



CARDEA

Career Acknowledgement for Research
(Managers) Delivering for the European Area
Grant Agreement No. 101058572

Title of Milestone: Final Project Meeting Report

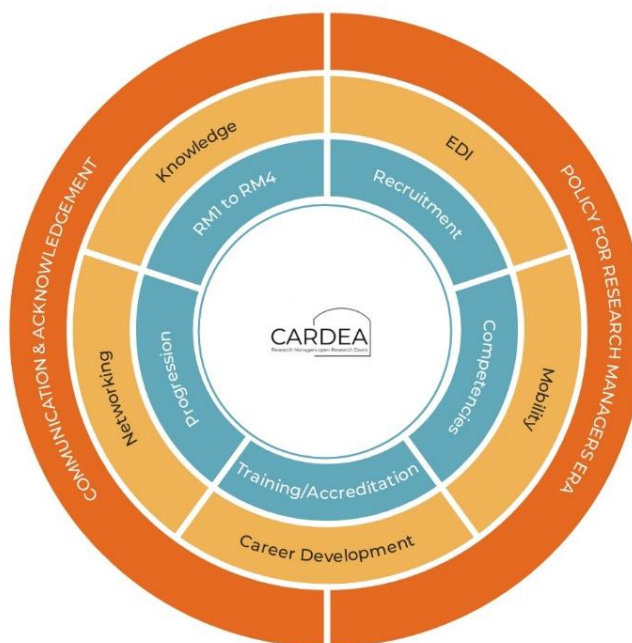


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CARDEA MATRIX



Horizon Europe

Final Project Meeting Report

101058572 Cardea

Milestone 5

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1.0	14.07.2026	Initial Document

Abstract

Cardea is the Roman Goddess of door pivots, ideal to describe our project to develop Research Managers (RM) who strengthen Europe's R&I excellence through a diverse set of support roles and responsibilities. Research Management as a profession is almost invisible from policy, career progression, and tenure opportunities across Europe. Also, there is little consistency between countries, funders, policymakers and individual institutions. Cardea will develop supports to address this inequality. Our consortium has enjoyed considerable success doing this for Researchers already. We will create a detailed data-driven (500+ participants, 24 countries) knowledge space to define and characterise the problem. Based on this, we will develop a range of solutions, including a Capacity Maturity Model to assess and improve RM activities and a novel RM Hub for networking and training to include a community of practice. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Widening Participation (EU13), and Public-Private partnership actions will be at the core of our research, training and enhancement activities. Additionally, the mobility and networking of RM and those with responsibility for developing RMs will be included to ensure the RM ecosystem grows transnationally. We will learn from each other and support one another in bringing RM careers to the next level. Significantly, these actions will provide a significant evidence base to advocate the inclusion of RM exigences in policy, and we will target this proactively, targeting 38 key decision-making organisations. Amongst the impacts of Cardea will be an enduring network and Hub that can facilitate RM development and collaboration, a validated methodology to assess RM careers and a well-established baseline against which improvements can be objectively measured. This allows us to develop an RM Charter and offer a Concordat to institutions and organisations that make significant commitments to developing RM activities in a structured, mature manner.

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ACRONYMS

ARMA	Association of Research managers and Administrators	HSS	Humanities and Social Sciences
Cardea	Career Acknowledgement for Research (Managers) Delivering for the European Area. Also Cardea is the Roman Goddess of the hinge, door pivot, the name embodies the role of RM as door openers and facilitators of access to research	EIRMA	European Industrial Research management Association
C&C	HRS4R Charter and Code for Researchers	IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
CERMH	Cardea European Research Managers Hub	IOP	Institute of Physics
DOI	Digital Object Identifier	KSA	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
EARMA	European Association of Research Managers and Administrators	KT	Knowledge Transfer
EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	NORDP	National Organisation of Research Development Professionals
EIRMA	European Industrial Research Management Association	OER	Open Educational Resources
ERA	European Research Area	PESTLE	Political, Economic, Societal, Technological, Legal, Environmental
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	R&I	Research and Innovation
HC	Human Capital	RISE	Realizing Integration through Social Enterprise
HE	Horizon Europe	RM(s)	Research Manager(s)
HEI	Higher Educational Institution	RPO(s)	Research Performing Organisation(s)
HR	Human Resources	SDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
HRS4R	Human Resource Strategy for Researchers	SES	Socio-Economic Status
		STE(A)M	Science, Technology, Engineering (Arts) and Maths
		T&L	Teaching and Learning
		TNA	Training Needs Analysis

CARDEA Final Consortium Event

The **CARDEA Final Consortium Event**, held on **10 July 2026** at **University College Cork**, marked the successful conclusion of a four-year Horizon Europe project dedicated to strengthening the recognition, professionalisation and career development of Research Managers across Europe. Coordinated by University College Cork, CARDEA brought together an expert consortium of **eight partner organisations** from **Ireland, Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania and Spain**, working collaboratively to deliver a comprehensive suite of resources that will continue to benefit the European Research Area long after the project's completion.

The event celebrated the collective achievements of the consortium, Advisory Board, stakeholders, Research Managers and the European Commission, while reflecting on the journey from the project's inception to its lasting legacy. Speakers highlighted how CARDEA was built on extensive consultation with the Research Management community, including a European survey of more than **850 Research Managers**, which informed the project's priorities and ensured that all outputs addressed genuine sector needs.

Throughout the project, partners successfully delivered **all project milestones, deliverables and work packages**, demonstrating exceptional collaboration despite the complexity of an international consortium. The project produced **40 deliverables** and achieved all contractual milestones under Horizon Europe.

The event showcased the major achievements delivered through the project's work packages, including:

- The **European Competence Framework for Research Managers (RM Comp)**, published by the European Commission and now recognised as a key reference framework for the profession.
- The **RM Comp Implementation Framework**, supporting organisations and teams in embedding competence-based approaches to Research Management.

