



Waipapa  
Taumata Rau  
**University  
of Auckland**

# Researcher Skills and Career Planning for Academia and Beyond



2 July 2025



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# Agenda



1. Career planning
2. Researcher Skills and Capabilities
3. Transferable Skills for Outside Academia





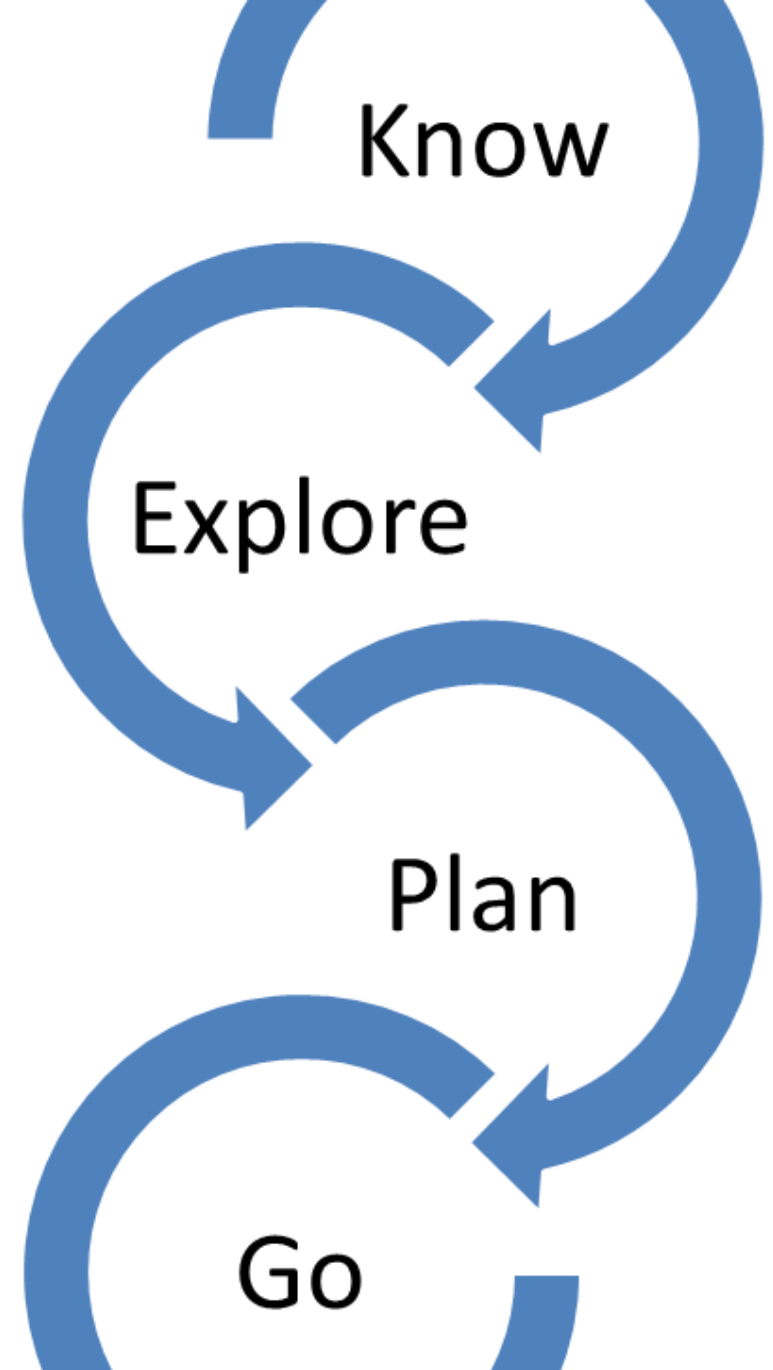
## **Poll question 1:**

**Do you have a current career plan?**

# 1. Career Planning



Whether you want a career in academia, industry, or if you are not sure what is right for you, it is a really good idea to have a **plan** in place so you can **explore options**.



