

# Building connections

## Importance of networking

For research students, the value and importance of networking and making connections within academia and industry cannot be overestimated. Students with expanded networks have an edge when it comes to applying for grants, co-authoring publications, award nominations, conference participation and job offers. Being well-connected in your faculty, school and department also means you can better navigate the full extent of the facilities, funding and services provided by the University.

## Where to start

### Speak with your lead supervisor or postgraduate coordinator

One of the first steps is to make sure your lead supervisor or postgraduate coordinator provides you with information on faculty inductions, and where to find information about events, resources, grants, and support services. Usually your school or faculty has an email bulletin specifically for postgraduate students that you can sign up to. These emails will let you know about upcoming events, conferences, seminars, social events, and other activities happening in your school or faculty. This bulletin may be run by the postgraduate coordinator, or another member of the school or faculty, such as a Student Experience Coordinator.

## HDR News

Make sure to read the University of Sydney's [HDR News](#) newsletter – it contains important news for HDR students. Your University email address will automatically be signed up to HDR News when you begin your candidature.

## Find your postgraduate student representative

Each faculty and school will have a postgraduate student representative who can help with issues you may experience during your candidature. Often postgraduate student representatives will attend staff meetings or sit on committees to provide feedback from

the postgraduate community to University staff. If you don't know who your postgraduate student representative is, ask your postgraduate coordinator.

## Connecting with other students

SUPRA organises a range of free events throughout the year specifically for postgraduate students. Events are advertised on [our events page](#), [our Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). We also advertise our events in our weekly postgrad newsletter, [Grad Post](#). You can sign up to Grad Post when you [become a member of SUPRA](#).

SUPRA also has an [HDR student network](#) to support and advocate for HDR students at Usyd. [Join the network on Facebook](#). The HDR Student Officer is elected each year from within the network. You can contact the HDR Student Officer at [hdr@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:hdr@supra.usyd.edu.au).

Faculties and schools also have postgraduate student associations that are run by postgrads. They hold social activities and advocate on behalf of postgrads. These associations can usually be found on the faculty and school socials, but you can also ask your postgraduate coordinator to connect you.

## Developing a social footprint

Social media is important for academic life. Whether you are in the first or fourth year of your thesis, the importance of having a digital footprint is often considered to be essential to your academic success.

Social media engagement allows you to share your research, find academics and other postgrads with similar research interests, find out about upcoming academic conferences and workshops, and join in conversations with research communities globally. It can also be useful for developing your own personal brand, and for recruitment and job seeking.

The University Library has a comprehensive [guide to publishing](#) that includes details on: promoting your work using researcher profiles; ways to share your research online; strategies for findable research; and how to communicate with specific audiences.

### X (Twitter)

[Sydney Uni on X \(Twitter\)](#)

The University of Sydney and some individual faculties are on [X \(Twitter\)](#), and post about upcoming events happening at the University and in your faculty. While many academics

did leave X (Twitter) due to the platform changes, it's still the most used platform for academics to share research results and network. [Check out some academic hashtags that can expand your network.](#)

## The Conversation

[The Conversation](#) is a not-for-profit media outlet that connects researchers with journalists to create an independent source of research-based news. It can provide you with the opportunity to write an interest piece or topical discussion based on your research. The Conversation only publishes articles by employed researchers and academics, and PhD students who have supervision. They don't accept submissions from master's students.

Once registered on the site you can pitch ideas to the editorial committee and if your idea is accepted, you can submit a draft and receive feedback. This process is similar to submitting an article to an academic journal but the piece itself is a lot shorter, **enabling you to get valuable writing experience without a large time commitment.** Most articles are 600–800 words and reach a potential audience of 48 million people through republication, according to The Conversation's website.

## LinkedIn

[LinkedIn](#) is a useful portal to connect you with future employers, research or business partners. You can list completed publications, conferences attended, and any current research projects. You can also list any funding or grants you have been awarded. Research positions (either qualitative or quantitative) and business/research positions are commonly advertised.

## Individual advice and support

If you're feeling isolated or concerned about your studies and don't know who to talk to, [contact us to speak with a caseworker.](#) SUPRA is independent from the University and provides professional and confidential advice. We can provide advice in person, over the phone, Zoom or email, so we can assist you wherever you are. [Find out more about our casework service.](#)

The University [Student Counselling Service](#) can help if you're feeling isolated or finding it hard to connect with others in the academic community. Student Counselling also provides workshops and resources specific to HDR students.

The University [Learning Hub](#) provides workshops on various academic skills – many specific to HDR students. They also offer [one-on-one consultations for thesis writing](#).