Working in a brave new world

Brexit Watch
Long on words but short on details: how Britain’s impending exit from the EU might impact funding and networks across Europe.

STATE OF THE STATES
Dr Anne Katrin Werenskiold and Lance Leverette discuss possible ramifications of the new American Presidency

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW EARMA MD
Nik Claese, on moving forward with internal change, efficiency and more presence
EARMA’s European Certificate in Research Management is a professional qualification designed for individuals with at least four years of experience in research management, gained in several of the areas covered by the units. The course covers a set of key topics to be successful research managers.

THE PROGRAMME WILL:

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★ Expand your international network by joining a group of European colleagues, as well as getting access to the EARMA alumni-group after completion.

★ Provide students with formal recognition as an Research Manager

TO FIND OUT MORE HOW THE QUALIFICATION CAN ASSIST YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND BENEFIT YOUR INSTITUTION;

★ Visit http://www.earma.org or

★ Attend one of EARMA’s online inductions sessions, or

★ Visit the EARMA booth at the Annual Conference 2017 in Malta

“EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO UNLOCK THE GOLDEN DOOR OF FREEDOM”

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER
This is my last Annual Conference as Chairman and it is time to reflect on how far we have come over the last four years.

The most obvious change in the European research landscape since I started has been the UK’s decision to withdraw from the EU. By the time you read this, Prime Minister Theresa May will almost certainly have triggered Article 50 and, while nothing is clear yet – and won’t be for a number of years – May’s 12-point exit plan leaves very little room for compromise. It is very likely that the pick-and-choose approach that so characterised the UK’s 40+ year membership of the Union will not be tolerated during its exit.

WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED?
The UK, a research powerhouse, is always prominent in any research index. The UK attracts many foreign researchers, postgrads, postdocs, PIs and senior researchers who are now embedded in the UK system. Their presence underlines the degree of interconnectedness that exists between countries in research but particularly between those in the EU. Any diminution in that interconnectedness will have consequences.

While the loss of EU research monies in the UK is potentially very damaging (some estimates put it at 27 per cent of the UK’s public research budget), the biggest consequence is the dislocation of the personal, scientific and research connections that exist between the UK and the rest of Europe. Supportive phrases such as the UK’s ‘commitment’ to research that ’significant H2020 projects’ would continue to be supported are chilling despite the positive tone.

As researchers and research managers, we have to accept that public research is not prioritised the way we would like it to be. It will never be prioritised above education, health, agriculture and a host of other essential public services that governments must provide, so the onus is on us, as the research community, to do our best to defend it.

Our colleagues in the UK need to know that we will argue as hard on this side as they will on their side to defend the right of all European researchers to work with each other easily and productively without unnecessary limitations. This is a call to our Association members and to all our sister Associations to engage with those who will be negotiating to keep research on the Brexit agenda.

EARMA is in rude health, but we have work to do to make it even more relevant to our members and cater for their specialist professional interests, as well as continuing to provide an unprecedented professional and culturally diverse networking opportunity.

SIGNING OFF
I have enjoyed working on your behalf for the last four years, but I could not have done it without the support of my family, my Director and colleagues in our Directorate of Research, Enterprise and Innovation Services, the President of the Dublin Institute of Technology, the EARMA Board members who do a phenomenal amount of work on your behalf most of which you do not see, and our working group members who have played a significant role in this conference and in several of our other events.

Finally, I must thank you, our members, for your unstinting support and confidence over my four years. While I intend to remain involved in the Association, I wish you all the very best in the future and I wish the incoming Chairperson as much support and help as I had from my boards and from members.

Thank you.

Chairman’s Corner
John Donovan
Chairman of EARMA
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"The policy can be vague, but it’s the relationships that count."

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Research Development Manager (EU & International)
Brunel University, London, EARMA ERA-WG member

"Open Science is a movement that is here to stay and it will hopefully be the new standard of scholarly communication."

WILHELM WIDMARK
Library Director, Stockholm University, Sweden

"A successful EIC should enrich and simplify the European innovation landscape, thereby complementing efforts made in member states and through other European initiatives."

SANDRA OLIVERA
EU Policy Officer, Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems Vinnova, Brussels
Introducing our new Managing Director

"I love helping people and it was in this role that I discovered my personal motivation"

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself in more detail for you. I am Belgian and live in the greater Brussels area. Like many of you, I became involved in research administration and management more or less by accident. I remember my first day very well. My boss slapped the FP7 financial guidelines on my desk and said she was much too busy to give any further instructions – the financial guidelines in turn slapped me into the reality of having a proper job after a cosy stay at university. I had no idea at that point that I would grow to love this career.

While sending out endless streams of A2.5 forms was not my favourite thing, I did like helping our researchers. I love helping people and it was in this role that I discovered my personal motivation. Developing myself to support researchers in the best way possible became my main professional goal and is something I continuously strive for.

One year and nine months into the job, the position of manager of the European Liaison Office became available. I was given the confidence and thrown into the deep end with the main responsibility for millions of euros in research contracts. This was incredibly challenging, but it turned out to be the most rewarding experience of my life. Over the course of the following year, there was so much work to do, but at the end I emerged as a more confident, capable and knowledgeable professional. I began managing a small team which presented new challenges. Meanwhile, my university’s EU research funds kept increasing because of the wonderful researchers we have. I am confident my team also made a significant contribution.

In 2015, I challenged myself and joined the Programme Management Office of Imperial College as a bid consultant. However, I was unable to move to London, nor did I want to leave my university. In my enthusiasm, I was left commuting between Brussels and London with a schedule which changed every week. You might say this is a bit crazy and you might be right! However, I enjoyed it immensely and cannot thank the programme management colleagues enough for their professional and kind manner. A word of warning: do not do this kind of thing if you intend to get sufficient sleep!

During the summer, I saw the advertisement for the EARMA managing director post. I got very excited seeing everything EARMA had planned. I was not looking to leave my job so I said to myself that if I was still as excited after three weeks of annual leave, I would apply. Forget three weeks – more than six months later I am just as excited because EARMA has big plans for the future!

I hope you want to be a part of that future too! If you do, then please don’t hesitate to let us know!

Nik ClaeSEN
Managing Director, EARMA
Since Ljubljana 2010, EARMA has been transformed from a very small association to an association that has tapped into the willingness and commitment of its members and grown into a real network of and for its members. This success, which has come on the back of very hard work by active members over those years, produces its own problems.

The problems with success are obviously nice problems to have, even though it often means an ever-increasing workload, demands on limited time, and to a real possibility of ignoring the day job. Moving EARMA to the next stage needs internal change, more efficient governance, and more presence. For these reasons EARMA created the new post of a full-time Managing Director.