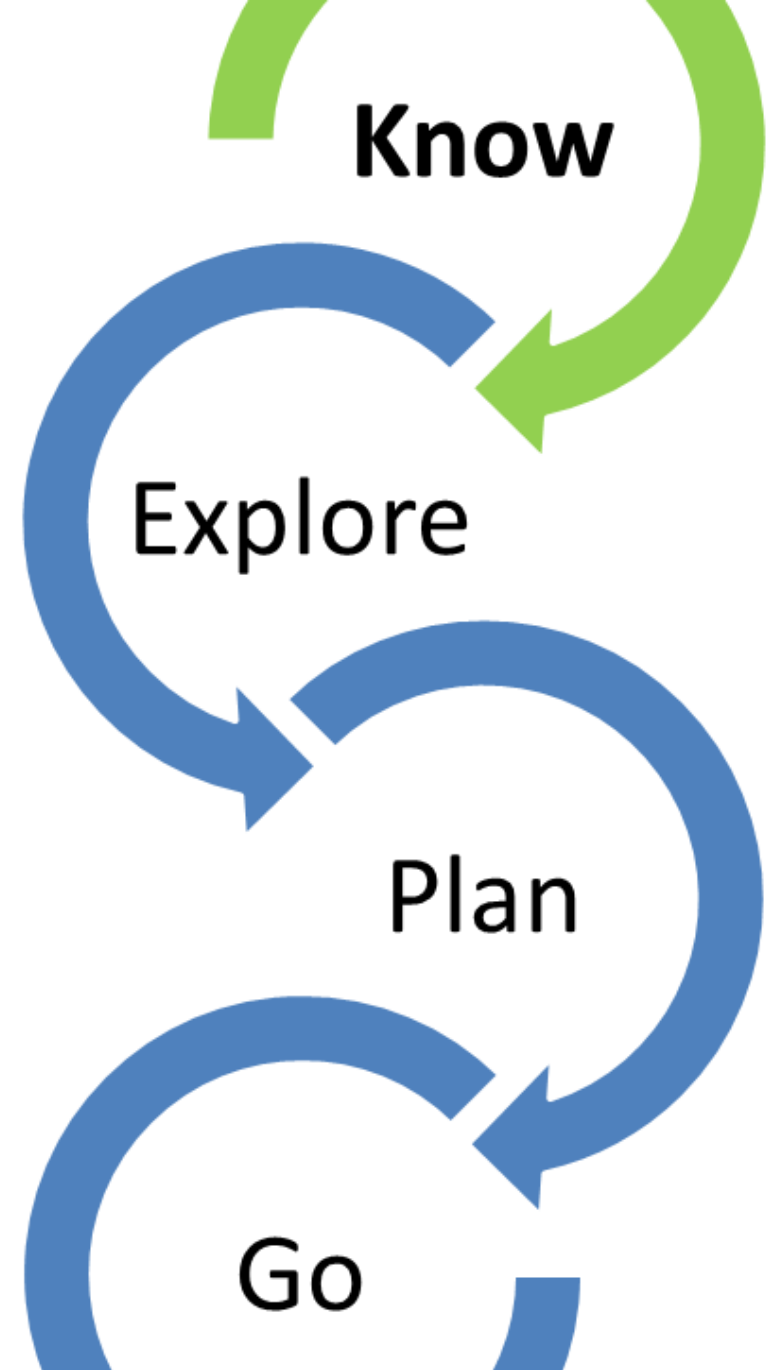
# 1. Career Planning



Know yourself! Self-awareness and self-reflection is a useful skill and exercise.

Ask yourself:

- What am I good at? What are my **strengths**?
- What am I **passionate** about? What **motivates** me?
- What do I **value** in my work? Helping society? High salary?

