

A new era in research management

An ERA action empowering R&I

February 2026



1. Why does research management matter?

As research and innovation become more complex and expectations for societal impact increase, skilled research managers are essential to support effective research processes and the implementation of key European Research Area (ERA) priorities. The Commission's strategic priorities for 2024-2029 place research and innovation at the centre of the EU's economy to secure its long-term competitiveness and strategic autonomy. Strengthening research

management capacity helps connect actors and activities, ensuring a more resilient and effective European research and innovation ecosystem. The ERA actions on research management have been designed to strengthen the strategic capacity of research-performing and research-funding organisations across Europe. This factsheet offers a brief overview of how these objectives are pursued.

Where research management can make the difference*

- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Policy alignment
- Impact and knowledge transfer as well as valorisation of results
- Resource acquisition and allocation
- Shaping the governance and strategy of their organisations
- Accountability and compliance
- Interoperability and flexibility
- Talent development and researcher training
- Research infrastructure management



*See RM Roadmap project deliverable '[Research Management in Europe: a strategic opportunity for strengthening R&I systems – Overarching Roadmap](#)', 31.08.2025



2. How does the topic contribute to the European Research Area?

Anchored in Article 179 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the European Research Area aims to create a single market for research and innovation. The ERA Policy Agendas set out three-year work plans for reforming and aligning European research systems. Capacity-building for research management has been covered by separate actions in each agenda and is also embedded horizontally in multiple ERA actions.



What? Important legal and policy documents outlining the priorities and activities

PACT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Council Recommendation, setting out R&I priorities Member States want to work on

ERA POLICY AGENDA 2022-24 & 2025-27

Three-year work plans translating the priorities into concrete outcomes and ERA activities, co-created with Member States, Horizon Europe associated countries and EU-level stakeholders

2022-24

ERA action 17: Enhance public research institutions' strategic capacity

2025-27

ERA action: Empowering R&I: A new era in research management



Who? Actors implementing the ERA activities

COUNCIL OF THE EU

Owner of the ERA activities

EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE (ERAC)

strategic advise

ERA FORUM

Implementation discussion between all Member States, Horizon Europe associated countries and EU-level stakeholders

2022-24

Core group (European Commission, Germany, Hungary, Aurora) + National and organisation contacts of all committed parties

2025-27

EARMA and EU-Life joined the core group



3. What concrete outcomes have been accomplished so far and what comes next?

The outcomes are focused on four different areas: recognition, upskilling, networking and capacity building in less advanced regions and organisations.

Outcomes of ERA action 2022-2024	Upcoming outcomes of ERA action 2025-2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A catalogue of best practices and achievements listing ‘Success stories from the Research Management Community’, supported by a video series.• Establishment of a network of 140 Research Managers Ambassadors across 40 countries and 10 thematic communities.• Selection of the Umbrella term ‘Research Manager’ as a common terminology based on the RM Roadmap survey.• A mutual learning platform - CARDEA Academy – provides free, open-access training resources for research managers at all career stages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RM Comp (published in 2025) – a career and competence framework outlining career paths and skills for research managers. For its further uptake, it will be supported by a handbook for training providers.• Awareness-raising campaign in Member States and other countries to highlight the value of research management in strengthening Europe’s strategic capacity and competitiveness in R&I.• Analysis of the role of research management in selected actions funded under the “widening” part of Horizon Europe.• Launching a centralised hub that collects educational and upskilling material.

These outcomes have been supported by the Horizon Europe projects – [CARDEA](#), [RM Roadmap](#), and [RM Framework](#).

4. Further material

- [ERA Policy Platform](#): Commission platform with the latest monitoring and implementation information on the ERA
- [INSPIRING ERA](#): A Horizon Europe project enabling research and innovation stakeholders to understand and put the outcomes of the ERA into practice
- [ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024](#) and [ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027](#)

