Research management in Europe: An overview of current initiatives, projects and developments in the EU context

Nik Claesen, EARMA Managing Director
Coordinator of RM Roadmap and RM Framework

ZWM Lunch Talks, 23 February 2026

About EARMA

10.000 Research Managers and Administrators

350 member organisations in 40 countries

Co-Creating a European Research Management Profession and Academy

4000+ event participants annually

Thematic Groups

Impact, Artificial Intelligence, Ethics & Integrity, Project Management, Equality, Open Science, ECDI, BESTPRAC and University Alliances

Ísland
Norge
Sverige
Санкт-
Метербург
Eesti
Москва
Беларусь
Київ
Україна
Chișinău
France
Ελλάς
İzmir
Türkiye
Antalya
Alger
الجزائر
تونس
طرابلس
سوريا
الموصل

Building towards the professionalisation of Research Management

EARMA

earma.org

System level

- Building a European RM Profession
- National RM dialogue, policies and practices

Organisational level

- Building support for researchers and the organisation
- People working with systems

Individual level

- Training
- Certification
- Networking
- Career path

EARMA acting at the 3 levels of research management

System level

- EARMA Strategy
- ERA RM Action
- RM Roadmap
- RM Framework

Organisational level

- Creating a platform of member to share, discuss and improve
- EARMA Conference and Events

Individual level

EARMA Academy

- Training
- Networking
- Certification
- Mentoring
- Travel grants

How can European R&I actors thrive in a fast-changing world (of AI)?

EARMA

earma.org

How can European R&I actors thrive in a fast-changing world (of AI)?

The people: The research managers

System level

- Building a European RM Profession
- National RM dialogue, policies and practices

Organisational level

- Building support for researchers and the organisation
- People working with systems

Individual level

- Training
- Certification
- Networking
- Career

The Situation in 2022: A Fragmented Landscape

- Fragmented landscape
- No clear information for policy making
- No common term and definition
- No commonly accepted classification segmentation in subcategories
- No standardisation of research management across the ERA
- Lack of awareness

Developments Research Management in Europe

Co-Creating a European Research Management Profession and Academy

EARMA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
RESEARCH MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

CARDEA
Research Managers open Research Doors

RM ROADMAP

RM FRAMEWORK

RM Definition

Research Managers enable, facilitate, and support the performance of research in all its applications. They hold generalist or specialised roles within the research and innovation ecosystem.

Research Managers are based in all types of research performing organizations, including public and private universities, research institutes, research funding organisations, medical institutions, NGOs, companies, public authorities, and so on.

Outcomes: The European Research Area Platform

RM Roadmap Ambassadors

List of Ambassadors who play a crucial role as community builders for research managers across Europe. By Horizon Europe project RM Roadmap.

Co-creation for research management community

Brings together research management communities to develop a roadmap for the future of research

Catalogue of professional development opportunities for research managers in Europe

Provides to the research management community a

CARDEA ACADEMY

CARDEA Academy

Offers open access to online training resources. Each module is delivered by experienced research

The European Competence Framework for Research Managers

EDI toolkit and fact sheet

EDI toolkit and fact sheet. By utilising these resources, Research Managers can better advocate

READ MORE ABOUT…

RM FRAMEWORK

SCAN ME

RM ROADMAP

SCAN ME

Publication of Success Stories

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT 25

Strategy to unlock success in research institutes 26
Postdoc to PI: charting the Sorbonne University pathway 26
Highways and byways of Europe: strengthening research manager careers through CARDEA 27
From local needs to national Impact – research administrators setting the agenda 27
Recognition of research managers in Antwerp University's career structure 28
A new oncology-driven nanomedicine research laboratory on the ERA map 28
Systemic professionalisation of research management in the Catalonia region 29
EU-LIFE: a decade of uniting Europe's life sciences for global excellence 29
Transforming a decentralised organisation into an effective research hub 30
Systemic change takes time: the power of patience in research reform 30
MSCA-PF Seal of Excellence: attracting research talents with an institutional incentive programme 31

