

RM ROADMAP

Consensus Document for Country Community Iceland

Co-Creation Session 1: Understanding the landscape: National Networks and Associations

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“Creating Framework Conditions for Research Management to Strengthen the European Research Area”

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Understanding the landscape: National Networks and Associations

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1. Introduction

This is an important moment for the research management (RM) community in Europe. The European Commission (EC) and countries across Europe want to better understand the current research management landscape to further strengthen the European Research Area (ERA).

Research management includes a broad range of professionals supporting researchers to achieve excellence in research. For the purpose of this co-creation exercise, Research Managers (RMs) are to be considered as broad as possible including: research policy advisers, research managers, financial support staff, data stewards, research infrastructure operators, knowledge transfer officers, business developers, knowledge brokers, innovation managers, etc. For simplicity, we use the term research management but this exercise covers also other terms such as research support, research management and administration, professionals at the interface of science and other terms which are used as the norm in the national landscapes across Europe.

The RM Roadmap Knowledge and Community Platform (KCP) brings research managers together to shape the future of the profession and support the strengthening of an inclusive research management community in Europe. The KCP is a place where research managers share their views and introduce issues for discussion in a solution-focused endeavour. RM Roadmap Ambassadors lead the discussions for each country on the Knowledge and Community Platform, supported by national and regional RM networks.

This co-creation exercise is the biggest collaboration between RM networks ever to take place in Europe. With a focus on learning insights from RMs, the co-creation exercise seeks to establish a robust framework that can support professional growth and collaboration across the EU and associated countries.

By 2023, 40 country communities have been established within the RM Roadmap Ambassador Network. The RM Roadmap project will use the outcomes from this co-creation exercise to make a roadmap for the future of research management in Europe and to build and exchange solid knowledge on career framework opportunities, upskilling and networking for research managers. RM Roadmap will ultimately build a value proposition for policy makers and institutional leaders who want to strengthen and modernise their research support departments.

This **consensus document for Country Community Iceland** contains the outcomes of the **First Co-Creation Session - Understanding the landscape: National Networks and Associations**.

A short summary of the main outcomes from the co-creation exercise is included in section 2. More information about the topic of RM National Networks and Associations is detailed in section 3. Recommendations about best practices, challenges and lessons learnt about (formal or informal) national networks, associations, communities are provided in section 4.

For more information about the RM Roadmap initiative, the reader can consult the following website: www.rmroadmap.eu

2. Summary of Co-Creation Session 1

The RM Roadmap Co-Creation session 1 in Iceland started on 6 October 2023. An email was sent out to all Iccarma members and to individual research managers at different national organizations with an introduction to the RM Roadmap project and information on the Co-Creation session 1 and how to participate in it. A reminder was sent out on 13 October 2023. News and information about the RM Roadmap Co-Creation session 1 was also posted on the Iccarma website. Twenty-one individuals joined the platform with 36 views and 12 members submitting comments. At an event of Iccarma on 18 October the RM Roadmap project was further introduced and Iccarma members encouraged to participate in future Co-Creation sessions.

Within the Icelandic RM community there is a general knowledge of the Iccarma association and Iccarma activities. The comments received in the Co-Creation session 1 state that in general Iccarma members know of and utilize the training and networking opportunities provided by Iccarma. Iccarma members also mentioned the lack of recognition of RMs at the institutional and national level as a challenge.

3. Discussion Outcomes of Co-Creation Session 1

This consensus document for Country Community Iceland contains the outcomes of the First Co-Creation Session - Understanding the landscape: National Networks and Associations.

1. If you have a national network (formal or informal), how did it help you? If you don't, please say how you have built your (internal) network and are using it.

Iceland has a formal national association: ICEARMA (Icelandic Association of Research Managers and Administrators), which was formalised on 23 November 2012, www.icearma.is. ICEARMA has a chair, a treasurer and a secretary as well as two substitutes which meet on average four to six times a year between annual general meetings. A small membership fee is collected to fund meetings, trainings and events. Member counts have ranged from 25-50 from research organizations and the national research funding agency, the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís). The board includes representatives from the public and private universities in Iceland as well as research institutions. ICEARMA does not provide any certifications.

ICEARMA has helped members to recognize others who work in RM in Iceland and whom to contact at other organizations when it comes to RM matters, hence Icearma has an active role in creating and supporting a national network of RMs. Seminars held by ICEARMA in collaboration with the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannís) have also been beneficial and have opened up the discussion on RM and RMs outside individual organizations. ICEARMA has also opened up access to international conferences and training opportunities.

2. What challenges do RM networks and associations encounter in contributing to national and European R&I systems? If there are no networks, please elaborate if there have been networking initiatives and if not, please state why you think that is the case.

The main challenges that RM networks and associations on a national and European level is visibility. The specific knowledge and expertise of RMs is often unrecognized and overlooked by individual organizations, as well as by the research community. Both in terms of institutional hierarchy and job descriptions. The wide scope of knowledge of RMs could be better utilised by research organizations and institutions and at the ministerial level, for instance by the Icelandic Science and Innovation Council, in relations to contribution to institutional and national research strategies.

Knowledge and understanding of the roles of RMs and the needed expertise of RMs is somewhat lacking. Research management requires extensive expertise and in-depth knowledge of research, research management, the work of researchers, funding bodies and organizations that RMs work

for and with. This knowledge and expertise is often unrecognised both by researchers, the institutions they work for as well as national and international research funders and governmental bodies.

3. Please list all of the formal and informal networks and associations of research managers in your country and link to their websites or online groups. Skip if there are no networks your knowledge.

ICEARMA – www.icearma.is - The Icelandic Association of Research Managers and Administrators

SMES – Internal institutional group for research support for external funding at the University of Iceland

4. Please list and link to any policy documents and funding which mentions research management or the equivalent national name(s) for research management.

The University Cooperation Fund established in 2023 by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, has the aim to support strategies at the university level. There are six priorities identified of which two can be linked to research management; Administration, support services and infrastructure utilization to increase quality, efficiency and effectiveness and; Internationalization of Icelandic universities.



4. Recommendations

1. If associations or networks do exist in your country, what recommendations would you share to support colleagues in setting one up in countries without associations or networks?

We recommend considering establishing a national association or network for RMs. The first step could be to map out those individuals within your own organization who are RMs as well as working with your national funding agency in order to gather information of other RMs in organizations on a national level. The next step could be to host an event to introduce the idea of establishing a national network or association in accordance with your national legislation. It could also be beneficial to reach out other RM associations and networks, particularly RM associations and networks in your region, in order to gather insights into how they have organized and built up their RM associations or networks. Reaching out to EARMA for support and using EARMA events to network on a national level could also be very beneficial.



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