Improving Your Online Presence

Leadership
Develop skills to take control in your research project and build your employability in a range of careers

IAD
For Researchers at a Glance

Writing
Present your ideas effectively in publications and proposals

Funding
For tailored development opportunities and new networks

Careers
Understand your options, marketing yourself effectively, make the right decisions

Networks
Develop effective connections with researchers, stakeholders and employers

Engagement
Support to reach new audiences and promote the value of research in society

Social Media
Build your own profile and find out where to follow us
Section 01

Reviewing your online engagement
01 How do you behave online?

When do you look for someone online?

Think about the circumstances under which you look for someone - is it to find out about their work? In anticipation of meeting them? Whether you might like to work for them?

Where do you look for them? What do you hope to find?

What prompts you to ACT on what you find?

And what actions do you take?

Knowing your own behaviours will help you start with natural steps to boost your online profile.
01 Has this influenced your online presence?

Are you using these “audience” insights in your own profile?

Why do you want people to look for you?

Where do you expect them to look for you?

What actions do you want them to take when they find you?

What would make it easier for them to ACT?

Step one to boosting your online profile is to use the good practice you admire in others.
Has this narrowed your online presence?

Are you using a typical “audience” member?

Ask some colleagues why they look for people online and WHERE they are looking.

Do you have a presence on these other sites - even if it is just a profile that points to the places where you are more comfortable and active?

Do the functionalities of these other sites make it easier for people to take actions? (i.e. easier to read your papers if they are part of your profile; easier to seek your opinions or expertise if they can see you contributing to discussions.)

What do you need to gather ready to build your profile on these sites?

Step two to boosting your online profile is to be visible on the sites that are widely used by others.
Section 02

The Core Features of Online Spaces
Before you start developing your presence, think about what value it will add to you and others.

Social media sites are set up to help people engage in conversations and discussions.

Think about the kinds of conversations which will help you to raise your profile - these might be contributing to discussions about research topics; engaging in debates about researcher experiences or finding common ground with potential collaborators.
Your online engagement and presence forms part of a “neighbourhood” for people.

Where does your community spend time? What do they hope to find in this virtual neighbourhood? Rapid updates on research? Events? Signposts to useful information? What can you add to become a valued member of the neighbourhood?
02 Core Features- networks

It’s much easier to connect with people who are visible and active online.

Where might you be visible to a broader network of people? Where are the “clusters” for your research area/future career interests?

What information are you going to make available to encourage people to connect with you?

What do you observe in others that makes it easy for you to connect with them?
Your investment in building a profile will pay off if you start to benefit from the information people share - and contribute to it.

What information are you able to share? How is it distinctive from what else is available?

How will you track who engages with it?

What are the gaps in your own knowledge? Who might provide it?
Your online profile is an important resource for potential employers and collaborators - they will get a stronger sense of you than from a CV or sterile university profile.

What do you want people to know about you?

Can you create a story around your key skills or interests by providing information and comment related to it?

Are you connected with the people you want to be visible to? And engaging with their content and post
Section 03

Getting Started
Some questions to help

What are the top results when you search for yourself online?

Do you appear in the top results for your research field or profession? (If not, who does and do you feel you have comparable expertise?)

Is the information about you

1. up to date (watch for old university profiles which may confuse about your current institution)

2. positive (review comments or replies to posts)

3. consistent with the messages you want to share (i.e. research interests, career plans)
Some actions to take

Contact old institutions and ask for profiles to be removed or amended with a link to a current profile

Look for patterns in the search results of other researchers - are there any consistencies you can apply to yourself? (i.e. if all on Twitter, should you be?)

Ask for feedback on your profile and whether it is beneficial

Find out how to remove old or damaging material from websites (all social media sites have processes for doing this)

Decide what kind of online engagement will suit your career or research aims
Section 04
More information
There are endless online resources about online presence

You’ll probably find advice from within your own field - look for people with a high profile and review their online profile for evidence of blogs or advice.

Universities often have social media guidelines, but also advice - this is developing at the University of Edinburgh.

https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/research-support/research-information-management/pure/your-research-profile Advice on building your Research Explorer profile through PURE

http://www.alexsarchives.org/2014/02/one-academic-online/ One academic’s story - a little dated but explains the process of building an online profile

https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/publish/scholarly-publishing/visibility One of many overviews with an academic flavour
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