



ARQUS
ACADEMY WEEK

3-7 MAY 2021

SHAPING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

**European RMAs:
definitions, skills, and
opportunities**

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European University Alliance

European RMAs: definitions, skills, and opportunities

Research Management and Administration (RMA) is becoming recognised as a profession around the world. But what exactly does an RMA do? Where do they work?

Simon is an RMA with over 25 years' experience and will explore these questions and more... in the next 10 minutes!

Overview

- what is an RMA (what do we do)
- where do we work
- what skills do we have/need
- do we have certification
- importance of peer networking



What is an RMA?

Stackhouse (2008) defines it as undertaking work that “... embraces anything that universities can do to maximise the impact of their research activity. It includes assistance in identifying new sources of funds, presenting research applications and advice on costing projects and negotiating contracts with external sponsors. It incorporates project management and financial control systems. It also involves help in exploiting research results—through commercialisation, knowledge exchange and dissemination to wider society”.

Other terms

Stackhouse, Julie (2008). Profiling the profession. *Research Global*, 19, 8–9, 22.

- Research Administrator [US]
- Research Manager, Research Adviser [EU]
- Research and Innovation Manager [Africa]
- Research Facilitator and a 1001 other different job titles!



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Research Administration Around the World

Simon Kerridge
University of Kent

Research is international, so is Research Administration*

As we start the third decade in the third century of our calendar, I appear to be entering the “third age” of my life (I am hoping for a good few more to allow, perhaps, more time to reflect).

While, undoubtedly, research administration emerged over 60 years ago (Kaplan, 1959), probably first in the U.S., it has now developed in many other parts of the world—however, not always by that name. For example, in most of Europe the term “research management and administration” is more common, and “research advisor” is also used. Whereas in Africa, “research management” is prevalent.

It is perhaps more useful to look at the scope of what we do—what is research administration? We could look at the knowledge required for certification, such as by the U.S.-based Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC, 2020). Or, perhaps better is to look at the approach taken, for example, by the U.K. Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA, 2011) with their Professional Development Framework. Or, to look at the competencies required to undertake these tasks, a theme picked up in the last issue by Williamson et al. (2020) as they explored the Professional Competency Framework (PCF) established in Southern Africa. Some recent work from Portugal (Agostinho et al., 2020) as they term “Professionals at the Interface of Science (PLoS)” to encompass broader areas of activity, and this has been built on by Santos et al (2021) to specifically include those who work in research funders and policy organizations.

It seems that, like so many things in life, Research Administrators are difficult to pigeonhole. Personally, I would vote for “Research Management and Administration” or “RMA” as the name of our profession. But, I suppose I am biased as I’m from the U.K. and RMA is part of the national association title. Although other parts of Europe have

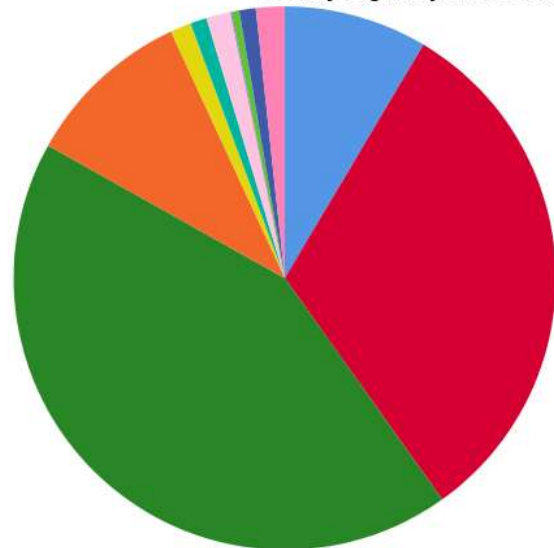
Where do RMAs work?

RAAAP-1 Survey [2016] – 2,691 respondents; 844 from Europe
 RAAAP-2 Survey [2019] – 4,523 respondents; 1,525 from Europe ←
 (and hopefully RAAAP-2 to come in 2022)

<https://inorms.net/activities/raap-taskforce/>

Pie Chart Count of 11. How would you characterize your institution, irrespective of size?