I have been an EARMA member for three years and Tallinn 2014 was my first annual conference. Originally, it was unclear to me what else there was to EARMA outside of the conference. I soon discovered that it is so much more! EARMA is a community of research administrators and managers who care about their profession and strive to secure and improve the profession to the benefit of the scientific world. I have discovered that EARMA is a think-tank, a training centre, a place for knowledge exchange, a place to develop people, and a good place to be.

As the new managing director, my first tasks – based on the revised strategic document developed in Tarragona – will be to complete the development of the EARMA office and help the board transition from an operational board to a more strategic function.

The board has always emphasised that EARMA is an association of the members for the members. This cannot be an idle aspiration and, with limited time and resources, the board has striven to provide more for the membership in terms of the PD programme, improved communication with members, and additional programmes of activities. However, continuing to develop these programmes, and to expand them, requires dedicated effort. My role will be to further elaborate on what EARMA is offering and take responsibility for the successful delivery of the programme. This can only be done in close collaboration with the various groups in the association and I will be engaging with them.

Key to all of this has to be an increased emphasis on communications, both within the Association and outside it, between its stakeholders, and those it seeks to influence. This will mean improving the access for members and reaching more people in a better way. We will need to invest in communication to make sure everybody can get the most out of what EARMA has to offer. This means many changes in the way we are doing things but those changes will pave the way for more benefits for members and stakeholders.

We are at an important point in the history of science. Science is seen as a way to create societal impact. While this is extremely important, we also need to value science in its own right. The research sector in Europe is a complex one and is getting more complex all the time. Rules concerning ethics, data management, inclusiveness and so many other topics are very important. However, there is a balance between the necessity of the ‘rules’ and the practicality of the research. This balance is the space occupied by excellent research managers and administrators. We support our researchers by facilitating their ability to engage in their research.

EARMA is investing in a strong RMA profession to fulfil this role. I have been hired to enable the association to move a step closer to this goal and that is what I am going to do with the help of all the great people that make up our community. Exciting times are ahead!

Nik Claesen, EARMA’s New Managing Director.
The role of EARMA’s Annual Conference Committee is to deliver a vibrant programme with topics that are designed to be thought-provoking, topical and innovative, as well as highly relevant to research managers’ daily jobs. Therefore, the theme of this year’s conference, *Negotiating Research: What is the Best Deal for European Research?*, is particularly timely. For the first time, our opening keynote session will include an expert panel who will focus on debating issues relevant to the conference theme. Chaired by Seán McCarthy, and designed to offer novel audience participation with the ability to take instantaneous voting, it is sure to be a lively start to the conference. Turn to page 8 to read contributions from some of the panellists.

Seán’s own session, *The Profile of Successful Organisations in H2020*, examines the design of research offices, the support provided to researchers, the attitude of senior management to European funding, and how researchers view European programmes as part of their individual career plans. Seán McCarthy has delivered training courses in 74 of the top 100 research organisation in Horizon 2020, and is therefore more than qualified to speak on this.

As we head towards the next Framework Programme (FP9), the political background has thrown up a whole range of issues that are central to all of our jobs and will affect the future programme. The most obvious of these is Brexit for, while it is clearly of great concern to the UK research and support community, it also touches upon themes related to future support for European research as a whole.
Notably, the second keynote, *Business as usual? Framework 9 and the future of the West* from William Cullerne Bown, founder and executive chairman of Research (part of Research Professional), explores in some depth the political background to recent changes and how the recent turmoil might affect Framework 9. Similarly, a pragmatic approach to dealing with political issues, as well as a strategy for dealing with them is offered in a separate session which examines how political pressures affect our day-to-day jobs. The presentation from Thomas Estermann (Director, Governance, Funding & Public Policy Development at EUA), explores this from a different perspective, examining how future trends will impact upon universities and what they need to do to fully benefit from funding.

Key to these issues is the need to improve efficiency of research funding set against further funding pressures due to, for example, the need to fund excellence whilst addressing both political priorities and other concerns. The session, *Widening Participation and Excellence, New Frontiers*, explores the need to increase and improve engagement with Third Countries.

Funding pressures often lead to low success rates, which is examined by Peter Fisch, who asks whether low success rates and high costs of preparing proposals are signs of system failure or just unavoidable consequences of a highly competitive environment? What solutions could improve the heavy costs of both preparing and negotiating large research programmes? At the ‘micro level’, a further session related to success rates offers guidance on how we can best help our researchers to deal with this. And with increasing pressures on budgets it is good to look at alternative models, something that will be explored in-depth with a session on crowdfunding.

In addition to the extremely topical keynotes, we have plenty of practical topics ranging from grant writing skills, to how to manage international grants (e.g. with the US, Japan and Brazil), financial reporting, including an analysis of recent changes to the Annotated Model Grant Agreement, interdisciplinary research, research metrics, impact, ethical approval and a session on how to manage clinical trials.

With 54 sessions from around 100 highly qualified speakers, this has just scratched the surface of what we think will be a ground-breaking conference. Please take time to develop your own conference timetable by exploring the full programme on the conference app.

The EARMA’s Annual Conference Committee wishes you all a rewarding and memorable experience!

**ACC members:**
Evelina Brannvall (Lulea University of Technology), Anja Hegen (University of Bergen), Emmanuel Babatunde (University of Bergen), Emma Lythgoe (Secretary), Jagdees Pabla (Coventry University), Katrin Reschwamm (EUrelations AG)
Could you begin by introducing yourselves and revealing what about the EARMA Annual Conference 2017 you are most looking forward to?

**WCB**: I am a journalist who specialises in the intersection of science and politics for about 30 years. I think the conference is an important one because it comes at a moment of great change really...or turmoil you could say. It’s a period where nobody quite knows what’s going to happen, so getting together to talk about things is important.

**TE**: I am in charge of the European University Association’s (EUA) work on funding, governance and public policy development. As the largest and most comprehensive university association, we work to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research, and to influence policy making at the national and European level. As part of our work on funding we have launched a campaign to provide arguments for sufficient and sustainable funding. To convince decision makers we provide evidence from our data collections and analytical reports and I am very much looking forward to sharing these findings with the participants at the EARMA conference in the opening panel as well as in a specific session on the future of European funding.
PF: My background is in shaping European Research policy. I was an EU official in the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation for 20 years. I was also Head of Unit for the Social Sciences and Humanities Programmes and for the Evaluation of the Framework Programme.

After leaving the Commission in 2014, my focus is now on analysing European Research Policy. I would like to stimulate a broader public debate, through short papers published on my website (www.peter-fisch.eu), but also through interviews and conference participations. I look forward to this EARMA Annual Conference, particularly the presentations in Tracks one and four. There is actually a lot to discuss on the future of European Framework Programmes.

