

RM ROADMAP

Consensus Document for Country Community Sweden

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

Ambassador(s): Ylva Hultman

Associate Ambassador(s): NA

Authors: Ylva Hultman, Dr.Evelina Brännvall, Dr.Daniel Vare, Dr.Joel Jakobsson

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RM ROADMAP

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

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landscape: National Networks and
Associations**

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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 Sweden** 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

It has been and is a challenge to engage people in Sweden to contribute and be active in the co-creation discussions. It is hard to reach out in the community and make people feel that their input is important, I need to work harder on that before next session.

The input that came were both known and unknown to me, so even if the comments were few it gave a good picture of the landscape of networks in Sweden. The Swedish Network SWARMA is easy to reach but it is harder to get in contact with the organizations outside SWARMA. One conclusion from this session is that the different networks need to connect better.

3. Discussion Outcomes of Co-Creation Session 1

This consensus document for Country Community Sweden 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.

In Sweden we have the network SWARMA for research managers and administrators working at higher education institutions. The network and the community overall is very open and non- competing with each other, it is rather supporting each other openly. For lots of people the network has been a huge help both in the day to day work and also for contacts in more complicated questions. There are lots of subgroups in SWARMA covering important areas as Ethics, Financial Compliance, National Funding and so on.

Unfortunately, RMAs working in other sectors are not part of SWARMA, and the discussion about this comes up from time to time. Therefore many people don't know about SWARMA, or know but can not be part of it. There is also people in SWARMA who need to collaborate with people in other sectors and for them a more open network would have helped a lot. Now they create their own smaller groups based on existing contacts instead.

Except from SWARMA there is also other ways for networking in Sweden. The national funder Vinnova has a national reference group for financial and legal issues. The aim is to collect views from the Swedish system, i.e. both academia, institutes, industry and SMEs. It has a national overall perspective that extends from research to demonstration. The assignment involves, among other things, contributing to the inputs that the national NCPs make to the EC. In practice, it also means a lot of benchmarking and exchange of experience between the participants in the group, which is very valuable. Meetings mostly take place virtually with a physical meeting once/year.

There are also smaller networks created after need, some are regional and have a broader scope and some are more task oriented. One example is an informal network since the beginning of 2022 discussing issues connected to state aid rules in the context of R&D cooperation agreements. The network consists of university legal counsels at several Swedish universities as well as legal counsels from organisations close connected to them. The network has created opportunities for increasing the understanding of the application of the state aid rules on the R&D contracts arena as well as highlighting and finding possible solutions to common challenges and possibilities.

Other examples are networks and groups related to research data management, like the SND network and the Swedish Data Steward Network.

For tech-trans, there is in fact a formal association, SNITTS , which is a member of the European ASTP.

- 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.**

SWARMA is represented in reference groups for Horizon Europe which gives us an opportunity to contribute to the European R&I system at the national level. We have also very good relations with the national funders as well as VINNOVA (hub for most of NCPs). They also include companies and research Institutes in the discussions to get a broad perspective which is very good. As a network I think that we could be more active giving input to the EC public consultations representing opinions of our HEIs.

- 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.**

<https://swarma.se/en/english/>

<https://www.snitts.se/om-snitts>

<https://snd.gu.se/en/about-us/snd-network>

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

There is nothing I can think of here.

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?

My recommendations are to think through who the network is for, and from that perspective, who should be involved. Another important aspect is how the network should be administered and how to keep the network running. It is really good to map those questions first to be able to know the size the network could expand to and if you need a fee to keep it running. There is pros and cons both with formal and informal networks and it differs what is most convenient in each country. Networks are great and adds so much joy to your day to day work.

2. If your country does not have any informal/formal network or association, what kind of support would you need?

N/A

5. References

N/A

6. Acknowledgements

Thank you also to Olaf Svenningsen for input in the discussion.



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