- The **CARDEA Academy**, providing the **first open access, free training programme for Research Managers leading to a recognised microcredential**, ensuring continuing professional development opportunities across Europe.
- A suite of practical **toolkits**, including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion resources, mentoring guidance, professional development planning, reflective practice, training needs analysis and organisational implementation tools.
- The **Research Manager Career Framework (RM1–RM4)**, providing greater clarity around career progression within the profession.
- The development of a proposed **Charter for Research Managers**, contributing to ongoing European policy discussions regarding recognition of the profession.
- A comprehensive **CARDEA Dashboard**, dissemination resources, communication materials, factsheets and exploitation activities designed to maximise the long-term uptake of project outputs.

Particular emphasis was placed on CARDEA's contribution to European policy. The publication of **RM Comp** by the European Commission and its subsequent reference within the **Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027** represents a significant milestone in the professionalisation of Research Management. The project has also made an important contribution to the implementation of the **European Research Area (ERA) Policy Agenda**, particularly through its support for the recognition and development of Research Managers.

The consortium also reflected on the strong foundations that enabled the project's success. All partner institutions held the **HR Excellence in Research Award**, and many consortium members served as assessors and lead assessors for the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research process. This shared commitment to researcher development and institutional excellence helped shape the collaborative ethos that underpinned CARDEA from the outset.

Looking ahead, the event emphasised that CARDEA's impact extends well beyond the lifetime of the funded project. The project's legacy will continue through:

- Continued availability of the **CARDEA Academy** and associated microcredential.

- Ongoing implementation of **RM Comp** across European research-performing organisations.
- Adoption of the **RM Comp Implementation Framework** by institutions seeking to strengthen Research Management capacity.
- Continued use of the CARDEA toolkits and career framework.
- Integration of project outputs into European policy initiatives and future Horizon Europe actions.
- Continued collaboration between consortium partners and the wider Research Management community.

The event concluded by recognising the outstanding commitment of the consortium partners, the Advisory Board, stakeholders, the European Commission, University College Cork, and, most importantly, the **Research Managers whose experiences inspired the project**. Together, they have created a lasting legacy that will continue to strengthen the profession of Research Management across Europe for years to come.

CARDEA has not simply delivered a project it has helped shape the future of Research Management in Europe.

Agenda CARDEA – Career Acknowledgment for Research (Managers) Delivering for the European Area Agenda Friday 10th July 2026 Dora Allman Room UCC

Time	Subject	Speaker
8.30 am	Coffee and Registration	All
9.00 am	Welcome Address and Opening Remarks	Prof John Cryan VP Research and Innovation UCC
9.15 am	Presentation on CARDEA Results and Legacy	Mary Kate O'Regan Coordinator
9.45 am	Remarks	Professor John McCourt Rector of University of Macerata
10.00 am	Remarks	Dr Conor O'Caroll Chair of CARDEA Advisory Board
10.15 am	Remarks	Prof Anita Maguire Head of School of Chemistry UCC
10.30 am	Remarks	Dr Joanne Ui Chruaiaich CEO, Safefood
10.45 am	Photos and Coffee	All
11.15 am	EU Project Officer	Rinske Van Den Berg Project Officer EC
11.30 am	EU Project Officer	Anna Seip Policy Officer EC
11.45 – 1.00 pm	Presentations	All Partners Work Packages
1.00 pm	Lunch – sandwiches etc served in Dora Allman	All
2.00pm to 5.00 pm	Consortium Meeting Private	All CARDEA Partners
6.00pm	Consortium Dinner	River Lee Hotel

Speeches and Contributions of Speakers

Opening Remarks

Speaker: **Prof. John Cryan**, Vice President for Research and Innovation, University College Cork (UCC)

Event: Legacy Event of the CARDEA Horizon Europe Project for Research Management

Time: ~15 Minutes

Formal Greeting

Esteemed colleagues, distinguished international guests, ladies, and gentlemen.

It is my genuine pleasure and immense privilege to welcome you all to University College Cork today. We are here to celebrate the culmination of the CARDEA Horizon Europe project: a wonderful, European endeavour that has dedicated itself to a vital missing piece of our collective research infrastructure: our Research Managers.

To the international partners, who have travelled to be with us in Cork: thank you. Your presence here today is a testament to the cooperative nature of CARDEA. I want to extend a warm welcome to you all and to Prof John McCourt -- Rector of the University of Macerata.

We also come together today to recognise the incredible community that surrounds the research ecosystem. To the staff who support our researchers and academics, your expertise and encouragement are the foundation upon which high-impact discovery is built. Welcome to this special celebration.

CARDEA: The Goddess of the Hinge

When we look back at the genesis of this project, we must look to its name. The name CARDEA was chosen with deliberate, poetic intention by our own Mary Kate O'Regan. In ancient Roman mythology, Cardea was the goddess of the door pivot—the hinge.

At first glance, a hinge might seem like a modest, purely functional object. It is quiet, in most cases. Yet, without the hinge, the door remains immovable. Without the hinge, access to knowledge remains locked away. The hinge holds the structure together, smoothly enabling entry and discovery.

What a precise and elegant representation of Research Management.

Research Managers open doors in the global research ecosystem. They don't just sit in offices processing spreadsheets or tracking compliance. Research Managers give access to completely new opportunities. They are the conduits through which raw intellectual curiosity translates into scaled societal impact. They open the doors to funding, international excellence, transnational learning, institutional professional development, and strategic networking. They carry the immense weight of administrative, legal, and financial complexity so that our scientists and scholars can step through those open doors into the light of research excellence and discovery.

Today, as we review everything this consortium has achieved, we celebrate the professionals who make sure the doors to innovation across Europe never swing shut.

RM Invisibility

Despite this vital role, we must confront an unfortunate truth: for the longest time, Research Management has been an invisible profession.

If you examine the landscape of European policy over the last few decades, you are not at all likely to find Research Management in the picture. Research Managers have historically been left out of the formal narrative of research excellence. Until recently, there was virtually no systemic consistency between different European countries, funding bodies, policymakers, or individual Higher Education Institutions regarding how these professionals were valued.

