

## SULSA's Forging Futures Scheme

*In collaboration with Interface, SkillFluence & MyFuturePlan*

### Scope

SULSA, in collaboration with Interface, SkillFluence and MyFuture Plan have created the Forging Futures scheme to support and develop a cohort of researchers by enabling them to explore the opportunities available to them in academia and industry and equipping them with the tools to work effectively between the two. Recipients of this scheme will become **SULSA Ambassadors for Industry Engagement**.

The scheme has the added benefit of; enhancing the translation of research, catalysing cross-fertilisation across universities, building the confidence of researchers in collaborating across academic disciplines and industry sectors, increasing funding options for our researchers, and supporting their career progression.

This scheme will include:

- An in-person launch event to meet SULSA, SkillFluence, MyFuturePlan, Interface and fellow cohort members
- A 6-week modular course with [Skillfluence](#) on how to engage effectively with industry (*further details at end of document*)
- Group coaching sessions with [MyFuturePlan](#) to help them on their career path (*further details at end of document*)
- Access to industry case studies and connections with industry through [Interface](#)

One PhD Student and one Postdoctoral Researcher will be awarded from each of the SULSA member institutions, and will become a **SULSA Ambassador for Industry Engagement** within their institution. With this comes an expectation that you will pay it forward and work within your cohort to share the knowledge and insight you have learnt with your research community. This could be through the organisation of institute seminars with industry representation or through the creation of useful resources. Cohorts will be able to request small sponsorship funds from SULSA to support them with any ideas they have.

### Information Session

A seminar detailing this scheme and its benefits will take place on **Wednesday 6th September 2023 at 11:00 – 12:00**, with a talk from Tony Bradshaw (MyFuturePlan), Jennifer Rao-Williams (Skillfluence), Howell Davies (Interface) and a SULSA Ambassador for Industry Engagement Alumni. You can register for this session at [www.sulsa.ac.uk/sulsas-forging-futures-scheme](http://www.sulsa.ac.uk/sulsas-forging-futures-scheme)

## Eligibility

- Either a PhD student (penultimate year) or a Postdoctoral Researcher
- Working within Life Sciences research
- Must work at one of the twelve SULSA Member Universities or the James Hutton Institute

The scheme will run for two cohorts; PhD Students and Postdoctoral Researchers. Each of the thirteen SULSA members will have one position to fill per cohort.

## Funding Information and Conditions

- The successful candidate for each SULSA member institute must act as a SULSA Ambassador for Industry Engagement within their departments. This includes attending quarterly meetings.
- The two cross-University cohorts (PhD and PostDoc) must 'pay it forward' and support industry-engagement within their institutions, with support from SULSA and Interface
- You must be available to attend **all** the scheduled module and coaching dates including the in-person launch event (*listed at end of document*)
- You must have your application signed by your PI to demonstrate their support
- You must be funded until the end of the AY 2023/24 as a minimum due to the timings of the training delivery
- You must report back to SULSA via our online feedback form on the completion of both your training and time as an Industry Engagement Ambassador

## Judging Criteria

- Motivational statement
- Demonstration of required skills
- Ideas for the Ambassador Programme to enhance industry engagement

## In-Person Launch Event

An in-person launch event will take place on **Thursday 8th February 2024** at the Technology and Innovation Centre, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

This event will provide an introduction to both the Forging Futures Scheme and your fellow cohort members. It will include your first training session so attendance at this event is mandatory.

## Submitting Your Application

Please submit your application (**merged into a single PDF**) to [jill.inkster@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:jill.inkster@glasgow.ac.uk) at SULSA by **5pm on Monday 9th October 2023**.

## Notification of Outcome

Successful applications will be notified by email by **31st October 2023**.

## Reporting

You must provide the SULSA administration with project updates and outcomes when requested for reporting purposes.

## Applicant Reporting

After awarding SULSA will circulate a demographic survey to all applicants of this funding call. The information is collected anonymously and is used internally by SULSA to understand the diversity of our applicants and identify areas for improvement. This information will not be shared with reviewers and will be held in accordance with SULSA's privacy policy.

## Skillfluence Modular Course

- 6 x weekly 2 hour masterclasses - [www.skillfluence.co.uk/connecting-with-industry](http://www.skillfluence.co.uk/connecting-with-industry)
- This course is designed to provide you with a set of tools and skills to help you be immediately more effective working in, and with, industry
- You'll learn about career routes in industry to access the jobs you want; and gain know-how that lets you engage with industry with more confidence
- Self-study lessons on eLearning platform
- Live conversations and networking with industry representatives and collaborators
- Individual application activities
- Completion Certificate

You must be available to attend **all** masterclass sessions on the following dates (all online other than in-person launch event):

- Thursday 8th February 2024 at in-person launch event in Glasgow
- Tuesday 13th February 2024 at 10:00 - 12:00 via Zoom
- Tuesday 20th February 2024 at 10:00 - 12:00 via Zoom
- Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 10:00 - 12:00 via Zoom
- Tuesday 5th March 2024 at 10:00 - 12:00 via Zoom
- Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 10:00 - 12:00 via Zoom

## MyFuturePlan Coaching:

- 1 x 1 hour in-person coaching session (with full PhD or PostDoc cohort)
- 1 x 1 hour online coaching session (maximum of 4 people per session)
- Opportunity to develop a plan for your next career steps, develop an industrial engagement strategy and build collaboration within your cohort
- Help define and channel your technical skills, experience and personality to realise your ambition

- A better understanding of your unique contribution to your laboratory and the community in which you currently operate
- Help you prosper in the industry landscape, or in an academic role that benefits from industry collaboration

You must be available to attend **all** coaching sessions on the following dates:

### PostDoc Cohort:

- **Session 1:** Thursday 8th February 2024 at in-person launch event in Glasgow
- **Session 2:** 11:00 – 12:00 on Wednesday 28th February, Thursday 29th February or Friday 1st March via Zoom (*participants only need to attend **one of these dates** – SULSA will allocate in Jan 2024*)

### PhD Cohort:

- **Session 1:** Thursday 8th February 2024 at in-person launch event in Glasgow
- **Session 2:** 11:00 – 12:00 on Wednesday 6th March, Thursday 7th March or Friday 8th March via Zoom (*participants only need to attend **one of these dates** – SULSA will allocate in Jan 2024*)

## Support from Interface

The team at [Interface](#) has a long-standing track record of translating industry led challenges and opportunities to forge collaborative R&D projects co-developed with academic teams from across Scotland to deliver new products, processes and services.

The Forging Futures participants will be supported as follows:

- Learn about engaging with industry to deliver successful partnerships
- Understand the range of available support from the Scottish ecosystem including getting to know funding opportunities to support academic – business partnerships
- Facilitate conversations and networking with industry representatives and collaborators from Interface’s network
- Explore “the art of the possible” for ideal collaborators to enable outcomes and impact
- Opportunity to attend industry focused workshops and webinars

## Ambassador Programme

After completion of the Forging Futures training, you will become a SULSA Ambassador for Industry Engagement for 18 months, until September 2025. You will be expected to attend quarterly meetings to discuss activities for paying it forward and help shape the programme for the next cohort. The previous Ambassador cohort organised industry engagement events such as [IndAc 22: Industry-Academia Engagement Event](#), [Industry Insights Webinar Series](#), and [Life Sciences Innovation and Commercialisation in the NE of Scotland](#) event. Ambassadors also represented SULSA and the Forging

Futures programme at institutional seminars and research days.

Please visit [www.sulsa.ac.uk/blogs](http://www.sulsa.ac.uk/blogs) for articles from our Forging Futures Alumni to read about their experience.