

Item 10.o Early Career Academics

ECA Special Interest Group (SIG)

Updates

Employment opportunities for early-career academics remain infrequent across the board, and most are represented by part-time, fixed term contracts. Current PhD students are receiving fewer teaching opportunities than previously before the Covid-19 pandemic. Postdoctoral prospects are extremely limited.

1. Mentoring scheme

The ECA Support Network now has 63 mentors on its database across 6 language areas, with particularly strong representation in French and German, and in the 20-21st centuries, gender studies, and memory studies. We have been able to respond to eight one-off support requests and to establish seven year-long mentoring partnerships, and hope to be able to continue increasing the reach of our support provision as, first, more mentors from a greater range of specialisms join the network and, secondly, as the ECA community becomes more aware that our schemes exist.

2. ECA Symposium: 15 July 2021

The ECA SIG is planning a day-long online symposium for early-career academics and established colleagues, with a range of sessions on themes relating to early-career issues. Proposals from colleagues for sessions are welcome.

3. Updates to website

Plans are under way to update the ECA SIG section of the website and to ensure our members are represented online. Colleagues will be advised in future to check claims of membership of the SIG with the website.

4. ECA social media

We are planning to create a UCML ECA SIG twitter account to represent early-career academic issues on this social medial platform.

5. ECA survey

A survey of the field for early-career academics, and for established colleagues on ECA issues, has been submitted for approval to the UCML board. This will be released over summer 2021.

6. ECA Charter

The creation of a charter to be shared among UCML HE members which will adopt its principles, modelled on Vitae career development framework. Including definition of scholarship, parity of access to research training/support, training for health & safety issues, and standard of training for PGRs. ECA Charter will consider both REF and TEF implications.

Equality and Diversity

As UCML ECA rep, Liam is keen to sustain equal and diverse representation of the ECA community among the ECA SIG. He is currently developing ideas for this and welcomes the support of UCML colleagues.