SM: I am Managing Director of Hyperion Ltd (www.hyperion.ie). I help organisations develop their ‘European Research and Innovation Strategies’ and do this by designing and delivering training courses for researchers, research support services and directors of Universities and Research Centres. In 2016, the European Commission published a list of the top 100 organisations in Horizon 2020. I deliver training courses in 74 of these top 100.

From the EARMA conference, I am looking forward to practical lessons learned from people who work with universities and research centres. In particular, I look forward to listening to discussion on real problems and real solutions.

What is the main focus of the talk you will be giving and what is it you hope delegates will take away with them from your session?

SM: In my talk, I will draw a profile of the top organisations in Horizon 2020. The delegates will take home messages for their senior directors, support staff and, most importantly, for their researchers. For the Directors, I will highlight the strategies of the top organisations in Horizon 2020. For the Support Staff, I will talk about the practical support that is appreciated by the researchers. For the researchers, I will describe the profile of researchers who are very successful in Horizon 2020.

PF: My talk “Do we need perfect proposals?” is again – like my talk in Lulea – somewhat off the beaten track. In my presentation, I will highlight some aspects of Horizon 2020 and demonstrate that established perceptions might not always be accurate – and that
some issues could be tackled in a completely different way. So please join my talk if you would like to learn more about the dark sides of the constant trend towards more and more perfect proposals, or if you would like to learn why ‘Governance’ is not just an airy concept, but a core issue for European Research Policy. And for those who attended my talk last year – yes, I will come back with fresh evidence for imagining the unthinkable… a Framework Programme without Work Programmes!

**TE:** I will participate in two sessions, the opening panel and a session on the Future of European Funding. In both sessions, I will share the findings from EUA’s work and reflect on the impact of recent and current developments on universities. Brexit, the revision of the current and the shaping of future funding instruments for research and education, the lowest success rates ever in Horizon 2020 and a continuing participation gap between EU members are only some of the developments that will have a fundamental impact on universities and how they will be able to use EU funding instruments.

I hope that participants will take away a better understanding of these diverse trends, how they are interlinked and what they can do in their intuitions to address them in a strategic way. I equally hope for an engaging exchange as my intention in the session is also to take away diverse reflections from participants and practitioners.

**WCB:** Well, in a way it’s about how can we make the Framework Programme (FP) relevant in the current circumstances. If you look at what’s on the plate of Europe’s leaders – the fracturing of the western alliance and the United States, problematic relations with Russia, another neighbouring region in the Middle East in flames, the problem of terrorism, and the rise of populist forces which are openly talking about the dismemberment or radical restructuring of the EU – these are huge issues and it’s not obvious at all how the FP is relevant to that.

One thing I will try to do is to set out a way that the FP can make itself relevant to the current generation of the political leaders in the current political movement.

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The 22nd Annual EARMA Conference takes place in Malta. How valuable do you think these annual events are for research managers and administrators across Europe?

**PF:** I am not a Research Manager myself, but I sense that these meetings offer a unique opportunity to get fresh ideas and new insights – which will help and motivate colleagues once they are back in their home office. And the simple fact of meeting so many people doing a similar job is simply reassuring that taking care of research management and administration is really an important task.

**WCB:** It’s a coming together of people from across the continent who have an interest in the research system as a whole. Researchers and academics have been meeting up to discuss things for hundreds of years, but these days they are very fragmented into their disciplinary silos, so there are not many forums where people get together to discuss the system as a whole. I think that makes it worthwhile, not just in the practical sense, but in a more systematic sense and with the big challenges Europe is facing I think it’s more important than usual.

**TE:** On the one hand, the varied topics and sessions allow everyone to have a good learning experience, as well as an exchange among colleagues across Europe. On the other hand, it’s also a good platform to communicate and exchange on policy-relevant topics. I personally find the discussions with the many experienced colleagues to be very fruitful and inspiring.

**SM:** I have attended most of the EARMA conferences over the past 15 years. These conferences are important for networking, identifying trends in the sector, and discussing new solutions to common problems. Conferences like this are the true social networks.
Brexit Watch: Long on words but short on the details

Jordan Hill, Michael Reynier and Yulia Matskevich
t has been a big couple of weeks in the emerging life of the UK’s post-Brexit research strategy. The headlines are:

- One new Industrial Strategy (sort of)
- One (short) White paper on Brexit
- The appointment of a new Research Tsar (before UK Research and Innovation has been officially born)
- Oh, and our Parliament is well on the way to agreeing to initiate Article 50.

But what this flurry of Government activity clearly delivers in quantity it fails to match in quality and originality.

On the face of it the Industrial Strategy has much to occupy universities, covering technical skills, cultivating world-leading sectors and science and innovation. Yet much of the paper, including the extra £4.7 billion in research funding, had already been announced in last year’s Autumn Statement and, with a heavy focus on the three-month stakeholder consultations, the UK Government appears reluctant to take a leading role on picking out the details. So, plenty of opportunity for UK Higher Education Institutions to influence here one might assume – providing we aren’t nudged aside by the sharp-elbows of big industry.

THE WHITE PAPER(S) AND NEW FUNDING BODY HEAD

The white paper entitled ‘The United Kingdom’s Exit from, and new relationship with, the European Union’ was intentionally dull and lacking detail. However, rather worryingly, it contained several large errors. From the Government leaving the timestamp on the bottom corners of the pages in the original copy (the paper was finished at 4:26am on the day of its release), to the incorrect statistical data relating to the paid holiday British workers receive (it is five weeks, not the 14 weeks mentioned), it was clear that the paper had not been thoroughly proofread. Indeed, it was written in such a hurry that the Government was forced to announce the release of a further white paper on the Great Repeal Bill shortly afterwards.¹

The announcement of Sir Mark Walport as the head of the new funding body, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), at least makes political sense. Sir Mark has been the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government since 2013, so few know the machinations of research policy as well as he does. However, he was also CEO of the Wellcome Trust for 10 years before that and can be expected to at least appreciate the HE sector. He promises “… to [work] closely with all of our research and innovation communities to provide a strong and coherent voice for UK science and innovation.”²

THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKS

We suppose the sound of the slowly grinding gears of Government is generally a good thing – even if it leaves much to the imagination. But if you ask any head of institution, administrator or academic what the single biggest advantage of participating in the EU programmes is, the answer will most likely include the word ‘networks’.

So, London Higher Europe will focus its 2017 strategy on nurturing and expanding European networks. We will be increasing our Brussels presence to showcase the very best of London’s research talent, with two high-level missions planned for March alone. We will also focus on opening up two-way
channels of communication with European HEIs, organisations and regions who share our strategic priorities and complement our research strengths.