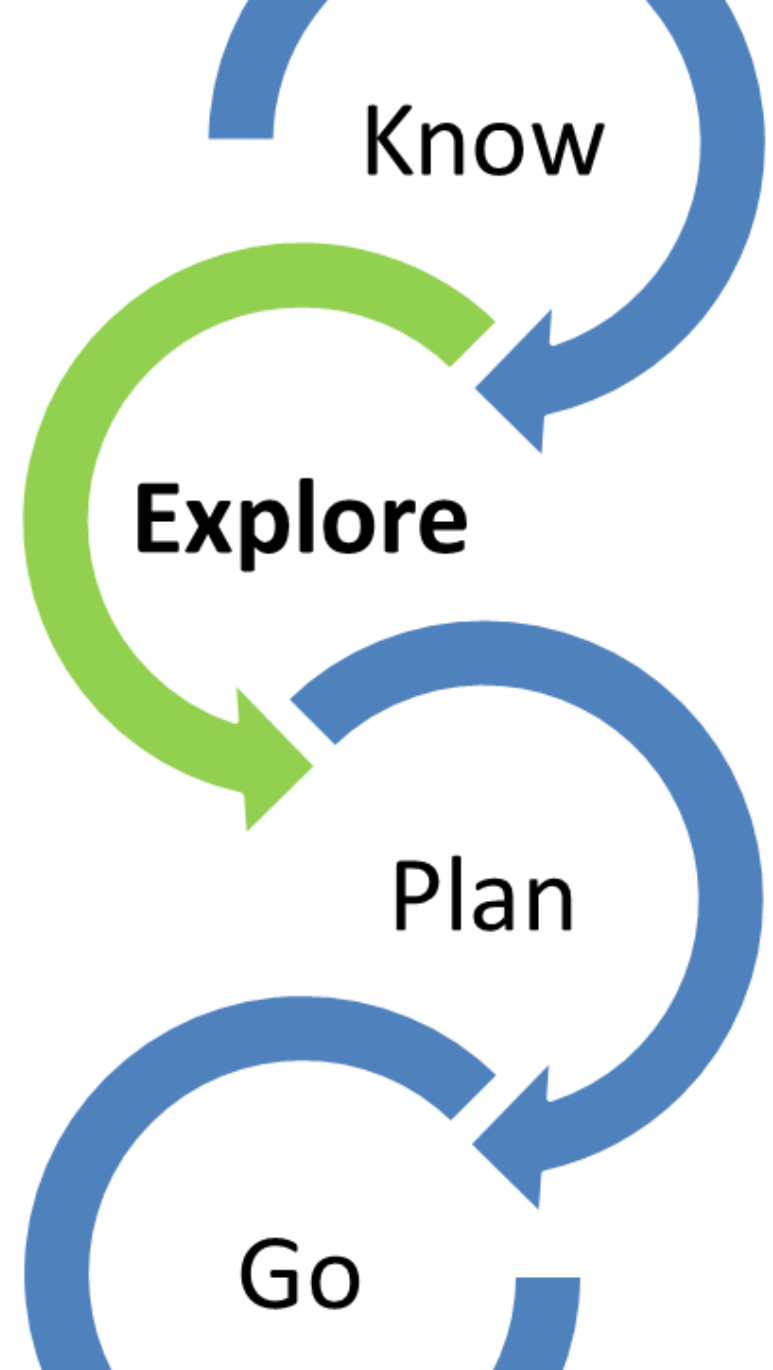


# 1. Career Planning



Be aware of and explore options:

- What is the current and near future job market like?
- What options are available to me that fits my **values** and **strengths**?
- Which of those options am I interested in? Which of those is a good fit for my **needs**?

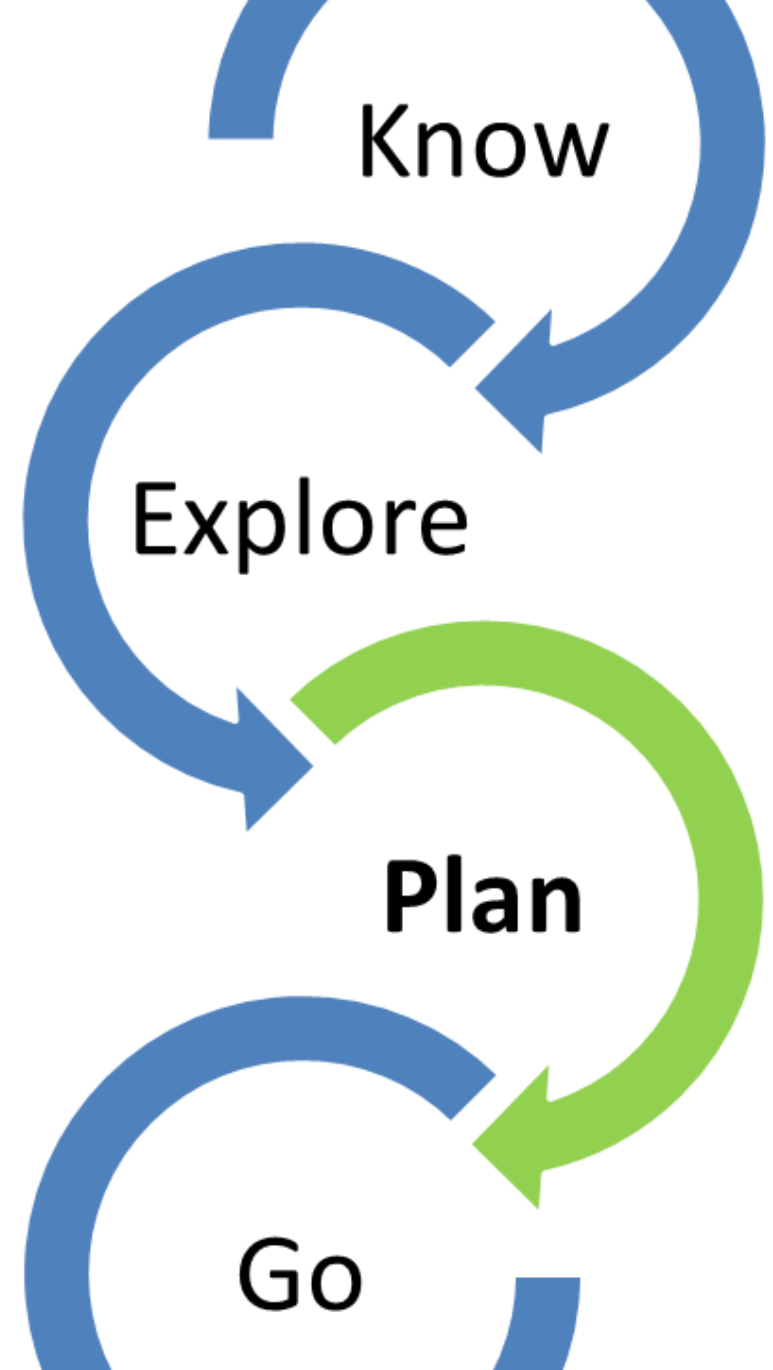


# 1. Career Planning



Plan for how to get into the career you want:

