

RAAAP: Research Administration as a Profession



NARMA vårkonferanse 2018 – Open Science

Kompetanseutvikling: Utvikling gjennom
profesjonalisering og soft-skills

Simon Kerridge, Director of Research Services, University of Kent (UK)

 orcid.org/0000-0003-4094-3719

 @SimonRKerridge #NARMA2018

raaapworldwide.wordpress.com



Overview

- RAAAP
 - What and how
- RAAAP
 - What is an RMA?
 - What skills are needed?
 - What motivates people to become RMAs?
- RAAAP - How (& when) you can get the data
- Some Conclusions and Discussion



The Presenter

- Simon Kerridge
 - Director, Research Services, University of Kent (UK)
 - Chair, CASRAI; Immediate Past Chair, ARMA



1984-1987 BSc

1987-1990 Computer Programmer in own SME

1990-1994 Researcher (Durham)

1994-1995 Researcher (Sunderland)

1995-2012 RMA (Sunderland) [various roles]

Also DProf 2012

2012-20?? RMA (Kent) [head of office]

So... is this normal?

I've been an RMA for over 20 years

It is my profession

But I didn't know it was one

So how do we attract the best?



Overview of (from) Kent



University of Kent



Canterbury (1965)



Medway (2005)



Tonbridge (1982)



Brussels (1999)



Paris (2009)



Athens (2011)



Rome (2013)





University of Kent

• 53rd Anniversary

“The UK’s European university”

- 20,155 students
- 3,773 staff (728+145)
- €300m turnover
- €40m (research income + QR core funding)
- Canterbury, Medway, Tonbridge, Brussels
 - Paris, Athens, Rome
- UK 17th for Research Intensity, 16th for Teaching Quality
- Queen’s Anniversary prize for Tizard Centre
- Top 100 under 50 (THE) in the World, Now 335th (301-350)

50

1965-2015
THE UK'S
EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY



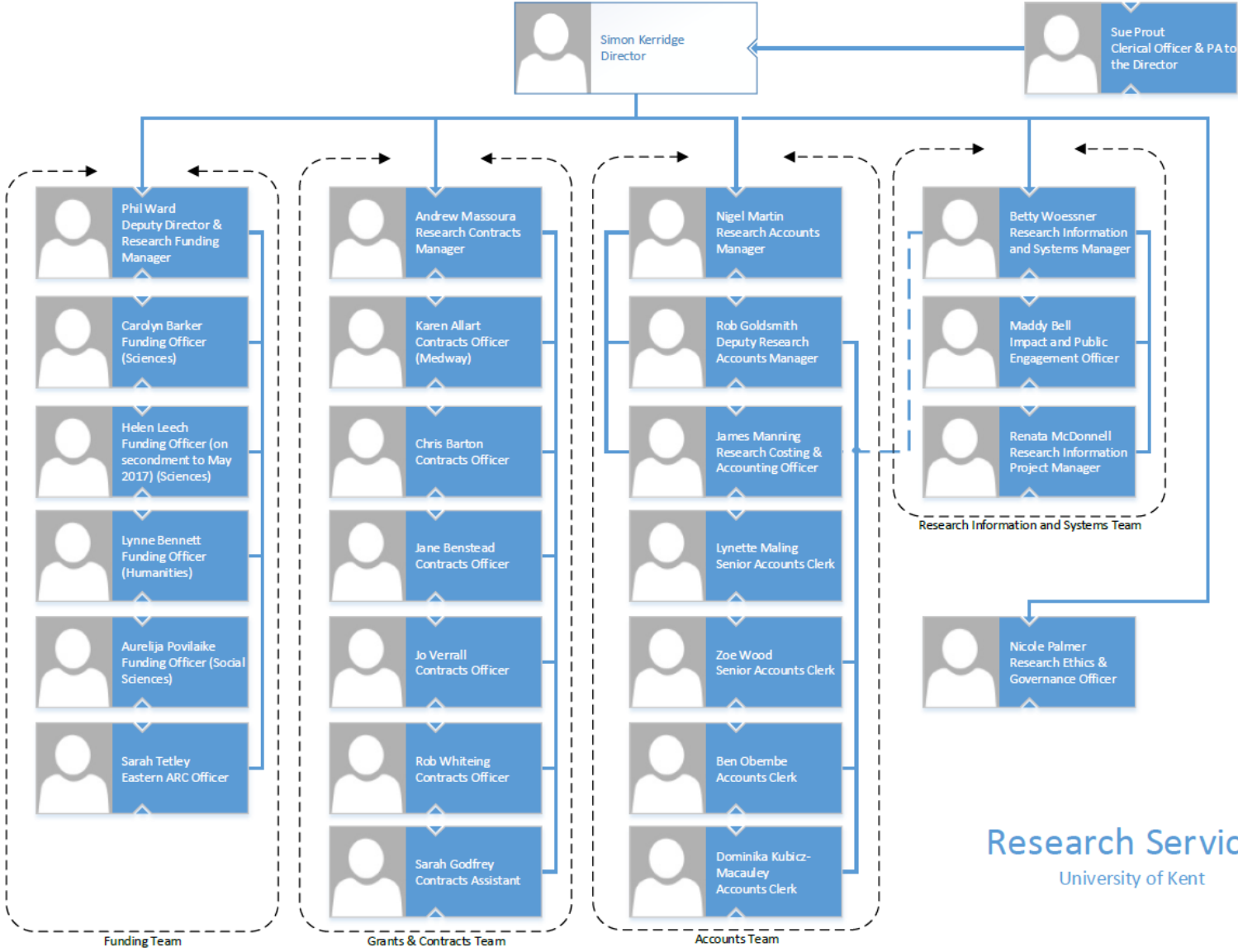
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University of
Kent

Overview of Research Services



RAAAP – Advisory Group



- **PI – Simon Kerridge**
- **Director, Research Services, University of Kent (UK)**
- **Co-PI – Stephanie Scott**
- **Director, Policy and Research Development, Columbia University (US)**

- **Advisory Group:**

- **Patrice Ajai-Ajabe, Programme Officer, ACU (UK)**
- **Jan Andersen, Senior Executive Advisor, TUD; past president EARMA (DK)**
- **Janice Besch, Managing Director, Alzheimer's Australia NHMRC; President, ARMS (AU)**
- **Cindy Kiel, EAVC for Research at UC Davis; President , SRA International, (US)**
- **Susi Poli, University of Bolgnia; EARMA Board Member (IT)**
- **Deborah Zornes, Director, Research Services, Royal Roads University; President, CARA (CA)**



What the Advisory Group did not tell us...

maybe Ragnar Lie... should have been on the AG

RAAAP is a happy fish



RAAAP is a happy fish, who has just enjoyed a meal

RAAAP is a happy fish, who has just enjoyed a meal, and ...

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 **#NARMA2018**

RAAAP – Who to

- We contacted most INORMS associations
 - And some others, trying to get good international coverage
- All agreed to take part!



RAAAP – Who to

	Members	95%+/5%	95%+/1%
ACU – Association of Commonwealth Universities	200	132	154
ARMA – UK Association of Research Managers and Administrators	3153	343	548
ARMS – Australasian Research Management Society	2300	329	515
BRAMA – Brazilian Association of Research Managers	60	52	55
CARA/ACAAR – Canadian Association of Research Managers and Administrators	914	271	385
EARMA – European Association of Research Managers and Administrators	958	274	392
NCURA – National Council of University Research Administrators	7312	365	608
NORDP – National Organization of Research Development Professionals	640	240	326
RMAN-J – Japanese Research Management Association	309	172	211
SARIMA – Southern African Research & Innovation Management Association	415	200	256
SRAi – Society of Research Administrators International	5300	358	590
WARIMA – West African Research and Innovation Management Association	34	31	32
NB WARIMA to send to senior RMAs only			
	21595	377	644

NB Of course there is some overlap

EARMA cascaded to other Leiden Group associations, including of course NARMA (approx. 700 members)



RAAAP: Questionnaire Development

- **Based on initial proposal idea**
- **Brainstormed at kick-off meeting with Advisory Group**
- **Draft MS-Word version developed by PIs**
- **Refined by telecon**
- **Tested**
- **Finalised after feedback**
- **Developed in Qualtrics***
- **Re-tested**
- **Finalised and signed off by Advisory Group**
- **Approved by UK Ethics (Kent) and US IRB (Columbia)**
- **Launched**

* Thanks to Silvia Dobre and Jonathan Rathmill, University of Kent

RAAAP: Questionnaire Overview

Section A: About your role

Section B: Skills

Section C: Demographics

RAAAP: Section A examples

- **Level (self selection): Leader / Manager / Operational**
- **Type of employment (FT/PT/combined role/...)**
- **Areas of role (ARMA PDF)**
- **Central/Departmental**
- **Type of Institution**
- **How many / types worked at**
- **How many jobs**
- **What level you entered the profession**
- **Why you did**
- **Why you stayed**



RAAAP: Section B examples

- How important is the skill (5); and level required (7)

- Funding Opportunities
- Proposal Preparation
- Costing and Pricing
- Contracts/Negotiating
- Financial Monitoring
- Staff Employment
- Funding Reporting
- Research Impact
- KE and Business Development
- Technology Transfer / Spinout
- Continuing Professional Development / Short Course
- Research Students



RAAAP: Section B examples

- Policy Development
 - Research Assessment
 - Ethics and Governance
 - MIS/ERA/CRIS
 - Audit/Compliance
 - External Auditors/Statutory Returns
 - Managing Research Support
-
- And after these “technical skills”
 - Some more “generic skills”



RAAAP: Section B examples

- **Communications**
- **Teamwork/Collaboration**
- **Adaptability/Change Management**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Critical Observation**
- **Conflict Resolution**
- **Initiative Taking**
- **Cultural/Diversity**
- **Decision Making**
- **Taking Responsibility**
- **Project Management**
- **Mentoring/Coaching**

And where you learned these skills

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RAAAP: Section C examples

- **Education Level**
- **Subject Area**
- **Professional Accreditation (eg CRA)**
- **Professional Development - skills**
- **Professional Association(s)**
- **Country of Employment**
- **Age Bracket**
- **Gender**

- **So... not much!**
Wow... surprised we got any responses at all!

