

ARMA (UK)
Professional Development Framework
Request for Quote
September 2024

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1. Introduction to ARMA (UK)

ARMA (UK) is the professional association for research management in the UK. We represent research leaders, managers and administrators, offering professional development and opportunities to build networks, knowledge and skills.

With around 3000 members, we work with UK-wide and international bodies to influence and understand the changing research management agenda, translating the impacts of that change for our members. We work with others to promote public trust in research, communicating its benefits and value. Most of all, we work to enhance research management as a professional partner in the UK research environment.

We provide a wide range of membership benefits and development opportunities, including regular e-news, blogs, social media channels, a member magazine, a jobs mailing list and our Annual Conference.

Our Values

ARMA (UK)'s values are:

- Member-focused – our decisions will always be led by what we believe is in the best interests of our members, for the profession and for the sector.
- Inclusive – we will remove barriers to active participation in our profession and champion the cause of inclusivity, diversity and social justice for our colleagues and for the sector.
- Collaborative – we will build new partnerships and expand our network for the benefit of our members. We will seek out collaborators who share our values, to work together to advance our mission.
- Professional – we will exhibit the highest standards of professional conduct. We are committed to continuous improvement and proactively seek out opportunities to advance our knowledge and find new ways to carry out our roles more effectively.

Our Vision

We aim to drive the professional recognition of research management, to influence the development of UK research policy and to support a vibrant and inclusive community of RMA professionals.

Our Mission

ARMA is the UK association for research managers and administrators. Our purpose is to provide professional development opportunities, to connect the RMA community and to advocate the views of the profession in relation to national policy and matters directly affecting RMAs and researchers.

Our strategic goals

To deliver our strategic vision, ARMA (UK) has set three strategic priorities and one corporate priority. These are outlined below and in our [2021 – 2024 Strategy](#):

- 1. Professional research management**
- 2. Community**
- 3. Equity, diversity and inclusion**
- 4. Organisational effectiveness, governance and sustainability**

2. RFQ Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Quote (RFQ) is to invite providers with suitable subject knowledge and expertise of both the Research Management and Administration sector and producing digitally accessible products, to submit a quote to refresh ARMA UK's Professional Development Framework.

This includes two distinct but complimentary elements;

- 1) A review and re-write of the current Professional Development Framework
- 2) A re-design of the Professional Development Framework, providing a product that is digitally interactive (with downloadable elements accessible via our website).

We welcome submissions from providers who will collaborate to deliver both elements.

This RFQ includes information about ARMA (UK), the process, information about our current 'as is' state of the Professional Development Framework and our vision for improvement. Providers are invited to submit a proposal and costings for both core elements (re-write and re-design) outlined in this RFQ.

3. Tender process, timescales and value

a) The process

ARMA (UK) is inviting providers to provide a quote which outlines solutions for their expertise and approach to refreshing and re-designing our Professional Development Framework. Please contact james.dunphy@arma.ac.uk to receive:

ARMA's professional development framework
The PDF review documentation

b) Questions from providers

Providers are welcome to email any questions or request a call (james.dunphy@arma.ac.uk) by the end of the day on **18th October**. We will try to answer any questions in as much detail as possible.

c) Submitting your response

All providers wishing to provide a quote should do so by email to james.dunphy@arma.ac.uk by **25th October. Please do not provide more than 6 sides of A4 and please outline the below:**

- Your understanding of the proposal and your approach
- Your proposed timeline including milestones and risks
- Key interdependencies
- Your proposed budget (please distinguish between element 1 and element 2)
- Quality assurance (highlight the people involved)

d) Selection for interview and criteria

Submissions will be assessed against our criteria (using the ratio 60% quality and 40% costs). The submissions that meet our requirements will be shortlisted and the provider(s) invited to the next stage of the process which will include being invited to attend an interview to present your proposal.