- How do you get to where you want to go?
- Break down actions into smaller steps and short-term and long-term objectives and goals
- Mentor/supervisor for support and help with career advice?
- Academia -> what fellowships are available to me?

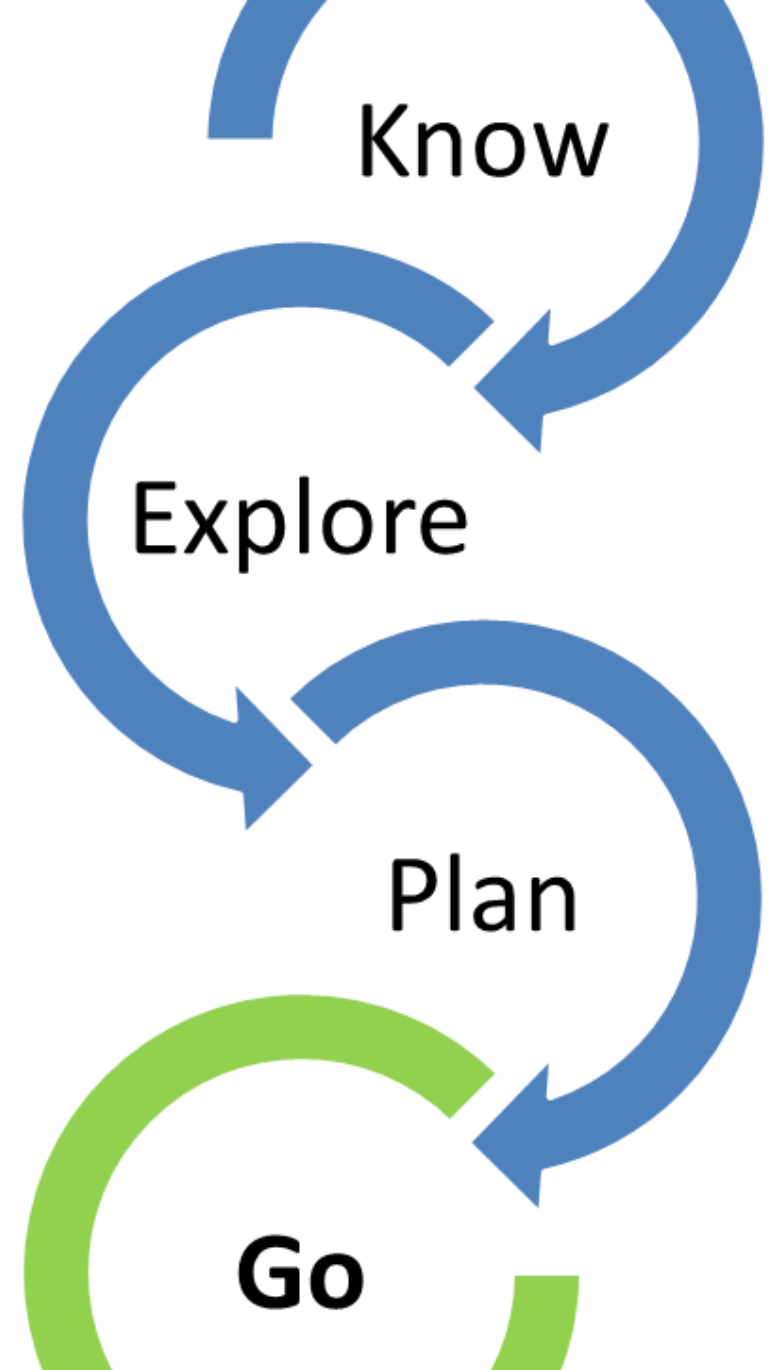


# 1. Career Planning



Get started!

- Execute your plan
- Review and make changes and updates
- Let your supervisor/adviser know of your career plans
- Network, network, network!