Maximising our usage of the plethora of European networks that exist, such as European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN), will be important here, as well as taking a more bespoke and personal approach. Areas we have begun working on to this effect include Big Data, Healthcare, linguistics, Food, Migration and the Creative Industries, where our enthusiastic academics are keen to network with others working in these areas. While the UK may, in the future, be outside the EU it will always be ‘in’ Europe and our European research partners will continue to be our most cherished relationships.

The policy can be vague, but it’s the relationships that count.

Jordan Hill: Jordan Hill is a recent master’s graduate of the College of Europe, a specialist postgraduate institute focused on EU affairs, and an Intern at London Higher. His work focuses on research excellence, EU funding and strategic engagement with university stakeholders across Europe.

Dr Michael Reynier is the Deputy Chief Executive of London Higher. He has overseen the economic impact study of London’s HE (London – The Knowledge Capital), set-up several London Higher programmes (Case for HE, London Medicine, London Higher Europe) and has led major research projects on HE in world cities, university spin-outs, bibliometrics, EU students, part-time study and, most recently, shared services and Open Access. He runs a variety of senior-level (PVC) networks representing research, Europe, marketing and London Centres.

Yulia Matskevich Research Development Manager (EU & International) Brunel University, London, EARMA ERA-WG member

If you have questions, ideas or opportunities that relate to our networking in 2017 focus then don’t hesitate to let us know by emailing jordan.hill@londonhigher.ac.uk
Research offices have emerged all over Europe in the last few decades. Where once they were essentially entrepreneurial enterprises, they have now become professionalised, key operators in the institutional research strategy and policy. Staff member profile has changed and only seldom are you alone in the office. The challenge of having a leadership role has changed, where new and more strategic agendas confront the day-to-day business of acquiring research funding.

For years, EARMA has tried to develop new types of training offers for leaders and future leaders of research offices, grant offices, sponsored programme officers etc. across Europe. The vision is to link the individual training events into a certified programme for leaders in research management and administration, and the first steps have been taken by developing specific offers for leaders that will be recognised as part of a certification programme.

The 2017 EARMA leadership in research seminar, ‘Delivering Excellent Research Management and Administration’ is taking place in conjunction with the EARMA Annual Conference on April 23-24. It will cover three main topics:

1. Research Administration Services

Many research administration services are considering reorganisation to meet new challenges in both political and funding landscapes. High-quality support services can (and must) be organised differently, depending on the context and organisational culture of the institution. Some of the questions we will try to address are:

How do you develop dynamic and forward-looking services that suit your organisation’s requirements?

How do you identify strategic opportunities for your institution?

Presenters and participants will explore different models of support services and tools for analysing services, such as benchmarking and indicators.

2. External Research Benchmarking

Excellent research support requires engagement in developing strategies for profiling and focusing of the research activity at your institution. This entails working closely with the academic leadership and staff, balancing different roles, and using tools and techniques that support the leadership and researchers to develop projects and applications that contribute to meeting the academic objectives of the institution.

3. Open Science and its relation to societal impact of research

Open Science is the new kid on the block. What then, are the challenges for the Research Office and how is the concept of Open Science linked to the increased focus on societal impact of research? Presenters will give us updated insight behind the headlines and the group will work on how this field might change the way we work, strategically and practically, to support the research activity/our researchers in the future.
EARMA BRUSSELS 2018

The annual EARMA Conference has never been held in Brussels!

Throughout its history, the EARMA Conference has been held all over Europe, from north to south and east to west, but it has never been held in arguably the most obvious place for a European Association working primarily with funding and cross-European research policies and activities.

But in 2018, the EARMA community are invited to gather in Brussels! On April 16-17 2018, the EARMA Annual Conference will be convened in the capital of Belgium. Attached to this there are also several preconference events taking place on April 16-17 2018.

Already, preparations for the EARMA Leadership Programme, including a site-visit to main European stakeholders in Research and Innovation, have started. The European Commission has positively welcomed the collaboration on a programme that will ensure an in-depth introduction to ideas and plans behind the forthcoming 9th Framework Programme.

This will be just around the time when the new Framework Programme will be presented to the public. In addition to meetings with the European Commission, there will be meetings with other stakeholders and players, members of the European Parliament, university associations and networks, and key industrial partners.

EARMA will invite sister associations to join the programme, and allow for parallel activities that can enhance the outcome of being in Brussels in one of the most exciting times for European research – the formation of the next Framework Programme!

The Planning Group behind the Leadership Event is:

**Jan Andersen**
Former EARMA Chair and Senior Executive Officer at Technical University of Denmark

**Ragnar Lie**
EARMA Professional Development Working Group Chair, Project Manager at University of Oslo and Senior Advisor at the Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions

**Dr Peter Hedges**
Head of University Research Office Cambridge
A Brief Introduction to Open Science

Open Science is the growing movement to make science open in the digital age. This movement holds that science must be conducted in a reproducible way, where all components of research are open. The movement is a challenge to how research today is often presented and disseminated behind closed pay walls. The goal is to increase the quality and benefits of science by making it faster, more responsive to societal challenges, more inclusive and more accessible to all users.
The movement is driven both as a political agenda and importantly from within the academic community. The EU Commission has recommended that their member states frame national policies on Open Access and Open Data. Funding agencies are driving Open Science when they require data management plans, source code distribution plans and the open dissemination of projects they fund. Many researchers want to have their research results and data openly disseminated so others can build on their results and contribute to societal change. The main principles of Open Science that are discussed are: Open Access, Open Data, Open Source, Open Educational Resources, Open Methodology and Open Peer Review.

Some interesting questions are which and how much work is being done on Open Science in Europe. Sparc Europe has conducted a survey to 50 different organisations across Europe that support research. The survey, entitled ‘Mapping Open Science and Open Scholarship in Europe’, aims to find out where organisations are placing their efforts in the area. What kinds of activities or outputs are most frequently addressed and which are less addressed? With the conclusions of the survey they try to illustrate the scope of activity and outputs conducted in Europe to support the implementation of Open Science. In the conclusions, they find that the groups the organisations primarily were serving with their Open Science activities were policy makers and researchers. Other target groups were publishers, early career researchers and libraries. They also found that the key thematic areas in focus for the organisations who work on Open Science is Open Access, Open Data and research infrastructure. The activities in Open Science that the organisations most frequently are working with are: advocacy and policy development, providing expertise and training on Open Science, providing information resources and tools, and IT infrastructure. The most frequent outputs from their work are recommendations and guidelines, briefing papers, position papers and workshops.