RESEARCH SUPPORT DELIVERY 32

When strategy meets funding: collaborative success for scientific excellence and impact 33
Research development in a cross-institutional research centre: a model for success 33
Going digital: research services transformation 34
Research managers as agents of researchers' career development at institutional level 34
Impact helper: building the impact capacities of research managers and researchers 35
The 1, 2, 3 qualities of research success 35
Overcoming fragmentation: the research management community at Ca' Foscari University of Venice 36
Investing in support for EU-funded projects pays off big for Uppsala University 36

The Situation in 2025 in the EU/ERA: Activities and Findings

Information for policy making

RM ROADMAP

Co-creation for research management community

CARDEA Dashboard

RM ROADMAP CATALOGUE 2024

Catalogue of professional development opportunities for research managers in Europe

RM ROADMAP Survey Results

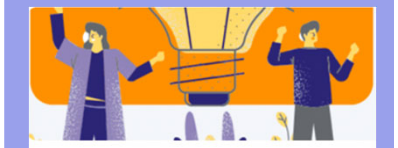
Common term and definition

The European Competence Framework for Research Managers

RM ROADMAP Survey Results

1 Who are Research Managers?

This page summarises the basic demographical character of Research Managers responding to our survey.



RM Roadmap Ambassadors

Classification segmentation in subcategories

The European Competence Framework for Research Managers

Anchor point of research management across the ERA

The European Competence Framework for Research Managers

RM FRAMEWORK

Awareness Raising

RM Roadmap Ambassadors

Success Stories from the Research Management Community

A catalogue of best practices and achievements

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Research Managers

EDI toolkit and fact sheet

RM COMP: The European Competence Framework for RM

COGNITIVE ABILITIES/PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

5. Strategic Planning

The ability to envision and execute a comprehensive research plan aligned with agreed goals and broader organisational and or national/international strategies. Develop a vision to turn ideas into action. Obtain and synthesize information to identify and explore trends, opportunities, threats (also based on intuition and creativity) to achieve a long-term goal and to thrive in a competitive, changing environment. Identify alternative paths to turn ideas into action, select the most appropriate approach and adjust where necessary.

FOUNDATIONAL	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	EXPERT
• Understands the fundamental principles of strategic planning and its contribution to the success of a research project. • Is able to conduct basic strategic planning analyses utilising tools such as SWOT analysis. • Understands how research project objectives align with organisational strategy. • Basic understanding of the strategic role of stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.	• Is able to identify trends and threats within the research endeavour. • Ensures that the research project is aligned to organisational strategy and goals. • Effectively allocates approved resources to facilitate the strategy of the research. • Implements strategies and procedure that increase research impact.	• Demonstrates the ability to formulate comprehensive and forward-thinking strategic initiatives. • Utilises networks and expertise to connect in with national and or international research strategies. • Exhibits proficiency in conducting thorough analysis, identifying key opportunities and challenges, and developing implementation plans that align with organisational goals. • Connects with internal and external stakeholders to devise strategies that increase the impact of the research.	• Demonstrates the capacity to integrate insight, analyse global trends, and anticipate emerging challenges, resulting in the creation of agile and adaptive strategic plans. • Recognised as a thought leader in the field, guiding organisations through complex strategic decisionmaking processes and consistently achieving positive outcomes. • Develops and executes strategies that drive organisational success. • Works closely with stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation to advance the long-term value and strategic impact of the research.

The RM Roadmap as a coordinated European response

1. System-wide dialogue
2. National assessment of research management
3. Strengthening national connections
4. Leveraging EU-level guidance
5. Stakeholder buy-in and awareness
6. Planning national interventions
7. Integrating key actors and framework

System level

- Building a European RM Profession
- National RM dialogue, policies and practices

Organisational level

- Building support for researchers and the organisation
- People working with systems

Individual level

- Training
- Certification
- Networking
- Career paths

Leadership and change management: Building Research Management at the organisation level

- Leadership
- Researchers
- Human Resources
- Central Research Management
- Decentral Research Management
- Financial and Legal
- Internationalisation

RM Roadmap building an RSO Office

Good practices identified in building up and reinforcing Research Support Offices and Services

Offering High Quality Research Support

Advertising funding opportunities and services, providing individual support, strong continuum of departmental and central services, standardisation of RSS, joint ownership, celebrating successes, etc.

