Research Staff Champion Role in CMVM

**Background:** Support for research staff has recently been boosted by development of the University Research Staff Hub, and in CMVM by formation of a Research Staff Committee to develop and deliver enhanced support and training across the College. The next key step, in line with implementation of the actions arising from the University wide Concordat to Support the Career Development for Researchers, is appointment of a network of named ‘Research Staff Champions’ across CMVM. Champions will be embedded within the research staff support and development framework (Figure below), with a specific remit of working locally to ensure visible and active support for research staff at an early stage of their career. Research Staff Champions will be an essential conduit to and from research staff, with an active involvement in both delivery and development of CMVM policy around research staff support as outlined below.

**Implementation in CMVM:** Across the Institutes and Centres in CMVM (Figure Below) we have around 750 research staff who are the intended beneficiaries of this initiative, including lab-based, clinical research, data and social scientists. ‘Research staff’ here does not include technical staff who have a separate support stream through the Technicians Commitment. Arrangements for the local support of research staff already exist in some parts of the College, the aim here is not to replace those if they work well but to ensure that all research staff throughout the College have similar availability of a local link to support & development.

**Why take on this role?** If you are interested in research staff development then this role will give you an opportunity to have genuine impact on delivery at a local level and on policy at an Institute, College and University level. In doing so you will raise your personal profile and form new networks across the University, while gaining understanding of policy making and structures. Support & training for the role will be offered by the Research Staff Committee, HR partners & other key stakeholders, or at the request of Research Staff Champions, as appropriate.
The Role

After consultation with research staff societies, and existing staff who already hold roles like this in CMVM, we propose the following guidelines for responsibilities of Research Staff Champions.

1. Take a proactive approach to engagement with local research staff, that will include
   • meeting with new members of research staff to welcome them to the Institute/Centre and provide initial orientation on local structures, support for training, careers, wellbeing etc. (as 1:1, as a group, or included as part of a broader Centre/Institute Induction)
   • in collaboration with the Research Staff Committee work with the local Research Staff Societies to promote and/or organise events that e.g.support career development, celebrate research staff achievements, encourage integration within staff communities and a positive research culture.

2. Supported by the University Research Staff Hub and CMVM research staff webpages (in development), be a recognised and visible advisor who can be approached for direction to support for:
   • training in current role, careers & support for transition to next role in or beyond academia
   • other issues related to work in Institute/Centre (this may include wellbeing, bullying/harassment, research integrity, the expectation is not that the champion should deal with these issues directly but rather provide an informed link to support that exists elsewhere in the College/University)

3. Champion the interests of research staff in local management structures.

4. Form a network with other CMVM Champions to share good practice, and through that network engage with the CMVM Research Staff Committee, the Dean of Research and with the University Staff Champions Network to contribute to ongoing development of policy regarding research staff support.

5. We expect time allocation for this role to be 5-10h per month. This is a key role for delivery of CMVM strategy around enhancement of research culture and the time spent on it can be recognised as a Citizenship contribution for P&DR purposes. After an initial review point, we envisage the role lasting 3-5 years, with a transition period for succession built in.

The person: should be a member of academic, clinical academic or professional services staff, as best suits local arrangements.

Location: Research Staff Champions will be linked to each Research Institute, or Centre/Unit, depending on size of researcher population and local organisation. We envisage a network of 12-15 champions across CMVM, including at least 2 with a specific clinical remit, reflecting the needs of our research staff community.