



# Professional Development Workbook

*Just as Cardea, the guardian of open doors, symbolises opportunity and progression, this plan aims to facilitate the mastery of the eight competencies crucial to effective research management.*



**Funded by  
the European Union**

The CARDEA project is funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor REA can be held responsible for them.

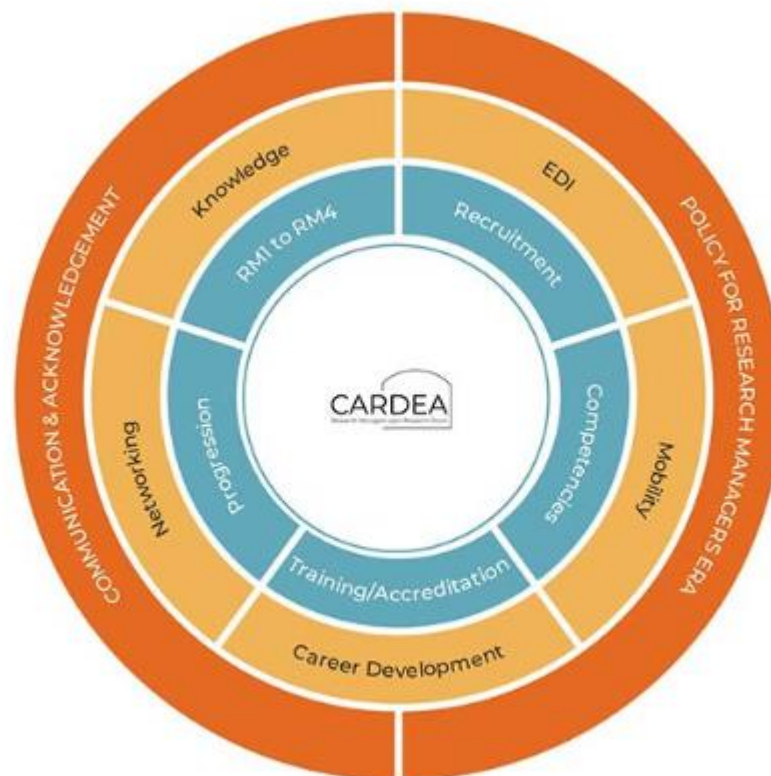
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# Research Manager Personal Development Plan

**Foreword:** A personal development plan is like a roadmap, a vital tool to help us navigate the changes and challenges we face as Research Managers (RM). It shows us how to improve our skills, adapt to new situations, and achieve our goals. By following this plan, we can become better RMs, more resilient in tough times, and ultimately, more successful in our work. This plan encapsulates a commitment to continuous learning and innovation, essential pillars in the pursuit of excellence within the European research community.

## CARDEA MATRIX



## Your Cardea Community



CARDEA is a group (many of us HR Professionals) with a proven track record in the delivery of initiatives to support research staff within our own universities and organisations. Under the framework provided by the HR Excellence in Research initiative we work to improve policy and practice, recruitment and working conditions, and the training and development of research staff. Through CARDEA we will now leverage our experience to introduce policy and career practice guidelines for Research Managers in the European Research Area. [Meet the team](#)

## Web Resources



**CARDEA**  
Enabling professionalisation  
of research management

Webpage: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/cardea/>



## CARDEA Hub

Webpage: TBC

Webpage: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/cardea/cardeahub/>



Contact us: [cardea@ucc.ie](mailto:cardea@ucc.ie)

# 1. Prework: Evaluation, Guidance, Reflection.

## Step one: Evaluation

**Evaluate:** Having completed the training needs analysis, You have identified area(s) to focus your growth and learning. Once you have identified areas for professional growth from the self-assessment tool, you can refer to the CARDEA Competency Framework for Research Managers to access **672** learning outcomes to support your career development (refer to section 2 for more information).

## Step two: Guidance

**Seek Guidance:** Have a conversation with your manager or a trusted colleague regarding how your engagement with Cardea may help you in your current role and/or in your career progression.

*\*NOTE: Using the CARDEA competency framework as a tool and the results of the analysis exercise, select skills and or competencies to develop with input from a mentor and/or supervisor.*

## Step three: Reflection

Write up your Cardea Personal Development Plan based on your reflections, conversations, and training needs assessment. But first, capture some thoughts in the pre-work reflection template below.

