

ARMS 2024 CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Theme: Professional research management as embedded practice

Title: The multifaceted identity of a research manager: a key to building collaborative relationships

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Abstract:

The career aspirations and goals of researchers change at different career stages but researchers are often treated as a homogenous group. The support they receive is largely standardised and procedural, and their relationship with research management staff is always characterised as a client service relationship. Through a pilot case study of early-career, mid-career and senior researchers, this paper aims to enhance our understanding of the needs of researchers at various career stages and their perceptions on the roles of research management professionals. Early-career researchers are often keen; proactively seeking advice, while also trying to ensure they follow the right process. With clearer research visions midcareer researchers tend to have clearly identified goals and opportunities, and they are quite skilled at writing grant proposals but still open to suggestions and feedback. Senior researchers often expect more administrative support than strategic advice with their already established track record and research program. To work with researchers with diverse needs, research management professionals need to recognise and adapt to the advisor, collaborator, or administrator roles they play. This study suggests ways to work effectively with researchers within current resource constraints when individualised tailored support is not feasible.