EMBARGOED UNTIL THURSDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2026 at 12pm (BST)

“Beginner's guide” launched to help at-risk scholars navigate UK academia

Subheading:

New comprehensive resource to reduce barriers for scholars rebuilding their careers and professional networks in a new academic system.

Main body

The UK Young Academy has launched a new guide for academics who have recently arrived in the UK to help them continue their careers.

Many at-risk scholars arrive in the UK with significant academic expertise but limited familiarity with how UK academia operates. Forced displacement can disrupt professional identity, networks, and institutional knowledge, making it harder to navigate an unfamiliar higher education system and rebuild a career.

Today, the UK Young Academy's At-Risk Scholars and Professionals project team has launched the accessible *'Beginner’s guide to UK academia'* to help address this gap, supporting academics to understand how UK academia works, where they fit within it, and where to find further support, all whilst navigating resettling in a new country.

An accessible entry point into a complex and often opaque system, it combines introductory guidance with signposting to specialist resources.

The guide will cover topics ranging from university structures, academic career pathways, and job titles to recruitment processes, research funding, and key organisations within the UK’s higher education landscape.

This resource sits alongside similar guides from fellow national young academies, including *A Beginner's Guide to Dutch Academia,* and *A Beginner's Guide to Swedish Academia*, which directly inspired the development of this guide.

Nuclear physicist Hasan Maridi is a member of the UK Young Academy, and former Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara) Research Fellow at the University of Manchester. He said:

"Even for someone with substantial academic experience, entering the UK system can be challenging because many of its structures, terminology, and expectations are unfamiliar. Much of this knowledge is often assumed rather than explicitly explained.

“Having clear information in one accessible place can reduce uncertainty, help people understand the opportunities and expectations within UK academia, and give them greater confidence to ask the right questions and find appropriate support at an already challenging time in life."

Anthony Kevins, Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Studies at Loughborough University and the resource development lead, said:

"Expertise and capability are not erased when someone is forcibly displaced from their own country. Yet we see that professional networks, institutional knowledge, career momentum, and cultural capital can be.

“For early-career professionals — who are often still in the process of establishing their professional identities — navigating displacement can be particularly challenging.

“The UK Young Academy is privileged to have access to a wide variety of experts and perspectives from across the UK, including from those with at-risk backgrounds. Many of those perspectives helped create this resource, which we hope will empower at-risk scholars to navigate our institutions through knowledge.”

The Beginner’s Guide to UK Academia is available free of charge on the UK Young Academy’s website: https://ukyoungacademy.org/activities/at-risk-scholars-and-professionals-uk-wide-initiative/beginners-guide-to-uk-academia/

ENDS

Contact

For more information about the UK Young Academy and to request interviews with spokespeople, please contact the UK Young Academy Staff team:

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Notes to editors

About the UK Young Academy

The UK Young Academy connects and develops talented individuals in the early years of their careers from a wide range of sectors so they can collaborate to make a difference in the world.

It is part of a growing international initiative to give early-career innovators, professionals, academics, and entrepreneurs a voice for the advancement of issues that are important to them. The UK Young Academy gives its members the opportunity to have their perspectives, knowledge, and insights represented across the wider innovation landscape, including academic institutions, professional bodies, and organisations beyond academia.

The UK Young Academy was established following an agreement by the seven senior academies across the UK and Ireland – the Academy of Medical Sciences, British Academy, Learned Society of Wales, Royal Academy of Engineering, Royal Irish Academy, Royal

Society of Edinburgh, and the Royal Society. Working closely with the Global Young Academy and the Young Academy of Scotland, it was set up under the auspices of the Royal Society in 2022.

Work programmes and initiatives led by members in collaboration with external partners and organisations are already underway to address the UK Young Academy's strategic priorities set out in its first year. https://ukyoungacademy.org/

Find the UK Young Academy on LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, and X.

The UK Young Academy is underpinned by a shared set of values, including:

- Excellence – members will be outstanding in their own field.
- Transparency – there will be a clear leadership structure that is accountable and elected through transparent procedures.
- Integrity – members will maintain high standards of ethics to make a credible contribution to global issues.
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion – a commitment towards attracting a diverse membership will be made, and members will commit to maintaining an inclusive and equal environment for all.

The UK Young Academy is funded by a grant to the Royal Society from the Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade.

About the At-Risk Scholars and Professionals project

The **At-Risk Scholars and Professionals initiative** connects scholars and professionals, whose careers have been disrupted by conflict, displacement, or persecution, with membership opportunities, resources, and support from the UK Young Academy.

The project aims to help participants rebuild their careers in the UK, through opportunities such as:

- UK Young Academy Membership,
- Mentoring,
- Professional training,
- Practical guidance for navigating the UK's specific academic and professional landscapes.

The practical and participant-focused initiative supports at-risk individuals to continue their professional work and support the long-term development of their home countries, whilst also capitalising on and championing the talents, perspectives, and expertise of at-risk scholars and professionals, to the benefit of the UK.

UK Young Academy projects are member-designed and UK Young Academy-funded initiatives that investigate and address societal challenges through interdisciplinary collaboration.