*\*NOTE: Using the “Your notes” section to reflect and make notes throughout your personal development process.*

1. What do you hope to achieve by engaging with Cardea?

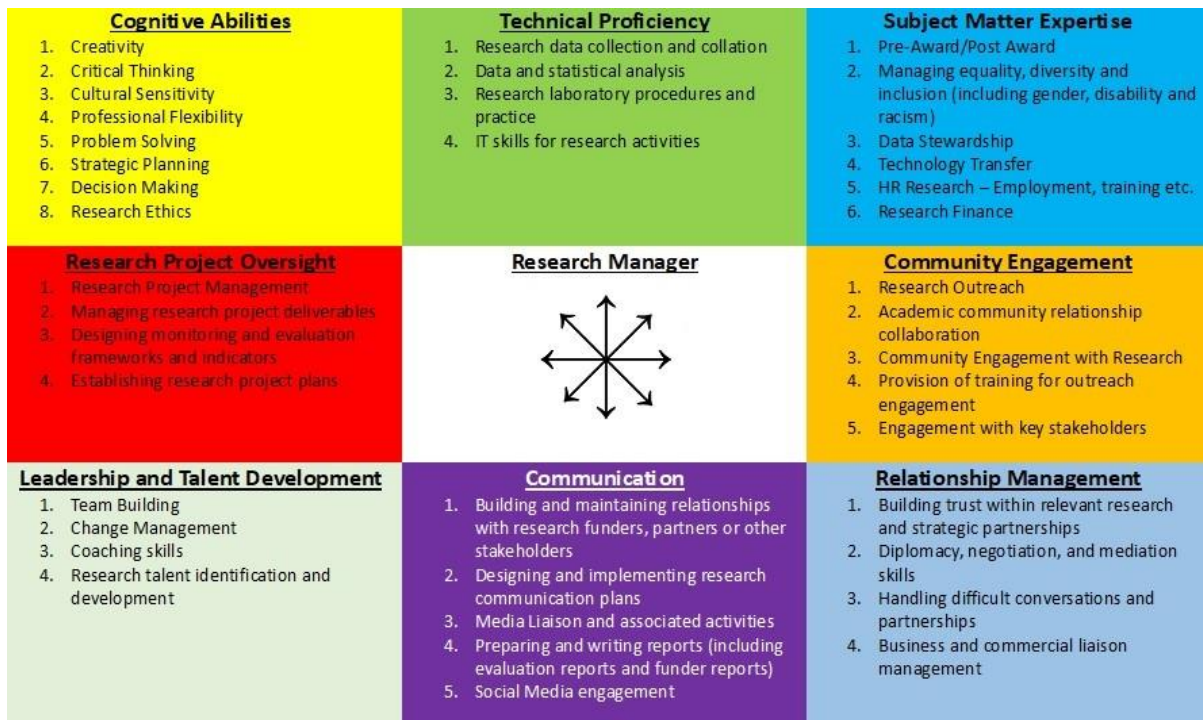
2. Is there anything you would like to change and/or develop? We encourage you to reflect throughout this process.

3. Choose one practical application that your learning may have within your organisation (team working, stakeholder relationships, projects you are involved in, etc).

4. What skills and attitudes will you need to develop to achieve this?



## 2. Skill/Competency to Develop:



### Cognitive Abilities/Transversal Skills

Cognitive abilities generally refer to a set of transferable skills that are relevant across various tasks and situations. These skills are often considered necessary for effective leadership, management, and collaboration in diverse organisational environments, including research. Also known as transversal skills, they enable overall professional success and adaptability.

*Examples of Cognitive Abilities included but are not limited to:*

- Creativity
- Critical thinking
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Professional Flexibility
- Problem Solving
- Strategic Planning
- Decision Making

#### Example: Cognitive Abilities/Transversal Skills

- Develop critical thinking skills through reading and discussing academic literature relevant to your field.
- Attend workshops or training sessions on problem-solving techniques and strategic planning.
- Engage in interdisciplinary discussions to broaden your perspective and enhance creativity.



## Technical Proficiency

Technical proficiency refers to the ability to use specialised tools, methods, and technologies relevant to the research field/area/organisation. Individuals with technical proficiency can successfully navigate and contribute to the resolution of complex problems within that technical context.

*Examples of technical proficiency competencies included but are not limited to:*

- Research data collection and collation.
- Data and statistical analysis
- Legal Skills
- IT skills for research activities

### Example: Technical Proficiency

- Identify specific technical skills relevant to your research area and set goals for improvement.
- Enrol in online courses or workshops to enhance proficiency in research data analysis tools and methods.
- Collaborate with colleagues or seek mentorship to learn new techniques or technologies

## Subject Matter Expertise

Subject matter expertise refers to a thorough understanding of the specific specialised area or field associated with an organisation and/or individual roles within an organisation.