RAAAP: When

- Survey was live from May 20th 2016
 - To coincide with the SARIMA conference
- Different associations “advertised” at different times
- With reminders
- Very few queries
 - No doubt due to great design and testing!
- Closed 7th September 2016
- Initial Analysis Complete (finally!!!)

RAAAP: DRAFT Results

Association	Num Members	Target for 95%+/5%	Target for 95%+/1%	Num Responses	Confidence Interval
ARMA – UK Association of Research Managers and Administrators	3153	343	548	495	5%
ARMS – Australasian Research Management Society	2300	329	515	313	no
BRAMA – Brazilian Research Administration and Management Association	60	52	55	11	no
CARA/ACAAR – Canadian Association of Research Managers and Administrators	914	271	385	241	no
EARMA – European Association of Research Managers and Administrators	958	274	392	268	no
NCURA – National Council of University Research Administrators	7312	365	608	741	1%
NORDP – National Organization of Research Development Professionals	640	240	326	138	no
RMAN-J – Japanese Research Management Association	309	172	211	49	no
SARIMA – Southern African Research & Innovation Management Association	415	200	256	38	no
SRAi – Society of Research Administrators International	5300	358	590	636	1%
WARIMA – West African Research and Innovation Management Association	34	31	32	23	no
NARMA - Norwegian Association of Research Managers and Administrators	700	248	341	110	no

2,691 responses in total

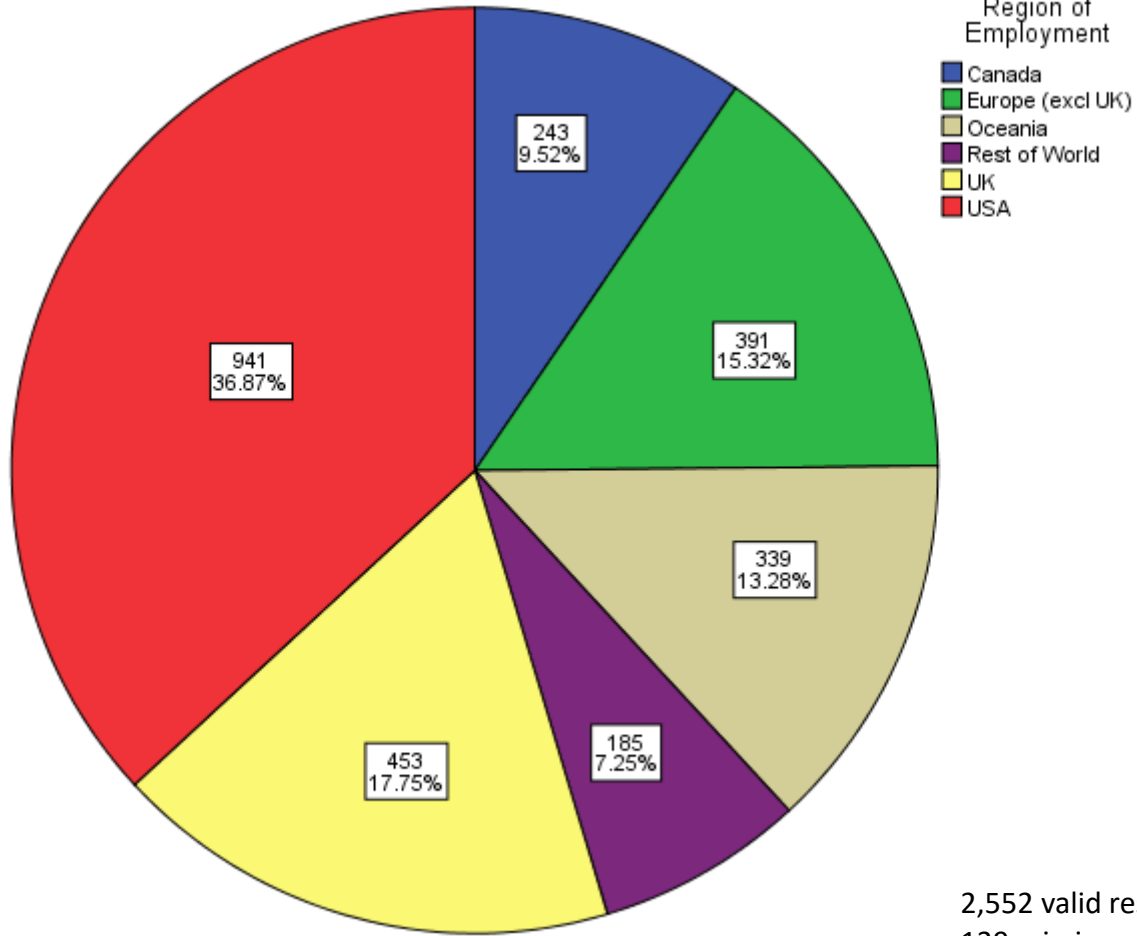


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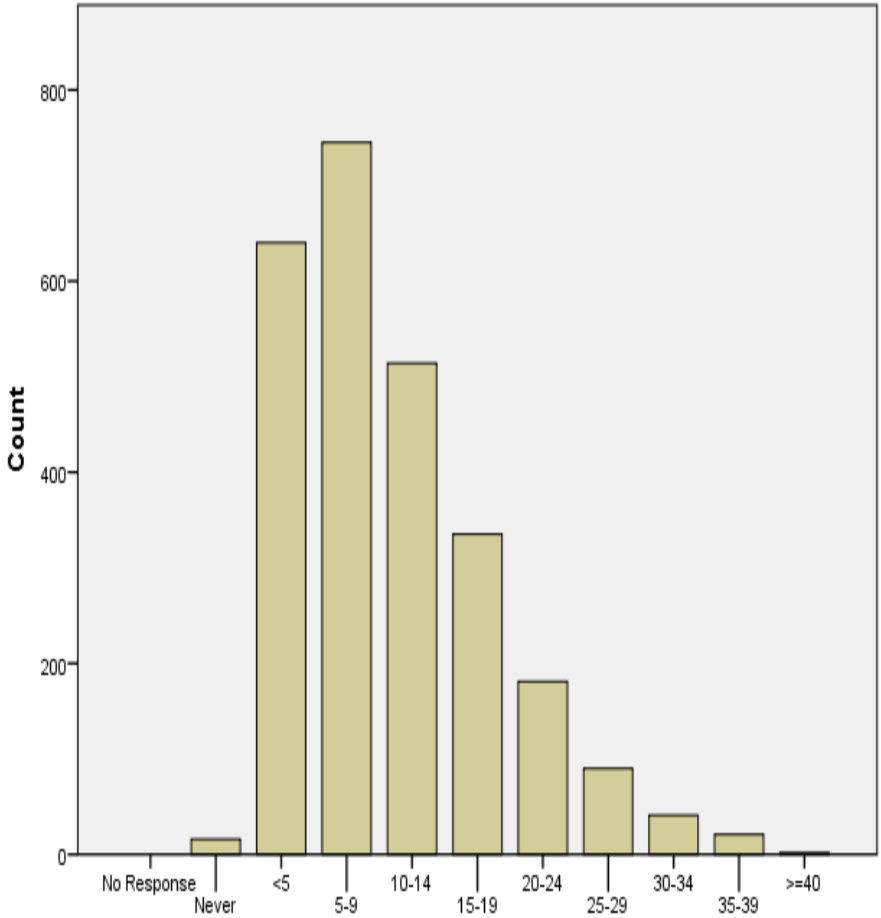
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RAAAP – Responses by Region



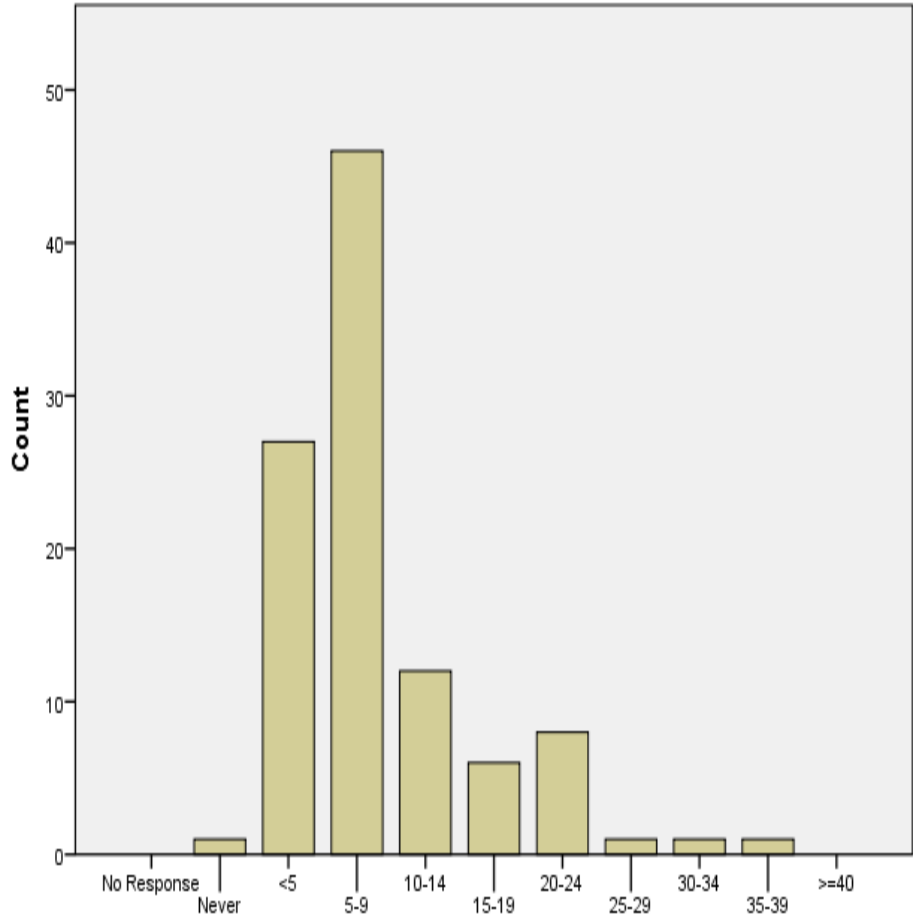
2,552 valid responses
139 missing

RAAAP: How long an RMA?