In fact, it was only as recently as 2021 that the specific role of "Research Manager" was explicitly named in European Union policy. Think about that for a moment. For generations, we have built complex, multi-million-euro transnational consortia, relying entirely on the expertise of these specialists, yet the formal policy structures failed to even acknowledge the existence of a key contributor. Today, Europe still lacks an overarching, fully institutionalised Research Manager career path with a universally recognised accreditation and career architecture.

The European Commission has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the research management profession through their funding bodies and the inclusion of research management within the European Research Area Policy Agenda. One of their most recent initiatives, *A New ERA in Research Management*, set the pace of implementation at the EU level. European policy has established a clear direction of travel and provided the necessary strategic framework, but the long-term success of these initiatives now depends on national action. Each member state has a critical role in embedding research management within their own higher education and research systems by using appropriate career architectures, recognition frameworks, professional development pathways, and

sustainable employment models. Without this national commitment, the full benefits of the European Commission's investment and policy leadership cannot be fully realised.

When CARDEA began, it set out to fix this structural inequality. The consortium needed to understand the precise dimensions of this invisibility. True to their commitments as a research-led community, they gathered hard, empirical evidence with the successful CARDEA Survey. The CARDEA consortium built a detailed, data-driven knowledge space, surveying over 800 participants across 24 countries.

The results of the CARDEA survey, alongside data from complementary initiatives like the Research Administration as a Profession survey and CARDEA's sister project, RM ROADMAP, paint a vivid and illuminating picture. Research Managers in Europe are highly educated. Over 90% hold degrees at master's or doctoral level, giving them deep expertise and an unparalleled understanding of global frameworks.

The data also reveals a vital demographic reality: the profession is predominantly female, sitting at about 73%. This metric underscores why Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles cannot just be a footnote in our institutional handbooks; they must sit squarely at the heart of our workplace structure. When we talk about recognising Research Managers, we are talking about addressing gender equity, recognising workplace barriers, and implementing structural EDI principles that ensure visibility, fair compensation, and professional respect.

The surveys also laid bare the systemic hurdles that persist. There is a pervasive lack of formal certification, non-competitive salary structures, and underwhelming paths for upward career progression. Often viewed as generalists, today's Research Managers are operating in an environment of unprecedented structural complexity. They are dealing with intricate data stewardship demands, open-access mandates, multi-layered international consortia, and rigorous ethical compliance regimes. These 'generalists' have become highly specialised, advanced professionals. The infrastructure of our universities must shift from temporary, project-to-project ad-hoc administration toward stable, institutionalised positions. The workforce has diversified, and our systems must evolve to reflect that reality.

Key Milestones and Breakthroughs of CARDEA

CARDEA did not just map the problem; it built the infrastructure for the solution. Over its lifecycle, this project has achieved monumental milestones that will define the future of the European Research Area (ERA). I want to highlight four key breakthroughs that represent the legacy of this work.

In 2024, the consortium successfully published **RM Comp**, a definitive, competency-based framework designed specifically for Research Managers within the European Research Area. This framework

maps out the European situation of research management across 7 distinct core areas, incorporating 50 unique competencies and 800 distinct learning outcomes spread over four proficiency levels: foundational, intermediate, advanced, and expert.

Rather than letting this become a dry or abstract textbook list, the framework categorises the actual realities of the job. It covers everything from pre-award strategy and post-award financial stewardship to intellectual property management, data stewardship, knowledge valorisation, and technology transfer. RM Comp introduces standard metrics where there was once none. It gives funding bodies, policymakers, and institutions a unified standard to align practices across borders.

It's so important to realise that the RM Comp framework was created as an antithesis to bureaucratic barriers to entry in other professions. This architecture explicitly recognises that professionals enter Research Management from a vast multitude of backgrounds. Many are PhDs and post-doctoral researchers who, finding that permanent academic tenure tracks are increasingly scarce, seek alternative, highly impactful career paths where their intellectual and professional training can thrive.

The RM1–RM4 structure allows individuals to enter the profession at any stage and transition fluidly, both upward and laterally, based entirely on their evolving skills and experiences. Alongside this, the newly developed **RM1–RM4 Assessment Toolkits** empower individual Research Managers to assess their own knowledge, self-identify skill gaps, plan specific professional development timelines, and document real-world examples of their competencies in practice.

To bring these frameworks into the light, the project established the **CARDEA Hub** and the **CARDEA Academy**. This is a vibrant, accessible digital interface that breaks down the constraints of physical location. Through the Academy, professionals from every corner of Europe can access targeted micro-credential training, interactive toolkits, and structured career enhancement opportunities.

Crucially, the Hub hosts a living **Community of Practice**. By definition, a community of practice is a group of people who share a common challenge or passion, coming together through ongoing face-to-face and online interaction to fulfil shared professional goals. It creates a space where peer-to-peer learning thrives. Supported by the RM Roadmap Ambassador Network, this Hub guarantees that a professional working in a widening region has the exact same access to world-class insights as a colleague working in a long-established capital city.

The final, crowning milestone of the project is the proposed **Research Manager Charter**. This landmark document provides a comprehensive framework to institutionalise the rights, responsibilities, and professional development of Research Managers across the European continent. It outlines the

reciprocal obligations of employers, funders, and policymakers to create a stable, innovative, and equitable environment.

By offering a formal Charter, CARDEA is creating a mechanism where institutions and funding organisations can sign their names to a public, mature commitment to develop research management in a structured manner. This provides the concrete evidence base needed to target key decision-making organisations and build a more robust, integrated European Research Area.

As Vice President of Research and Innovation here at UCC, I see the direct, daily impact of Research Managers on our own campus. UCC has a long, decorated history of deep engagement and collaboration through research.

Currently, we have over 1,100 active research staff members working within our walls. That represents a massive one-third of our university's entire workforce. Our researchers are absolutely vital to who we are, but they don't work in a vacuum. Our Research Managers are an inseparable and integral part of our university's identity. They make an invaluable, non-negotiable contribution to our intellectual community, our financial stability, and our institutional legacy.

