CODAU
Convegno dei Direttori generali
delle Amministrazioni Universitarie

A PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE RESEARCH MANAGER & ADMINISTRATOR (RMA) ROLE IN ITALY

For the purpose of creating a national professional framework for the Research Manager and Administrator role, the WG agreed to use the RMA definition developed by the RAAAP - Research Administration as a Profession worldwide (*https://inorms.net/activities/raaap-taskforce/*) as a reference and starting point. Such definition matches more closely the Italian RMA core activities and adapts fairly well to the Italian context.

The Research Manager Administrator according to RAAAP - The Research Manager Administrator is a person working to support the research lifecycle process. This includes (but is not limited to) the following tasks: strategic planning of research activities, organisation of services supporting researchers, lobbying, networking, promotion of research, pre-award and post-award project support (i.e. scouting of funding opportunities, support to project management - from drafting to submission – and to budgeting and cost planning, handling of internal institutional relations, negotiations with funders, partnership management, supervision of financial report towards funders). Support and advisor on research impacts, innovation and promotion, on training matters, on research policy, strategy and assessment and a number of topics such as data processing, research integrity, communication, ethics, governance, IT, audits, statutory returns, and career development of researchers.

The development of a professional framework proposal for Italian RMAs was based on) a deductive and inductive assessment of WP1 and WP2 outcomes. The WG formulated a template based on the RMA questionnaire analysis, which was carried out in WP2, and on the consideration of international professional frameworks of RMAs collected within the benchmarking activity performed in WP1.

First, the macro-areas of activities characterizing the scope of action of RMAs were identified. Each macro area was subsequently divided into tasks/activities, and assigned to three different levels as assessed in the existing international RMAs frameworks, and adjusted to the Italian context:

RMA LEVELS

1. *Leader* – Responsible for the strategic functions of the Institution
2. *Manager* – Directly reporting to Leader and Responsible for a Team or for specific missions (regardless of formal appointment)
3. *Administrator* – Responsible for specific and operational tasks

MACRO AREAS OF ACTIVITY
1. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF THE RESEARCH MANAGEMENT SERVICE
2. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND POLICIES
3. PRE-AWARD PHASE: PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATIONS, FUND RAISING, RESEARCH PLANNING
4. POST-AWARD PHASE: MANAGEMENT OF FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS
5. OPEN AND CITIZENS SCIENCE
6. EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

LIST OF TASKS FOR EACH MACRO AREA OF ACTIVITY

1. ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF THE RESEARCH MANAGEMENT SERVICE

1.1. ***An outcome-oriented organizational environment***. Creating an organizational culture which recognizes and values research management, while supporting human resources development at all levels, in order to increase awareness and confidence and thus improving performance and productivity

1.2. ***Team Management***. Understanding the requirements and needs of research support, proposing innovative strategies for the development and growth of the research management service

1.3. ***Team Work.*** *W*orking together and staying open to comparison and debate also within the same organization, with the awareness of research processes

2. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

2.1. ***Support and monitor the implementation of research strategies and policies,*** suggesting strategic paths and perspectives to increase the organization's research portfolio, also by promoting a public, national and international profile of its research organization system

2.2. ***Promote lobbying actions*** at the main funding bodies, associations and interest groups with reference to research funding strategies and practices

2.3. ***Apply and monitor research policy and regulatory best practices***, including through benchmarking activities

3. PRE-AWARD PHASE: PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATIONS, FUND RAISING, RESEARCH PLANNING

3.1. ***Create opportunities to promote partnerships and collaborations*** with public and private institutions, stakeholders and funders***, identify actions to support the career and professional development*** of researchers, in line with the strategic objectives defined by the governance, and ensure the diversification of the funding portfolio

3.2. ***Manage and promote the partnerships and collaborations activated, also identifying the main sources of funding for research***, guaranteeing their visibility with internal stakeholders, ***promoting actions to support the career and professional development of researchers*** and ***monitoring the presentation of research project proposals***

3.3. ***Implement research project management,*** supporting internal communication of funding opportunities and drafting project proposals for research funding

4. POST-AWARD PHASE: MANAGEMENT OF FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

4.1. ***Supervise the general framework of project management and guide organizational policies*** for the best possible management of funded projects, also in terms of allocation of dedicated human resources and / or of access to facilities for carrying out research activities

4.2. ***Develop best practices in the management of funded projects***, promote internal and external benchmarks and encourage constant contact with funding bodies and relevant stakeholders

