

MSDG Buddy Scheme: Guidance

October 2025

How the scheme works

Signing Up & Matching

- It's easy to get involved, just fill out a [short online form](#).
- You'll let us know whether you're looking for a buddy or happy to be one and share a bit about your interests and goals.
- We'll then match you with someone who aligns with your needs, ideally from a different institution to broaden your perspective.

Meeting Up

Meetings should be informal, supportive and have a mutually agreed length, location and frequency

- You and your buddy can meet online or in person, whatever works best for you both.
- Most meetings are virtual to keep things simple, but if you're nearby and want to meet face-to-face, that's okay too.
- Sessions are informal and flexible, usually under 2 hours and during work hours.

You might talk about:

- How things work at your institutions,
- Challenges and how you're tackling them,
- Career advice or just a bit of moral support,
- Opportunities to collaborate or network.

Duration

- Buddying usually lasts around 6 months, but it may be shorter if an individual's development needs have been met. It's also okay to informally keep going longer.
- We'll ask for feedback annually to help us improve the scheme for future participants.

Example Discussion Topics

These are just a few ideas to help generate conversation. Feel free to tailor discussions to your specific roles or organisational contexts.

Professional Development

- Career paths: How did you get to your current role?
- Skills you're currently developing or want to develop
- Training opportunities and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) resources
- Experiences with job applications, interviews, or promotions

Workplace Culture & Practices

- Differences and similarities in institutional cultures
- Approaches to hybrid or remote working
- Strategies for managing workload and work-life balance
- Team structures and communication styles

Services & Innovation

- Innovative projects or services at your institution
- User engagement strategies
- Use of technology in library services
- Approaches to accessibility and inclusion

Challenges & Solutions

- Common challenges in your role or institution
- How you've overcome specific obstacles
- Lessons learned from difficult situations
- Navigating change or restructuring

Networking & Collaboration

- Opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration
- Conferences or events you've found valuable
- Professional networks or communities you're part of
- Ideas for joint projects or knowledge sharing

Personal Insights

- What motivates you in your work?
- How do you stay inspired or avoid burnout?
- Books, podcasts, or articles that have influenced your thinking
- Reflections on leadership or management styles