UCC is an internationally competitive, globally focused institution deeply committed to the absolute excellence and tangible impact of our research outputs. We recognise that our discoveries play a fundamental role in driving a sustainable, knowledge-based economy for Ireland and beyond. Our strategic development focuses on creating world-class, leading research clusters that align directly with the key research strategies of the Irish Government.

The extraordinary scale of our activity is evident in our metrics: nearly 3,000 peer-reviewed research articles published in the year 2024 alone. Over a five-year window, our university has delivered more than 16,000 international publications and secured over €600 million in highly competitive research funding.

We could not have secured a single euro of that €600 million, nor could we have sustained the compliance, reporting, and operational weight of those 16,000 publications, without the specialised knowledge of our Research Managers. They are the ones who navigate the complex pre-award landscapes, protect our intellectual property, handle complex data stewardship, and drive the knowledge valorisation that turns a lab discovery into a societal solution.

Our commitment to this profession mirrors the massive structural shifts occurring across the Irish national landscape. We are currently witnessing a historic evolution in our national funding architecture with the formal amalgamation of Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Irish Research Council (IRC) into the unified body, **Research Ireland**.

This national restructuring mirrors the exact pillars that guide Ireland's strategic vision for science and society. These include maximising the impact of research and innovation on our economy, society, and environment; enhancing the structural impact of our research systems to drive absolute excellence and transparent outcomes; deepening our all-island, European, and global connectivity.

When you see these national pillars, you realise that CARDEA is a component part of the engine that makes them possible. How do you put talent at the heart of the ecosystem if you ignore the professionals who manage the talent? How can you even think about global connectivity without a network of Research Managers who understand how to link institutions together? The work completed by this consortium perfectly anticipates the direction where both Irish and European policy must go.

The beauty of CARDEA lies in its narrative of real, practical cooperation. This project was driven by dedicated and highly educated professionals traveling, talking, and learning from one another.

We look at our colleagues at the University of Liège, who are actively stepping forward to implement the RM Comp framework within their own institutional structures, showing the rest of Europe how to turn policy into practice.

We look at the tireless work of our consortium members who travelled extensively for study visits, meticulously compiling case studies that detail the diverse career paths of Research Managers across different cultures and societies.

We look at the widespread dissemination efforts achieved through Info Days, active workshops, and a vibrant, highly successful LinkedIn community that has brought thousands of professionals together into a single conversation.

Through study visits, networking, and a targeted micro-credential, this consortium has significantly grown the capacity, compatibility, and mutual trust of Research Management systems across the entire European Research Area. You have learned from each other, supported one another, and lifted the entire ecosystem together.

Conclusion

The work of the CARDEA project is concluding its official funding cycle, but its real work is only just beginning. The enduring network you have built, the validated methodologies you have established, and the definitive baseline you have measured have been woven into the fabric of European higher education – indeed RM Comp is cited in Horizon Europe Call documents.

Because of your dedication over these past years, the doors of European research are swinging wider than ever before. Doors are opening for early-career professionals looking for a stable, recognised, and rewarding career path. Doors are opening for universities to operate with greater efficiency, maturity, and structural excellence. And doors are opening for European society to benefit from faster and more impactful innovation.

On behalf of University College Cork, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the CARDEA consortium, to your extraordinary international partners, and to every single Research Manager who continues to work, often behind the scenes, to make European excellence possible.

Thank you for your innovation, your dedication, and your collaborative spirit. Enjoy this magnificent day of celebration.

Thank you very much.

Speaking Points

Dr. Conor O'Carroll, Chair of the CARDEA Advisory Board

(15 minutes)

The Strategic Importance of CARDEA

- Reflect on the position of Research Management at the start of the project.
- Highlight the increasing importance of Research Managers in supporting research excellence, competitiveness, and societal impact.
- Emphasise the need for greater recognition, professionalisation, and career development opportunities for Research Managers across Europe.

Chairing the CARDEA Advisory Board

- Reflect on your experience of taking a leadership role in this project.

CARDEA's Contribution to the European Research Area (ERA)

- Position CARDEA as a significant contributor to the professionalisation of Research Management within the ERA.
- Highlight how CARDEA has responded to European policy priorities through evidence-based research and stakeholder engagement.
- Note the project's contribution to strengthening institutional research management capacity across Europe.

Key Achievements

- Development and validation of **RM Comp – the European Competence Framework for Research Managers**.
- Establishment of the **CARDEA Hub and Academy** as sustainable resources for the research management community.

- Development of the **Proposed Charter for Research Managers**.
- Creation of training resources, networking opportunities, mobility recommendations, and professional development pathways.
- Engagement with Research Managers, institutions, funders, and policymakers across Europe.

The Value of Collaboration

- Recognise the contribution of consortium partners, stakeholders, advisory board members, and external experts.
- Highlight the strong collaborative approach adopted throughout the project.
- Reflect on the importance of cross-border learning, networking, and knowledge exchange.
- Acknowledge the extensive consultation and validation activities undertaken with Member States and stakeholders.

Building a European Community of Practice

- Discuss how CARDEA has helped strengthen connections between Research Managers across Europe.
- Highlight the importance of communities of practice, peer learning, networking, and knowledge sharing.
- Emphasise the value of creating sustainable structures that will continue beyond the project lifetime.

Looking to the Future

- Reference the continued focus on Research Management within the ERA Policy Agenda 2025–2027.
- Highlight opportunities for further development of:
 - RM Comp
 - Research Manager career pathways
 - Training and micro-credentials
 - Mobility and networking initiatives
 - The Proposed Charter for Research Managers

- Emphasise the importance of maintaining momentum beyond the project.

Legacy and Sustainability

- CARDEA has established a strong foundation for the future professionalisation of Research Management in Europe.
- The project's outputs, resources, and networks will continue to support Research Managers beyond the funded period.
- The CARDEA Academy and associated learning resources will remain available to support ongoing capacity building.

