





Introduction to Part 1

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The field of research management and administration (RMA) is an evolving domain. With research endeavors spanning multiple disciplines and often involving various institutions and diverse teams of experts, there is an increasing focus on research governance. Researchers are now expected to demonstrate the impact of their work, going beyond academic achievements to encompass broader societal significance. RMAs play a crucial role in ensuring that research is carried out efficiently, ethically, and with a substantial societal impact, aligning with evolving funding priorities, changing policy requirements, and the rapid advancement of technologies.


As RMAs' roles and responsibilities continue to expand, more researchers and scholars are turning their attention to this domain for investigation. However, the theoretical foundations of RMA activities have been relatively unexplored. To address this gap, Part 1 of this handbook comprises a comprehensive collection of chapters covering various topics, offering frameworks to inform and guide future research on RMAs. These theoretical frameworks assist in addressing the numerous challenges and opportunities that this evolving field encounters and serve as a basis for developing best practices. The contributions from leading experts and practitioners in the field provide valuable resources for researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and students looking to deepen their understanding of this emerging profession.

Part 1 consists of four sections with distinct themes: History, Context, Identity, and Professionalism. We present a succinct overview of each chapter by dividing the discussion into four sections.

Section 1: History

Section 1 provides the historical context to lay the foundation of the subsequent discussions on the RMA profession. How and when did RMA emerge as a profession

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in different parts of the world? How were professional associations for RMAs set up and organised in different regions? **Chapter 1.1** (Kirkland, 2023) presents a comprehensive overview of the progress of research management in Africa over the past two decades, particularly through the growth of various professional associations including Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association, SARIMA. The chapter aims to offer a critical assessment of the role of international support in building research management structures on the African continent. **Chapter 1.2** (Monahan et al., 2023) offers a thorough chronology of how the profession has evolved in the United States and Canada, with distinct specialisations over the years, resulting in the development of professional societies in both countries. It also touches on Mexico, where no formal research administration infrastructure has been established yet.

Chapter 1.3 (Takahashi, 2023) focusses on Asia by highlighting the increasing need and the resultant development of RMA since the 2010s by covering China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. The comparative analysis also reveals a variation among the countries in the region in the way they address these professions. In **Chapter 1.4** (Hochman et al., 2023), the authors trace the origins of the RMA profession in Australasia, charting its growth over the past 35 years. They show how the RMA profession in Australasia has gained widespread recognition within the higher education sector and among government agencies, through the establishment of a well-regarded accreditation program.

Chapter 1.5 (Zsár, 2023a) demonstrates the close relationship between the development of RMA in Europe and the science and technology policy emerged from discussions among the European Union member states, the European Commission, and Parliament. The author traces its origins to the 1980s, depicting how a network among a small group of financial professionals has evolved over time, with uneven growth across regions. **Chapter 1.6** (Groeninx van Zoelen, 2023) provides a brief overview of the state of RMA in Central and Eastern European countries, where the profession is relatively new given the history, size, and economy of the region. Highlighting examples of progress and challenges within the profession, the author maintains that only a few have leveraged regional or European funding opportunities.

The last chapter of Section 1, **Chapter 1.7** (Kulakowski, 2023) provides a detailed historical account of the origins and evolution of INORMS, the International Network of Research Management Societies, and summarises the factors that led to its formation. Established 20 years ago, INORMS has grown its membership base by successfully addressing the need for cross-national understanding of research regulations and promoting collaborations among member societies.

Section 2: Context

Section 2 is dedicated to exploring the contextual aspects of RMAs, including their professional qualifications, skill sets, and common career trajectories. Through detailed discussions on definitions, this section aims to promote our understanding of the field.¹

¹As stated in the previous chapter (Kerridge et al., 2023, Introduction and Structure), this book focusses on issues such as formation, evolution, and significance of the professional roles in the broader research ecosystem. For in-depth understanding of the tasks and responsibilities of RMAs, Kulakowski and Chronister (2006) provides a detailed description of the day-to-day tasks involved in the profession, which could be of interest to readers who are considering becoming an RMA.

Chapter 2.1 (de Jong, 2023) aims to provide a comprehensive definition and description of professional staff (PS) in higher education and research, taking into account the evolving nature of employment in these sectors. With the absence of a widely accepted definition, the author proposes a new narrative that integrates current literature. **Chapter 2.2** (Oliveira, Fischer, et al., 2023) analyses the results of the third Research Administration as a Profession Survey (RAAAP-3) carried out in 2022. It examines various demographic characteristics of RMAs as well as the types of institutions where they work, their job responsibilities, academic qualifications, professional accreditations, and affiliation with professional associations.

Chapter 2.3 (Dutta et al., 2023) explores the routes how individuals enter the RMA profession, the skills they bring to secure their first role, and their career satisfaction. The chapter provides an overview of the diverse backgrounds and paths that can lead people to the field of RMA, based on the qualitative feedback from the RAAAP-3 survey questions. The aim of **Chapter 2.4** (Poli, Kerridge, et al., 2023) is to explore the reasons behind individuals choosing to become and remain RMAs, as well as to understand their roles, skills, and career paths. The chapter examines the results of the RAAAP-2 survey to gain a global understanding of this developing field. **Chapter 2.5** (Santos et al., 2023) investigates the work settings of RMAs and analyses the various work contexts, based on the data collected through surveys and interviews conducted with RMAs from the United States and Europe.

