

● **Developing a culture of professionalization in research and innovation management, through effective leadership**

Within the global research management community, regardless of the context, the culture in our organisations needs to allow for development and professionalisation of research support. This panel will share experiences from India, Vietnam, Thailand, the UK and South Africa, to examine factors that might aid leaders in attracting, retaining and developing new entrants to the profession, as well supporting the career paths of those who are already established in their roles.

Research Management is still very much a developing field in many countries and contexts, such as South and Southeast Asia, and organisations seeking to establish research management support often need to recruit and train staff from varied backgrounds, without formal grant management qualifications. The panel will discuss competencies that are important for RMAs, which could be transferable from other professions, as well as competencies which are specific to RMAs, which could require or benefit from, on the job training, and be developed through a combination of approaches including mentoring.

Even in well established research offices, there can be still be reluctance to support a culture of enhanced professionalisation. However, where there are deficits, there are also opportunities for leaders, as well as RMAs themselves, to find creative solutions to build a culture of collaborative working in partnership with academics, which our panel will explore.

For research managers in all contexts, it is important to have a sense of a defined career path, with visibility of their profession within their organisations – and this represents a leadership challenge for those who are building research management teams and working within research organisations. The panelists will share their experience of tackling these challenges, in a variety of contexts, and aim to show intersections and linkages within the diversity of their experience.

Presenters:

- Ms Katrina Lawson, University of Oxford (Viet Nam)
Katrina Lawson is the Grants and Communications Manager at Oxford University Clinical Research Unit (OUCRU). The OUCRU grants management team is based in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, and manages a comprehensive grants programme in Vietnam, Indonesia and Nepal. Katrina's previous roles include working at the Office of Research Services in at KAUST in Saudi Arabia, and with the University of Auckland in New Zealand. Katrina also leads the OUCRU Communications team, and has a special interest in promoting research uptake, which led her to develop the OUCRU policy engagement team and secure policy engagement funding support from Wellcome.
- Dr Savita Ayyar, University of Delhi (India)
Dr Savita Ayyar trained in Biochemistry at the University of Delhi and in Biotechnology at AIIMS, New Delhi. Her doctoral research in Developmental Biology at the University of Cambridge, UK was supported by a Cambridge Commonwealth Trust Fellowship. Following a period of postdoctoral research, she worked at the Wellcome Trust in London, UK. Following this, she moved to India to initiate the activities of the Research Development Office (RDO) at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore. Dr Ayyar currently works on behalf of the DBT/Wellcome Trust India Alliance as an Independent Consultant to develop IRMI, the India Research Management Initiative (<https://www.indiaalliance.org/India-Research-Management-Initiative>).

- Ms Gem Brown, University of Oxford (United Kingdom)
Gem Brown is an experienced business professional, holding a BA (Hons) in Business with Law from the Open University and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Warwick. Gem has worked in both the public sector and with many industry partners, developing income-generating services and negotiating commercial and research contract activity. Gem has been instrumental in driving change to improve operations, most recently consolidating grant management at the Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford. As the NDM Head of Grant Management, Gem has oversight of a portfolio of grant activity worth over £1 billion, funded by more than 100 different funding bodies.
 - Dr Pamisha Pillay, University of Cape Town (South Africa)
Dr Pamisha Pillay has a PhD in Chemistry from the University of Cape Town and has worked as a researcher and research manager at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). She is currently the Director of the Research and Consulting Support Unit at Wits Enterprise, a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. She is also the former Vice President of the Research Management portfolio of SARIMA and the interim Chair of the International Professional Recognition Council (IPRC), an autonomous body that confers professional recognition to research managers across Africa based on a peer review process.
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