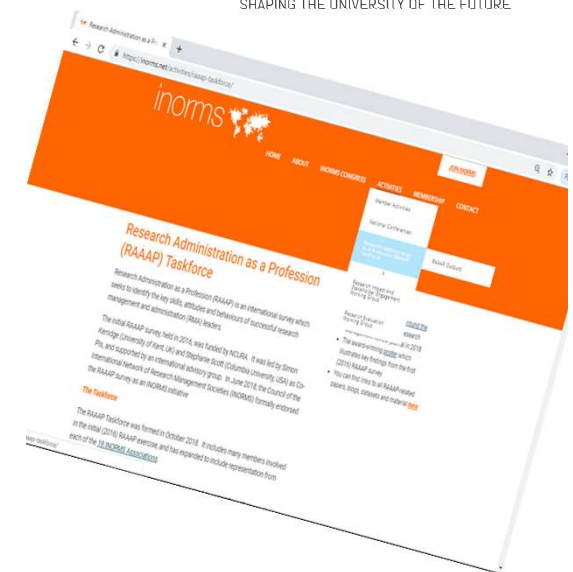
If you work at a university, please select one of the first three options, using the appropriate norms for your country to guide your selection.



11. How would you characterize your institution, irrespective of size?

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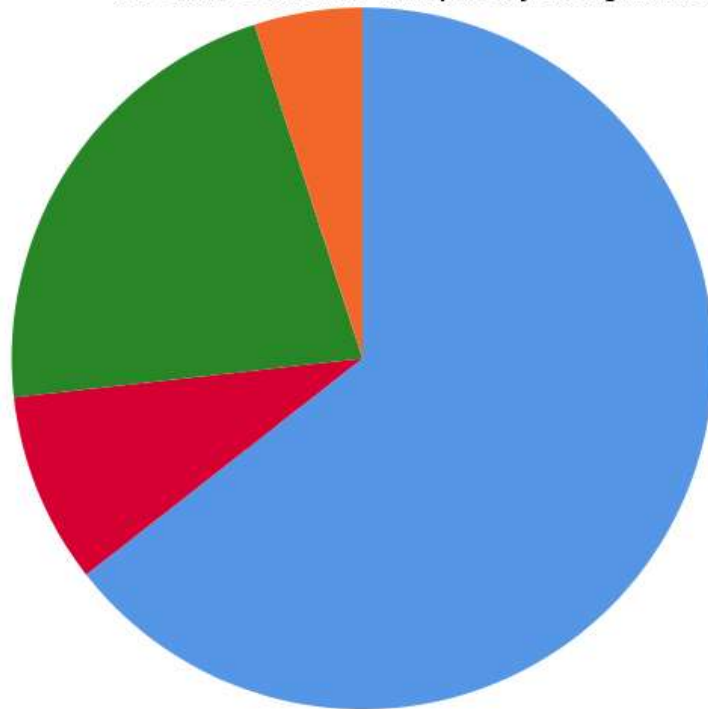
- University - PUI
- University - Research Active
- University - Research Intensive
- Research Institute
- Research Funder
- Private Company
- Hospital
- Charity
- Government Department
- College
- Not sure



Where do RMAs work?

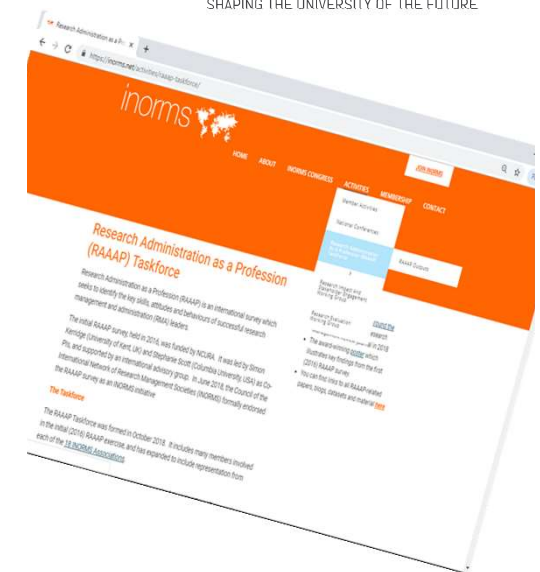
RAAAP-2 Survey [2019] – 4,523 respondents; 1,525 from Europe ←

Pie Chart Count of 13. What part of your organization do you work in?



