for the benefits of eGSA training - It is wonderful to see our courses providing valuable career support to our students and alumni!

Dr Paige Maguire
Deputy Director eGSA

Thought of the day

If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough. – Albert Einstein