Chapter 2.6 (Junqueira & Bezerra, 2023) presents a case study of the establishment of a scientific research project management office at a Brazilian institution. Depicting a success by a small team operation, the chapter aims to illustrate the significance and impact of RMA practices even in settings with limited resources. **Chapter 2.7** (Ritchie et al., 2023) provides a thorough discussion of RMA education, training programs, and professional development in North America and Western Europe. It evaluates the proliferation of certification and credentialing programs over the past three decades and their influence on the development of the field as a profession. With a goal to provide a platform, **Chapter 2.8** (Andersen & Romano, 2023) provides an overview of the emergence and institutionalisation of professional associations for RMA, which creates a forum for future discourse among practitioners, and a nexus for a profession to develop around.

Section 3: Identity

Section 3 is dedicated to presenting the latest research findings related to the emerging identity of RMA as a profession. The chapters in this section explore a range of issues that RMAs face as they navigate the challenges and opportunities of this evolving field.

Chapter 3.1 (Poli, Oliveira, et al., 2023) utilises a mixed methodology to comprehensively understand the RMA profession by combining viewpoints and interpretations from both within and outside the field. It concludes by analysing how individuals from other fields who partake in RMA training courses perceive the RMA profession. The objective of **Chapter 3.2** (Poli, et al., 2023) is to enhance the reader's comprehension of the organisational structures surrounding RMAs and their functionality. It commences by elucidating the various types of knowledge present in higher education and evaluates the institutionalisation and development of the RMA profession across different countries. In **Chapter 3.3** (Oliveira, Trentini, et al., 2023), the authors introduce a four-type model of organisational structures in the realm of RMA and illustrate it with two examples: Embrapa in Brazil and SAM-Research at the Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy. The objective is to demonstrate to readers the significance of creating adaptable and tailored support services for RMA.

With a specific focus on the African context, the authors of **Chapter 3.4** (Hunter-Hüsselmann et al., 2023) explore the significance of cultivating institutional research cultures and implementing effective research support structures, including the establishment of dedicated research offices. The chapter also offers insights into effective management and utilization of research information. **Chapter 3.5** (Sonobe & Saito, 2023) provides an account of the specialists who coordinate international projects in the ASEAN countries, by focussing areas in science, technology and innovation. The authors emphasise the importance of an empathetic approach to interdisciplinary collaboration, which involves understanding and meeting the specific needs of local contexts. **Chapter 3.6** (Zsár, 2023b) explores the importance of professional associations in the growth of the RMA profession in Europe. The author applies the theory of social constructivism to analyse how RMA associations promote the international culture of their members and influence policy-making at different levels. **Chapter 3.7** (Yang-Yoshihara, Poli, et. al., 2023), examines the RMA identity as a dynamic process rather than a fixed concept within the evolving higher education landscape. The authors delve into the challenges encountered in the field and encourage RMAs to proactively participate in shaping their identities and enhancing the profession's visibility.

Section 4: Professionalism

To capture the evolving nature of RMA profession, Section 4 explores various issues surrounding their professionalism.

Chapter 4.1 (Dyason & Pillay, 2023) presents a case study to show how the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) has advanced the professionalisation of RMA in the region, through collaboration with its members as well as strategic partnerships and funding. The authors present a conceptual roadmap that shows how to steer the young profession of RMA in Africa and beyond Southern Africa. In **Chapter 4.2** (Zsár and Angyal, 2023), the focus is on Hungary, where the authors find that the RMA profession is still in its early stages of maturity, with a constantly evolving state of research support. According to the authors, RMAs in Hungary may lack the necessary knowledge to meet non-research-specific criteria, but they show a willingness to learn and improve their capacities.

Chapter 4.3 (Poli & Taccone, 2023) examines the identities and communities of educational staff and RMAs internationally through the example of a large multi-campus university in Italy. The study compares the self-awareness and sense of belonging of two professional groups in relation to their roles in supporting education (teaching and learning) and research, indicating that RMAs have a stronger sense of community, compared to educational managers. **Chapter 4.4.** (Romano et al., 2023) provides a comprehensive overview of the skills and competencies of RMAs worldwide by comparing 22 national, EU, and international RMA associations and professional development frameworks. The study aims to enable benchmarking and analysis for the development of professional frameworks, training for RMAs, and their recognition as a profession.

Chapter 4.5 (Shambrook, 2023) addresses the issue of mental health for the RMA profession. It investigates stress levels by analysing data collected from regions including the US, Great Britain, Europe, Australasia, and Canada through the Research Administrator Stress Perception Survey (RASPerS). The author argues that the findings can help RMAs lead healthier lifestyles and assist leaders in creating work environments that support employee retention. **Chapter 4.6** (Marčić & Pepić, 2023a)

presents a study that includes a focus group and a survey of RMAs in the Western Balkans offering insights into the current state of the profession, its evolution, and the challenges and opportunities perceived by the RMAs themselves. The findings provide a comprehensive view of the RMA profession in this under-investigated region and suggest areas for future research and recommendations.

Chapter 4.7 (Ito & Takahashi, 2023) examines the relationship between long-term career success of RMAs and relevant factors, using data from the RAAAP-2 survey. The results show that job attraction and obtaining additional academic degrees are positively associated with the total years of experience. Additionally, there is a significant connection between country/regional variation and total years of experience. In **Chapter 4.8** (Christensen & Smith, 2023), authors address the issue of diversity in research and research management, examining the benefits and challenges faced by RMAs working with diversity in international research organisations. Drawing from practitioners' perspective, the authors suggest using 'Cultural Intelligence' as a framework to help RMAs navigate the complexities of diversity and internationalisation in the research process.

The wide array of perspectives presented in Part 1 enables readers to grasp the historical background that paved the way for this profession's emergence. These diverse viewpoints also serves as a inspiration for practitioners to reflect on their professional identity. Our aim is for the insights and knowledge in Part 1 to furnish readers from all backgrounds with valuable frameworks for a deeper understanding of this profession and active engagement in its ongoing development.

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