13. What part of your organization do you work in?

- Central RA Office
- Non-Central RA Office
- Academic Department
- Other



RMA skills

RAAAP-1 Survey [2016] – 2,691 respondents; 844 from Europe

Funding Opportunities
Proposal Preparation
Costing and Pricing
Contracts/Negotiating
Financial Monitoring
Staff Employment
Funding Reporting
Research Impact
KE and Business Development
Technology Transfer / Spinout
Continuing Professional Development / Short Course
Research Student Support
Policy Development
Research Assessment
Ethics and Governance
MIS/ERA/CRIS
Audit/Compliance
External Auditors/Statutory Returns
Managing Research Support

Hard (Technical) Skills

Communications
Teamwork/Collaboration
Adaptability/Change Management
Problem Solving
Critical Observation
Conflict Resolution
Initiative Taking
Cultural/Diversity
Decision Making
Taking Responsibility
Project Management
Mentoring/Coaching

Soft (Transferrable) Skills

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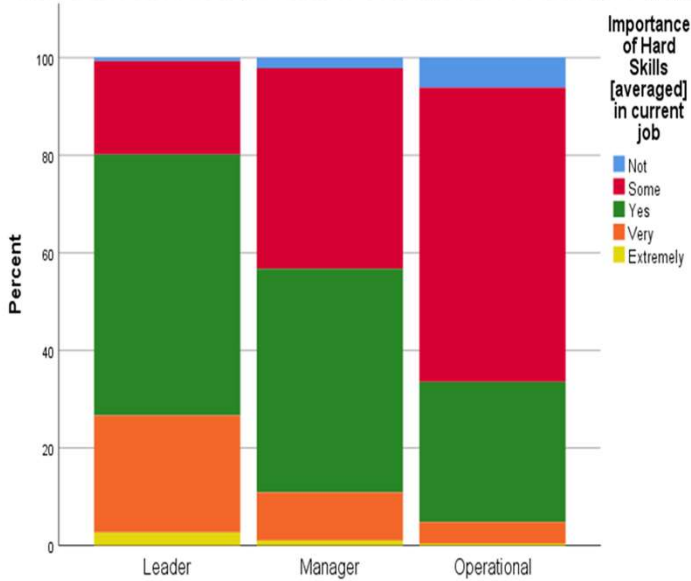
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RMA skills

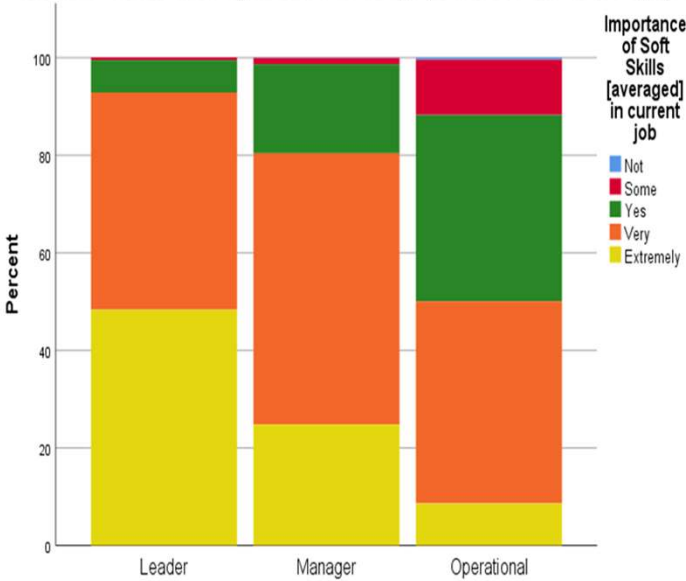
RAAAP-1 Survey [2016] – 2,691 respondents ←; 844 from Europe

Stacked Bar Percent of Define your current RA role by Importance of Hard Skills [averaged] in current job