Approx Years (Banded) as a Research Administrator

All Responses

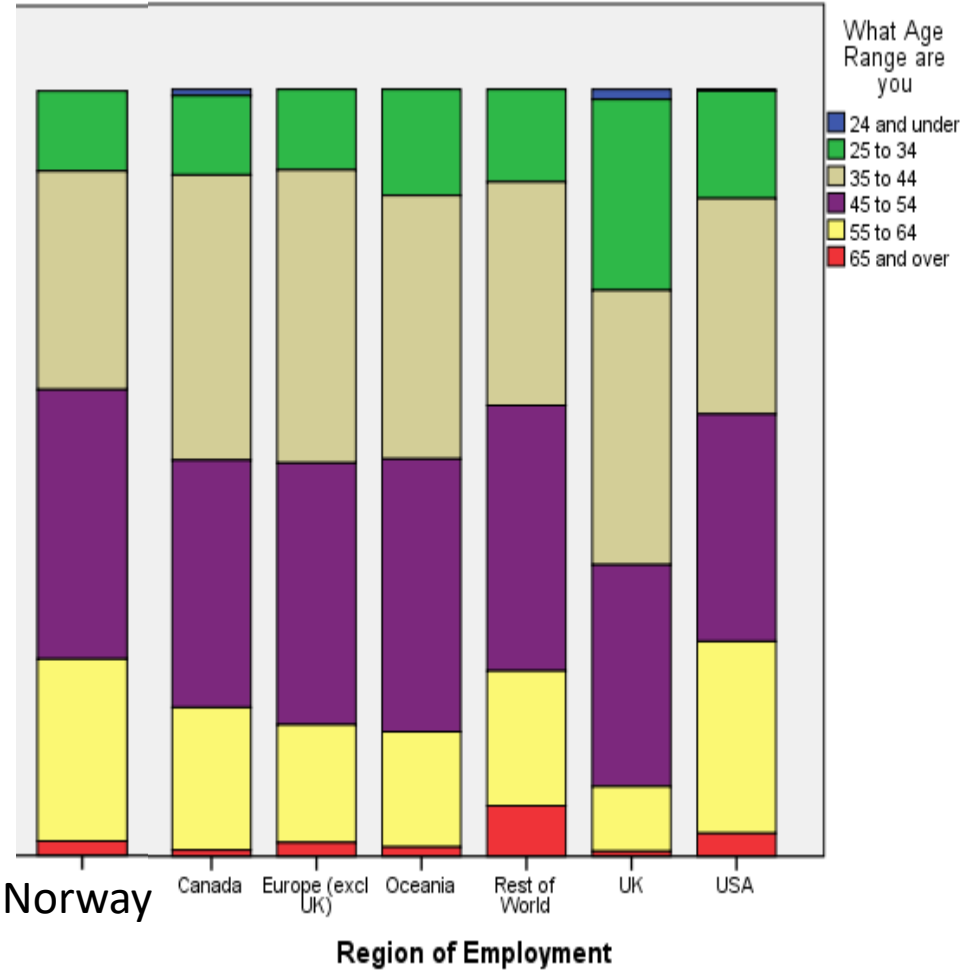
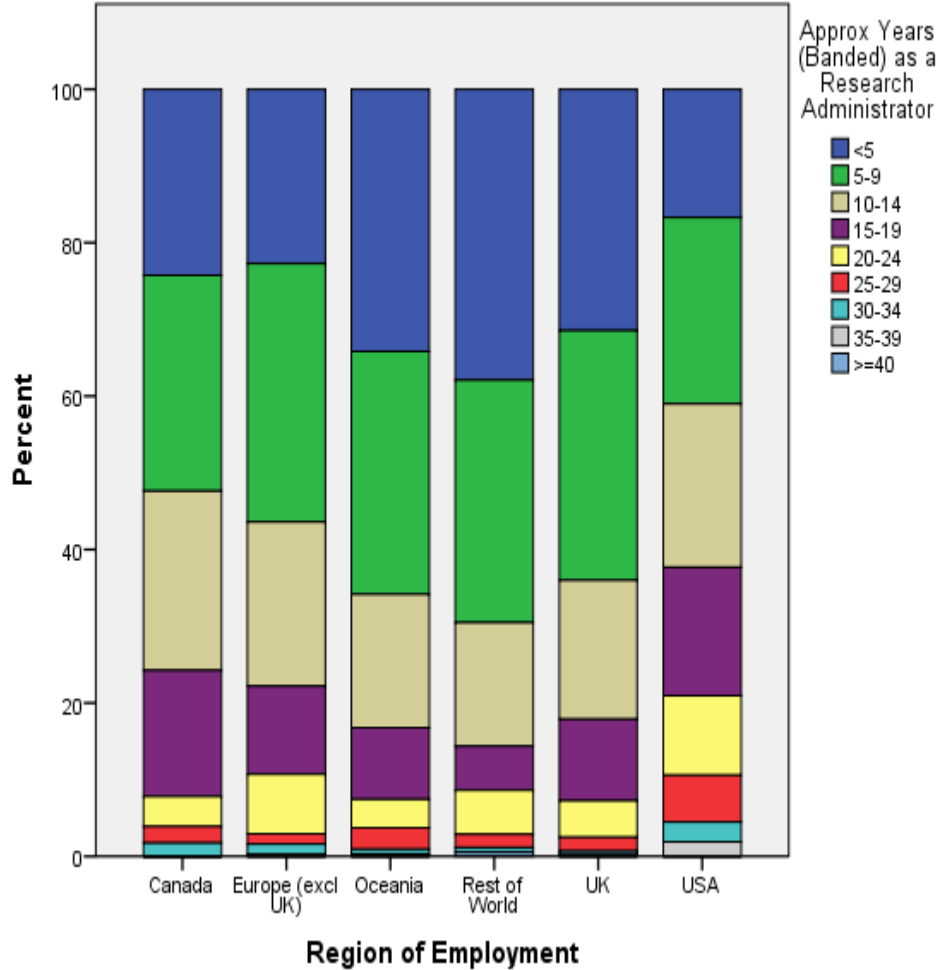


Approx Years (Banded) as a Research Administrator

NARMA Members



RAAAP – RMA age profiles

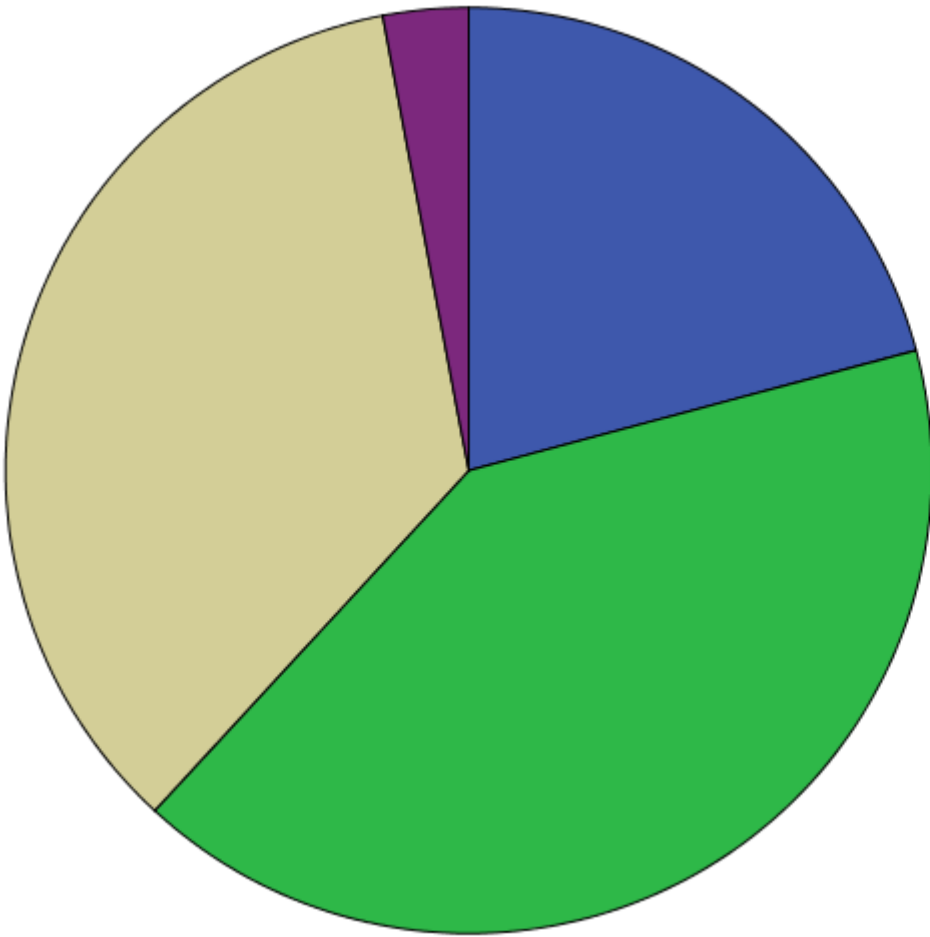


Valid: 231 374 322 174 442 897 (2,440)

