
EARMA – European Association of Research Managers and Administrators

The European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA) was established in 1995 to support and professionalise research management across Europe.

It serves as a **network for individuals and institutions involved in research management, providing training, advocacy, and best practices to enhance the effectiveness of research funding and management.**

Over the years, EARMA has expanded its influence by organising **annual conferences, offering professional development programs and collaborating with European institutions**, including the European Commission. It has played a crucial role in **shaping research policy, supporting Horizon Europe initiatives and promoting the recognition of research managers** as key enablers of scientific progress.

In 2024, the EARMA Board successfully launched the new Strategy Plan for 2024–2028, "[The future is now 2024-2028: Research management in a changing world](#)", setting a clear direction for the future of the organisation. This strategy focuses on strengthening professional development, enhancing community engagement, and reinforcing the recognition of research management across Europe.

In the past year, **new offices were opened in the heart of Brussels**, where several successful training events and project meetings were already hosted. This central location offers unparalleled proximity to EU institutions, providing excellent networking opportunities, increased visibility, and a stronger platform for more effective advocacy on behalf of EARMA's members.

EARMA remains committed to influencing policy and driving positive change for and within RMA profession. In 2024, it launched the **EARMA FP10 position paper**, "10 Recommendations for FP10," at the Odense Conference, followed by a special launch event on May 28, 2024. Through active advocacy, it continues to champion a strong voice for the research management initiative in the European Research Area (ERA) Policy Agenda Action and RMA policy debates, with the aim to ensure positive contributions and impact.

In 2024, **RM Roadmap**, a Horizon Europe project dedicated to shaping the future of research management (RM) in Europe, achieved key milestones. The project delivered **two pivotal reports: "Understanding the landscape: National Networks and Associations" (February 2024)**

and **"Who are Research Managers? Skills and Competences" (September 2024)**, providing critical insights into the evolving RM field. In parallel, the RM Roadmap consortium collaborated closely with the CARDEA consortium to develop a **comprehensive Training and Career Development Framework for research managers**.

The RM Framework project: Creating a European Framework for Research Management Training and Networking was approved for funding. The RM Framework project aims to support the development of a European qualification system for research management (RM), enhancing interoperability and improving RM within the European Research Area (ERA). The project consortium consists of partner organisations from ten European countries with EARMA as the coordinator. It is supported by an extensive network of European and national RM organisations. These achievements will lay the foundation for the EARMA Professional Development Programme, ensuring impactful and sustainable progress in the field.

Progress towards EARMA's Strategic Goals

In 2024, EARMA continued to welcome new members, demonstrating its growing network's strength and relevance. EARMA's institutional membership reached a new high, with a total of **266 institutional members (compared to 247 in 2023) and 313 individual members (compared to 249 in 2023) across around 50 countries**.

IST-ID is member of EARMA for its third year.

EARMA continues to operate a number of funding schemes to support its objectives. All the programmes have three underlying objectives:

- The training of research managers and administrators
- The exchange of best practices between research management systems
- Enhancing international research collaboration through building strong links between research management systems

Table to show a summary of the 2024 Awards

Award Title	Award Amount
Conference Accepted Speaker Awards	10 x €500 max
Conference Widening Bursary – New Members	5 x €500 max
Conference Widening Bursary – Non-members	5 x €500 max
Event Access Awards	10x €500 Annual Conference Attendance Awards
	5x €500 EARMA-led events linked to external Association Calendars
Virtual Event Grants	Up to 4x €500 or 2x €1000 for collaborative events
Invited Speaker Awards	3x €500 awards
Annual Conference Best Poster Awardees	2x €500 awards
Training Awards	4x €500 awards

The **Annual Conference, EARMA’s flagship event, was held in Odense on April 23-25, 2024**, and was a resounding success with an unprecedented attendance of around 1,500 participants. **From IST RMA ecosystem participated three RMA from different research centers (CQE, IDMEC, INESC-ID).**

This annual event served as a platform for the research management, administration, and support community to gather and share valuable insights and information. The theme of the conference, **"Where is RMA Going? The Future of RMA in a Rapidly Changing World,"** explored **new challenges for research managers and administrators (RMAs) across the research ecosystem.**

The Board continued to approve proposals for new **thematic groups** with the purpose of involving members and non-members around specific professional themes in RMA building communities of practice.

EARMA currently has the following Thematic Groups:

Thematic Group	Year Established	Nº of Members	Nº Members on LinkedIn	LinkedIn Link
Ethics And Research Integrity Officer Network (ERION)	2018	500	NA	NA
BESTPRAC	2021	988	308	LinkedIn Group
EARMAimpact	2022	620	404	LinkedIn Group
Post-Award Project Management	2022	587	675	LinkedIn Group
Research Management and AI Tools	2024	292	464	LinkedIn Group
Open Science	2022	342	NA	NA
European Universities Initiative (EUI)	2022	272	8	LinkedIn Group
Equality, Culture, Diversity and Inclusion (ECDI)	2024	96	121	LinkedIn Group
RoRMA - Research on Research Management and Administration Subcommittee	2024	NA	161	LinkedIn Group

Investing in the continuous professional development of EARMA members is at the forefront of EARMA’s strategy.

