



# ARMA 2024: Conference themes and sessions

## Artificial Intelligence

### Session 1: AI 101 – A Beginner's Guide for Navigating the AI Landscape

#### Description:

- Introduction to AI: intro to the concept of AI, its historical context and fundamental principles
- Overview of using AI in research: AI tools and frameworks that can be leveraged in research projects
- Potential applications: significant contributions of AI, Natural Language Processing, applications in image recognition
- Problems and pitfalls: ethical considerations, data privacy and security, skill development and training
- An outlook for the future: emerging trends and innovations

### Session 2: AI and Predictive Analytics for Research Funding

#### Description:

- Utilising AI and predictive analytics in grant proposal writing and evaluation
- AI-driven tools for assessing grant application success rates and funding opportunities
- Analysing funding trends and patterns through AI-powered data analytics
- Enhancing grant management and reporting with AI-powered solutions

## Engaging policy makers

### Session 1: Engaging with Policy makers

#### Description:

Policy engagement is an area of rapid growth within the UK University sector. UK Universities are increasingly investing in professional support services related to policy engagement, with 46 universities now reported as having policy engagement bodies based within their institutions (Durrant & MacKillop 2022). There has also been an increase in policy funding calls, the emergence of academic policy networks, and projects focused on linking academics and policymakers. With policy engagement on the rise, research managers and administrators are increasingly required to understand the policy engagement landscape to ensure they can effectively support academic staff. We are seeking expressions of interest for a workshop session that will explore the:

- importance of engaging with policymakers
- emergence of policy hubs and networks
- current policy funding landscape
- role of engaging with policymakers in the development of REF 2028 Impact Case Studies

- tools available to research managers and administrators to support academic staff to engage with policymakers.

## **Session 2: Building international networks and partnerships**

### **Description:**

An area for development at the research management level, especially for UK research managers, is how to build international networks and partnerships. Currently, most of this work and training is done at a national level. There is a big gap in the help for research managers to improve their networks beyond the UK (especially post Brexit and post Covid), and across different sectors and disciplines too - business, policy, and civic society too. Research managers require the opportunity to learn how to create new value chains and impact from what is quite often completely new networks and relationships - both personally and professionally. We are seeking expressions of interest for a suggested workshop session that will explore how research managers can:

- build international networks and partnerships
- improve their networks beyond the UK (especially post Brexit and post Covid)
- work across sectors such as business, policy, and civil society.

## **Ethics and Integrity**

### **Session 1: Ethical Research Impact**

#### **Description:**

Research impact is now firmly embedded both in the funding and regulatory framework for research (e.g., REF and KEF requirements). With the increasing focus on non-academic impact, a conversation is now emerging around ethical impact and conducting research adjacent activities ethically, such as knowledge exchange and public engagement. We envisage this session could be a semi-structured roundtable format or a series of Pecha Kucha presentations. We are seeking expressions of interest from speakers to run a session around the following suggested questions:

- Should research impact be ethical? Why or why not?
- How do you embed ethical impact into the research culture and not leave it as an add-on?
- What does ethical impact look like in terms of REF? How do we build a research environment in our institutions where we can meet the REF, KEF and funder requirements while simultaneously not harming stakeholders and communities?
- How can impact be nurtured in a healthy and ethical way and not become a new metric to chase?
- What practical processes can we implement at institution level to help?
- Are there examples of good practice and case studies to be shared with the sector?
- What roles do funders play in this space? What role should they play?

### **Session 2: Building a Culture of Research Integrity**

#### **Description:**

Research integrity matters because it allows all those involved in the research process, including funders, other researchers and those that are impacted by the findings, to be able to assess the trustworthiness of the research. We are seeking expressions of interest for a suggested roundtable session that will:

- Explore the importance of research integrity within UK institutions, how to build a culture of good research practice within institutions and what the indicators of success might be.
- Focus on how research managers can help to support and improve the culture of research integrity within their institutions.
- Discuss the barriers to addressing research misconduct and what research managers can do to both mitigate research misconduct issues and manage them if/when they do arise.
- Explore the existing tools, reviews and advisory bodies (e.g., UKRIO's new procedure for investigating misconduct, UK CORI projects) and discuss how findings can best be used within institutions.