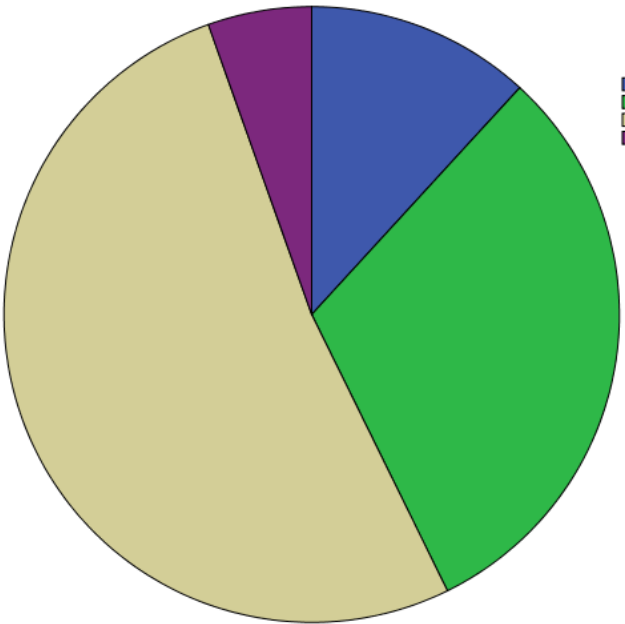
Valid: 242 390 332 182 450 935 (2,531)