# 1. Career planning



Check what career support resources your institution has available, e.g:

- Career Development and Employability Services (CDES at UoA)
- Professional Development programmes
- Mentoring
- Workplace insights internships
- Funding opportunity support

# 1. Carer planning - Academic careers



- Academic standards
  - Teaching/research/service
  - Supervision
  - Publications/creative outputs
- Requirements for continuation/promotion
- Differences across disciplines

# 1. Carer planning - Academic careers



- Funding opportunities in NZ
- Are you willing to move to a different city/country?
  - International funding opportunities?
- Networking, established collaborations, visiting researcher stays are important!

# 1. Carer planning - Academic careers

Stand out in your **Academic CV** by highlighting:



- Supervision, mentoring
- Awards, prizes, funding
- Engagement, outreach, impact
- Peer review, editorial work
- Membership of professional bodies, societies, committees
- Conference posters/talks, invited talks
- Research stays, international network
- IP/patents



# 1. Carer planning – Outside academia



- Important to build a network of contacts outside academia
- Explore options for industry work experience e.g industry research collaborator or partner

# 1. Carer planning – Outside academia

For **non-academic CVs** it's important to:

- Tailor your CV and cover letter to role
- Provide evidence and examples of how your experiences, knowledge, and expertise address what they are looking for
- Focus on what skills and capabilities you have
- Limit or exclude information around your degrees, publications, conferences, funding etc unless it is relevant for the role



# 1. Carer planning – Outside academia

Non-academic career ideas:



- Consultant (self-employed or firm e.g PwC)
- Central or local government e.g MoH, MPI policy advisor, data analyst
- Professional staff roles at universities
- Publishing e.g editorial manager
- Start-ups
- Think tanks
- R&D
- Sales
- Education e.g teaching outside academia
- Science/research institutes, NGOs, charities



## **Poll question 2:**

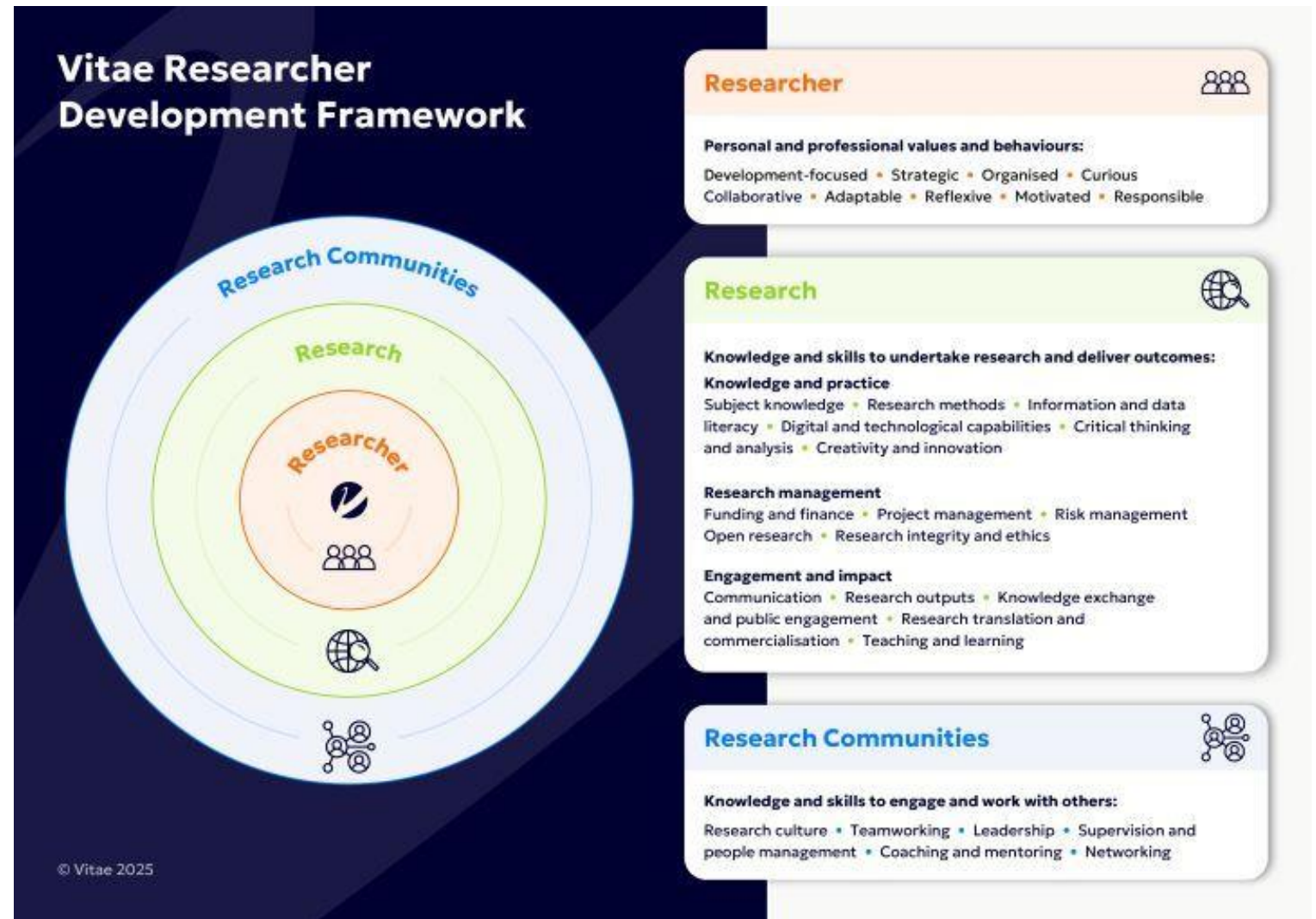
**Do you know which skills and capabilities you need to develop to achieve your career goals?**