Based on impact related training needs of RMAs identified in a 2023 survey, a two-day training event was held in Brussels in November 2024. Delivered by four members of this Thematic Group community, it focused on impact proposal writing and storytelling as well as institutional impact culture and strategy. The event was attended by 32 participants, with a waiting list of 6 people, underscoring the **high demand for such training opportunities**.

During the year, work with both the impact trainers as well as the Early-Stage Research Managers and Administrators Masterclass (ESRAM) trainers highlighted several challenges but has laid a strong foundation for the development of a **future professional development initiative**. This initial phase has provided valuable insights and established key groundwork to shape the programme’s next steps. Alongside this work, RM Roadmap and CARDEA, two Horizon Europe projects funded by the European Commission under the HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ERA-01 call, have made considerable advances. RM Roadmap has addressed delivered reports on “Understanding the landscape: National networks and associations” and “Who are research managers? Skills and competences” and worked in close collaboration with the CARDEA consortium to prepare the **Training and Career development framework for research managers**. These significant milestones have been carefully considered to guide the development of the **EARMA Professional Development Programme**. Following these initiatives, the EU-funded RM Framework project was approved in July 2024. The project will establish framework conditions for training programmes dedicated to RMAs across Europe. This initiative aims to support the development of a European qualification system for research management

(RM), enhancing interoperability and strengthening the profession across the European Research Area (ERA).

Starting on February 1, 2025, the project will last 24 months with a total funding of 1 million euro. The RM Framework brings together the expertise of 17 organisations to build on past initiatives such as RM Roadmap, CARDEA, EURESTMA, foRMAtion, and BestPrac.

The two-year project will deliver key outputs to support RMAs, including:

- A handbook for developing high-quality training programmes for RMAs
- A quality label to certify and standardise RM training programmes across Europe
- A pilot training programme to test and measure the impact on both individuals and institutions

Both the EU-funded RM Roadmap project and the collaboration with “ERA action 17” have significantly elevated the profile of RMAs within the European Scientific ecosystem, highlighting EARMA's crucial role and establishing the EARMA brand as a trusted service supplier.

Given the current landscape, EARMA is well-positioned to play a pivotal role in supporting the evolving needs of the European scientific community.

This year our virtual webinars have achieved record-breaking participation, with over 2,000 registrations. Notably, Elevating Research Impact: Exploring the Power of Open Research attracted more than 300 registrants. Approximately 175 participants engaged in our in-person training and development programmes, which spanned a variety of events, from leadership sessions to AI Day Spring 2024: AI in Proposal Evaluation.

The EARMA mentoring programme pilot, launched in 2024, was a resounding success, with many mentor-mentee relationships set to continue beyond the initial phase.

The **Mentorship Scheme programme** is a tailored initiative for members of EARMA, conceived with the vision of instilling a culture of perpetual learning, meaningful networking, and the exchange of best practices. It's a realm where our community members can navigate the pathways of professional growth, under the guidance of experienced mentors. Building on this momentum, preparations for round 2 began in 2024, with the next phase starting on February 5, 2025, and featuring ten mentor-mentee partnerships.

EARMA remains dedicated to **shaping policy and driving positive change within RMA profession**. The European Research Area (ERA) policy agenda, adopted by the European Council in 2021, introduced a new governance framework, including the ERA Forum, and set out the first-ever ERA Policy Agenda with 20 action points to tackle Europe's current challenges. One key initiative, **Action 17: "Enhancing the Strategic Capacity of Europe's Public Research Performing Organisations,"** is particularly significant for RMA community.

17 Member States have committed to supporting this initiative, sending representatives to collaborate with the European Commission and stakeholders—including EARMA—in the first steps toward aligning research management policies and practices across the European Union. EARMA remains committed to supporting our community in gaining recognition for the research management and administration profession.

In January 2024, the Board approved a Letter of Support for the **successor to ERA Action 17: Strengthening and Growing the Strategic Capacity and Capability of Public Research Performing and Research Funding Organisations in Europe – Enabling Research and Connecting Actors and Activities to Reinforce the Entire EU R&I Ecosystem**. As this policy evolves, EARMA continues to champion its importance and advocate for RMA community’s role in shaping the European research landscape.

In the first quarter of 2024 EARMA formulated its position on the next European Union (EU) Framework Programme (currently designated FP10). The position paper, titled “10 Recommendations for FP10”, outlines the priorities of the community of European research managers and administrators (RMAs) and calls for dedicated funding streams to enhance research management (RM), streamline bureaucracy in the next Framework Programme and highlights the need to further develop synergies with other EU and national funding programmes as well as providing FP10 with an ambitious and ring-fenced budget.

