



The [Centre for Postdoctoral Development in Infrastructure, Cities and Energy](#) was formed in 2021 through an award of £4 million from the Research England Development Fund, with the aim to tackle two distinct but interrelated challenges; building and sustaining the advanced skills base required to create a pipeline of world-class talent in infrastructure, cities and energy, and accelerating progress towards a net-zero society by 2050. Led by Loughborough University, in partnership with the Universities of Birmingham and Cranfield, C-DICE brings together 18 higher education institutions from across the Energy Research Accelerator (ERA) and the UK Collaboratorium for Research in Infrastructure and Cities (UKCRIC), as well as industry and other stakeholders.

To deliver these objectives, the programme offers postdoctoral researchers from any partner university free access to training and development, industrial secondments, facilities, and funding through a range of fellowships, grants and developmental sandpits. This enables researchers from a wide range of disciplines to access an unrivalled package of training and development programmes, facilities, and expertise to develop the vital skills they need for their careers, and crucially to support the skills workforce needed to accelerate progress towards decarbonisation.

In its first two years of operation, C-DICE invested £365k in developmental events and activities - including bespoke training programmes, three conferences, and four research sandpits which are all tailored to achieving decarbonisation and/or postdoctoral researcher development. In addition, £340k was awarded in grants, fellowships, sandpit prizes and secondments which support decarbonisation projects, and accelerate progression for postdocs. Working in close collaboration with a range of ECR networks and partners to access as many researchers as possible, the programme has benefited over 500 researchers.

C-DICE uses Inkpath – a university training management platform to enable researchers to plan their development through C-DICE and maintain a record of their development. This also provides access to a range of micro-credentials which provide evidence to employers of skills development.

In 2023, C-DICE is hosting the UKRSA/Vitae biennial National Postdoc Conference as part of Postdoc Appreciation Week. This is the only conference in the UK dedicated solely to the celebration of postdoctoral researchers from any university, in any discipline. The conference theme of “Transitions and New Horizons” will provide

a platform to celebrate the impact and contribution of postdocs in changing the world for the better. It will bring together the postdoctoral community for building networks, sharing experiences, developing careers, and equipping postdocs to thrive in their current role and beyond.