

**Grand Challenges Guidance for Facilitators 2024**

**1. What is Grand Challenges?**

Grand Challenges is a hands-on, high energy project week which will take place 3rd-7th June 2024. Grand Challenges Week is open to all undergraduate students regardless of discipline or year of study and this year, all the challenges will be running face to face.

The challenges will engage students through innovative learning experiences, working in cross-disciplinary groups to address some of the most significant issues facing 21st Century society. Students will hear from top academics and invited speakers, in preparation for designing an innovative and creative project that tackles a real-world challenge of their choice. Each group will present their work to other students, academics and invited guests at the end of the week. This year’s topics include Climate and Environment Emergency (Streatham), Future Food (Streatham), Mental Health (Streatham), Social Inequality (Streatham), Global security (Streatham) and Tomorrow’s World (Penryn).

**2. What is the role of a facilitator?**

Facilitators play a significant role in the overall success of the Grand Challenges programme. The facilitators work closely with undergraduates, student programme assistants, academics and external guests/speakers to ensure that the experience is well co-ordinated and that all students maximise their educational experience and potential. It is likely that every Grand Challenges group will differ in focus, content, dynamics and experience of the students and staff alike.

The definition of facilitate is "to make easy" or "ease a process". A facilitator helps to plan, guide and manage a group to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively with good participation, time management and full commitment from all students involved. It is not the same as traditional ‘transmission’ teaching, and facilitators are not expected to teach subject content to students in their groups.

Facilitators and Student Programme Assistants will be the first points of contact for students. Facilitators will coordinate and facilitate small group work. Facilitators working on the same challenge will share ideas and discuss their work. In this role, you need to understand more about how people learn than about the subject being investigated.

Your responsibilities will include the following:

a) Before Grand Challenges Week:

* Attending training sessions between March and May (about 5 hours in total).
* Attending planning meetings between March and May with the academics running the Challenges (number of total hours will vary between Challenge).
* Working closely with academics to support setting up a week-long programme for their Challenge, in accordance with the Grand Challenges Principles (number of total hours will vary between Challenges).
* Independent preparation following the trainings and meetings.
* Providing content to Central Team for communicating with students who have signed up.

b) During Grand Challenges Week (3rd-7th June 2024):

* Being present for Grand Challenges week activities (up to 35 hours in total).
* Facilitating group activity and supervising students throughout the week.
* Supporting students to work in a ‘research like’ way, making sure students understand the evidence-based approach.
* Ensuring that an enquiry-based learning approach is adopted in the challenge activities.
* Supporting Student Programme Assistants to ensure that correct administration is performed (e.g. registers taken; resources required available, consent forms signed, risk assessments done);
* Ensuring that groups are prepared to present outputs at the end of the challenge week.

c) After Grand Challenges Week:

* Helping with the write-up of Grand Challenges.
* Attending a discussion session of their experiences to help evaluate the programme.

**3. Skills/Person Specification**

To facilitate effectively in Grand Challenges, you must be objective. This means that, for the purposes of the group, you will take a neutral stance regarding the subject. You will be happy to step back from the detailed content and away from your own personal views/expertise and focus on the group process. The "group process" is the approach used to ease discussions, aiming to encourage the best from all members and successfully conclude the event through the outputs, whatever form these may take. How you design this depends on many factors and we will explore this in more detail during the training. The secret to successful facilitation is having a group process that flows, encouraging the group's ideas, solutions, creativity, capacity, capability and decision-making.

Your key responsibility as a facilitator is to create this group process and a positive and constructive environment in which it can flourish.

**Person specification**

Highly Desirable Criteria

* Good facilitation skills and experience.
* Completion of LTHE Stage 1.
* If you are applying for the Global Security Challenge, you should have an expertise (teaching or research based) in the broad fields of security and strategy.
* If you are applying for the Future Food challenge, you should have relevant research experience and expertise in this area.
* If you are applying for the Social Inequality challenge, you should have some skills in textual analysis, an ability to analyse images, and to engage critically with culture and politics.

Desirable Criteria

* Ability to work effectively with a wide range of staff, students and external contacts with diverse interests and needs to deliver multiple objectives.
* An understanding of the benefits of interdisciplinary, employability, research-led education, and student-led learning in a university education.
* Ability to engage the interest and enthusiasm of students and inspire them to learn.
* Excellent organisational skills, including time management and planning within the framework of the agreed programme.
* Excellent team working skills.
* Proactive ‘can do’ attitude with good problem-solving skills.
* Creative and innovative.
* A good listener/observer.

**4. Recruitment process**

Applications for the Facilitator 2024 role close on 31st January 2024. The role is open to University of Exeter postgraduate students only.

For some challenges, applications will be judged solely on this application form. For other challenges, there will also be an interview stage.

The recruitment process for each challenge will take place separately. If you are invited to interview for multiple challenges, these will be separate interviews taking place with different people on different dates. If you are offered the position by more than one challenge, you will be able to choose which challenge you want to work with.

You should expect to hear back on the outcome of your application by the end of February.

**5. Training and remuneration**

Successful applicants will attend training sessions, covering detailed information about the Grand Challenges week. The role of the facilitator and the facilitation of enquiry-based learning will be explored in more depth, equipping you with the skills and knowledge you’ll need to support students taking part in the programme.

The rate of pay is £20.22 an hour (Occasional Teacher A). Facilitators will be paid up to £707.70 for Grand Challenges week, for up to 35 hours work. Due to visa restrictions, those on Tier 4 visas would only be able to work for 20 hours each week and so would be paid £404.40 for the week. If, for any reason, a facilitator works less than this number of hours during Grand Challenges week, they will be paid for the number of hours worked.

The role of the facilitator outside of Grand Challenges week will depend on the requirements of the individual challenge but will likely involve between 5-10 hours of work which will include training, meetings and individual preparation.

Facilitators should be able to commit to working throughout the whole of Grand Challenges, and have availability for scheduling training, meetings, and individual preparation between March-May.

Facilitators will claim on an hourly basis so they will need to help track of their hours, including during the Grand Challenges week.

**6. How will Challenge content be designed?**

Content will be designed by the academic teams, in conjunction with facilitators.

**7. Contacts**

The main contacts for Grand Challenges queries are the Grand Challenges team (challenges@exeter.ac.uk). During the Grand Challenges Week, your Challenge academic lead will be your first point of contact. You will also be working with student programme assistants allocated to your Challenge, who will be your first point of contact for practical, logistical, and technical queries.