Closing Message

- Research Management is a strategic profession that underpins research excellence, innovation, and impact.
- CARDEA has helped elevate the visibility and recognition of Research Managers across Europe.
- The project's true legacy will be the continued development, recognition, and support of Research Managers throughout the European Research Area.

Speaking Points

Prof. John McCourt, Rector of the University of Macerata

(15 minutes)

The Importance of partners collaborating across Europe.

- Reflect on the strategic importance of creating and maintaining a network between countries. Particularly countries across the EU.
- It is also crucial to involve the widening countries of Europe. Recognise CARDEA's contribution to the objectives of the European Research Area regarding its advanced Inclusion and Widening participation.
- It is evident to you, as Rector of a major university, that collaboration is a key to success.

UNIMC's role

- Proudly state that the University of Macerata has been at the forefront of this major Horizon Europe project, one that is bringing about a change for Research Management, giving Research Managers the formal recognition and esteem they deserve.

Research Management and its invisibility

- Emphasise the importance of supporting the people and structures that enable research and innovation (Research management, research in all sectors, networking and mobility).
- Research Managers lack recognition for the work that they do. They are often pigeonholed into 'administration' as a role definition. Their leadership and project management contributions are crucial, but unnoticed.
- You may reflect about the situation of Research Management in UNIMC. How research management is decentralized to individual departments. They set their own strategic goals, all while central administration provides specialized funding support, open science initiatives, and impact-led assessments.

How the CARDEA project has been elevated by the University of Macerata

- Note the dedication of UNIMC's own Grant Office (led by experts like Barbara Chiuconi) for actively working towards European standards for the completion of the CARDEA project.

- Highlight how UNIMC is translating CARDEA's goals into immediate local action, such as their focus on the work package, "Training and Development," which has designed a tailored training program created by and for RMs (RMs). This program is built on an in-depth analysis of RM training needs which includes a thorough mapping of existing training opportunities for European Research Managers.
- By empowering and supporting our RMs, UNIMC becomes a more resilient, secure, and competitive institution on the global stage.
- By supporting CARDEA's initiative for a Proposed European Charter for Research Managers, as well as the RM Comp career framework, UNIMC positions itself as a progressive employer of choice for careers within the research ecosystem, offering alternative paths for PhDs and postdocs who want to drive innovation outside of usual researcher roles.

Observing CARDEA's Progress after departure

- The development of RM Comp, the CARDEA Academy, mobility initiatives, and the Proposed Charter demonstrate how the project translated evidence into practical outcomes.
- The project has moved from understanding the challenges facing Research Managers to developing solutions that can support the profession across Europe.

Looking to the Future

- Research Management is now receiving greater visibility within European policy discussions than ever before.
- The work undertaken by CARDEA positions the consortium and wider community to contribute to future developments in the European Research Area.
- Continued investment in Research Management capability will be essential to supporting research excellence, competitiveness, and impact.

Provisional Closing Statement

The success of CARDEA proves that excellence in science cannot exist without excellence in research management. As Rector of the University of Macerata, I call upon our fellow European universities, funding agencies, and national policymakers to engage with CARDEA's frameworks. Let us formalize these career pathways, dismantle academic biases, and ensure that the vital pivots of our innovation ecosystem are recognized, valued, and empowered for the future.

Speaking Points: CARDEA and HR Excellence in Research

Prof. Anita Maguire

(15 minutes)

Opening Reflection – Outlining the CARDEA project's inception

- CARDEA has its roots in the HR Excellence in Research (HRS4R) community.
- Many consortium partners first met through their involvement in HR Excellence in Research activities across Europe.
- Several CARDEA partners serve, or have served, as HRS4R Assessors and Lead Assessors on behalf of the European Commission.
- This shared experience created a strong foundation of trust, collaboration, and a common understanding of researcher and institutional development needs.

The Shared Vision Between CARDEA and HRS4R

- Both CARDEA and HR Excellence in Research are fundamentally concerned with creating excellent research environments.
- Both seek to strengthen institutional capacity, support researcher development, and promote research excellence.
- Both recognise that research success depends not only on researchers themselves but also on the professional staff and systems that support them.

Research Managers as an Essential Part of Research Excellence

- HR Excellence in Research has transformed how institutions (including UCC) support researchers through policies, career development, training, and working conditions.
- CARDEA extends this conversation by focusing on the professionals who enable research excellence every day: Research Managers.
- Research Managers play a critical role in securing funding, supporting compliance, managing projects, facilitating collaboration, and enabling institutional research performance.

Alignment with the European Charter for Researchers

- CARDEA's objectives align strongly with the principles underpinning the European Charter for Researchers.
- Professional support structures, career development, training opportunities, institutional capacity building, and research culture are central themes in both initiatives.
- CARDEA contributes to strengthening the wider research ecosystem that supports researchers throughout their careers.

Institutional Transformation and Capacity Building

- Through HRS4R, institutions have invested heavily in researcher development, career support, and organisational improvement.
- CARDEA builds upon this experience by providing frameworks, tools, and resources to support the professionalisation of Research Management.
- RM Comp, the CARDEA Academy, mobility initiatives, networking activities, and the Proposed Charter for Research Managers all contribute to institutional strengthening.

A Natural Progression for the European Research Area

- The European Research Area increasingly recognises the importance of research support professions.
- As Europe continues to focus on research excellence, competitiveness, and impact, the role of Research Managers will become increasingly important.

The Strength of the CARDEA Consortium

- The consortium brought together institutions with extensive experience in HRS4R implementation, assessment, and continuous improvement.
- This shared expertise contributed significantly to the quality of the project's outputs and recommendations.
- CARDEA demonstrates what can be achieved when institutions committed to research excellence work together towards a common goal.

Closing Message

- Congratulations to the consortium for their achievements.

- HR Excellence in Research has helped transform the experience of researchers across Europe.
- CARDEA builds upon this success by helping to strengthen and professionalise the research management profession.
- Together, these initiatives contribute to a stronger, more sustainable, and more competitive European Research Area.

