

The Risks We Face if Researcher Developers Disappear

Risks to Research Culture: The Garden Untended

Research culture is like a garden: rich, diverse, interdependent but only if cultivated.

Researcher Developers are the gardeners.



Without Researcher Developers:

Strategic culture frameworks lose their stewards

Strategy, People and Research Environment (SPRE), the Researcher Development Concordat, HR Excellence in Research (HREiR), EDI plans, Open Research commitments – initiatives once nurtured with skill and insight start to wither.

Result: Strategy drifts from implementation, and commitments risk becoming performative rather than lived.

Decline in inclusivity, leadership capability & interdisciplinary collaboration

When structured development and cross-campus facilitation disappear, silos strengthen, leadership capability stalls, and meaningful collaboration becomes increasingly difficult to build or maintain.

Result: Weaker team cultures, reduced innovation, and diminished capacity for complex, cross-disciplinary research.

Reduced ability to measure, understand & improve culture

The professionals who gather lived-experience insight, interpret cultural data, and convert findings into actionable change are no longer present.

Result: emerging issues go unseen until they become formal complaints, reputational damage, or attrition.

What's the Result?

The garden remains, but the weeds creep in, slowly at first, then all at once.