

## CAPHIA Professional Development Series

### Seminar 4: Promotion and Application Pitch

#### TOP 3 TIPS

Dr Ankur Singh (University of Melbourne)

1. Set yourself apart – know your strengths and what makes you different from other applicants
2. Understand benchmarks used by your university to measure contributions to teaching, research and leadership/engagement
3. Engage in careful planning – target your evidence to your audience and consider how your personal experience throughout your career points to specific impacts that align your vision for the future with that of your university

Dr Sophia Lin (University of New South Wales)

1. Present a wide range of evidence that focuses on impact
2. Be confident – do not be afraid to sell yourself and showcase the specific contributions you have made, especially in collaborative teaching and research
3. Demonstrate how your achievements fit into the specific academic and professional context of your position and field of public health

A/Prof Aziz Rahman (Federation University)

1. Focus on achievements since your last promotion or appointment as the strongest evidence for promotion
2. Focus on research that has been published (as opposed to accepted publications) to demonstrate significance and impact of research
3. Resilience and motivation are key – maintain productivity at all stages pre- and post-application, including after an unsuccessful application, and do not be afraid to re-apply as soon as possible

A/Prof Rebecca Fanany (Central Queensland University)

1. Develop a clear area of expertise – know how you can add value to the university and demonstrate your specific, targeted expertise within your teaching, research and leadership/engagement activities
2. Understand the expectations of your university at each level and work to exceed the expectations of your current level for a significant period of time prior to application
3. Develop a comprehensive and achievable plan for how you will contribute to your university at each level that supports your personal strengths and expertise

A/Prof Sue Devine (James Cook University)

1. Think strategically from the beginning of your PhD – begin building skills, experience and networks that will support both entry into academia and career development, including promotion

2. Do not wait to publish – begin publishing as soon as possible during your PhD, including publication opportunities beyond traditional academic journals, and showcase your writing and presentation skills through avenues such as grant applications and conferences
3. Understand the purpose, mission and values of the institution to which you are applying to ensure your personal and professional goals align

## TAKE HOME MESSAGES – From Presenters & CAPHIA Community

### Preparing and Applying for Promotion

- Know your strengths and carefully consider how your achievements in teaching, research and leadership/engagement contribute to a long-term plan for the future within the university
- Understand context – align your teaching, research, and leadership/engagement activities to the specific benchmarks and expectations of your university
- Be prepared to prove yourself – document the ways in which your achievements demonstrate the impact of your professional activities and do not be afraid to clarify the field-specific context that shows the significance of your work
- Be honest with yourself – do you have a clear conceptualisation of your personal strengths and weaknesses as an academic and the specific nature of your achievements in teaching, research and leadership/engagement?
- Explore as many avenues for demonstrating your achievements as possible – do not forget less “traditional” forms of evidence, especially to demonstrate the significance and impact of your teaching and mentoring skills
- Clarify your career goals in your own mind to ensure you are directing your professional development and activities toward achieving your desired level – for example, do you wish to pursue Level D and beyond, including the significant administrative responsibilities required at those levels?
- Avoid comparing yourself with colleagues – remember that you are on your own personal academic career path, and your unique story is what can allow you to set yourself apart from other applicants
- Do not hesitate to seek support and mentorship from colleagues, including from outside your direct school or faculty – perspectives from inside and outside the microculture in which you work are valuable in providing insight into the most beneficial ways to present yourself to promotion panels

### After Application

- Maintain productivity after applying, including after an unsuccessful application – it is important to continuously develop your teaching, research and leadership/engagement, especially if you are aiming for future promotions or expect to re-apply after an unsuccessful application
- Remember that an unsuccessful application is not always solely due to the quality of the application or evidence presented – financial considerations and the presence/absence of leadership and administrative opportunities (especially at high levels) can impact promotion outcomes

- Be prepared to follow through with teaching, research and leadership activities presented as part of your application – it is expected that you will maintain and develop your professional achievements in line with your personal career goals
- Do not be discouraged by unsuccessful applications – remember that unsuccessful application outcomes will increase as level increases and you can always re-apply at the next available opportunity

### Notes on Entering Academia

- It is never too early in a PhD journey to prepare for an academic career – it is advantageous to start building a teaching and research profile as early as possible
- It is advisable to start publishing at the beginning of your PhD journey and to seek out opportunities to gain teaching experience
- Sessional teaching, including casual marking and research assistance, can be beneficial in gaining valuable teaching experience while completing your PhD – publications and teaching experience will greatly enhance your application for academic positions, even at entry-level
- Get involved in professional activities early on – joining professional organisations as a postgraduate student and actively volunteering for activities and working groups provides invaluable experience while supporting networking with established academics
- Seek out support and mentorships among staff in your school – academics are generally very open and interested so taking the time to meet and present your research can be beneficial in building a solid professional network
- When applying for academic positions, do not be afraid to get in touch with the contact person listed on position descriptions – proactively asking questions can allow you to gain a better understanding of the mission and values of the university to which you are applying
- Remember to consider the mission and purpose of the university before applying – it is important to ask yourself if your personal and professional values and goals align with the university
- Be yourself – your achievements and contributions are unique and valuable, and finding a role where your personal professional aspirations fit with the team and organisational context supports a long and rewarding career in academia