*Examples of subject matter expertise competencies included but not limited to:*

- Pre-Award/Post Award
- Managing equality, diversity and inclusion (including gender, disability and racism)
- Data Stewardship
- Technology Transfer
- HR Research – Employment, training etc.
- Research Finance
- Clinical Research Management
- Research Ethics and Integrity

### Example: Subject Matter Expertise/Specialised Knowledge:

- Assess your current level of expertise in key subject areas related to your role as a research manager.
- Identify gaps in knowledge and create a plan to address them through self-study, training, or networking opportunities.
- Participate in conferences, seminars, or webinars to stay current on the latest developments in your field of expertise.

## Research Project Oversight/Management

Research project oversight/management refers to the planning, execution, monitoring, and general management of research activities to achieve specific research project results within pre-defined constraints such as time, budget, and research scope.

*Examples of Research Project Oversight/Management competencies included but not limited to:*

- Research Project Management
- Managing research project deliverables
- Designing monitoring and evaluation frameworks and indicators
- Establishing research project plans

### Example: Research Project Management/Oversight:

- Review past research projects you have managed and identify areas for improvement in project planning and execution.
- Seek feedback from colleagues or supervisors to identify strengths and weaknesses in your project management approach.
- Develop a project management toolkit with templates, checklists, and best practices to streamline future projects.

## Community Engagement

Community engagement refers to activities and initiatives designed to connect research with external audiences, stakeholders, and the broader community.

*Examples of Community Engagement include but not limited to:*

- Research Outreach
- Academic community relationship collaboration
- Community Engagement with Research
- Provision of training for outreach engagement
- Engagement with key stakeholders

### Example: Community Engagement:

- Assess your current level of engagement with external stakeholders and communities.
- Identify opportunities to expand your network and deepen relationships with key stakeholders.
- Volunteer for outreach activities or community service projects to enhance your engagement skills and broaden your impact.

## Leadership and Talent Development

Leadership and talent development are two important factors both of which are critical within a research project, a research organisation, a research team and/or other specific team leadership activities.

*Examples of Leadership and Talent Development included but not limited to:*

- People Management and managing team performance.
- Team Building
- Change Management
- Coaching skills
- Research talent identification and development.

### Example: Leadership and Talent Development:

- Reflect on your experience managing teams and developing talent within your organisation.
- Identify areas for improvement in leadership and team-building skills.
- Seek mentorship or coaching to enhance your ability to support the professional development of your team members.

## Communication

Communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, and feedback both within the research team and with external stakeholders.

*Examples of Communication included but not limited to:*

- Building and maintaining relationships with research funders, partners or other stakeholders
- Designing and implementing research communication plans
- Media Liaison and associated activities
- Preparing and writing reports (including evaluation reports and funder reports)
- Social Media Engagement

### Example: Communication:

- Evaluate your communication skills in both written and verbal formats.
- Set goals for improving communication with internal and external stakeholders.
- Practice active listening and seek opportunities to receive feedback on your communication style.

## Relationship Management

Relationship management refers to the strategic and organised approach to developing, nurturing, and maintaining positive and productive relationships with various stakeholders involved in or impacted by research initiatives. These stakeholders may include members of the research team, funding agencies, industry partners, public and private organisations, not-for-profit, research hospitals, collaborators, regulatory bodies, and the broader community.

*Examples of Relationship Management included but not limited to:*

- Building trust within relevant research and strategic partnerships
- Diplomacy, negotiation, and mediation skills
- Handling difficult conversations and partnerships
- Business and commercial liaison management

### **Example: Relationship Management:**

- Reflect on your current relationships with stakeholders and identify areas for improvement.
- Develop strategies for building and maintaining positive relationships with key stakeholders.
- Seek opportunities for collaboration and partnership-building to strengthen your network



### 3. Goal Setting

Goal setting plays a pivotal role in personal and professional development, serving as a compass that guides you toward your desired outcomes. By setting clear and achievable goals, you can establish a personalised roadmap for success, providing direction and focus to a desired competency level. Goals create a sense of purpose and motivation, inspiring individuals to act and persevere in the face of obstacles. Moreover, goal setting breeds accountability and self-discipline, as you commit to specific targets and track your progress over time. It encourages reflection and growth as you evaluate their performance and adjust your strategies accordingly. Ultimately, goal setting empowers RMs to realise their full potential, driving continuous improvement and achievement.

