Activity: Use and expand your networks to find vacancies

It makes sense that the more people you know, the more likely you are to be able to connect to opportunities. Expanding your networks is an essential aspect of your job search. However, it isn’t just knowing people that will help you to find a job. You must actively engage with your network to update them on what you are doing and what you are looking for.

Think about:

* Who is in your current network outside academia? Create a map of your contacts (think as broadly as you can)
* Do your current contacts have an accurate view of what you are looking for, when you are looking to move and what you have to offer? If they have out of date information, they can’t help you effectively.
* How are you helping your network out? If you are not investing time in helping people in your network to find opportunities and be successful, then why should they help you? The principal of reciprocity is very important here: think of ways that you can invest in helping your network and they will invest in helping you.

For more detailed advice and activities on networking, take a look at:

* The University of Bristol’s [online resource on networking](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/academic/researchstaffhub/opportunities/networking/), written specifically for researchers.
* Start local: connect with Bristol alumni who work in careers that interest you – they will be more likely to respond if they know they are helping another Bristol colleague. [Bristol Connects](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni/reconnect/bristol-connects/) is an exclusive, online space for alumni, students and staff. Connect with your global alumni community to gain insights, share professional experience and make new connections.
* University of Leeds’ YouTube channel has a series of insights on [how to use LinkedIn to create connections](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLUL_viKVCUyDNsOQExaFwXovXkx3izBUn), diversify networks and find jobs.