An important meeting for the development of Open Science, ‘Open Science – From Vision to Action’, was held in Amsterdam in April 2016 during the Netherlands EU Presidency. The meeting gathered important stakeholders for Open Science, such as research funders, research-performing organisations (including researchers, libraries and support staff), publishers and politicians. As a conclusion of the meeting a document was created – ‘Amsterdam Call for Action on Open Science’. In the document, they state the need for a speedy transition towards Open Science and that now is the right time to move forward. Many researchers are supporting this transition and are moving towards Open Science by the ways they work. Different organisations from the scientific community are lobbying to make the politicians act. The politicians have listened and the European Commission is prepared to take a leading role to accelerate the transition towards Open Science.

IN THE CALL FOR ACTION THEY FORMULATED TWO PAN-EUROPEAN GOALS FOR 2020:
1. Full open access for all scientific publications
2. A fundamentally new approach towards optimal reuse of research data

AND TO REACH THESE GOALS BY 2020 THEY SAY WE NEED:
1. New assessment, reward and evaluation systems
2. Alignment of policies and exchanges of best practice

To make it concrete they also stated 12 action items divided into five cross-cutting themes. The most important among those themes is to remove barriers to Open Science. An example of something that needs to change is the reward and evaluation systems that are built on impact factors of journals and dependent on the old publishing system. We also must develop the research infrastructure to handle research data in an open way. The other themes are about handling the advocacy and policymaking to Open Science.

Open Science is a movement that is here to stay and it will hopefully be the new standard of scholarly communication. As we can see in the Sparc Europe report, there are a lot of organisations working on the promotion of Open Science. The European Commission is taking the lead to make Open Science the default for science. As the concrete actions from the Amsterdam call for action on Open Science are taking place in many member states in the EU, we can look forward to an open scholarly communication system in the future.

Wilhelm Widmark
Library Director
Stockholm University
Sweden
In June 2015, during the European Research Area in Innovation conference in Brussels, the European Commissioner for Research and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, announced that his term at the European Commission would be guided by three Os: Open science, Open innovation and Open to the world.
Concerning open innovation, he mentioned that he "Would like to take stock of the various schemes to support innovation and SMEs under Horizon 2020, to look at best practices internationally, and to design a European Innovation Council (EIC). The EIC should be modelled to the very successful European Research Council (ERC) and should support innovation closer to the needs of the users."

That was the starting point for the European Commission to enter into an intensive phase of consultations. Stakeholders have been invited to give ideas to the design of a so-called EIC to match the vision of Commissioner Moedas.

The European Commission has organised an open call for ideas and a major workshop with around 100 stakeholders to move forward in getting ideas for creating an EIC. In addition, numerous stakeholders’ initiatives have taken place in Brussels to discuss the EIC idea and inspire the designers of the future proposal. According to the first thinking from the European Commission, a possible EIC is more of a concept rather than a physical institution. Even if there is still no formal proposal on an EIC, some first elements are to be tested during the last years of Horizon 2020. The second step would be a full blown EIC in the next Framework Programme, post-2020.

On January 20th of this year, Commissioner Moedas announced the names of 15 innovators that will be members of a new High Level Group (HLG) of Innovators. The HLG members, who have expertise in business innovation, will give advice to shape the design of an EIC post-Horizon 2020. The announcement text for the HLG also stated that it will provide a user perspective on potential reforms to Horizon 2020 to help improve Europe’s performance in breakthrough and market-creating innovation. The HLG will start its work in early March 2017. Their mandate is for two years with the possibility to renew.

AN ACTION LIST OF TEN CHANGES

The Commission has already announced an action list of ten changes in Horizon 2020 that will be introduced in the work programme for 2018-2020 as part of the first elements of an EIC. These actions are:

1. Establish a Group of Innovation Advisors (i.e. the HLG that has already been announced)
2. Revise the Horizon 2020 work programme (2018-2020), and make a much simpler presentation of relevant support for innovation in a one-stop shop
3. Make the small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) instrument fully bottom-up with continuously open calls
4. Strengthen evaluation criteria to focus on market-creating innovations
5. Revise and accelerate the evaluation process, introduce face-to-face interviews and adopt a more business-like approach to awarding grants
6. Complement financial support with mentoring and coaching
7. Identify and test new scale-up instruments
8. Generate real-time data and intelligence tracking performance of projects to feed into policy processes
9. Work in partnership with existing initiatives for sharing data and intelligence, and aligning guidance
10. Improve the user interface across the Horizon 2020 website and related guidance

BUT WHY A EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL?

The question you might be asking yourselves is ‘Does Europe actually need a European Innovation Council?’. Well, according to the European Commission we do. Innovation is central to Europe’s ability to generate new jobs and economic growth, and to tackle societal challenges. It is well known that while Europe performs well on some innovation measures, we perform less well regarding market-creating innovations and scaling-up our businesses.

The current research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020 has increased support for innovation compared to its predecessors. However, more must be done and the Commission has identified gaps concerning market-creating innovation and scale-ups.

A successful EIC should enrich and simplify the European innovation landscape, thereby complementing efforts made in member states and through other European initiatives.

Finally, here are some important milestones on the road to a successful EIC:

- **June 2017** – The European Commission presents results of the Horizon 2020 interim evaluation and possibly announces the public consultation of the next Framework Programme
- **Autumn 2017** – The European Commission adopts Work Programmes for the last years of Horizon 2020, including potential elements of an EIC
- **Beginning of 2018** – The European Commission is expected to present its proposal for the next Framework Programme, including a possible EIC
- **January 2021** – The next Framework Programme will be launched, alongside a possible EIC

Sandra Olivera
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Research Management and the ‘Administration Society’

O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in 't!

When Shakespeare wrote those words, he did not have research managers in mind. However, in Aldous Huxley’s 1932 novel, Brave New World – which takes its title from these famous lines from The Tempest – management is very much in focus. The year 2017 has started in a tempestuous manner, especially for research managers and administrators, who are often the link between different actors in academia and the outside world – researchers, management, funders, politicians and other stakeholders. When these groups are in upheaval, having a safe place where concerns can be voiced, challenges discussed, and solutions drawn up becomes more important than ever.

By ‘safe places’, I mean research management associations (RMAs), like EARMA, ARMA, DARMA and sister organisations. The past 10 to 15 years has seen a proliferation of RMAs across the entire world, including Europe, where the Leiden Group gathers the Chairs of European societies and networks. The role of RMAs is changing under the influence of many factors – the political madhouse of early 2017 being one – but also how management and administration is perceived.

WHAT IS ADMINISTRATION AND WHO DOES IT?