Speaking Points

Rinske van den Berg, EU Project Adviser

The inspiration and rationale for the CARDEA project

- Reflect on the importance and immediacy of funding CARDEA under Horizon Europe.
- Highlight the growing recognition of Research Managers as enablers of research excellence within the European Research Area.
- Important note: CARDEA was one of only 2 projects funded under Action 17 that were specifically focused on strengthening and professionalising Research Management across Europe.

CARDEA's Contribution to European Priorities

- Recognise CARDEA's contribution to the objectives of the European Research Area (Advancing Inclusion and Widening Participation, promoting mobility across countries, implementing EDI values and practices).
- Highlight the project's alignment with broader European ambitions around research excellence, institutional capacity building, skills development, and research careers.
- Emphasise the importance of supporting the people and structures that enable research and innovation (Research management, research in all sectors, networking and mobility).

Notes on the CARDEA Consortium

- Commend the consortium for its collaborative approach throughout the project. 8 partnered institutions working closely despite of the distance between them, etc.
- Highlight the commitment shown by partners from different countries and institutional contexts (Aligning research strategies, synergy between sectors).
- Acknowledge the extensive engagement undertaken with stakeholders, Research Managers, institutions, funders, and policymakers. Examples include Study Visits, Case Studies, the CARDEA Survey, Info Days, etc.

Key findings and their impact

- Recognise the strong evidence base developed through surveys, consultations, focus groups, stakeholder engagement and collaboration with the RM Roadmap project.
- Highlight how CARDEA has translated research findings into practical outputs and recommendations.
- Note the progression from identifying challenges to developing sustainable solutions.

Key Achievements

- Development and validation of RM Comp; the RM1-RM4 career framework.
- Creation of the CARDEA Hub and Academy, including free open-access micro-credential trainings for RMs.
- Support for networking, mobility, training, and capacity-building activities.
- Development of resources that can continue to be used beyond the lifetime of the project and lay the foundation for future projects.

Supporting the Research Ecosystem

- Research excellence depends not only on researchers but also on the wider ecosystem that supports them. Research Managers can bridge any gaps between researchers and this wider ecosystem.
- Research Managers play an increasingly important role in enabling successful research environments.
- CARDEA has helped strengthen the understanding of this role and its contribution to European research and innovation.

Closing Remarks

- Congratulate the consortium on their work towards greatly increasing the recognition of this crucial profession.
- Thank partners for their commitment, professionalism, and collaboration throughout the project.
- Express confidence that CARDEA's legacy will continue to influence Research Management policy and practice across Europe for many years to come.

Speaking Points

Anna Seip, EU Policy Officer

Contribution to the European Research Area

- CARDEA has been a significant contributor to the implementation of **ERA Action 17 – Research Management Initiative**, helping to strengthen recognition, professionalisation, networking and capacity-building for research managers across Europe.
- The momentum generated through Action 17 is continuing under the new ERA Policy Agenda 2025–2027 through "**A New ERA in Research Management**", which seeks to further strengthen career development, recognition, training, mobility and working conditions for research managers across Europe.
- CARDEA has developed a **European Career and Competence Framework for Research Managers (RM Comp)** to support professional recognition and career development.
- CARDEA's European Charter for Research Managers is one of the project's strongest outputs. It is designed to do for Research Managers what the European Charter for Researchers did for researchers: provide a common European framework for recognition, career development, rights, responsibilities, and professional standards.
- The Charter contributes directly to the four pillars of Action 17:
 - Recognition
 - Upskilling
 - Networking
 - Capacity
- The project produced policy recommendations and key findings via outreach efforts such as the CARDEA Survey to inform **ERA and national research management policies**.
- CARDEA has supported **widening participation and capacity building** in less research-intensive regions and countries.
- Discuss the project's seminal achievements, highlighting that it has laid a foundation for future ERA initiatives for Research Management.

Increased visibility for Research Management

- Through its work on competence frameworks, stakeholder engagement and community building, CARDEA has helped move research management from being an often-invisible profession to one that is increasingly recognised as essential to Europe's research and innovation ecosystem.
- The project has demonstrated the importance of research managers in supporting excellent research, enabling compliance, increasing impact, and helping institutions navigate an increasingly complex research landscape.
- CARDEA has worked to highlight **strategic value of research managers**. Particularly aside from administrative tasks. Examples include their role in pre- and post-award support and collaboration between researchers and institutions.
- Through **RM Comp and competence frameworks**, CARDEA has created a shared language for skills, roles, and career development in research management.
- CARDEA has contributed to building a **European research management community**, enabling networking, knowledge exchange, and shared practice.
- It has demonstrated the importance of **cross-sector collaboration**, bringing together policymakers, universities, research organisations, and research managers.
- CARDEA has helped **embed research management in policy discussions**, reinforcing its importance to research excellence and system efficiency.

Sustainability

- Sustainability focuses on **embedding outputs into systems and practice**, not simply maintaining project deliverables beyond July 2026.
- CARDEA's achievements extend beyond the lifetime of the project. Its outputs have informed ongoing European discussions on the future of research management and contributed to the foundations for the next phase of policy development.
- The future vision is a Europe where research management is recognised as a strategic profession, supported by clear career pathways, professional development opportunities and stronger institutional frameworks.

- RM Comp is recognised within the 2026–2027 Work Programme for Widening Participation, further reinforcing its relevance and supporting its continued adoption across the ERA. CARDEA supports the long-term sustainability and broader uptake of its outcomes through the integration of the RM Comp framework into the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027 under Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area.
- For example, in calls such as HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-02-WIDENING-01 (Twinning), and HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-04-WIDENING-01: Research Management Facility proposals are explicitly encouraged to strengthen research management capacities through dedicated activities aligned with the European Competence Framework for Research Managers.
- CARDEA outputs are being **embedded in institutional systems**, including role-defining frameworks (e.g. University of Liège).
- CARDEA may be concluding as a project, but its impact will continue through the European Research Area. The foundations laid by this community are helping to shape a new era for research management in Europe—one where research managers are recognised not simply as supporters of research, but as strategic enablers.