RAAAP: Your current role



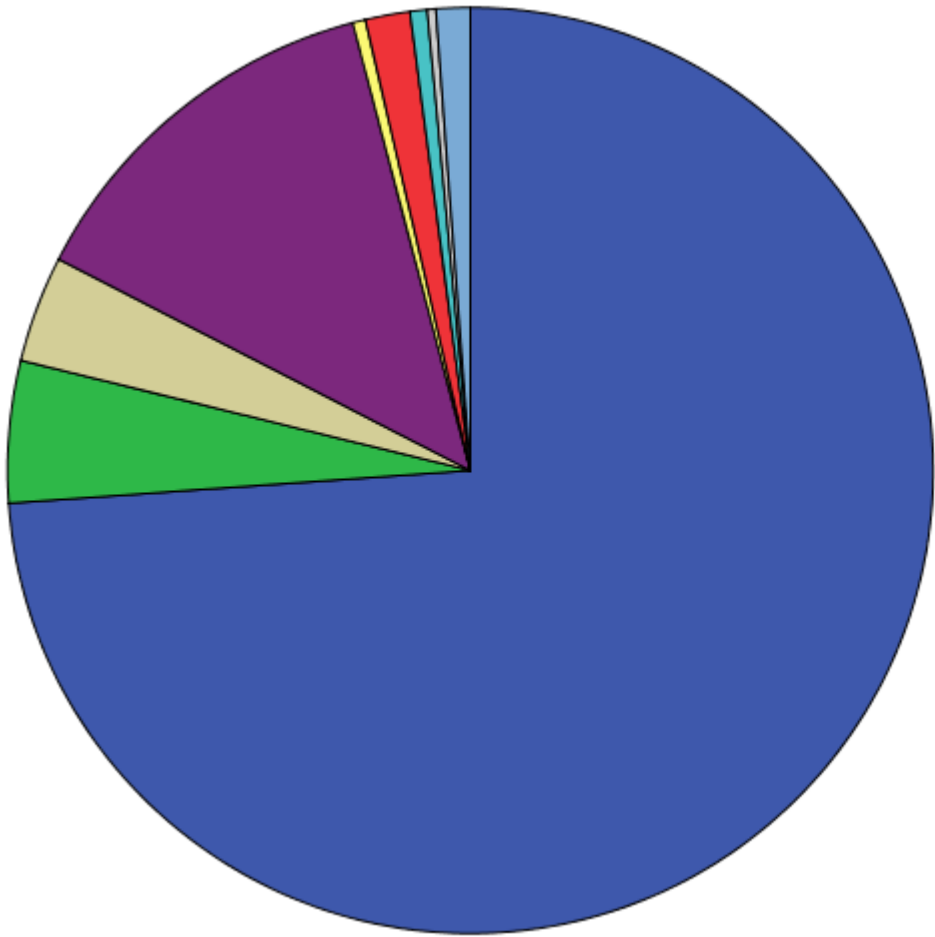
All Responses



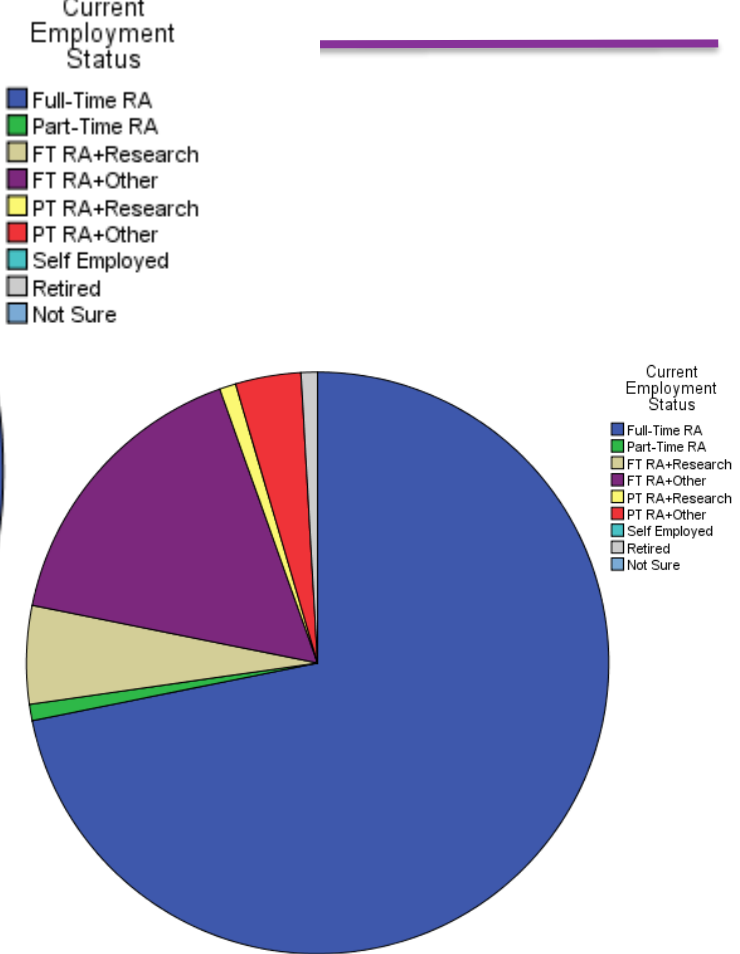
NARMA Members



RAAAP: Type of Employment

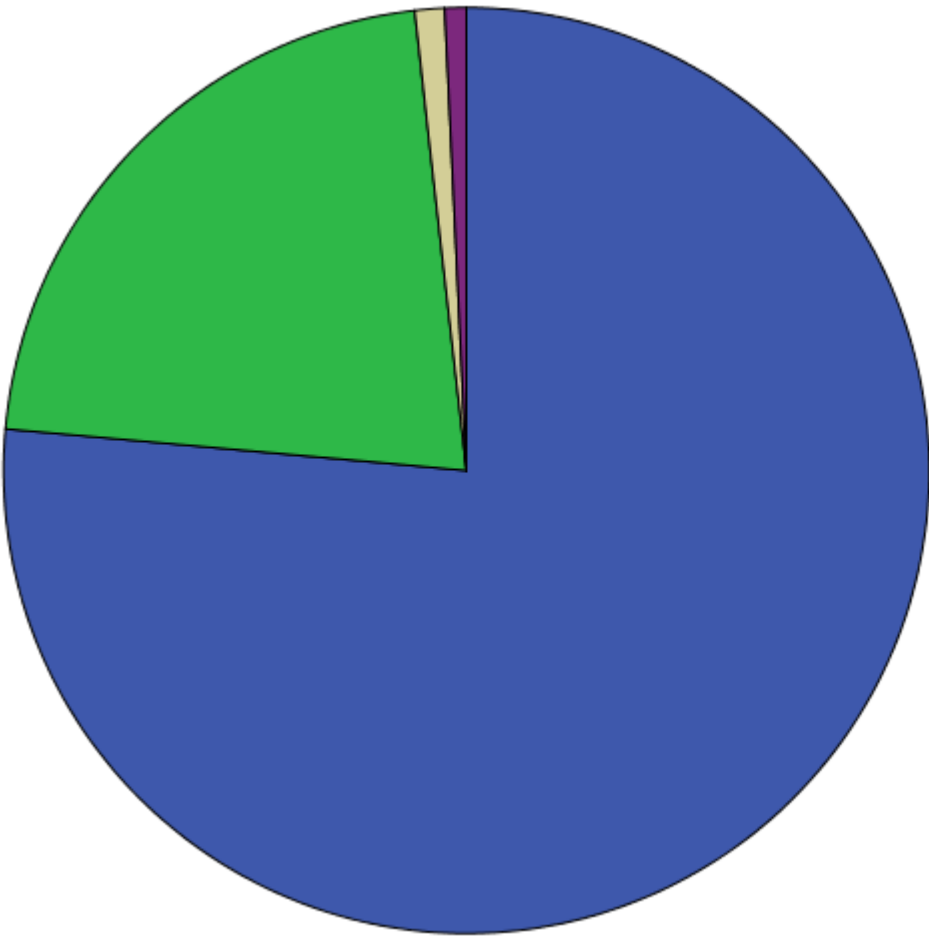


All Responses



NARMA Members

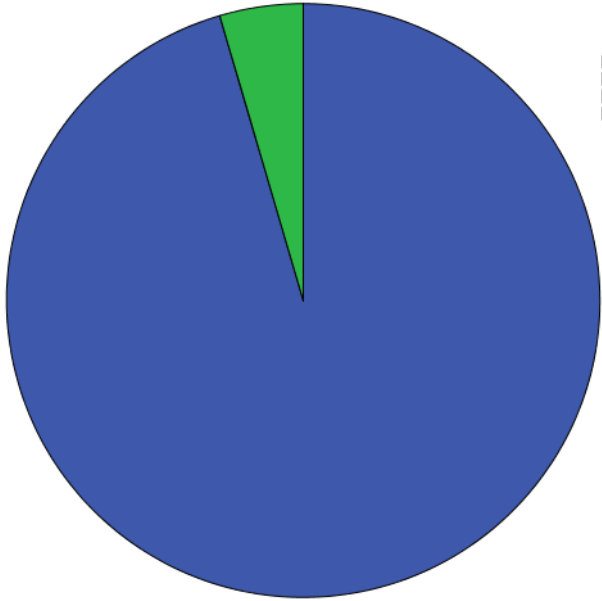
RAAAP: Type of Institution



All Responses

What type of Institution do you work in

- Public
- Private Non-Profit
- For-Profit
- Not Sure

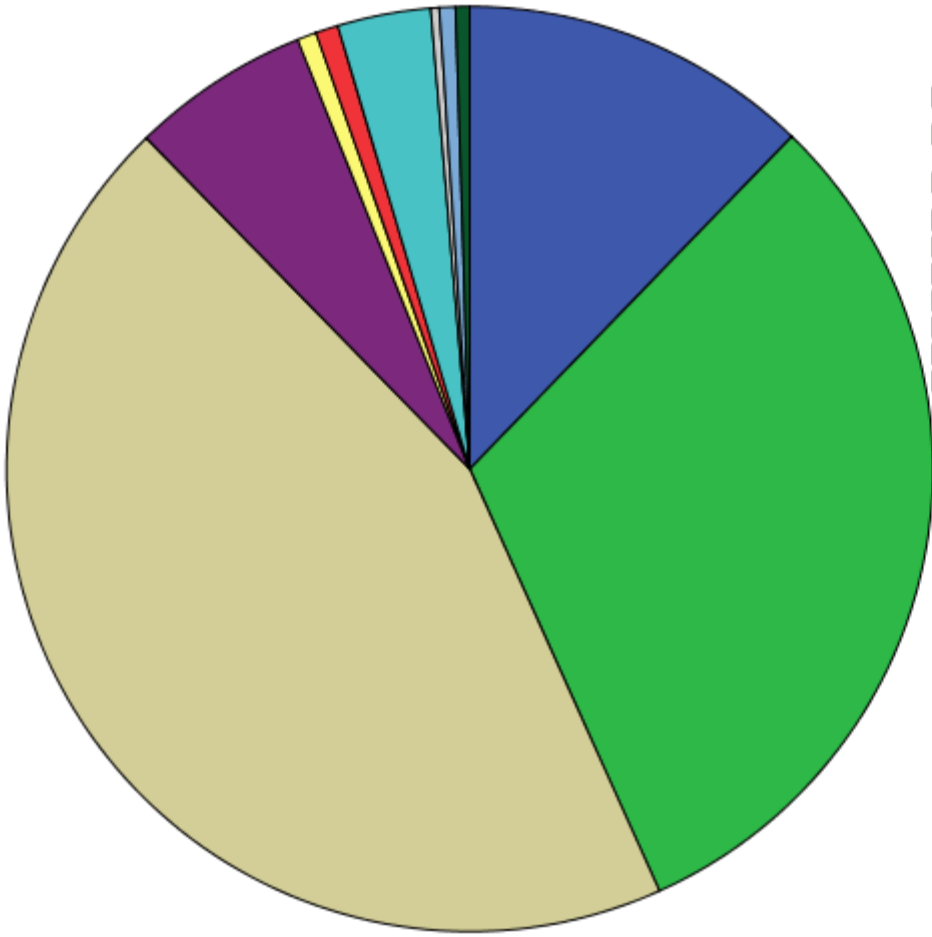


NARMA Members

What type of Institution do you work in

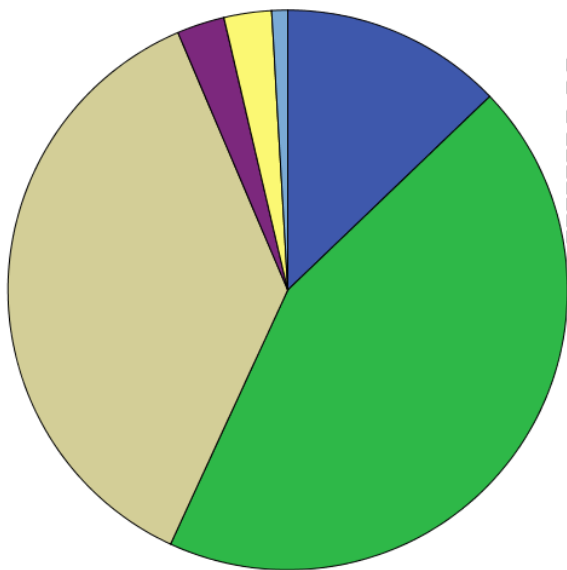
- Public
- Private Non-Profit
- For-Profit
- Not Sure

RAAAP: Where do RMAs work



All Responses

- What character of Institution do you work in
- University - PUI
 - University - Research Active
 - University - Research Intensive
 - Research Institute
 - Research Funder
 - Private Company
 - Hospital
 - Charity
 - Government Department
 - Not Sure

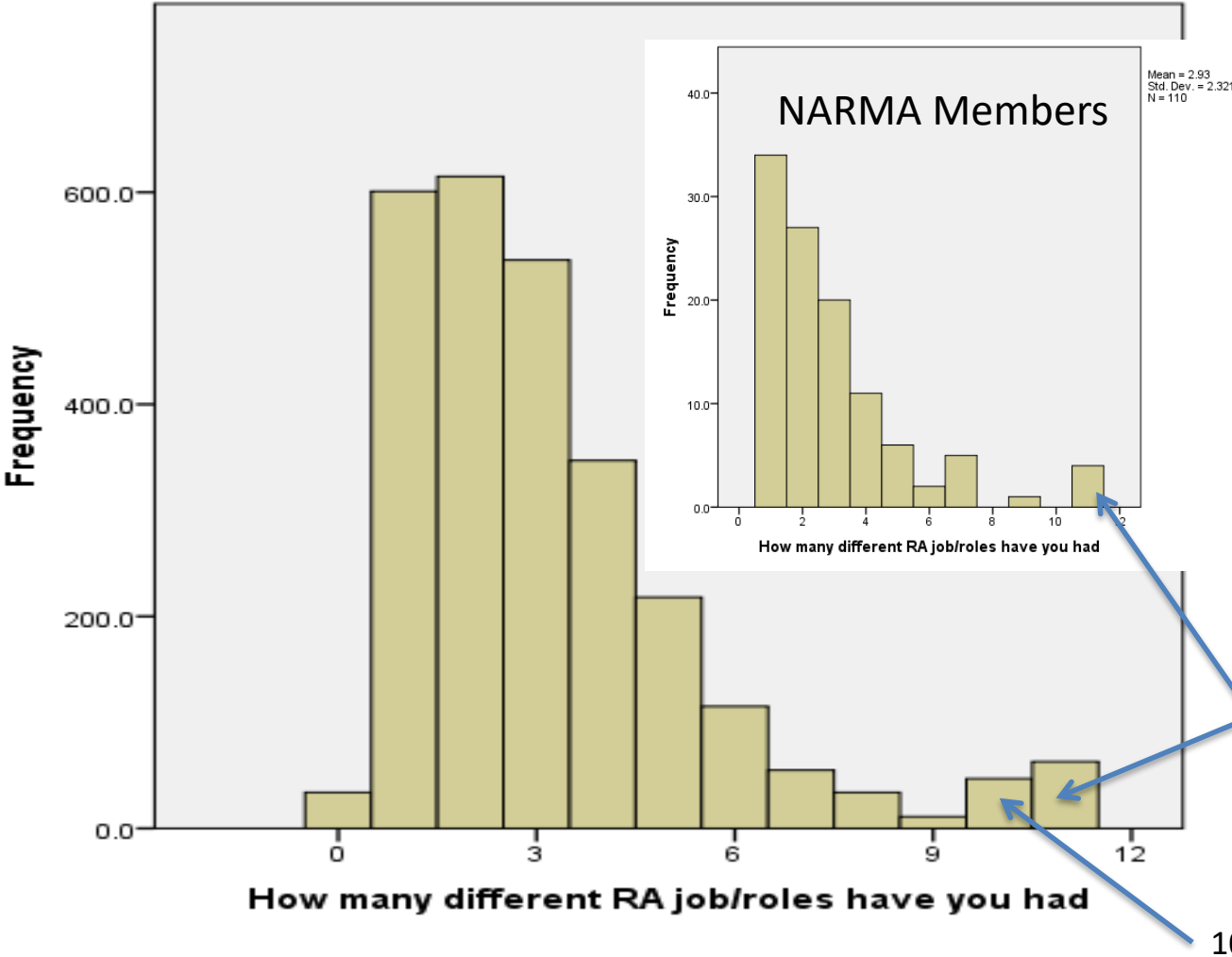


NARMA Members

- What character of Institution do you work in
- University - PUI
 - University - Research Active
 - University - Research Intensive
 - Research Institute
 - Research Funder
 - Private Company
 - Hospital
 - Charity
 - Government Department
 - Not Sure