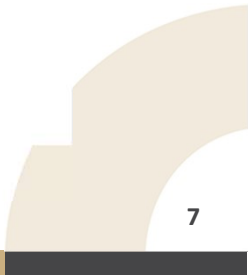


Define your current RA role
HARD SKILLS [Av]

Stacked Bar Percent of Define your current RA role by Importance of Soft Skills [averaged] in current job

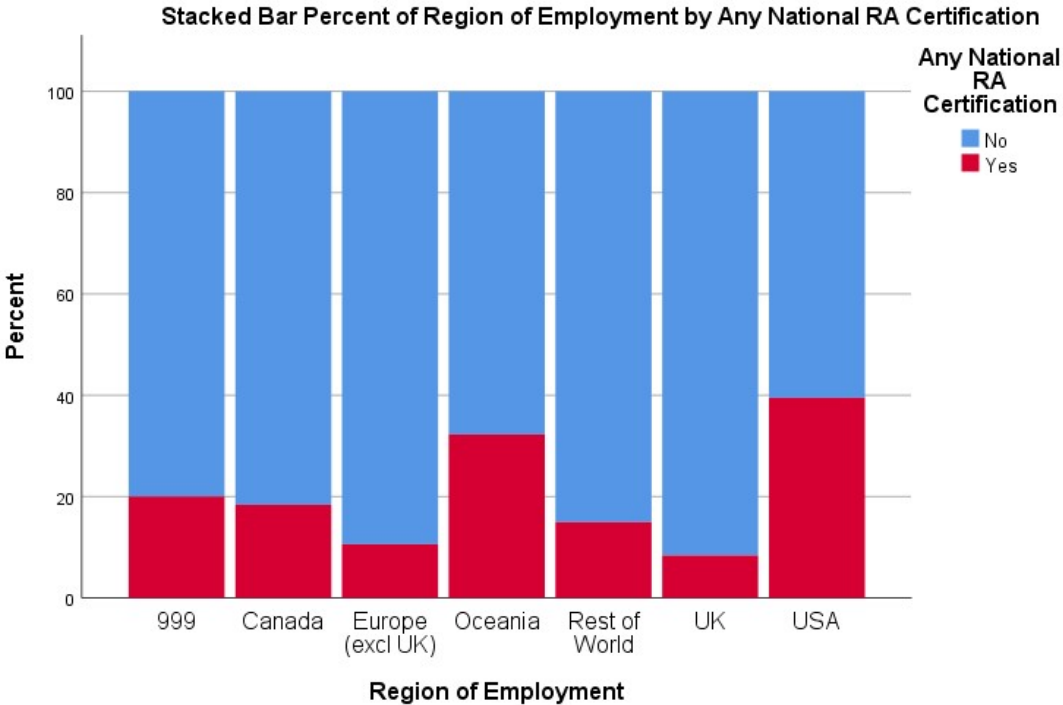


Define your current RA role
SOFT SKILLS [Av]



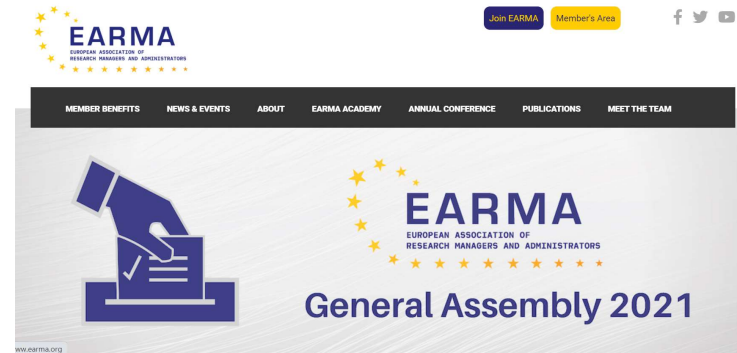
RMA certification

RAAAP-2 Survey [2019] – 4,523 respondents; 1,525 from Europe ←
150 reported having a recognised RMA certification: ~10%; Whereas in the US it is ~40%



RMA networking

RMA is a Community of Practice
EARMA for Europe
But, and, many national associations too:



Danish Association of Research
Managers and Administrators



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Thank you

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