At DARMA’s Annual Conference 2016 in Nyborg, Denmark, one keynote was delivered by Anders Forssell of Uppsala University in Sweden, on the topic of ‘The Administration Society’, which is also the title of a book, Administrationssamhället, by Forssell and Ivarsson Westerberg, 2015. The book defines the administration society as being “A society where a seemingly endless stream of policies generates massive administrative work, and where this work intrudes into and adds to the daily workload of most professional and other occupational groups.” I think many, if not most people recognise this description.

This begs the question: What is administration? According to Anders Forssell, administration is:

1. All production, collecting, processing, compilation, putting together, and reporting of information

2. To interested parties of different kinds (principals, owners, executive groups and officers, managers, staff and personnel, interest groups, authorities, customers, suppliers, media etc.)

3. In order to maintain, co-ordinate, manage and control an organized system of any sort (an operation, an organisation, a project, a network etc.)

4. Over time and space

The key is that administration is “necessary to maintain, coordinate and control any organised system.” Thus, administration is necessary to maintain research, so the next key question is: Who does it?
According to Forssell, Sweden has seen a dramatic decrease in "low-skilled administrative work"; the number of 'secretary' positions decreased from 256,000 in 1990 to 31,000 in 2008, whereas the number of 'manager' positions doubled in the same period. Another trend is that more and more administrative tasks are performed by professional staff, such as professors, doctors or teachers. Some university researchers in Sweden use as much as half of their time performing administrative tasks.

This explains the pervasive idea of growing administration, even if the number of administrators is shrinking. Thus, it is not so much that administration grows, but rather that it is done by the wrong people – employees who are employed to perform other tasks. It is crucial that organisations are properly staffed, so that the right people do the right tasks, prompting a call for the re-employment of an appropriate number of skilled, professional support staff.

EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES OF RMAS

At the INORMS Conference in Melbourne in September 2016, Director General Zhang Xiaoyuan from the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China gave a memorable keynote presentation. Director Xiaoyuan told the INORMS delegates that China's massive investment in science and technology has resulted in substantial growth in output, but there is still a component missing to achieve the desired impact. This missing component is a 'standardised Science and Technology Management Platform', which China is in the process of building. If I understood the message correctly, the Ministry has concluded that well-functioning research management and administration is a key component for successful research and innovation, and massive investments are underway in China. Look out – there might be job opportunities cropping up in the Far East!

The People's Republic of China therefore seems to have reached the same conclusion as the Administration Society, and there is even a fledgling Chinese RMA, which brings us back to the topic of this article – the role of RMAs.

The Leiden Group has demonstrated that research managers and administrators can network in many ways, and there are almost as many variations on how to be organised as there are RMAs in the Leiden Group, from large organisations with independent finances and fully staffed management offices, to informal networks that might have an online discussion forum as their only common resource.

There are pros and cons to all different modes of organising research managers and administrators. At EARMA 2017 in Malta, the Board of DARMA will present what a small independent association in a small country can do, and discuss what we have learned from our experiences. The purpose of the session is to explore the possibilities and best strategies for associations that can neither attain thousands of members, nor sustain employed staff or fully developed professional training programmes. Still, there is substantial common ground, regardless of the vast differences in modes or sizes of organisation. Dialogue and sharing of experiences between RMAs is critical, and we are still only beginning to explore what is possible.

FORMAL ORGANISATIONS VS. INFORMAL NETWORKS

What, then, are the benefits of being a formal organisation as opposed to an informal network?

Interestingly, the answer is neatly summarised by Anders Forssell's definition of administration above. A formalised structure facilitates efficient administration which, in turn, enables a larger, more consistent variety of offerings to members. Of course, it is not quite that simple, but with an economy, statutes that support the association, and a group of committed people managing an association, new possibilities open.

Name recognition should not be underestimated either; an association with a recognised profile can engage in dialogue with other stakeholders, such as sister associations, funders, public agencies and think tanks, and organise shared events, exchange programmes, writing reports and white papers, and much more.

Regardless of the mode of organisation, there is no doubt that RMAs are growing in number and members. I think this is because those associations are, if not exactly safe places, useful tools to navigate a complex and rapidly evolving world. Sharing experiences with the 'many goodly creatures' that are our colleagues in Europe and across the world becomes so much more important when well-known structures crumble and maybe even disintegrate.

Olaf Svenningsen, University of Southern Denmark, Research Support and DARMA Chair
The state of the States: Research and Science policy under the Trump Presidency

Authors: Anne Katrin Werenskiold, Lance Leverette
Serving Society through Science Policy was the theme of the 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). This interdisciplinary conference of the largest scientific society, with 11,000 attendees, had planned to analyse potential key scientific issues under the new US Presidency and to discuss how to inform policies with the best available scientific evidence.

As AAAS President Barbara Schaal put it “We have an obligation as members of the scientific community to clearly communicate the value of science ... It’s central to the function of government, to the well-being of its citizens, and to the overall health of the economy and the health of our planet.”

So far in 2017, the scientific community has become more politically active than ever, launching campaign offensives and founding grassroots organisations aimed at swaying public opinion toward a more scientific focused perspective. For example, Michael Eisen, Professor of Genetics at the University of California, Berkeley, known as a proponent of open science and co-founder of the Public Library of Science (PloS), is preparing to run for Senate in 2018. Eisen believes that, “If we want to defend the role of science in policy making, scientists need to run for office.”

Similarly, ‘314 Action’ has been founded by a group of researchers and political activists aiming to bring more candidates with a background in science, engineering or mathematics to public office. As such, they offer candidate training for scientists interested in running for public office.

Further examples that highlight the increasing political action of the scientific community to counter current trends include, the ‘March for Science’, which is planned as a singular event on April 22 in Washington, D.C., and quickly spread internationally. It received support from various scientific associations, including AAAS, and the march developed into a global movement with participation of ‘scientists and science enthusiasts’ in over 150 cities around the world. Utilising social media as a method to mobilise, many researchers set up various Twitter accounts, while AAAS set up a dedicated website to broadcast the latest developments and also provide a central communication forum: https://www.forceforscience.org/.

ALTERNATIVE FACTS REPLACING DATA

With the election of Donald Trump as the 45th president of the US, the scientific community was essentially thrown aside. Indeed, science did not play a role in the Trump electoral campaign; Trump called global warming a ‘hoax’; targeted voters in coal states, such as West Virginia and rust belt states, such as Ohio and Michigan that had seen jobs plummet; and essentially overlooked progressive areas, such as California and New England that were deemed unwinnable by his campaign.

