

Pursuing non-academic careers in higher education

DR REBECCA GELDING

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@rebeccagelding


ARC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVER
THE LIFE COURSE



Photo by Andy Wang on Unsplash

A wooden wall made of horizontal planks, featuring several climbing holds of different shapes and colors (yellow, green, and grey). The holds are scattered across the wall, some with visible screws. A dark blue rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

**Warning:
There's more than one way to
scale a wall**

An aerial photograph of a two-lane asphalt road that winds through a rugged, mountainous landscape. The road is light gray with white dashed lines for lane markings. It curves through dark, rocky terrain with patches of green and yellow vegetation. The mountains have a layered, geological appearance. The lighting is warm, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The text "It's been a long and winding road...." is centered over the middle of the road in a white, sans-serif font.

It's been a long and winding
road....



Various Research Assistant &
Teaching Roles

Different Professional Roles

- Small Centre Administrator
- Outreach Co-Ordinator
- Node Administrator

Applied to PhD –
but no scholarship

Got a job in Finance
Industry

PhD in Music Cognition
(part time)

Finished Masters

Had 2 kids

Bachelor of Science
(Advanced Maths) Hons

Operations Manager of
National Accounts for
an SME

Started Masters of
Education (part time)

What types of professional roles exist in higher education?



Photo by Kaleidico on Unsplash

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Grant support
Pre / Post award
Ethics & Research Integrity
Data Management



Photo by Headway on Unsplash

SCHOOL / FACULTY MANAGEMENT

Learning & Teaching
Research
Finance
Recruitment



Photo by Amy Hirschi on Unsplash

RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT

HDR Training
ECR Development
Research Impact



Photo by Wes Lewis on Unsplash

RESEARCH CENTRE MANAGEMENT

Strategy
Stakeholder Engagement
Finance
Funder Management

Myths about professional careers

Boring / Unstimulating

No Autonomy

Seen as a failure

Won't be able to use my *** skills

Always learning new things

Control my own work and initiatives

Respected by both Academics & other Professionals

You'd be surprised!

Better job security and work/life balance
(7 hours per day)

5 Practical Steps

to prepare for your future
non-academic career in higher education

1

CHALLENGE:

Identify 4 possible interesting people to ask about their career journeys

BONUS:

Reach out to one of them & arrange to meet



Connect intentionally

Ask about people's career journeys

2

CHALLENGE:

Identify outlets that you could write for, and/or people who can give you critical feedback

BONUS:

Commit to submitting a pitch / article by a deadline



Photo by Nick Morrison on Unsplash

Write for Non-Academics

Learn the art of written communication
to those outside your field

3

CHALLENGE:

Identify events you could present at and/or learn how to present better

BONUS:

Commit to applying for an upcoming event.



Photo Kane Reinholdtsen on Unsplash

Present to Non-Academics

Get comfortable speaking to different audiences
& be proactive in finding opportunities

4

CHALLENGE:

How can you maximise joy in your future career?



Photo Jez Timms on Unsplash

Do a Joy audit

What activities over the last week / month brought you the most joy at work?

5

CHALLENGE:

Who is one person you would like to work for / with?

Commit to reaching out to them by a deadline to tell them & ask if they have anything available.



Be brave & ask

They won't offer you the job if they don't know you are interested.

Helpful resources

Just a few places to look for additional information



Australasian Research Management Society



Campus Morning Mail



Thesis Whisperer blog / podcasts on alternative careers



How to own the room: Women and the art of public speaking by Viv Groskop



5 Practical Steps

1

Connect intentionally

2

Practice writing for non-academics

3

Practice presenting to non-academics

4

Do a Joy audit

5

Be brave & ask

Questions?
