

the first 20 years

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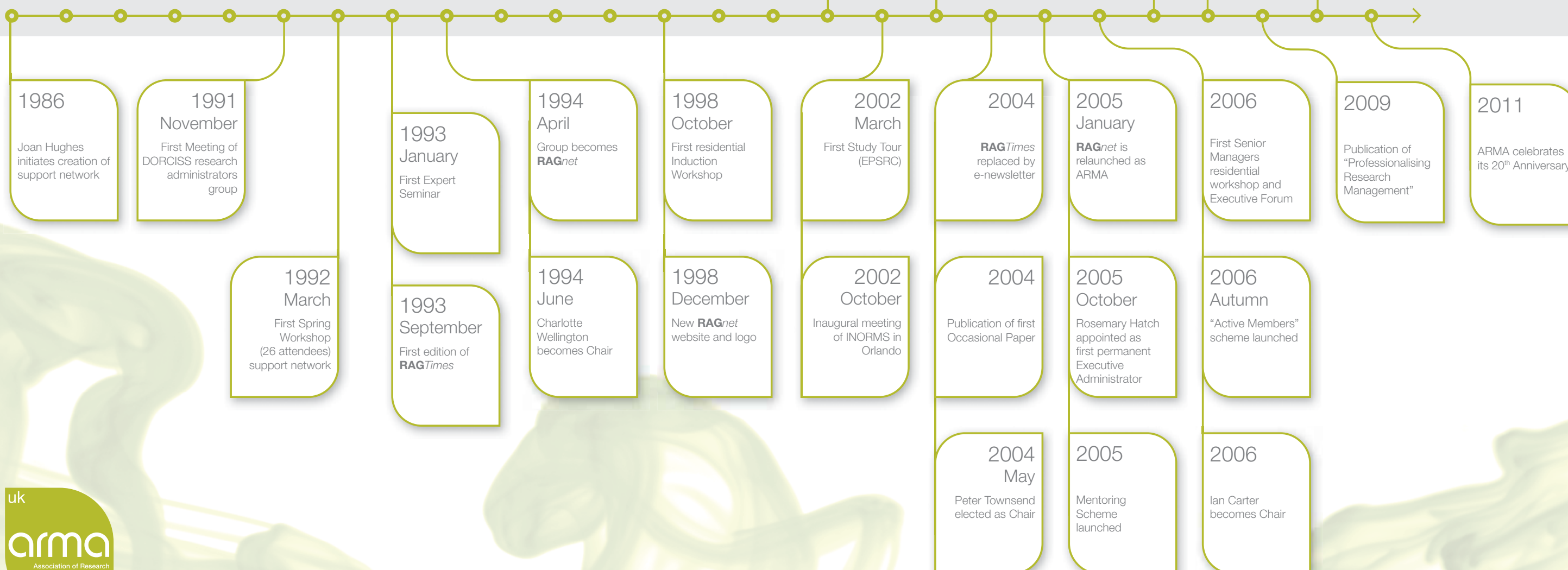
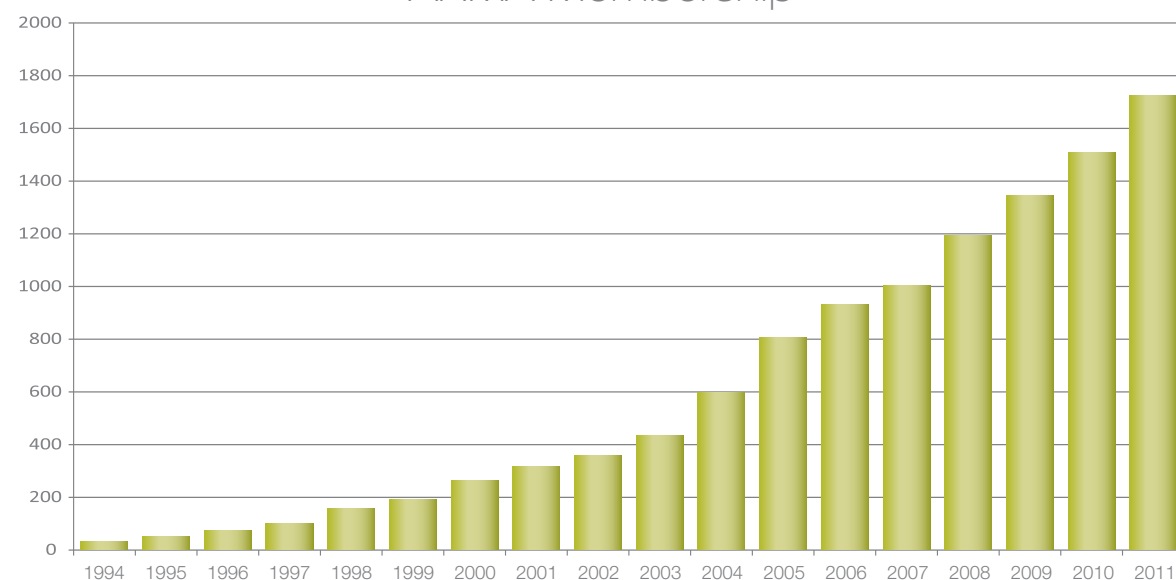
Association of Research
Managers and Administrators

The history of the first 20 years of the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (**ARMA**) charts our evolution from a small self-help group to a recognised professional association

DORCISS RAG held its first meeting in 1991 for a small group of research centre administrators and quickly became the standalone **RAGnet**. In 2005 **RAGnet** became **ARMA**, and today in 2011 we have over 1,700 members representing an influential and diverse group within the UK's research community.



ARMA Membership





Looking forward ...

Looking back on 20 years of the Association it is clear that we have come a long way. The story of DORCISS RAG, **RAGnet** and ARMA reflects the development of research management and administration as a profession: over the last two decades our contribution to the research process has become more prominent, more recognised and more integrated.

Nonetheless, these are uncertain times and it would be complacent to think that the public spending cuts and changes to higher education funding will not affect us.

So far attendance at ARMA's events has stayed strong. This demonstrates the huge value that members place in the training and networking that we provide. In straitened times budget holders will have to ensure that resources are used to maximum effect. This is why the professional development framework is central to the future development of ARMA's training. If we get it right it will have a major effect, not just on ARMA as an association, but on the nature of the profession, the people within it and the associated bodies involved in research.

We want to create a model that stretches across research management, in the broadest sense, to encompass the entire spectrum of from conceptualisation through to commercialisation. This is why we have consulted AURIL, PraxisUnico, and others in its development.

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The contraction of funding is undoubtedly a threat; but it is also an opportunity: an opportunity to dismantle some of the artificial boundaries that have sprung up and to start to think about the research process from cradle to grave. Bringing this more holistic approach to our jobs, particularly in light of impact and its contribution to the REF, will benefit us individually and as a profession.

It is impossible to know what the immediate future will hold. Some have speculated that we might see a reduction in membership, or that we might be forced to have to review our calendar of events as active members, squeezed in their day jobs, find it increasingly difficult to volunteer their time. What is certain, though, is that we as individuals, research institutions, funders and professional organisations will need to work more closely together to get through this period of change.

In 20 years ARMA has evolved from a loose network into a recognised and well-respected association. Our community of members play an essential role in maintaining the UK's reputation for research excellence. Looking to the future, if we focus our efforts on delivering the highest quality training and continue to build partnerships and collaborations nationally and internationally, the story of the next 20 years will be as positive as the first 20.

Ian Carter
CHAIR, ARMA