Solidifying Research Support

Providing proper onboarding for newcomers, regular meetings and team building, launching internal RM network, generating revenues for RSO

Facilitating Professional Development and Career Advancement

Specialisation within RSO, internal trainings, securing funding for external event participation, participation in peer-to-peer exchanges, professional associations, introducing career frames

Increasing Recognition

Initiating changes at institutional and national levels, evaluating RSS, and demonstrating the value of RSS

RM ROADMAP

System level

- Building a European RM Profession
- National RM dialogue, policies and practices

Organisational level

- Building support for researchers and the organisation
- People working with systems

Individual level

- Training
- Certification
- Networking
- Career

RM COMP: The European Competence Framework for RM

COGNITIVE ABILITIES/PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

5. Strategic Planning

The ability to envision and execute a comprehensive research plan aligned with agreed goals and broader organisational and or national/international strategies. Develop a vision to turn ideas into action. Obtain and synthesize information to identify and explore trends, opportunities, threats (also based on intuition and creativity) to achieve a long-term goal and to thrive in a competitive, changing environment. Identify alternative paths to turn ideas into action, select the most appropriate approach and adjust where necessary.

FOUNDATIONAL	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	EXPERT
• Understands the fundamental principles of strategic planning and its contribution to the success of a research project. • Is able to conduct basic strategic planning analyses utilising tools such as SWOT analysis. • Understands how research project objectives align with organisational strategy. • Basic understanding of the strategic role of stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation.	• Is able to identify trends and threats within the research endeavour. • Ensures that the research project is aligned to organisational strategy and goals. • Effectively allocates approved resources to facilitate the strategy of the research. • Implements strategies and procedure that increase research impact.	• Demonstrates the ability to formulate comprehensive and forward-thinking strategic initiatives. • Utilises networks and expertise to connect in with national and or international research strategies. • Exhibits proficiency in conducting thorough analysis, identifying key opportunities and challenges, and developing implementation plans that align with organisational goals. • Connects with internal and external stakeholders to devise strategies that increase the impact of the research.	• Demonstrates the capacity to integrate insight, analyse global trends, and anticipate emerging challenges, resulting in the creation of agile and adaptive strategic plans. • Recognised as a thought leader in the field, guiding organisations through complex strategic decisionmaking processes and consistently achieving positive outcomes. • Develops and executes strategies that drive organisational success. • Works closely with stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation to advance the long-term value and strategic impact of the research.