This document was produced by the EARMA Policy and Representation Committee (PRC), led by Eleonora Zuolo (PRC Chair), and included the widest consultation of EARMA’s members. The PRC followed this by organising a webinar “The Research Manager and Administrator community’s voice on FP10 - a discussion” which highlighted the critical role of research managers and administrators in shaping the future of European research. Through continued advocacy and strategic planning, the community aims to position FP10 as a robust and inclusive programme that fosters innovation, addresses societal challenges, and maintains Europe’s leadership in research and development in the world.

In June 2024 the Board agreed to sign up to the Research Matters campaign to increase EU funding for research and innovation which called for:

- Increased funding for research and development (R&D), reaching over 3% of GDP in the EU and all European countries
- Doubling the budget for the EU’s next research programme, FP10, and protecting that budget by ring fencing it

In September 2024, EARMA published its statement in support of CoARA, the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment, reaffirming its commitment to enabling, compliance, and advocacy.

Fully aligned with CoARA, EARMA is dedicated to promoting ethical research assessment and best practices across Europe in collaboration with national RMA associations and, through INORMS members, around the world.

Office Reorganisation and Governance Structure Update

As part of the new strategy and to ensure its successful implementation, the EARMA office has undergone a reorganisation to enhance efficiency and focus. A key development in this restructuring is the establishment of a dedicated department for professional development, providing targeted support and resources to strengthen EARMA's professional development programme.

Additionally, a comprehensive review of the Standing Committees has been conducted. **Standing Committees will be established to provide strategic advice and guidance to the Board, while Expert Committees will be formed to offer specialised insights and support to the EARMA Office.**

Strategic Plan for the Coming Year

In the coming year, EARMA will enter the second phase of implementing the EARMA Strategy 2024-2028, "The Future is Now 2024-2028". This strategic framework is designed to further empower and unite research managers and administrators across Europe while fostering excellence in research and innovation. In the next phase, EARMA remains committed to strengthening the profession's recognition:

1. Driving societal impact in the R&I ecosystem
2. Engaging the community through networking and sharing best practice
3. Enabling career pathways through continuous professional development
4. Influencing European and national policy and practices via national RMA associations and practitioners

The EARMA Implementation Plan 2025-2026 is structured around the three strategic priorities of the EARMA Strategy 2024-2028

Community engagement:

- Enhance the thematic group empowerment, fostering opportunities for peer exchange both at conferences and within thematic events, both online and in person
- Expand the platform for members through events, enhancing their experience with EARMA systems, services, and administration
- Continuously enhance EARMA member value and experience, providing access to travel bursaries and recognition opportunities through awards

- Support, fund, and promote research in research management (RoRMA) that advances the field of RMA

Professional development:

- Continue to build upon on the professional development offerings, mentoring and member driven initiatives
- Continue with the development of the professional pilot programme, offering practical and concise online and in-person workshops
- Assess accreditation and certification processes and requirements for the continuation of the EU funded RM Framework project
- Host in-person and online professional development workshops, offering insights into future trend setting practices while enabling members to propose new workshops and become trainers
- Ensure members benefit from EU-project outcomes, providing access to the latest information and know-how relevant to RMA

Recognition:

- Conduct stakeholder consultations on RMA recognition, striving for acknowledgment as a valuable partner of the R&I ecosystem
- Propose joint projects to the Leiden Group (The European Group of Research Management Associations), taking structural actions toward achieving recognition
- Take a leading role in in the successor of ERA Acton 17, reinforcing RMA training, networking and professionalisation
- Continue to engage in FP10 advocacy, advocating for a strong voice in research management ERA actions and RMA policy debates

To support these three pillars:

- Deliver a new IT system to enhance the member experience, optimising EARMA's tools and software to improve usability and engagement for members and delegates
- Ensure alignment of the EARMA values with the strategic process, milestones and implementation in all aspects and with an increased focus on EDIB and environmental sustainability
- Update the Governance Structure

All current standing committee terms will conclude in August 2025, allowing for a reorganisation aligned with EARMA's strategic objectives. Moving forward, standing committees will serve as

advisory bodies to the Board, while newly formed expert committees will provide specialised guidance and recommendations to the executive office.

As a result, the following committees will be restructured as expert committees:

- the Annual Conference Programme Committee (ACPC),
- the Awards Committee (AC), and
- the Professional Development and Recognition Committee (PDRC).

These changes aim to create a more agile and effective governance structure, ensuring EARMA remains well-positioned to support its community and advance its mission.

The Institutional membership fee for 2026 will remain the same: 1200€.

If you want to know more contact us at pre-award@ist-id.pt