Scientific areas, like renewable energy, that had been slowly progressing are now under threat, as evidenced by the appointment of cabinet members with direct ties to the oil industry, including the new Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who is the former CEO of Exxon Mobil. Worse yet, the new head of the EPA (Environment Protection Agency), Scott Pruitt, has openly stated his desire to see the agency disbanded, sued the agency 14 times to block environmental regulation while serving as Oklahoma Attorney General, and has recently faced scandals arising from an apparent connection to the oil industry, as witnessed in his email correspondence. Most frightening for scientists was the possible removal of open data regarding climate change from US government websites and servers. In preparation for this possibility, climate scientists had started preparing for a worst-case scenario by joining forces to copy and secure as much of the environmental data from US servers as possible in an effort referred to as ‘guerrilla archiving’.

Initial actions of the new administration seemed to prove the pessimists right, as climate data began to immediately disappear from public agencies’ websites. To further compound the situation, the official social media accounts of public agencies, such as the EPA and National Park Service, were blocked, the dissemination of research data to the public was subjected to review, and EPA-sponsored grants were frozen. To counter this, unofficial EPA and Park Service ‘shadow sites’ were set up to distribute information from those working in the agencies who were opposed to the new administration’s policy. Massive opposition led the EPA to unfreeze grants after just three days.

A second area of concern has been the new administration’s propagation of ‘alternative facts’ and a deference for experts and well-established scientific data. This is enforced by a continued campaign against the ‘fake media’ and blatantly untrue statements such as those regarding the ‘Bowling Green Massacre’ and the ‘Sweden Incident’. For the scientific community, such events are troubling to say the least as data and information is being openly disregarded where it does not fit the current regime’s agenda. Such actions run counter to every core scientific principle.

Another stone thrown by the administration directly impacted the personal lives of many scientists by hampering their travel to the US. With an executive order banning citizens of seven, predominantly Muslim countries (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan and Libya), from travel to the US, many found themselves unable to enter the US. The first reports after its implementation made it clear that this would massively...
affect researchers. Scientists returning from field work or from vacations outside the US, along with researchers and students coming to start their work at US universities, were among the first travellers detained at and deported from US airports, irrespective of their possession of visa or green cards.

Travelling to visit collaborators abroad, as well as presentations and discussions with peers at professional international conferences, is an essential ingredient for a research career. A travel ban therefore severely impairs the work and professional perspective of researchers. This threat prompted over 150 scientific associations to jointly publish an open letter to President Trump to remove the travel ban, followed up by an open letter signed by thousands of scientists that promotes a boycott of international conferences in the US as long as the ban persists. Although a court ruling defeated this executive order, the administration has continued to rally Congress and the public for the ban, while calling for broad immigration reforms which will undoubtedly cause more confusion for border agents and uncertainty for international scientists wishing to work in or visit the US.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Often, so many events take place over several months or even years, but for this administration it has all happened in the first month. So far, the Trump administration has neither appointed members for the President’s Council of Advisors in Science and Technology, nor senior science administrators to head the independent agencies. Considering evidence-based data is an important knowledge base to inform political decisions, the lack of interest in obtaining advice is unsettling, especially given the amount of science organisations and professionals that have appealed to the administration for an audience. Furthermore, political decisions on the support for science have a deep impact on research and its role as the driver for innovation and technology. With most funding for US research coming from governmental agencies, potential changes in policy are a reason to worry when the agenda is clearly aimed at boosting traditional industry over innovation.

The budget for the next fiscal year is currently under consideration and, although Trump’s budget proposal for defence is only moderately higher than that proposed under Obama, it does so by slashing funding to the EPA budget by 24 per cent, along with a cut of 20 per cent for its employees. With a current Republican majority in both the House and Senate – and a Libertarian view of less regulation over Wall Street, industry, and the environment – the situation for science and innovation from the public sector looks bleak until at least the next Congressional election in 2018.

**WHAT CAN THE EUROPEAN SCIENCE COMMUNITY DO?**

What about the impact on European researchers and research support officers? How are these developments going to affect us? How can we maintain the freedom of movement of ideas and expertise to and from the US? It appears that now might be the time for intense science diplomacy. US researchers, institutions, and funders are heavily involved in international collaborations and bound by long-term agreements. Their international partners could be well placed to convince the Trump administration that all partners profit from collaborations in the research field.

**THE TAKE-AWAY LESSON FOR EUROPEAN RESEARCH**

The replacement of facts by opinions and the neglect of experts are not limited to the US; terms like ‘fake news’ and ‘Lügenpresse’ are familiar across Europe; and the Oxford Dictionary’s Word of the Year 2016 was ‘post-truth’. It is now painfully clear that the time has come for the scientific community to become more politically active. Research Management Administrations are well positioned to support their researchers and institutions in making the voice of science heard.

Let us all work towards a better communication of science and its essential role in society! Participate, organise and mobilise!

- The EU-US agreement facilitating research cooperation under Horizon 2020. The participation of US entities enables the establishment of multiple ties across geographic areas across the US, and covers the vast array of markets, universities and SMEs. Not only do both parties widen their circle of knowledge, it allows Europeans to voice their concerns at events, campaign for increased collaboration, and gain political leverage as word spreads.

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Mentoring in the Workplace

By Dr John Carfora, James Casey, David Bateson, and Sarah Rohne

At the October 15, 2015 reception sponsored by the State Bar of Wisconsin Nonresident Lawyers Division (NRLD) in Minneapolis, four experienced mentors—Sarah Rohne, David Bateson, Dr. John M. Carfora and NRLD President James Casey—facilitated a discussion on ‘Mentoring in the Workplace’. Following welcoming comments and a Q&A session with Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson, the panel presentation was educational and engaging, and a lively discussion commenced among panellists and attendees to end the evening on a thoughtful note.

The panel began with an overview of the two types of mentoring: formal and informal, and discussed expectations and benefits of each type. According to Rohne, formal mentor programs are developed by organisations, such as employers and associations, and typically have a set duration, goals, and content. Formal mentor programs are most often designed around a single mentor matched to a single mentee. Conversely, informal mentoring relationships develop as a result of organic personal interactions. The goals, meetings, and discussion topics are set by the mentor and mentee as they get to know each other, and the mentee’s needs are explored and determined. Informal mentor relationships are sustained and driven by the needs of both in the relationship. Informal mentoring may also involve a constellation of mentors to meet the mentee’s different need. Indeed, these needs may shift over time as one progresses in his or her career.