RAAAP: RMA Job Fluidity

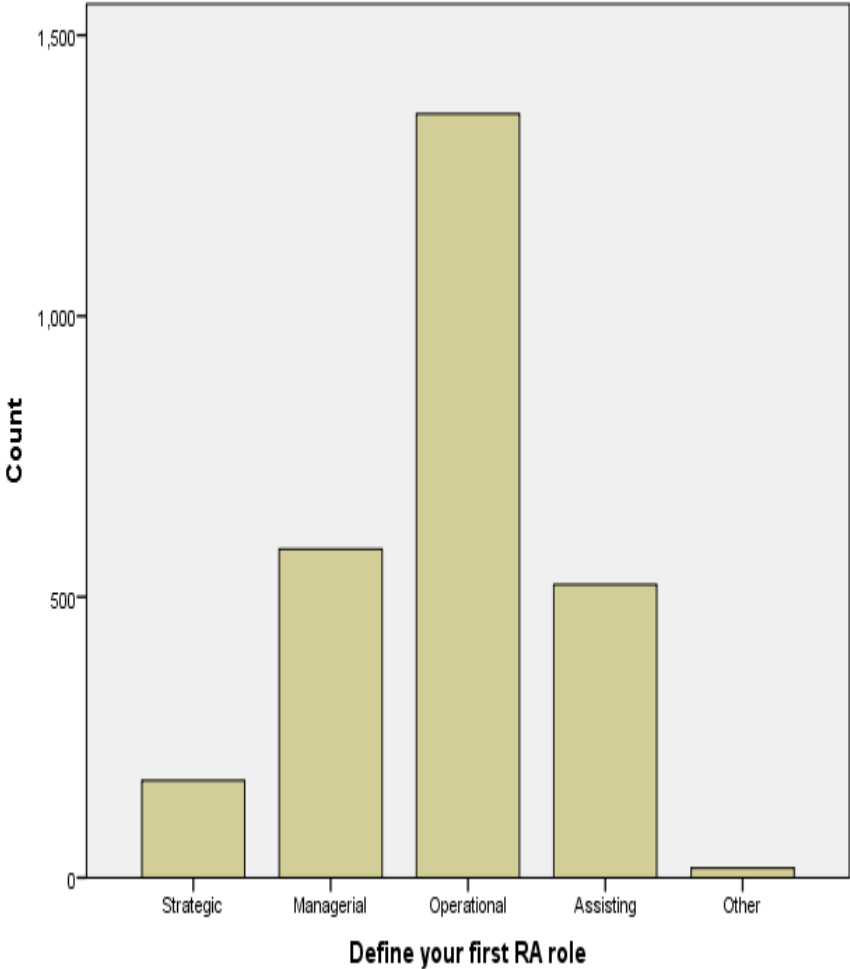


Approximately how many research administration job roles in total have you had during the years you were/are employed