4.3. **Manage the funded project**, from the negotiation phase to the review phase in accordance with the specific provisions of the funding body and the rules and best practices defined in the organization

5. OPEN AND CITIZEN SCIENCE

5.1. **Promote and disseminate** the principles of open and citizens' science within the organization, also by encouraging the implementation of regulations, codes and practices, participation in national and international networks on the subject and working to achieve the related third-mission objectives

5.2. **Ensure constant updates on the issues of open and citizens' science**, also by promoting internal information / training moments, and planning activities for the dissemination and communication of research and its results

5.3. **Become acquainted with the principles of open and citizens' science**, and convey them through project proposals, *ad hoc* information / training modules, dissemination and communication activities about research and its results

6. EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

6.1. **Support governance** in the implementation of national and internal policies for the evaluation of research and researchers, in the monitoring and reporting of data and research activities

6.2. **Coordinate the specific national and / or internal evaluation campaigns** of research and researchers, supervising the collection of the necessary information, also according to the monitoring and reporting activities of the research

6.3. **Manage and support the collection of data** in relation to the research evaluation partners and researchers and for the purposes of monitoring and reporting on research

The specific tasks (activities) within the macro-activities, the expertise (hard skills), the competencies (soft skills) and the training needs, were subsequently associated with each of the three RMA levels initially identified.

This association is not necessarily rigid, i.e. it does not imply that a task shall be associated with only one RMA level. In fact, even from the questionnaire's answers, it appears that the same activity can often be carried out by professionals at different levels, considering the operational context of reference. What changes between the different professional levels is therefore not only the type of activity, but sometimes also (or maybe only) the way in which the activity is executed, in terms of requested knowledge and skills.

Last but not least, it should be emphasized that some of the activities described above are carried out in collaboration with other professional profiles, not necessarily belonging to the RMA category, such as, for example, the professionals dedicated to bibliographic support (e.g. open science→ open access & research repositories) or to the support of some specific activities of third-mission and communication.

1. LEADER

A. ACTIVITIES

1.1 - **An outcome-oriented organizational environment**: creating an organizational culture which recognizes and values research management, while supporting human resources

development at all levels, in order to increase awareness and confidence and thus improving performance and productivity;

2.1. ***Support and monitor the implementation of research strategies and policies,*** suggesting strategic paths and perspectives to increase the organization's research portfolio, also by promoting a public, national and international profile of its research organization system

3.1. ***Create opportunities to promote partnerships and collaborations*** with public and private institutions, stakeholders including funders***, identify actions to support the career and professional development*** of researchers, in line with the strategic objectives defined by the governance, and ensure the diversification of the funding portfolio

4.1. ***Supervise the general framework of project management and guide organizational policies*** for the best possible management of funded projects, also in terms of allocation of dedicated human resources and / or of access to facilities for carrying out research activities

5.1. ***Promote and disseminate*** the principles of open and citizens' science within the organization, also by encouraging the implementation of regulations, codes and practices, participation in national and international networks on the subject and working to achieve the related third-mission objectives

6.1. ***Support governance*** in the implementation of national and internal policies for the evaluation of research and researchers, in the monitoring and reporting of data and research activities

B. EXPERTISE (HARD SKILLS)
Knowledge must be functional to the effective performance of the activities listed above:

- Project Management, organization, development of human resources
- National, European and international research policies, with reference to research funding, evaluation, endorsement and communication
- English language

C. COMPETENCIES (SOFT SKILLS)
Set of skills necessary to carry out the activities described above:

- Leadership and motivational skills
- Results-driven
- Interpersonal and networking skills

2. MANAGER

A. ACTIVITIES

1.2. ***Team Management***: understanding the requirements and needs of research support, proposing innovative strategies for the development and growth of the research management service

2.2. **Promote lobbying actions** at the main funding bodies, associations and interest groups with reference to research funding strategies and practices

3.2. **Manage and promote the partnerships and collaborations activated, also identifying the main sources of funding for research**, guaranteeing their visibility with internal stakeholders, **promoting actions to support the career and professional development of researchers** and **monitoring the presentation of proposals for research project**

4.2. **Develop best practices in the management of funded projects**, promote internal and external benchmarks and encourage constant contact with funding bodies and relevant stakeholders

5.2. **Ensure constant updates on the issues of open and citizens' science**, also by promoting internal information / training moments, and planning activities for the dissemination and communication of the research and its results

6.2. **Coordinate the specific national and / or internal evaluation campaigns** of research and researchers, supervising the collection of the necessary information, also according to the monitoring and reporting activities of the research

