

The Risks We Face if Researcher Developers Disappear

Risks to Institutional Performance: The Cracks Beneath the Foundations

On the surface, institutions may look stable. Underneath, the absence of Researcher Developers causes structural cracks.



Without Researcher Developers:

REF environment and SPRE narratives weaken

The institution struggles to evidence developmental culture, leadership growth, researcher support, team capability, or wellbeing initiatives.

Result: Environment statements rely on intention rather than embedded practice.

Funding competitiveness drops

Narrative sections in major bids, especially interdisciplinary or place based, lack proof of healthy research culture, effective teamwork, or leadership pipelines.

Result: Proposals are scientifically strong but strategically underpowered.

Siloed working spreads across the research ecosystem

Research Offices, Graduate Schools, HR, Organisational Development, EDI, Integrity, Open Research and faculties pull in different directions.

Result:

- Miscommunication increases
- Duplication of effort grows
- Costs rise

What's the Result?

Institutional efficiency and strategic coherence erode. The foundation is still standing, but stress lines multiply. Over time, they become impossible to ignore.