## 2. Researcher Skills and Capabilities

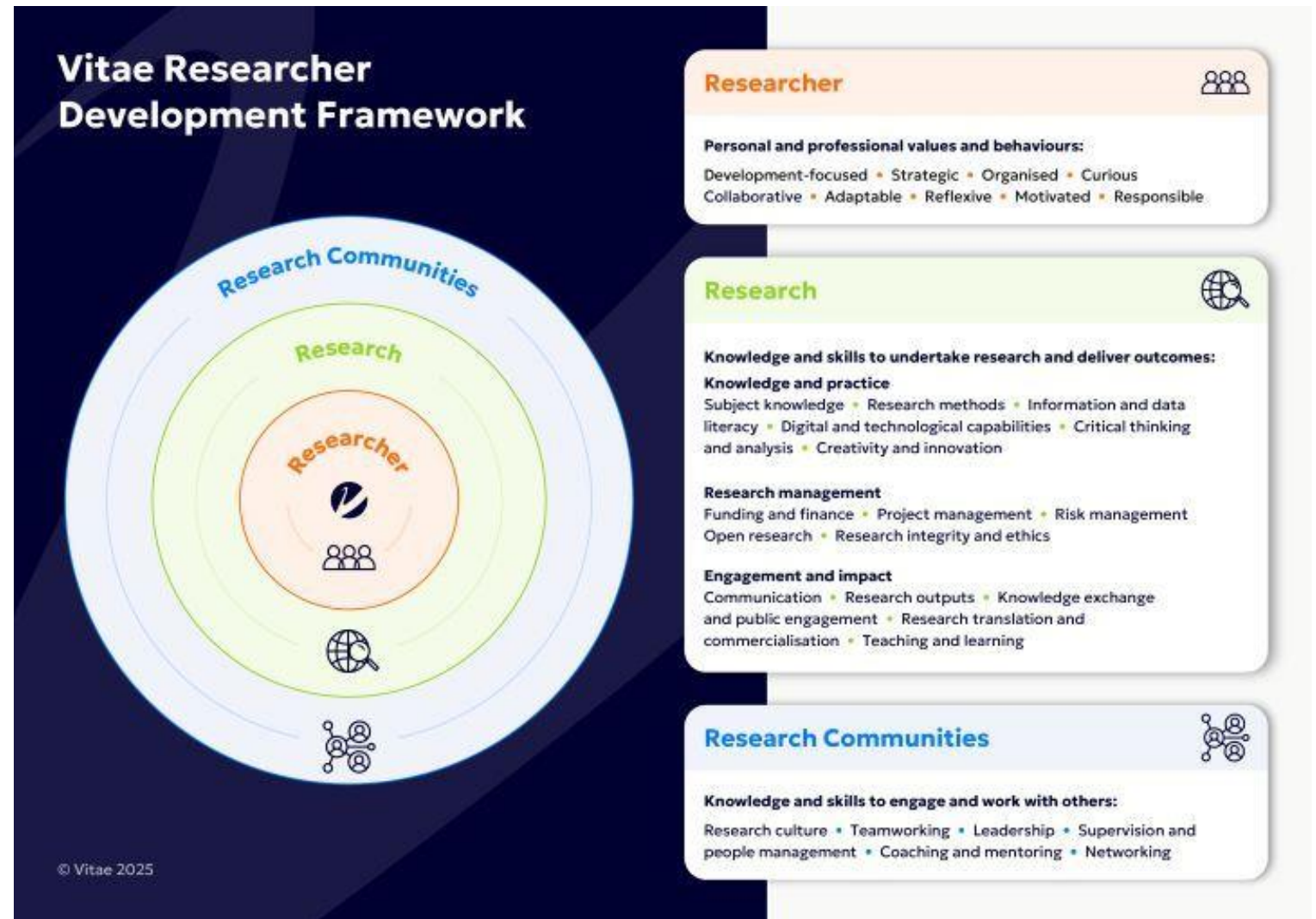
Holistic view of a researchers, not just technical skills training also developing interpersonal skills.

