Research Agenda Development of Scientific Researchers

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Research Design & Questions

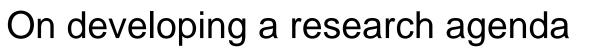
- 11 semi-structured interviews
- Grounded theory methodology
- Research questions
 - > How do scientific researchers develop their research agenda?
 - > What helps or hinders the development of that agenda?
 - What can institutions do to help foster development of research agendas?

Initial Findings

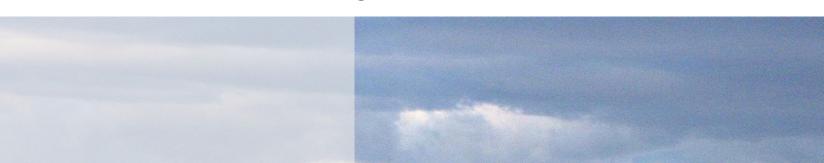
- Serendipity plays a larger part of a researcher's career path than initially thought.
- Funding has more influence on a researcher's career than initially thought.
- The development of new technology often sets a researcher's career into a new area that was never before possible.
- Researchers frequently stick with a specific focus simply because their graduate students need to graduate and have something to show.

Notable Quotes

On rolling with the punches







"...eh, they're a rhinoceros. Sometimes they're going to bulldoze your field site." – A mid-career researcher of evolutionary biology

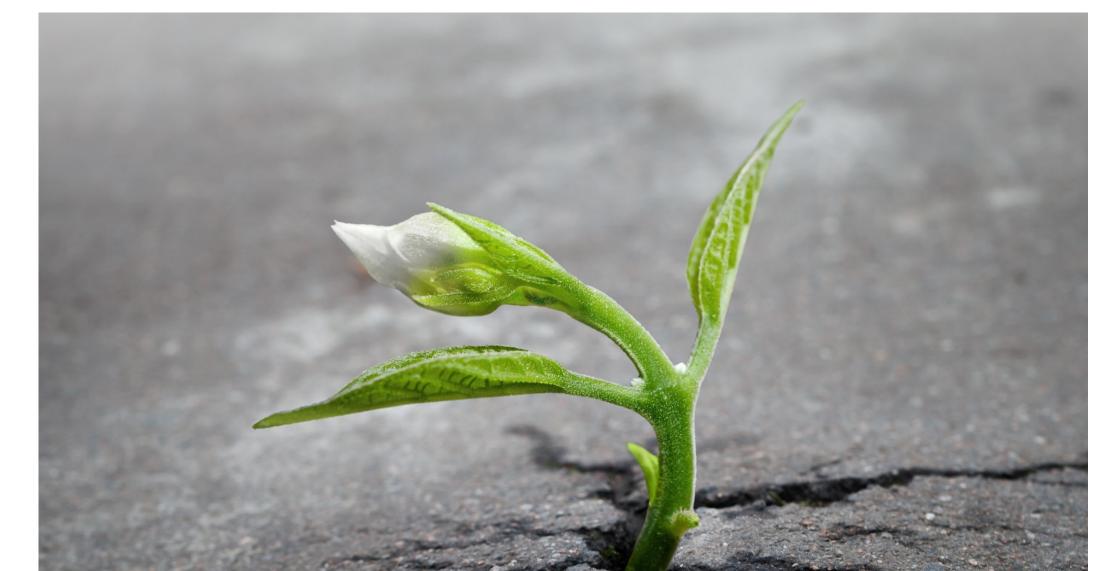


On determination

"...my research has been more like a random walk than anything else." - A senior researcher of chemistry

On getting stuck in a rut





"...I couldn't ditch it. I couldn't give up, even if it looked hopeless at times because too much rested on it. I had to make it work one way or another.." – A senior researcher of physics

"...it's easy for me to stick to that because that's what I know and...to some degree am known for that...So if anything, it's kind of harder to get out of that group." – A mid-career researcher of physics

Future Directions

How Can RDA Help?

- Continue to analyze transcripts.
- Present final findings at RDA P10 in Montreal.
- Submit article for review to journal T.B.D.

- Easier access to research data could help early-career researchers get a jumpstart on their career.
- Development of standards & products could help level the playing field.
- > Having strong collaborators is often cited as one ingredient of a successful project. RDA provides fertile ground for collaborations.