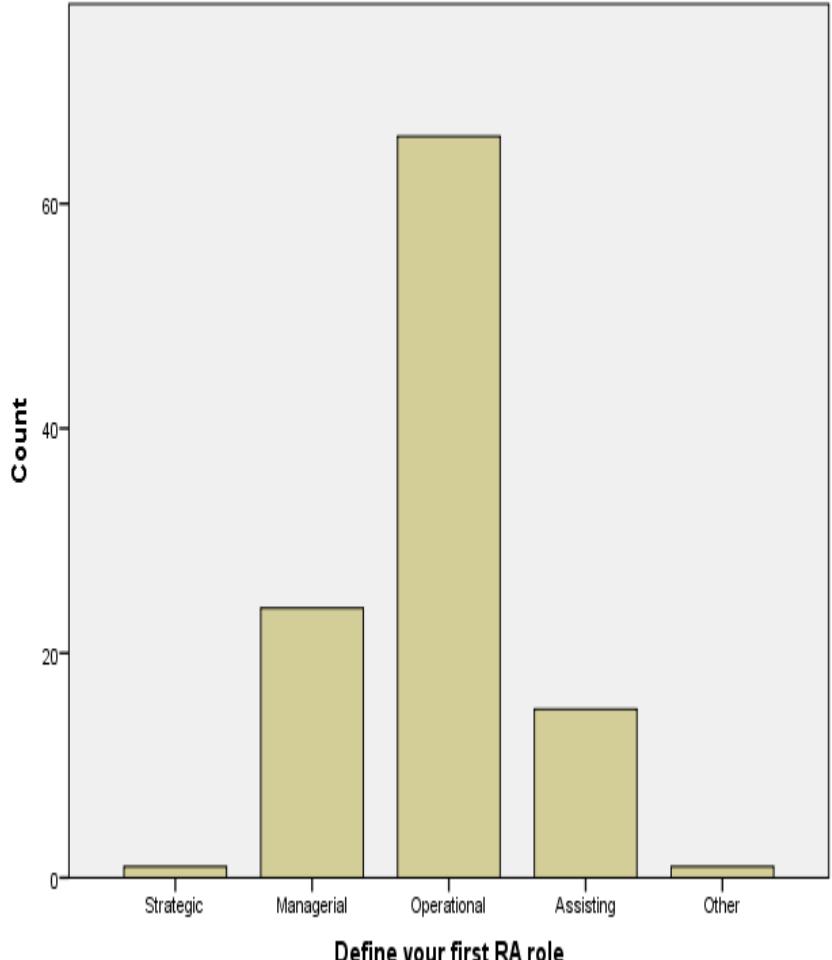
My history is rather complex



RAAAP: What level did RMAs start at



All Responses

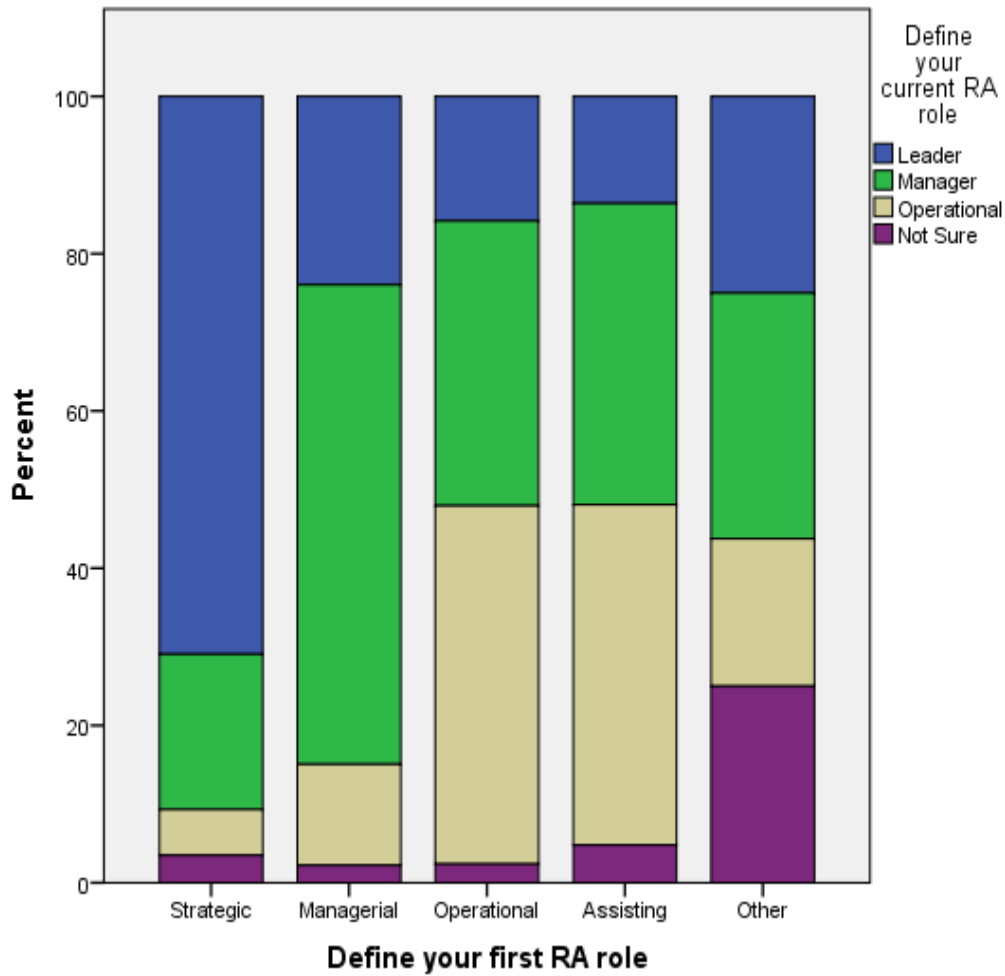


NARMA Members

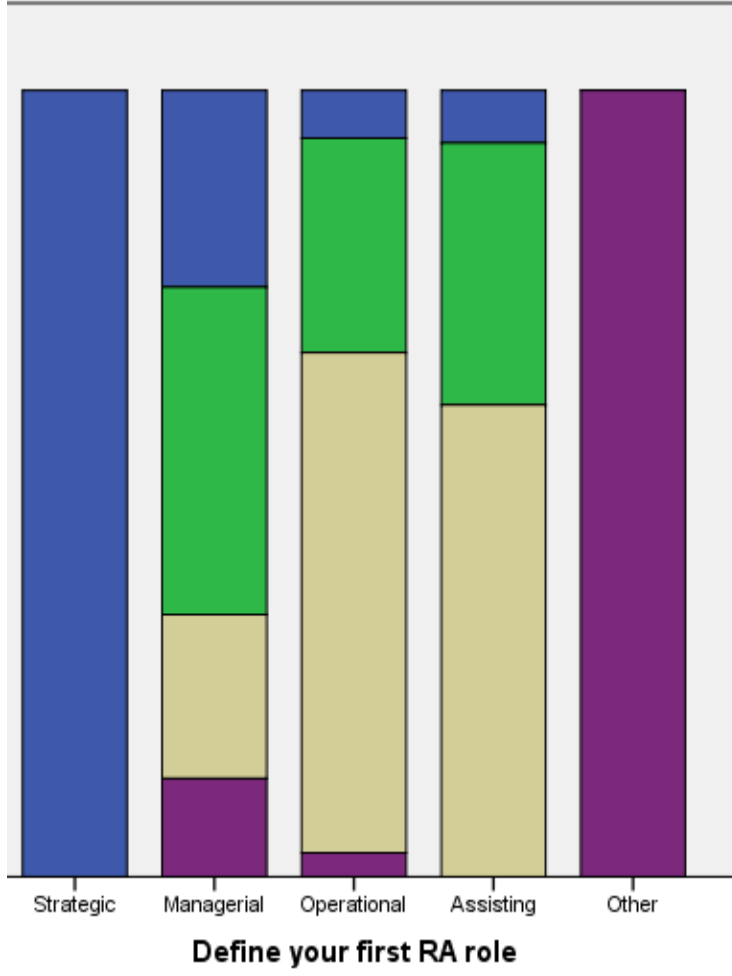
Thinking about your first role in research administration, how would you characterise it in terms of seniority?