B. EXPERTISE (HARD SKILLS)
Knowledge must be functional to the effective performance of the activities listed above:

- National and European research policies, Italian and European research "eco-system", with reference to research funding, evaluation and communication;
- main national, European and international research funding programs;
- tools and portals dedicated to project management and monitoring of data and products of research activities
- English language

C. COMPETENCIES (SOFT SKILLS)
Set of skills necessary to carry out the activities described above:

- Leadership and ability to coordinate a team
- Interpersonal and communication skills at different levels, with internal and external stakeholders
- Problem solving and results-driven

3. ADMINISTRATOR

A. ACTIVITIES

1.3. **Team Work:** working together and staying open to comparison and debate also within the same organization, with the awareness of research processes

2.3. **Apply and monitor research policy and regulatory best practices**, including through benchmarking activities

3.3. **Implement research project management,** supporting internal communication of funding opportunities and drafting project proposals for research funding

4.3. ***Manage the funded project***, from the negotiation phase to the review phase in accordance with the specific provisions of the funding body and the rules and best practices defined in the organization

5.3. ***Become acquainted with the principles of open and citizens' science***, and convey them through project proposals, *ad hoc* information / training modules, dissemination and communication activities about research and its results

6.3. ***Manage and support the collection of data*** in relation to the research evaluation partners and researchers and for the purposes of monitoring and reporting on research

B. EXPERTISE (HARD SKILLS)
Knowledge must be functional to the effective performance of the activities listed above:

- National and European research policies
- techniques for designing and drafting project proposals within the main research funding programs
- basic regulation knowledge of the main national, European and international research funding programs
- IT tools, software and platforms dedicated to project management and monitoring of data and products of research activities
- National legislation and internal regulation with reference to the activities carried out
- English language

B. COMPETENCIES (SOFT SKILLS)
Set of skills necessary to carry out the activities described above:

- Team Working
- Interpersonal Problem solving skills
- Communication skills
- Results-driven

RMA PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK - SUMMARY CHART

Leader

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Project management, organization, development of human resources

National, European and international research policies, with reference to research funding, evaluation, endorsement and communication

English language

SOFT SKILLS

Leadership and motivational skills
Results-driven
Interpersonal and networking skills

Manager

TECHNICAL SKILLS

National and European research policies, Italian and European research "eco-system", with reference to research funding, evaluation and communication

Main national, European and international research funding programs

Tools and portals dedicated to project management and monitoring of data and products of research activities

English language

SOFT SKILLS

Leadership and ability to coordinate a team

Interpersonal and communication skills at different levels, with internal and external stakeholders

Problem solving and results-driven

Administrator

TECHNICAL SKILLS

National and European research policies

Techniques for drafting project proposals within the main research funding programs

Basic regulation knowledge of European and international research funding programs

IT tools, software and portals dedicated to project management and monitoring of data and products of research activities

National legislation and internal regulation with reference to the activities carried out

English language

SOFT SKILLS

Team Working
Interpersonal Problem solving skills
Communication skills
Results-driven

RMA PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL MATRIX

	ORGANIZATION, MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF THE RESEARCH MANAGEMENT SERVICE	PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND POLICIES	PRE-AWARD PHASE: PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATIONS, FUND RAISING, RESEARCH PLANNING	POST-AWARD PHASE: MANAGEMENT OF FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS	ETHICS, OPEN AND CITIZENS SCIENCE	EVALUATION OF RESEARCH
Leader – Responsible for the strategic functions of the Institution	An outcome-oriented organizational environment	Support and monitor the implementation of research strategies and policies	Create opportunities to promote partnerships and collaborations	Supervise the general framework of project management and guide organizational policies	Promote and disseminate	Support governance in the implementation of national and internal policies
Manager – Directly reporting to Leader and Responsible for a Team or for specific missions (regardless of formal appointment)	Team Management	Promote lobbying actions	Manage and promote the partnerships and collaborations activated, also identifying the main sources of funding for research	Develop best practices in the management of funded projects	Ensure constant updates on the issues of open and citizens' science	Coordinate the specific national and / or internal evaluation campaigns of research and researchers
Administrator – Responsible for specific and operational tasks	Team Work	Apply and monitor research policy and regulatory best practices	Implement research project management	Manage the funded project	Become familiar with the principles of open and citizens' science and convey them through project proposals	Manage and support the collection of data in relation to the research partners evaluation