Modes of learning not just traditional training but also peer-peer learning, mentoring, access to resources and support.



## 2. Researcher Skills and Capabilities

Discipline specific knowledge and skills e.g tools, software, analyses, techniques, but mostly generalist skills.



## 2. Researcher Skills and Capabilities

**ResearchHub**

CategoriesResearch stageSign in

# Researcher development


Professional development and career advancement for research staff and students at the University of Auckland.

Home / Induction, skills, and development / Researcher development

Researcher Development is supported by various central service functions such as the Research and Innovation Office, School of Graduate Studies, Libraries and Learning Services, Centre for eResearch, Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, UniServices, Organisational Development, as well as faculty based research support teams (FIRST). Researcher Development is also a key priority area in the University's Vision 2030 and Strategic Plan 2025 Taumata Teitai to support the nurturing, recruitment and retention of research talent, and develop a future ready workforce.

**Explore resources and opportunities below to support you in doing research at the University and to support your career development**


Topic



### Capability development for researchers

Explore researcher development opportunities by capability area.


Article



### Career planning for researchers

Discover what motivates you in your career and how to plan get to where you want to be.


Article



### Mentoring for researchers

Mentoring guidelines, resources and capability development offerings for researchers.

Event



### Doctoral training and development opportunities




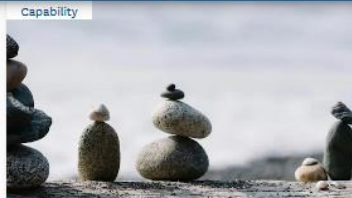











Enhance your doctoral journey by signing up for our wide variety of training and development opportunities.



## 2. Researcher Skills and Capabilities

**ResearchHub**

Search for anything

<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Responsiveness to and engagement with Māori: Development opportunities</b> Develop your capabilities of Te reo Māori and Vision Mātauranga.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Applying for funding: Development opportunities</b> Identify funding opportunities and develop your grant writing skills.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research impact and engagement: Development opportunities</b> Develop capabilities around planning, capturing, and evidencing research impact.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Leadership in research and academia: Development opportunities</b> Develop capability around personal leadership and leading others.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research integrity: Development opportunities</b> Build capacity around good research practice and research integrity.</div>
<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Human ethics, animal ethics and biological safety: Development opportunities</b> Build capabilities around managing human ethics, animal ethics, and biological safety obligations.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research project management: Development opportunities</b> Develop your project planning, risk, and financial management capabilities.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research data management: Development opportunities</b> Enhance your ability to manage research data and artefacts throughout and after a research project.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Building research networks and collaborations: Development opportunities</b> Sharpen your networking and research collaboration skills.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research methodologies: Development opportunities</b> Find general research methodology development opportunities.</div>
<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Digital research skills: Development opportunities</b> Develop skills to enable use of digital tools and technologies in research.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research communication: Development opportunities</b> Sharpen your writing and presenting skills to communicate your research to various audiences.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research publishing: Development opportunities</b> Learn to think strategically about what and where you publish in order to enhance your career, build your network and increase your research impact.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Entrepreneurship, innovation, and commercialisation: Development opportunities</b> Grow your entrepreneurial skill set and find paths to commercialisation.</div>	<div>Capability</div>  <div><b>Research supervision: Development opportunities</b> Complete your supervision accreditation and develop yourself in order to enhance your supervision practice.</div>