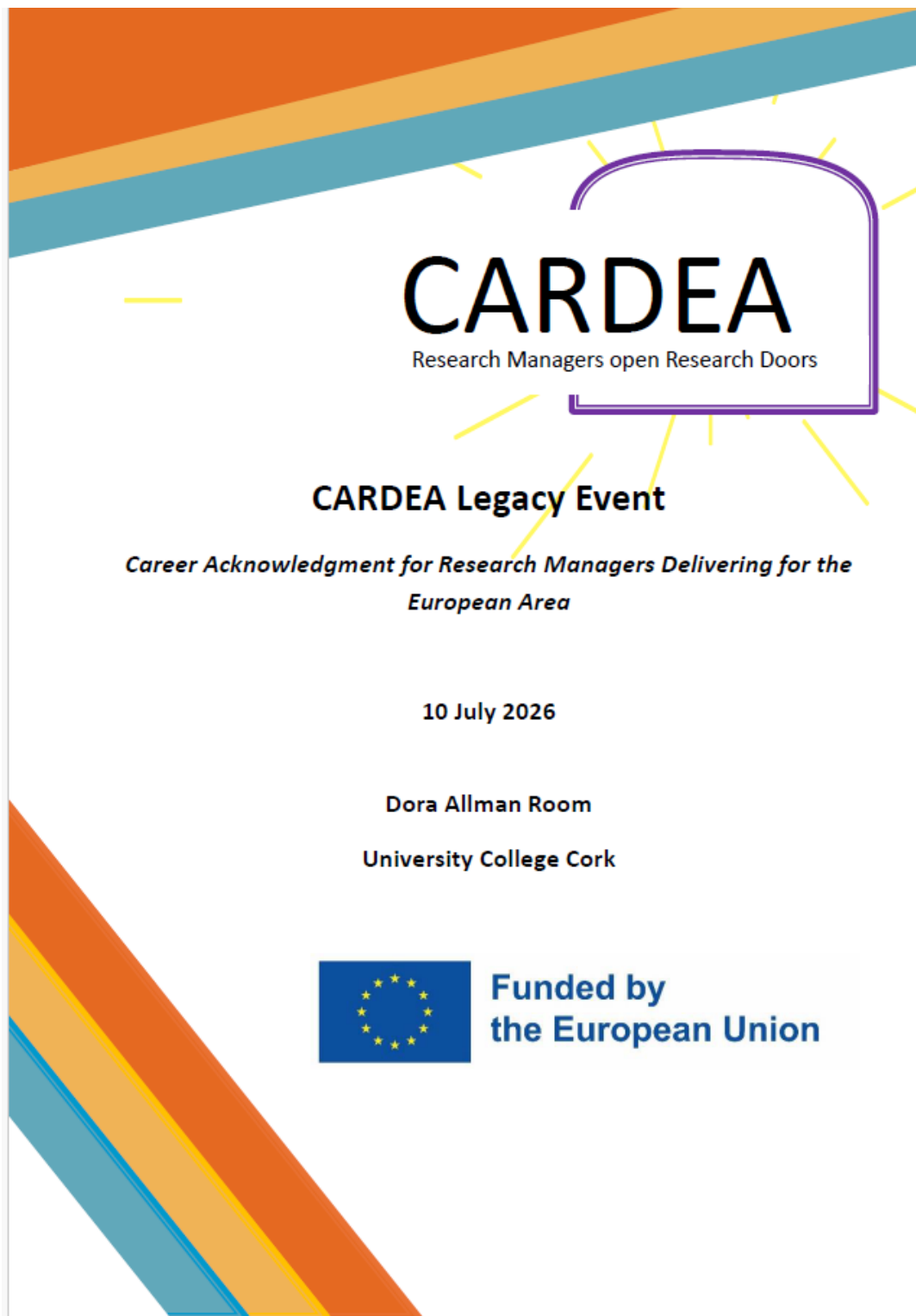
Closing Remarks

- Congratulate the consortium on successfully delivering an ambitious and impactful project.
- Thank partners for their commitment, professionalism, and collaboration throughout the project.
- Express confidence that CARDEA's legacy will continue to influence Research Management policy and practice across Europe for many years to come.

The Coordinator Presentation

Coordinator Presentation : Link [CARDEACoordinator PresentationJuly2026 | media.heanet.ie](https://media.heanet.ie/CARDEACoordinatorPresentationJuly2026)

The Coordinator's presentation provided a memorable and engaging reflection on the CARDEA journey, taking a creative approach to showcasing the project's achievements. Rather than following a traditional presentation format, the story of CARDEA was brought to life through music, humour, storytelling and the fictional character **Anna**, who represented the collective voice of the more than **850 Research Managers** who participated in the project's European survey. Each song reflected a different stage of the project's evolution—from understanding the needs of Research Managers, through the challenges of delivering an ambitious Horizon Europe project, to celebrating the remarkable achievements and lasting legacy of CARDEA. The presentation highlighted not only the successful delivery of all work packages and project outputs, but also the enthusiasm, resilience and camaraderie of the consortium, concluding with a celebration of the enduring impact CARDEA will have on the professionalisation of Research Management across Europe.

The brochure features a white background with decorative diagonal stripes in orange, yellow, and blue at the top and bottom left corners. The CARDEA logo is centered, consisting of the word 'CARDEA' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font, with the tagline 'Research Managers open Research Doors' in a smaller font below it. The logo is enclosed in a purple rounded rectangle with yellow lines radiating from it. Below the logo, the event title 'CARDEA Legacy Event' is written in a bold, black sans-serif font, followed by the subtitle 'Career Acknowledgment for Research Managers Delivering for the European Area' in a smaller, italicized font. The date '10 July 2026' is centered below the subtitle. The location 'Dora Allman Room' and 'University College Cork' are listed below the date. At the bottom, the European Union flag is displayed next to the text 'Funded by the European Union' in a bold, blue sans-serif font.