## Funding

### **Session 1:** The joy and pain of EU Strategy in the new world

#### **Description:**

The initial elation of EU Association has given way to challenges of upskilling staff, re-engaging European colleagues and complexities of managing parallel funding from the Government Guarantee. How can research managers now build a strategy for engaging with EU Funding?

- Pivoting from fire-fighting to strategy development
- Re-gaining trust and confidence of academics and EU partners
- Challenges and learnings to date for managing Government Guarantee grants
- Q&A and Invitation for sharing of Best Practice

### **Session 2: Demystifying US Government Funding – The Fundamentals**

#### **Description:**

Research Offices are increasingly being asked to diversify funding portfolios yet many struggle to break into the US market due to complexities of applying for and managing US Government research funding. This is intended to be a workshop session designed to give attendees an overview of general requirements for applying and managing funds and/or case studies of specific US government funders such as (but not limited to) NIH or NSF.

- Institutional Registrations (ERA Commons, SAM)
- Developing and submitting grant applications on grants.gov;
- Managing annual budget sign off process
- Tips and tricks.
- Invitation for sharing of Best Practice

### **Session 3:** Doing more with less: the evolving role of ROs in meeting needs of the funder

#### **Description:**

A panel session envisioned with input from funders and HEIs to discuss the increase in expectations from funders for HEIs (such as Due Diligence, Demand Management, Researcher Development Concordat, Technicians Commitment), the ability for Research Offices to respond with ever stretched resource.

- Funder drivers for increasing expectations
- How have HEIs responded to the increase in responsibility
- Sharing of best practice

### **Session 4:** Supporting Interdisciplinary Research

**Description:**

There is a growing emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration as a way to address global challenges and interdisciplinary/cross council calls are a focus of UKRI's five-year strategy. For research managers and administrators, this is a new area to be navigated, as supporting interdisciplinary research requires bringing together skills, knowledge, language, methods and ways of working from different disciplines.

- Defining interdisciplinary research and how this translates into academic research
- Look at how UKRI manages bids involving several councils including review process,
- Identify key things funders look for in interdisciplinary research applications
- Sharing of challenges and best practices

## Impact

**Session 1: Coaching for Impact / Coaching for Research support****Description:**

- Active Listening. Learning to listen and understand where someone's coming from and what they want to achieve. How to reflect in a positive way. Demonstrating empathy and being empathic.
- Abstracts that share best practice in how Coaching has been applied successfully, case studies of where it has been used and the results.
- How to successfully facilitate and support others through Coaching.

**Session 2: Impact and Engagement in REF 2028****Description:**

The initial decisions for REF2028 have been published. This inevitably brings with it a whole host of questions. As we look forward to REF 2028, ARMA is asking for abstracts that reflect on the REF 2021 Impact preparations to share best practices and learning from what went before:

- Case studies on what approaches institutions took to supporting impact, developing impact strategies, and developing case studies.
- How institutions developed and supported pipelines and navigated final submission decisions.
- Approaches to maintaining support for Impact work which wasn't going to be a case study.
- Supporting Knowledge Exchange and Engagement for a REF Impact Case Study.
- Routes to Impact case studies
- Sharing the highs and the lows of REF 2021 Impact preparations.
- Sharing best practices and lessons learned.

## REF and research assessment

**Session 1: Assessment as a force for good in research****Description:**

- The REF influence on researchers' lives in the UK is usually a source of heated debate. In the research management community, there seems to be a focus on the negative aspects of assessment but this session will explore the potential positives of assessing research.
- This is an opportunity to explore how universities with less research infrastructure could make use of REF incentives to advance research at institutional level.
- Hidden REF as an influencing tool: the 5% manifesto.
- Can measuring research ever improve research? Positive consequences and uses of assessment.
- Should improving research even be a purpose of assessment?

### **Session 2: Ten years of DORA and the raise of CoARA**

#### **Description:**

- The UK has been at the forefront of advancements in research assessment, as demonstrated by the level of adoption of DORA in the sector. Engagement with CoARA in the UK is low, how would this affect the UK position in the advancement of research assessment at international level and does this matter?
- Looking beyond 'the badge': an opportunity to explore the real impact of DORA from different perspectives: institutions, publishers, funders, researchers.
- What signing DORA really means on the ground. The signing of DORA by a myriad of institutions in the last ten years has sparked different levels of impetus advancing the way research is assessed. This is an opportunity to pause, share good practice and reflect on how the signing of DORA has supported or hindered institutions.

