

ARMS 2024 CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Theme: Effective collaboration with external stakeholders

Title: Stakeholder Mapping as a Catalyst for Relationship Building

Author: Stephanie Lim - Nossal Institute for Global Health, University of Melbourne

Abstract:

In the intricate landscape of research projects, funding stands as a cornerstone—research cannot be done without funding. This underlines the critical role of relationships cultivated by researchers and research managers with funding partners. Effective stakeholder engagement cannot be underestimated in this setting, holding the potential to unlock invaluable resources. However, embarking on understanding stakeholders can feel quite daunting without a clear starting point.

In a research institution or university where a diverse array of disciplines and sectors intersect, each staff often maintains at least one important relationship with a key funder. Understanding these connections, as well as understanding the funding partners, empowers us to grasp the challenges faced by these partners. This can help us respond appropriately, thereby capitalising on opportunities as they arise. We can collaborate on existing priority areas and highlight new areas of work that can be mutually beneficial.

In this poster, we share lessons learned and have identified essential steps to lead a stakeholder mapping process in a research environment. This involves identifying who your funding partners are, including their needs, priorities and limitations, their relative importance and their influence on your work. Understanding current relationships, as well as who holds those relationships, is also critical. This is an emerging area of practice where we start to put ourselves in a position to be able to reap the rewards of building effective relationships with funding partners.