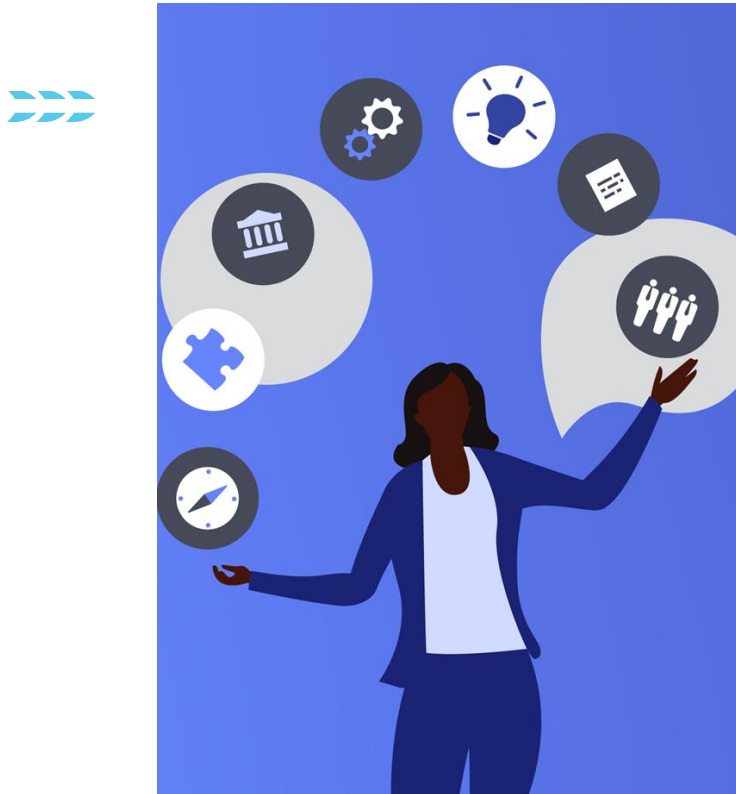




**Poll question 3:**

**What are your current career aspirations?**

### 3. Transferable skills for outside of academia



Research students and fellows possess many transferable skills that employers outside of academia value!

### 3. Transferable skills for outside of academia



Which of these transferable skills do you have?

- Critical thinking
- Fact checking
- Problem solving
- Written and spoken communication
- Finding and summarising information
- Creating graphs, illustrations, reports
- Analysing data
- Creativity, ideation, innovation
- Resilience

### 3. Transferable skills for outside of academia

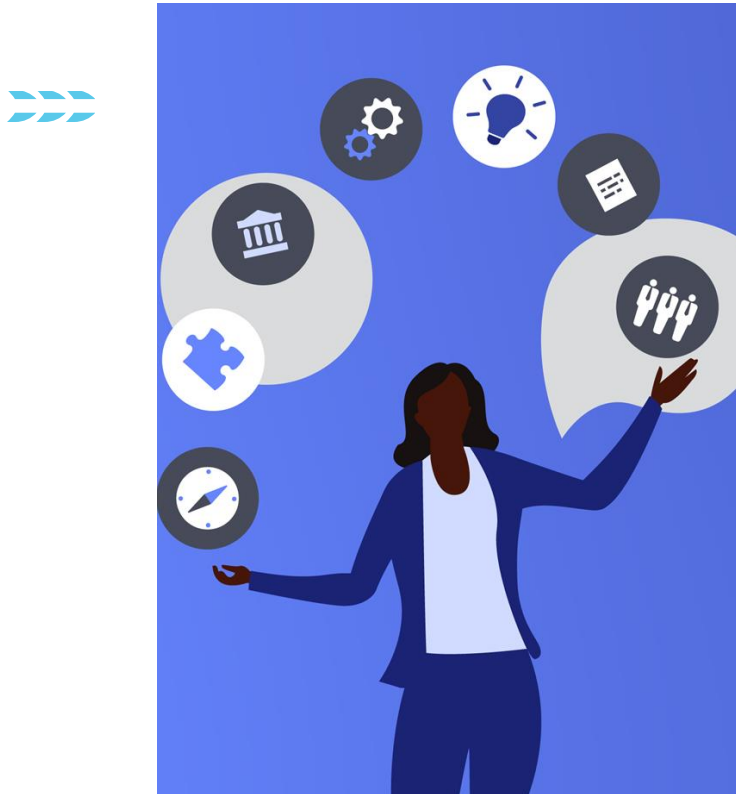


Or these?

- Project management
- Supervision and mentoring
- Applying for funding
- Teaching
- Public speaking
- Prioritising tasks
- Explaining complex ideas to various audiences
- Workplace politics



### 3. Transferable skills for outside of academia



What are employers looking for? What do they value? Their terminology might be slightly different but there is a lot of overlap:

- Ability to present ideas clearly verbally and written
- Attention to detail
- Identify areas of improvement, efficiencies
- Quick learner
- Complete projects to deadlines
- Stakeholder engagement

### 3. Transferable skills for outside of academia



What are employers looking for? What do they value? Their terminology might be slightly different but there is a lot of overlap (cont.):

- Team player
- Take initiative
- Leadership skills
- Analytical skills
- Experience working in a diverse/international workplace
- IP and commercialisation experience

### 3. Transferable skills for outside of academia



Some additional online resources:

- <https://careercenter.umich.edu/article/phd-transferable-skills>
- <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/career-management-for-researchers>

# Recap

## Career planning

- Know what is right for you
- Explore your options
- Plan by setting goals
- Get started!



Make use of the support and resources on offer at your institution!

# Recap

For a career in academia:

- Be aware of the academic standards and requirements in your discipline and institution
- Which skills and capabilities will help you get these?
- Be open to moving cities or country





# Recap

For a career outside of academia:

- Proactively develop a network outside of academia
- Identify your current transferable skills and which you need to further develop







# Thank you for listening, any questions?



## Contact:

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