Use the SMART Criteria to describe your goals:

**S** - Specific, **M** - Measurable, **A** - Action Oriented, **R** - Realistic; within your control and **T** - Time constrained



## 5. Action Plan

Short-Term Goals	Medium-Term Goals	Long-Term Goals
(3-6 months)	(6-12 months)	(12+ months)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify one competency area to focus on initially and set specific, achievable goals.</li><li>• Schedule regular check-ins with a mentor or supervisor to track progress and receive feedback.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand your focus to additional competency areas, setting milestones and timelines for achieving progress.</li><li>• Seek opportunities for professional development, such as workshops, conferences, or online courses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuously assess and adjust your personal development plan based on evolving priorities and feedback.</li><li>• Aim to achieve mastery in each competency area over time, recognising that development is an ongoing process.</li></ul>

### Reflection and Evaluation:

- ✓ Regularly reflect on your progress toward achieving your development goals.
- ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of your actions and adjust your plan as needed.
- ✓ Celebrate successes and learn from setbacks to continuously improve and grow as a research manager.

## 6. PDP Templates

### PDP- 12 MONTHS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT SITUATION	What training and development opportunities am I currently undertaking?
Career Goal(s)	What is my 12-month Career Goal? (using SMART criteria)
Competency Gap	What skills, knowledge or resources do I need to achieve the career goal(s)?
Actions	What actions will you take to address the competency gaps?
Evaluation	How often will this plan be reviewed, and by whom?



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Career Goal		
What is your 3-6-12-month career goal (using SMART criteria)		
Competencies GAP	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME
What skills, knowledge or resources do you need to achieve the career goal(s)?	What actions will you take to address each skill gap?	What actions will you take to address each skill gap?



## Key Resources

### **Videos:**

Topic: Personal Development

Ted Talk: [How you can reinvent yourself for success](#)

Presenter: Kirsty Perrin

Topic: Self-Reflection

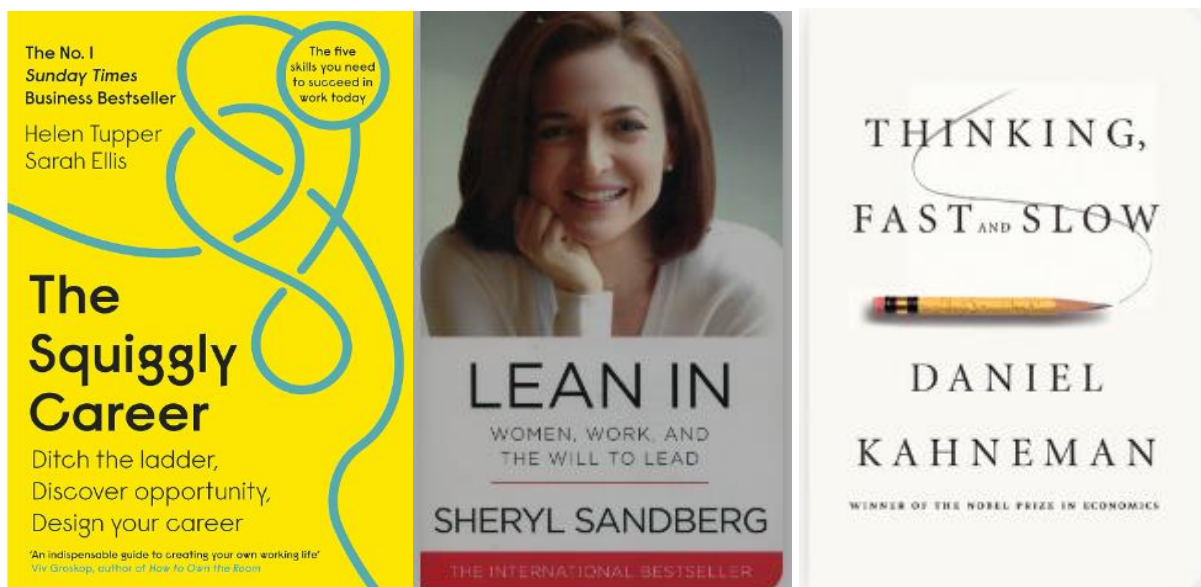
Ted Talk: [Self-Reflection: A Journey to Improvement](#)

Presenter: Maria Li

Topic: Goal-Setting

Ted Talk: [SETTING GOALS THAT MATTER](#)

### **Books:**



### **Articles:**

[Don't Underestimate the Power of Self-Reflection](#): Harvard Business Review

by James R. Bailey and Scheherazade Rehman

[Mastering The Art Of Goal Setting](#): Forbes

By Julien Fortuit

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