RM FRAMEWORK

EARMA Coordinator

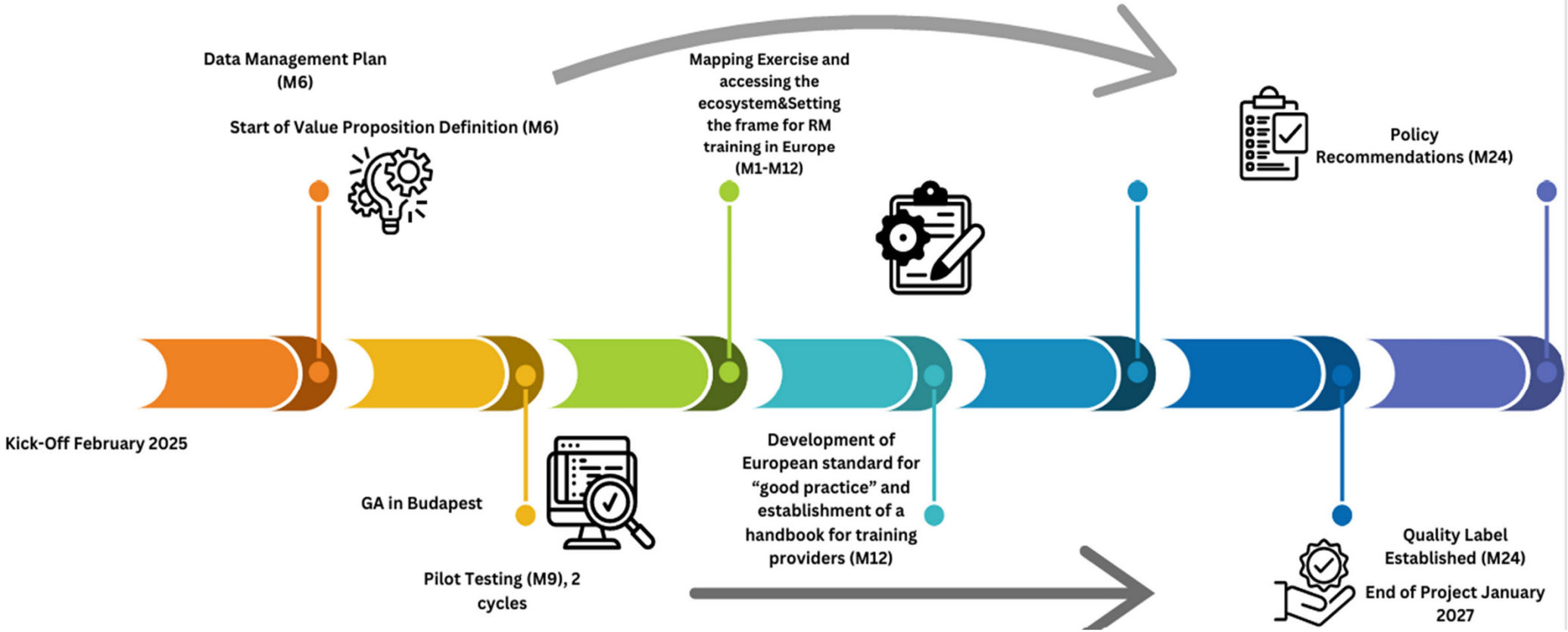
Kick-off: February 2025 in Brussels

Horizon Europe (2025-2027, 2 years)

Creating a European Framework for Research Management Training and Networking

UNIVERSIDADE D COIMBRA · HETFA RESEARCH INSTITUTE · zwm zentrum für wissenschaftsmanagement e.v. · CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung · AGAUR Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca · Generalitat de Catalunya Departament de Recerca i Universitats · 4eu+ European University Alliance · Sorbonne Université · Universitas Varsoviensis · Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca · Corvinus University of Budapest · CZVRMA · Univerzita Karlova

RM Framework Timeline



RM FRAMEWORK PODCAST

powered by THE GRANT

First episode launched!

#1 INTRODUCTION

Nik Claesen

Managing Director, EARMA

EARMA ACADEMY: Coming soon March-April 2026

FOUNDATIONS/ RM1

1. Introduction to Research Management & Administration
2. Funding Landscape & Proposal Development
3. Ethics & Research Integrity
4. Open Science & Research Data Management
5. Communication & Stakeholder Engagement
6. AI in Research Management - Fundamentals & Applications

CORE – RM2/RM3

1. Research Management & Institutional Leadership
2. Advanced Research Funding & Grant Management
3. Innovation, Knowledge & Technology Transfer, Research Impact
4. Research Policy & European Research Area (ERA)
5. Ethics, Integrity & Research Security
6. Digital Transformation & Research Infrastructure Management
7. Leadership & Change Management in Research Organisations
8. AI in Research Management – Strategy & Implementation

LEADERSHIP – RM4

1. Strategic Research Management & Institutional Leadership
2. Global Research Policy & European Research Area
3. Research Security, Risk & Compliance Management
4. Transformational Leadership & Change Management in Research Organisations
5. AI & Emerging Technologies in Research Strategy