CARDEA
Research Managers open Research Doors

CARDEA Legacy Event
Career Acknowledgment for Research Managers Delivering for the European Area

10 July 2026

Dora Allman Room
University College Cork

 **Funded by
the European Union**

Welcome

Cardea is the Roman Goddess of door pivots, ideal to describe our project to develop Research Managers (RM) who strengthen Europe's R&I excellence through a diverse set of support roles and responsibilities. The CARDEA project has worked to bring Research Management to deserved visibility, career progression, and tenure opportunities across Europe.



Achievements

Our consortium has reached impressive milestones over the course of this project. These include:

- Development of **RM Comp – the European Competence Framework for Research Managers**.
- Establishment of the **CARDEA Hub and Academy** as sustainable resources for the research management community.
- Development of the **Proposed Charter for Research Managers**.
- Creation of training resources, networking opportunities, mobility recommendations, and professional development pathways.
- Engagement with Research Managers, institutions, funders, and policymakers across Europe.

Legacy

CARDEA may be concluding as a project, but its impact will continue throughout the European Research Area. The foundations laid by this community are helping to shape a new era for research management in Europe—one where research managers are recognised not simply as supporters of research, but as strategic enablers of excellence, innovation and societal impact.

Agenda

Time	Session
08:30	Registration & Coffee
09:00	Welcome Address and Opening Remarks <i>Prof. John O'Halloran, President, UCC</i>
09:15	CARDEA Results and Legacy <i>Mary Kate O'Regan, Project Coordinator</i>
09:45	Remarks <i>Prof. John McCourt</i>
10:00	Remarks <i>Dr Conor O'Carroll</i>
10:15	Remarks <i>Prof. Anita Maguire</i>
10:30	Remarks <i>Dr Joanne Uí Chruáláioich</i>
10:45	Coffee Break & Group Photograph
11:15	European Commission Project Officer <i>Rinske van den Berg</i>
11:30	European Commission Project Officer <i>Anna Seip</i>
11:45–13:00	CARDEA Work Package Presentations
13:00	Networking Lunch
14:00–17:00	Consortium Meeting (Private Session)
18:00	Consortium Dinner – River Lee Hotel

RM Comp

7 Main Competence Areas

European Research Manager Competency Framework



Photos from the Day



GUESTS AT THE EVENT



CARDEA CONSORTIUM



GUESTS AT THE EVENT



GUESTS AT THE EVENT



SPEAKERS AT THE EVENT (LEFT TO RIGHT) Prof Anita Maguire Head of School of Chemistry UCC, Prof John McCourt Rector of University of Macerata, Dr Conor O'Carroll, Chair of CARDEA Advisory Board, Mary Kate O'Regan Coordinator CARDEA, Prof John Cryan, Vice President of Research and Innovation, UCC, Dr Joanne Ui Chruailaoich, CEO Safefood, Dr David O'Connell, Director of Research Support and Policy, Office of VP Research and Innovation, UCC.



CARDEA Legacy Event Registration Sheet

Date: 10 July 2026

Venue: Dr. Dora Allman Room, the Hub, University College Cork

Please record your attendance below.

No	Name	Affiliation / Organisation	Email Address
1	CHRISTOPHE PERRO	APC Nieneune Ireland	C.PERRO@UCC.IE
2	TARA RESTINCTION	Sustainability Institute	tara.reddington@ucc.ie
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5	FEDERICA DE ROMANIS	UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA	F.DEROMANIS@UMC.IT
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7	BARBARA LIUWU	UWHC	barbara.liuwu@uwhc.m
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9	LYONA PETERNEL	UNIPU	lpeter@unipu.hr

Attendees

39



No	Name	Affiliation / Organisation	Email Address
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17	Gracela Doyle	UCC	g.doyle@ucc.ie
18	Catherine Doyle	UCC	catherine.doyle@ucc.ie
19	Amanda Ford	CVRU UCC	a.ford@ucc.ie
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Conclusion

The CARDEA Final Consortium Event marked not only the successful completion of a four-year Horizon Europe project, but also the beginning of a lasting legacy for the Research Management profession across Europe. Throughout the event, partners reflected on the remarkable journey from identifying the needs of Research Managers to delivering practical, high-quality resources that will continue to support individuals, institutions and policymakers well beyond the lifetime of the project.

CARDEA has made a significant contribution to the professionalisation of Research Management by providing sustainable outputs that are freely available to the wider community. These include the **European Competence Framework for Research Managers (RM Comp)**, the **RM Comp Implementation Framework**, the **CARDEA Academy** with its **free, open access training programme and microcredential**, the **Research Manager Career Framework (RM1–RM4)**, the **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Toolkits**, mentoring and professional development resources, and the proposed **Charter for Research Managers**. Collectively, these outputs provide organisations and Research Managers with practical tools to support recruitment, career development, recognition and organisational capacity building.

Importantly, CARDEA's influence extends beyond its own deliverables. The publication of RM Comp by the European Commission and its inclusion within the **Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026–2027** represent significant milestones in embedding the recognition of Research Management within the European Research Area. The project has established a strong foundation upon which future European initiatives can continue to build.

The event also reinforced the strength of the partnerships developed over the past four years. The collaboration between eight organisations across Europe, supported by an engaged Advisory Board, committed stakeholders and the European Commission, demonstrated what can be achieved when expertise, shared values and a common purpose come together.

Above all, CARDEA's greatest legacy is the recognition that **Research Managers are essential enablers of excellent research and innovation**. The project has helped give the profession a stronger voice, clearer identity and practical resources to support its continued development. While the funded project has now concluded, the relationships established, the knowledge created and the resources developed will continue to benefit the European research community for many years to come.

As the event concluded, there was a shared sense that CARDEA had achieved far more than delivering contractual milestones and project outputs. It has left a sustainable legacy that will continue to influence policy, strengthen institutions and support the professional development of Research Managers across Europe. In doing so, CARDEA has opened new opportunities, inspired collaboration and contributed meaningfully to a stronger and more connected European Research Area.

Research Managers Open Research Doors and the legacy of CARDEA will ensure those doors remain open for future generations.