## **Research culture**

### **Session 1: Mapping the research culture policy landscape**

#### **Description:**

We would be delighted to hear from potential speakers who wish to talk about the research culture policy landscape, and are particularly interested in talks which discuss:

- the ways research managers and administrators have mapped and navigated this environment
- funder perspectives on research culture policy and what they expect from HEIs in implementing policies in this area
- university perspectives on the robust integration of research culture policies into their institutional research environment.

### **Session 2: Innovative approaches to building healthy research cultures**

#### **Description:**

For this session we would like to invite speakers who have observed or facilitated innovations in research culture development. This may include:

- discussion of initiatives/ideas which look to build parity of esteem between researchers and research managers
- talks which focus on the ways in which research managers and administrators can bring about change in research culture
- discussion pieces/talks which examine hierarchies within academic cultures and propose ideas for encouraging collegiality.

## Research management careers

### Session 1: RMA careers - what are the options?

#### Description:

- A session aimed at those who are new to RMA to give an overview of the types of roles available within RMA.
- The session will include insights from a range of different jobs which come under the RMA umbrella, beyond the more standard pre/post award roles. Examples may include grant writing, project management, research culture, policy, working for a funder
- The presenters will talk briefly about their career in RMA covering what they do in their current role, other roles of interest they have held, and how they have progressed in their career.
- This would be followed by a Q&A session with a particular focus on career development, how to gain the skills to apply for roles in different areas of RMA.

### Session 2: Retaining skills within RMA

#### Description:

- Context: It is becoming increasingly difficult to attract and retain talent within RMA. How can we attract people to the profession? Are there things that ARMA can do to support this? How can we upskill those already in post?
- Aimed at everyone across all career stages.
- Presenters will discuss the challenges of recruiting and retaining staff, providing examples of initiatives that have increase recruitment/ retention or upskilled staff such as secondments and work shadowing.
- This would be followed by a Q&A session.

## Trusted Research

### Session 1: UKRI and NPSA Guidance on Third Party Due Diligence

#### Description:

- UKRI has produced a guidance document outlining the steps that should be considered when undertaking due diligence checks (<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/UKRI-251022-DueDiligenceGuidanceForUKROsSep2022.pdf>)
- This document has been designed to aid research organisations in developing their own policies and policies in relation to due diligence
- Talks could focus on the main components of each of the three pillars: Governance and Control, Ability to Deliver, and Financial Stability
- What questions should be asked at each stage of a project? This could be aligned with the NPSA's trusted research implementation guide ([https://www.npsa.gov.uk/system/files/Trusted%20Research%20Implementation%20Guide\\_0.pdf](https://www.npsa.gov.uk/system/files/Trusted%20Research%20Implementation%20Guide_0.pdf))

### Session 2: Due Diligence Processes and Good Practice Sharing

#### Description:

- Due diligence in all areas related to a research partner is important to ensure that the institution is aware of the risks presented by a proposed research partner, and can take the necessary action in advance to mitigate such risks, or choose to refuse working with the partner if there is a significant risk associated with them
- This session would be run by a due diligence network that has been set up outside ARMA where each member specialises in a particular area
- They would each give a talk on their area and share best practices/case studies on operational process e.g. institutional process/framework on due diligence, resourcing, risk scoring matrix, systems and tools, mitigating actions, post award monitoring, process improvement
- A case study on Imperial could be used as an example of how data-based changes to procedures have been implemented covering what works, lessons learnt, and how to improve processes

### **Session 3: Due Diligence – International Research Collaborations**

#### **Description:**

- Talks will focus on different administration aspects of international research collaborations including export control, partner/collaborator payments, and key contract issues
- We live in an ever-changing world and it is becoming increasingly difficult for UK institutes to navigate, in particularly around less formalised collaborations
- These informal collaborations may have things that are missed in the research partner due diligence checks because they're just sharing ideas or materials with partners overseas or publishing a paper with someone not related to any approved funding
- Challenges for non-western countries that UK clinical collaborations should consider such as shortage of participants, funding, and motivations