1This article is adapted from a summary of the mentoring programme, authored by Sarah Rohne, David Bateson, and Dr John Carfora, published in the February 2016 issue of Back Home, the newsletter of the State Bar of Wisconsin Nonresident Lawyers Division. Use of the prior newsletter article and the contents therein has been granted by the State Bar of Wisconsin and the State Bar of Wisconsin Nonresident Lawyers Division.
FOUR FUNCTIONS OF WORKPLACE MENTORING

Bateson – a highly experienced professional in designing, implementing, and managing mentoring programs – outlined the four functions of mentoring in the workplace:

1. The career mentoring function focuses on skill development and career management

2. The psycho-social mentoring function involves the ways a mentor can help a new employee feel supported, overcome setbacks, and develop their professional identity

3. The role modeling function explains how mentees learn by observing their mentors in various lawyering activities

4. The professionalism function allows the mentor to help the new employee under obligations as well as aspirational professionalism

Bateson also discussed how both formal and informal mentor relationships can be structured around one or more of the mentoring functions. Both mentors and mentees need to do honest self-assessments, and the mentee must honestly assess which of the four mentoring functions they need from the relationship, while the mentor must assess their own abilities to mentor in each of the four functions.

Both mentor and mentee must then communicate effectively so that the mentor-mentee relationship can be structured around the intersection of strengths and needs. It is through good understanding of and communication about the four mentoring functions that mentor relationships not only survive, but flourish. Often, the mentee’s needs evolve over time and the focus of mentorship therefore leans towards different functions. Because no one mentor is likely to be strong in all four mentoring functions, Bateson recommends a constellation of mentors so that the mentee is able to benefit from the specific strengths each mentor can provide. Often the constellation of mentors will involve a mix of formal and informal mentor relationships.
THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONSIDER

The panel then discussed how to make a mentoring relationship beneficial, by creating a win-win relationship that includes mutualism and reciprocal benefits. As Dr Carfora explained, with more than 50 years' combined mentoring experience between the panelists, they were perfectly positioned to offer several thoughts and recommendations to consider:

- Always have an initial, informal meeting with a potential mentee (face-to-face or via Skype), paying close attention to effectively ‘co-matching’ your mentorship skills with a mentee’s needs and aspirations
- As a mentor, you should serve as an advisor, advocate, and ethical partner, and always as an honest and sincere role model
- Being an effective mentor should allow for the mentee to experience the many nuances of mentoring. Indeed, mentees may someday aspire to mentor others
- A mentor should be a thoughtful and reflective listener, and work with the mentee on techniques for best achieving the highest levels of courtesy and mutual respect
- Mentors and mentees should agree on thoughtful goals and meaningful metrics from day one, and work toward establishing realistic expectations. Similarly, both should regularly assess their work together and always do their utmost to keep an open mind to making changes
- Both should provide the other with respectful and honest feedback
- Finally, mentors should maintain a good sense of humor and practice the mentoring experience with joy and passion

When Casey was asked who he thought was an influential mentor to him, he mentioned the late mayor of Milwaukee, Frank P. Zeidler (1948 – 1960). Casey described to the audience how Zeidler combined the best attributes of a mentor – current technical and substantive knowledge, thoughtful interpersonal skills, humility, and the constant willingness to learn.

To wrap up the reception, the panel provided summary thoughts stemming from personal experiences participating in mentoring programmes. In practice, mentors and mentees should learn to manage expectations and reasonably respond to each other’s requests. A helpful mentor shows attention and respect to the mentees’ needs and development, while a reciprocating mentee should show gratitude and offer return support to the mentor as able. At the basic level, mentoring is a needed and helpful professional development tool for all.

MENTORING AND RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

So, how does the material from the Wisconsin NRLD mentoring programme apply to research administration? Well, a few thoughts come to mind:

Because the field of research administration is a rapidly changing one, it seems that both the mentor and mentee need to be ready and willing to change their mentoring relationship at appropriate points. This rapidly changing environment also illustrates the need to have a constellation of mentors at various points in time. Reinforcement of a two-way mentoring relationship is necessary. It is not simply the role of the mentor to give and that of the mentee to take. That sort of relationship will not last long in many cases.

While most people will assume that the mentor will be significantly older or more experienced than the mentee, that may not necessarily be true. A more nuanced approach to age and experience is necessary. Differences in age and experience should be embraced as part of building a fruitful mentoring relationship.
After four years’ service as EARMA Chair, John Donovan is about to step down. So, this is the time to reflect on the development of the association and his contribution to it.

EARMA went through a dire period in the late 2000s, following which Jan Andersen picked up the baton and pre-initiated EARMA virtually from scratch. In 2010 there were only about 140 members in the association, but all were highly dedicated to making a difference. John made his first impression in EARMA’s development with the Annual Conference in Dublin 2012, which he co-organised with Oonagh Kinsman. It was a fantastic event held at Trinity College Dublin.

In the following year, John was elected EARMA Chair. The four years since have been a period of growth and restructuring, where a still-frail organisation was led into smoother waters. This has culminated in a total membership of more than 1,000 people from 40 countries. John helped drive the Association's development by leading two strategic discussions with the active members of EARMA. The first was in Estoril in September 2013 and the second was in Tarragona in March 2016.

Knowing that assembling the right team for success is one of the most important leadership skills, John’s sought to bring in a highly professional treasurer from the outset. Since Sharon Bailey has joined the Board, there has been nothing but positive comments from the auditors regarding the books of EARMA. In addition, EARMA’s assets have grown steadily over the last few years. The strong financial position of the Association has enabled John to enhance the governance structures; a secretary has been employed and a Managing Director has now been appointed.

Of course, many active members in the Board and Working Groups contributed their fair share too. In addition to contributing to strategic discussions, the Professional Development Working Group was the driving force behind the initiation of the Certified Professional Development Programme; the ERA Working Group produced papers and events to help raise the visibility of EARMA and stakeholder recognition in the field; and the Annual Conference Committee has delivered increasingly successful conferences each year.

The informal ‘Leiden Group’ of European national Research Manager associations, which was first brought together at the Annual Conference in Leiden 2015, fosters exchange throughout Europe. John’s leadership style has enabled these groups to flourish and allowed active members play to their strengths.

John not only generously volunteers his time with EARMA, he has been a Scout leader for many years. Apart from hikes and camping trips, he has been known to barbecue a good burger for crowds of parade attendees on St. Patrick’s Day. John has developed his culinary skills even further and is a certified pasta maker, thanks to the Italian influence on the Board. Oh, and in his spare time, John heads up the research office in the Dublin Institute of Technology!

At this moment in time, EARMA thrives and has taken some important steps towards professionalisation of the association. What a legacy!

Thank you, John.

The EARMA Board

If you are interested in participating in the Comms WG and sharing your ideas, we encourage you to contribute – influence – change! Contact us at: comms@earma.org
EARMA is the professional association for research managers and administrators (RMAs) in Europe. RMAs are key players in research, and the profession is a fundamental component of the complete research process. EARMA is active in developing the research support profession through the provision of internationally recognised professional qualifications. Through the strength of its members, EARMA is a trusted partner in European research policy development.

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