The following criteria will be used to score submissions:

For element 1; ‘A review and re-write of the current Professional Development Framework’:

ARMA (UK) is looking for a partner(s) who:

- Have extensive knowledge and experience of working in the Research Management and Administration sector (preferably UK).
- Have a proven record of reliability and delivering similar projects to time and budget.
- Have a track record of working collaboratively and can build strong relationships with ARMA, our volunteers and key partner organisations.
- Is price competitive in the sector.
- Is financially stable.
- Demonstrates a strategic approach and understanding of similar frameworks/work in this area
- Can produce a product that is interesting and accessible for all

For element 2; ‘A re-design of the Professional Development Framework, providing a product that is digitally interactive (accessible via our website)’:

ARMA (UK) is looking for a partner(s) who:

- Have digital design expertise producing web-based interactive products
- Can work in partnership to produce an accessible product.

e) Selecting a partner(s)

Following completion of the key stages of the procurement phase, we will select a provider who meets our requirements. The chosen partner will be notified, and references sought.

f) Timescales

The timescales for the tender process and project are as follows:

Request for Proposals shared	October 2024
<i>Questions submitted by email</i>	18th October
<i>Submission deadline</i>	25th October
Submissions reviewed	w/c 28th October
Project kick off	November 2024
Visual plan shared	December 2024
1 st draft submitted for feedback	January 2025
2nd draft submitted for feedback	March 2025
Final draft submitted for sign off	April 2025
Preview of new Professional Development Framework	May 2025
Launch of new Professional Development Framework	June 2025

g) Value

The budget available for this tender is **£20,000** +VAT

4. Key Project Background Information

After developing an initial plan for the refresh of the Professional Development Framework, ARMA's Professional Development Committee (PDC) created a Professional Development Framework review group in 2023. The purpose of this group was to provide expertise and guidance in reviewing the PDF.

The review group undertook a significant desk-based review of the current PDF (summer 2023) and compared to similar frameworks from sister organisations (both UK and international). This information was analysed and summarised in a series of workshops which led to numerous recommendations for improvements relating to content, format, purpose, audience.

At this point it was recommended that a provider is commissioned to complete the refresh. The focus for the provider should be on finalising the detail of the content following the established vision developed by PDC, reviewing the work undertaken so far and further consulting with the membership.

It is expected therefore that the provider will review the current PDF, review recommendations from the working group, identify gaps and consult with the community (overseen by PDC) to create a fully refreshed, relevant PDF that is interactive, available online (with downloadable content) that meets the sector needs.

Risks and Rationale

The current PDF is not fit for purpose due to its format and aged content. A relevant, accessible framework will help drive professionalisation within the sector and significantly enhance ARMA's reputation. There are lots of other initiatives happening within the sector (nationally and globally) so therefore ARMA need to be proactive to ensure we continue to be leaders in this area.

The risk of not refreshing the PDF is to continue forward with an outdated framework for that does not represent the contemporary RMA role which requires a wide range of skills and knowledge. It is also a missed opportunity to align our T&D and qualification offerings.

5. Project Scope of Work

h) Project objectives

- **Objective:** To transform the existing 80-page PDF into a user-friendly, digital, interactive framework hosted on the ARMA website.
- **Target Audience:** Primarily research managers in the UK, with potential use by other stakeholders.
- **Key Features:**
 - Digital, interactive format with intuitive navigation and design.
 - Signposting and connectivity to relevant resources from other partners.
 - Downloadable elements, such as worksheets and practical tools, for everyday use by research managers.

A key tenet of the professional development framework will be highlighting the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion knowledge and skills at each career stage in the profession; helping to ensure our members are empowered to challenge behaviours and attitudes which undermine the principles of inclusivity. During the procurement process the potential suppliers will be required to highlight the steps that they will take to ensure this is a fully inclusive process.

i) Project intentions

A fully refreshed, relevant and accessible PDF underpins our strategic priorities and will help set the standards of professionalism for research management and administration, in the UK and enhance ARMA UK's credibility on an international stage.

The new PDF will help strengthen partnerships with those who share our values, to collaborate for the benefit of our profession.

A fully refreshed PDF will help align all professional development (training and development programme, qualifications, webinars) activity, helping members understand their possible career and professional development pathway.

j) Project requirements

To ensure that ARMA refreshes and redesigns our professional development framework we require a provider with significant sector knowledge, design expertise and willingness to work collaboratively to ensure this meets the sector needs and is aligned with our strategic priorities.