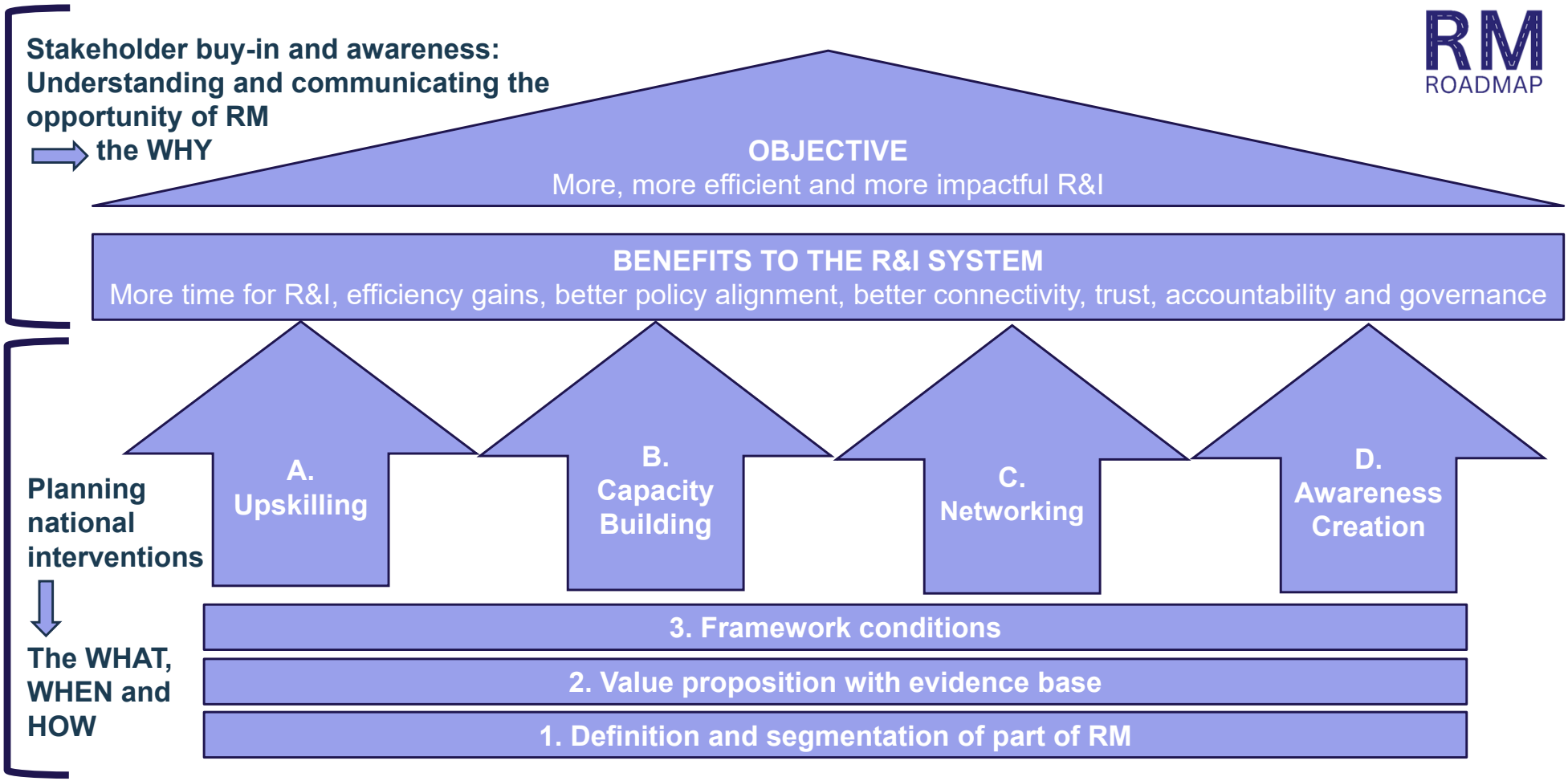
EARMA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
RESEARCH MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

EARMA Conference 2026

Utrecht, The Netherlands | May 5-7

earma.org

Clarivate
Home to leading research and analytics solutions
Web of Science
Pivot-RP
InCites
Research Professional News
Take our Research Offices of the Future snap poll here
All research workflows, data and documents in one integrated platform
Worktribe Research
intonetica
EXHIBITION FLOORPLAN


Stakeholder buy-in and awareness:
Understanding and communicating the opportunity of RM
the WHY
RM
ROADMAP
OBJECTIVE
More, more efficient and more impactful R&I
BENEFITS TO THE R&I SYSTEM
More time for R&I, efficiency gains, better policy alignment, better connectivity, trust, accountability and governance
Planning national interventions
A. Upskilling
B. Capacity Building
C. Networking
D. Awareness Creation
The WHAT, WHEN and HOW
3. Framework conditions
2. Value proposition with evidence base
1. Definition and segmentation of part of RM

EARMA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
RESEARCH MANAGERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Thank you

for being part of our community