

# How to: Network

*An important component of academic events that often gets over-looked is networking. Events such as poster exhibits and research conferences are an opportunity to meet new people, foster connections, and expand research horizons.*

## Wear your nametag

- » After an initial introduction, it's easy to forget someone's name, especially at an event where you are meeting many new people.
- » Conversations will go more smoothly if the person you're speaking with doesn't feel awkward for not being able to remember your name.
- » Others may be encouraged to wear their nametags too, which will make learning new names easier for you.

## Don't undervalue student connections

- » It's important to interact with faculty to create a professional network, learn about their research, and develop contacts. However, it is also important to communicate with other students!
- » Research events such as conferences and poster competitions are a great place to meet like-minded peers. Whether or not you study in the same field, you can gain valuable knowledge by asking about their research experiences and findings.
- » Forming connections and friendships with fellow students can lead to collaborations in the future: within your own university as well as across different campuses.

## Embrace social media

- » Create a professional profile to connect with a wider network of peers, researchers, and faculty.
- » Keep your eye out for upcoming research events; most are advertised through social media. If your university, college, or department has their own account, follow it to stay in the know.
- » If an event you're attending has its own account or event page, follow it.
- » If there is a hashtag associated with an event, use it! This is an easy way to engage more with the event, and for others in attendance to connect with you online.
- » It makes follow-ups easy: you're able to reintroduce your name and face without actually saying anything to them. But if you do want to include a message, it's best to keep it short and simple.

## Follow-up

- » People have short memories, so don't forget to establish a follow-up correspondence with those you've met.
- » Try to do this within the first few days following the event.
- » With students: LinkedIn, email, Twitter, and on rare occasions Facebook
- » With faculty: LinkedIn, email, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, Twitter