RAAAP: How did leaders start out

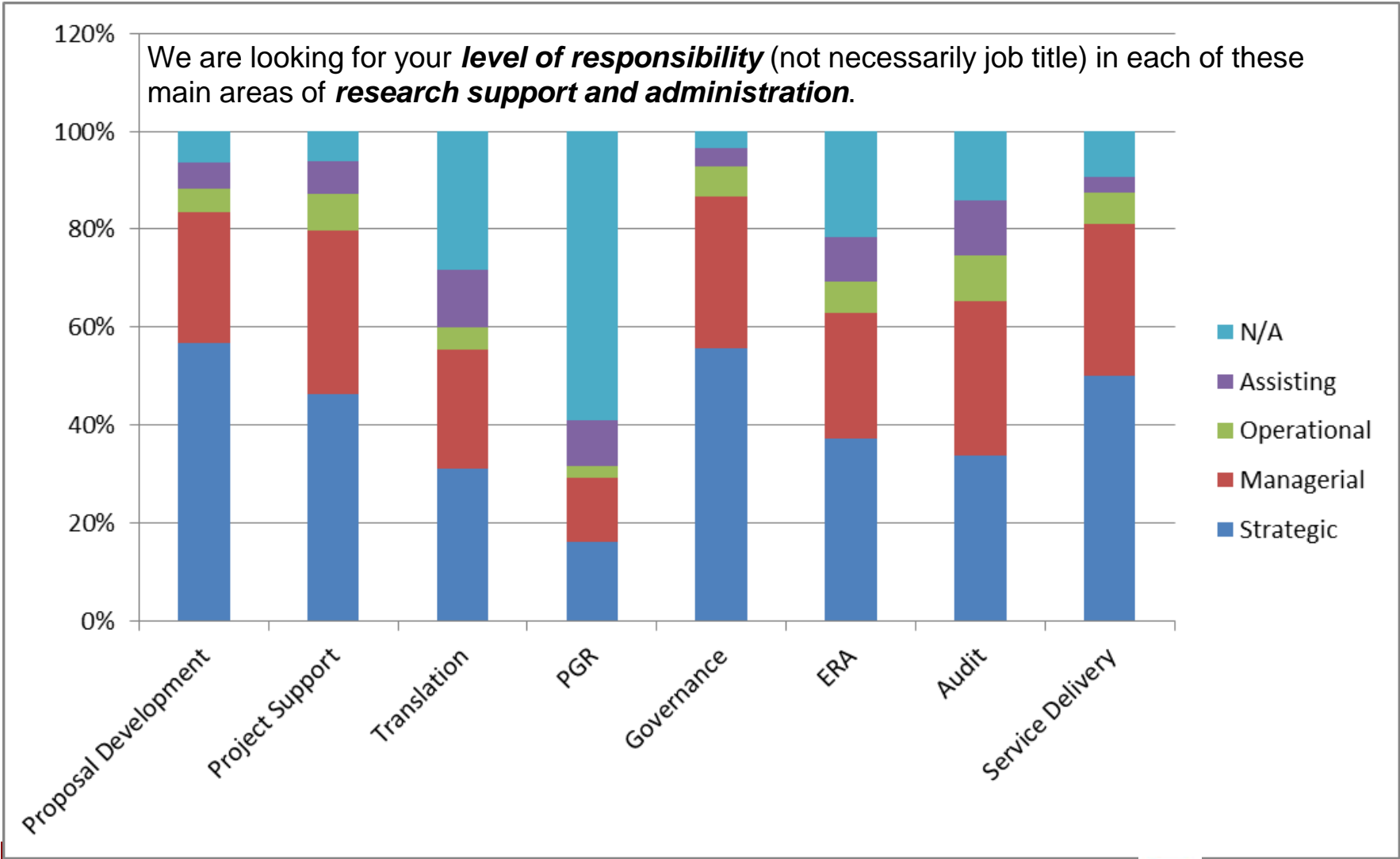


All Responses



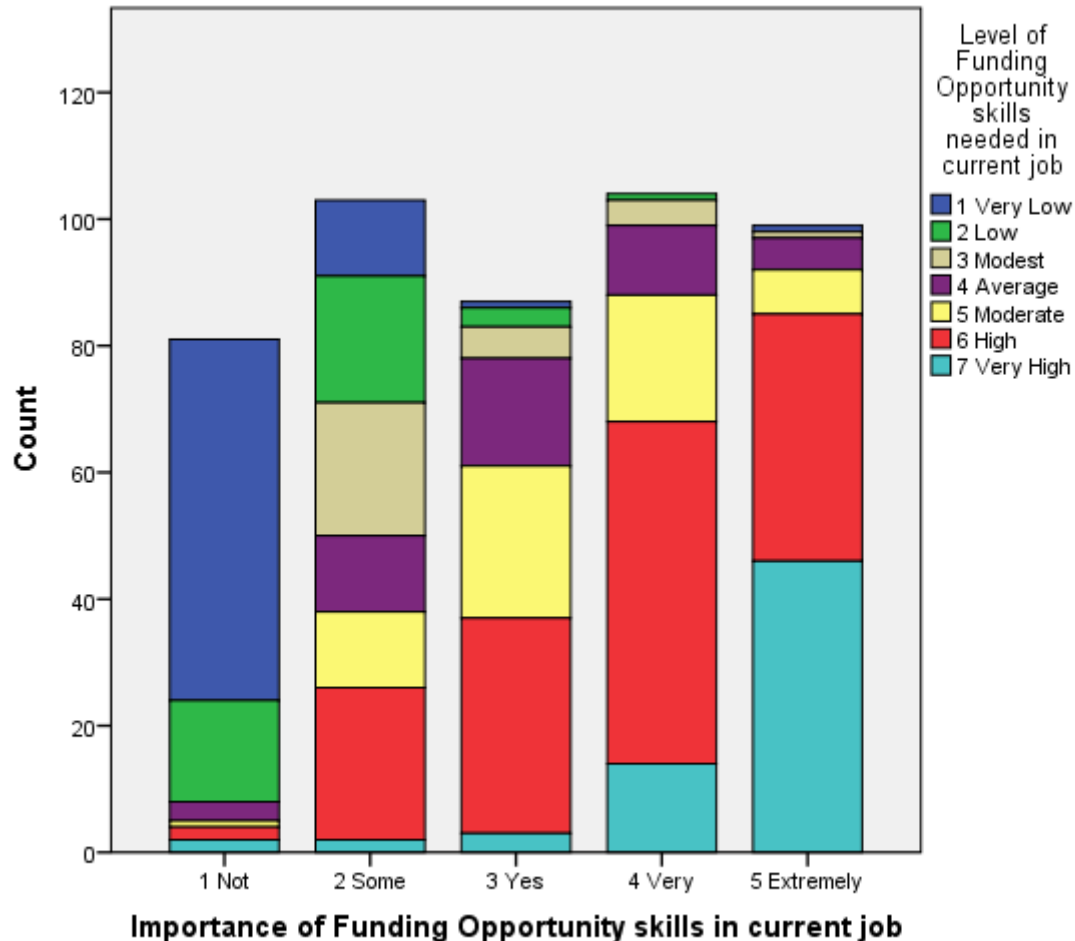
NARMA Members

RAAAP: Areas that Leaders* work in



*North America, Europe, and Australasia only

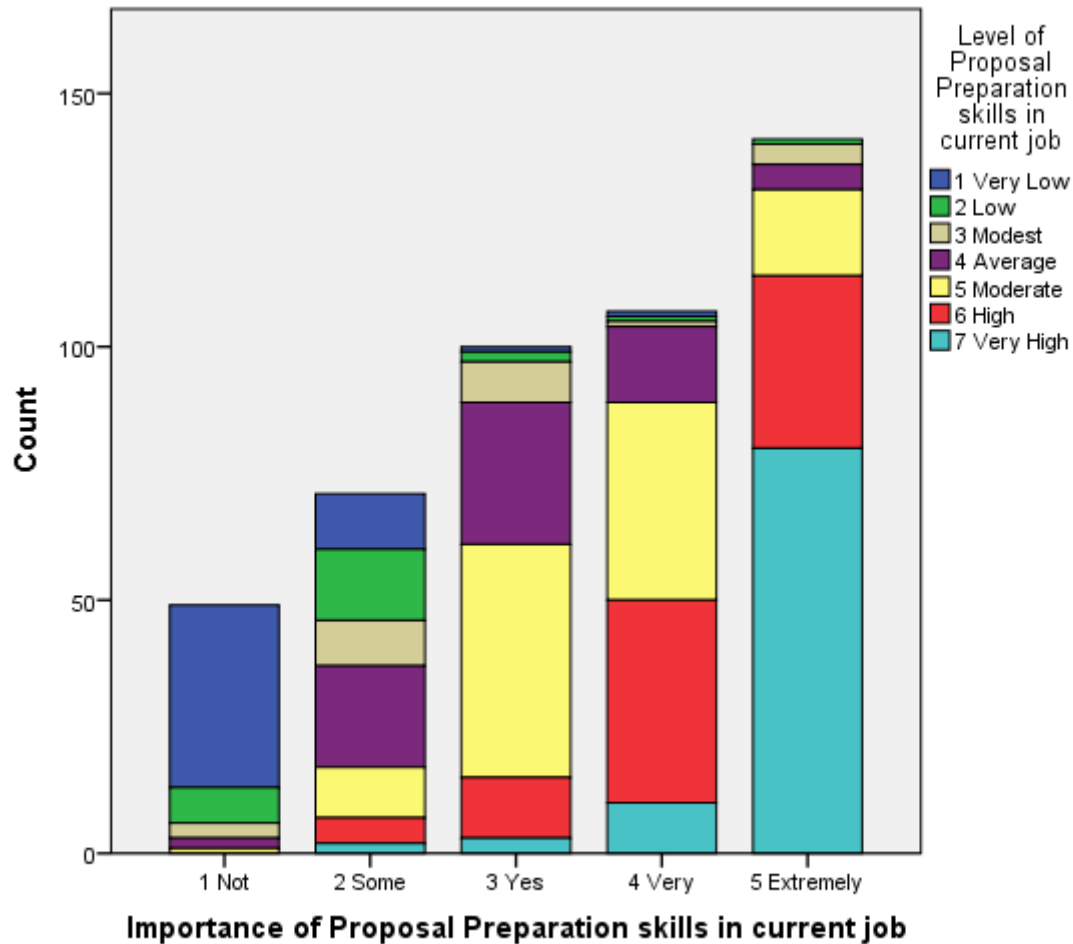
RAAAP: Funding Opportunities



sli.do
question

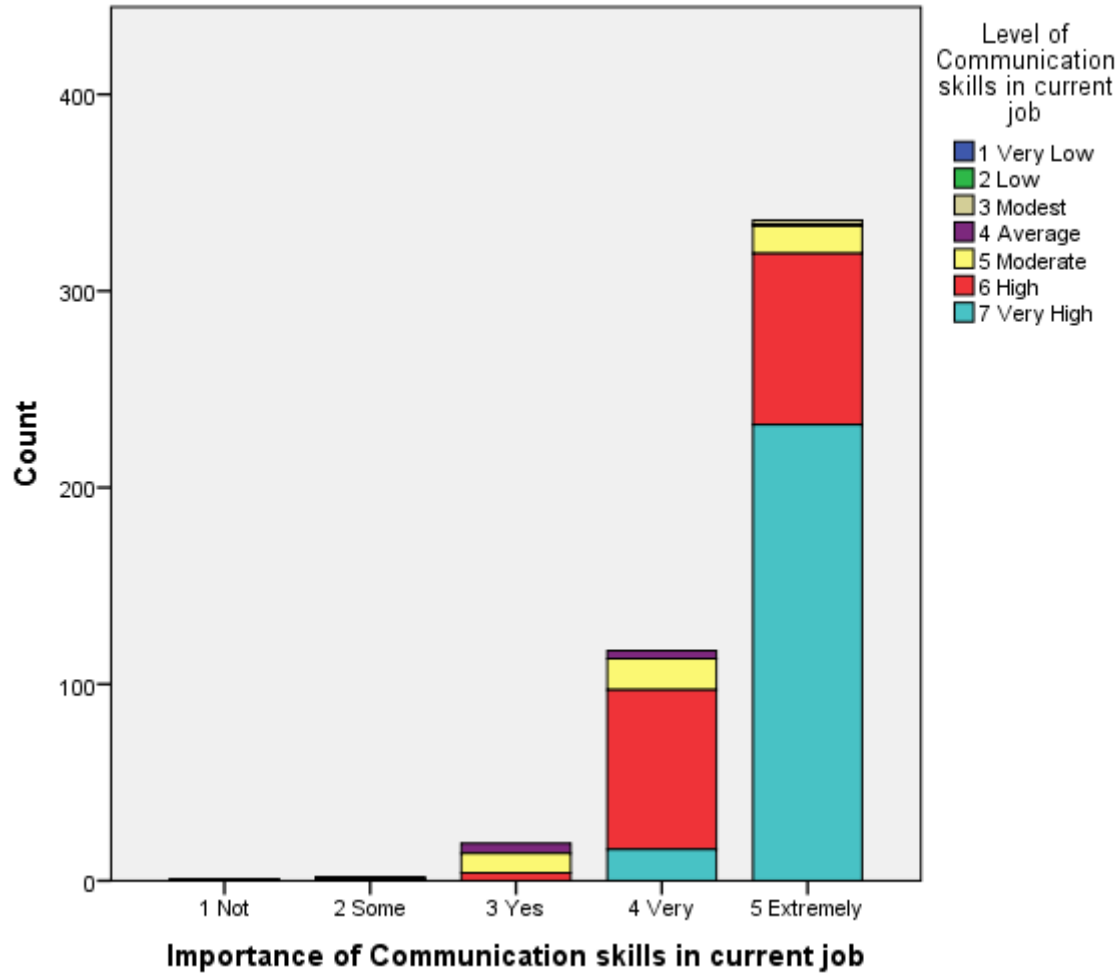
Looking at Leaders from Europe, North America and Oceania only

RAAAP: Proposal Development



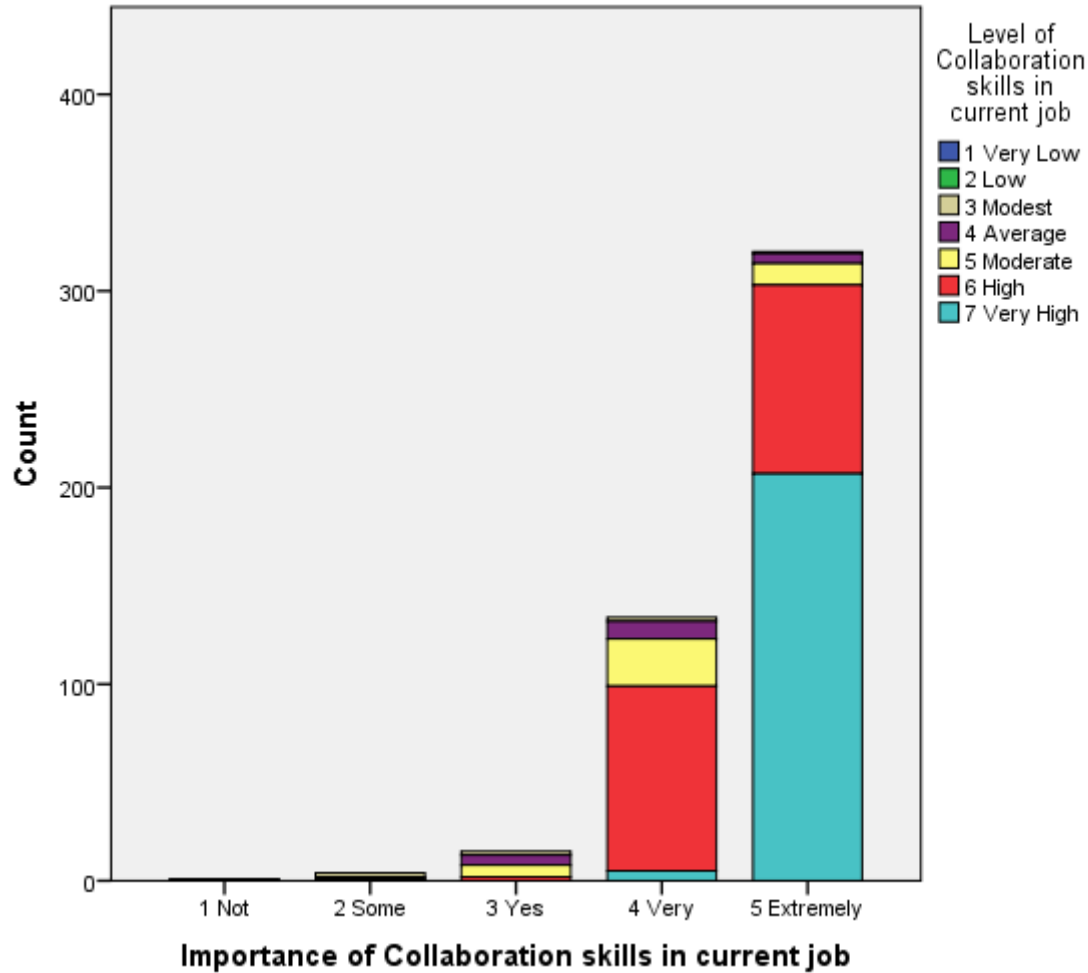
Looking at Leaders from Europe, North America and Oceania only

RAAAP: Communication



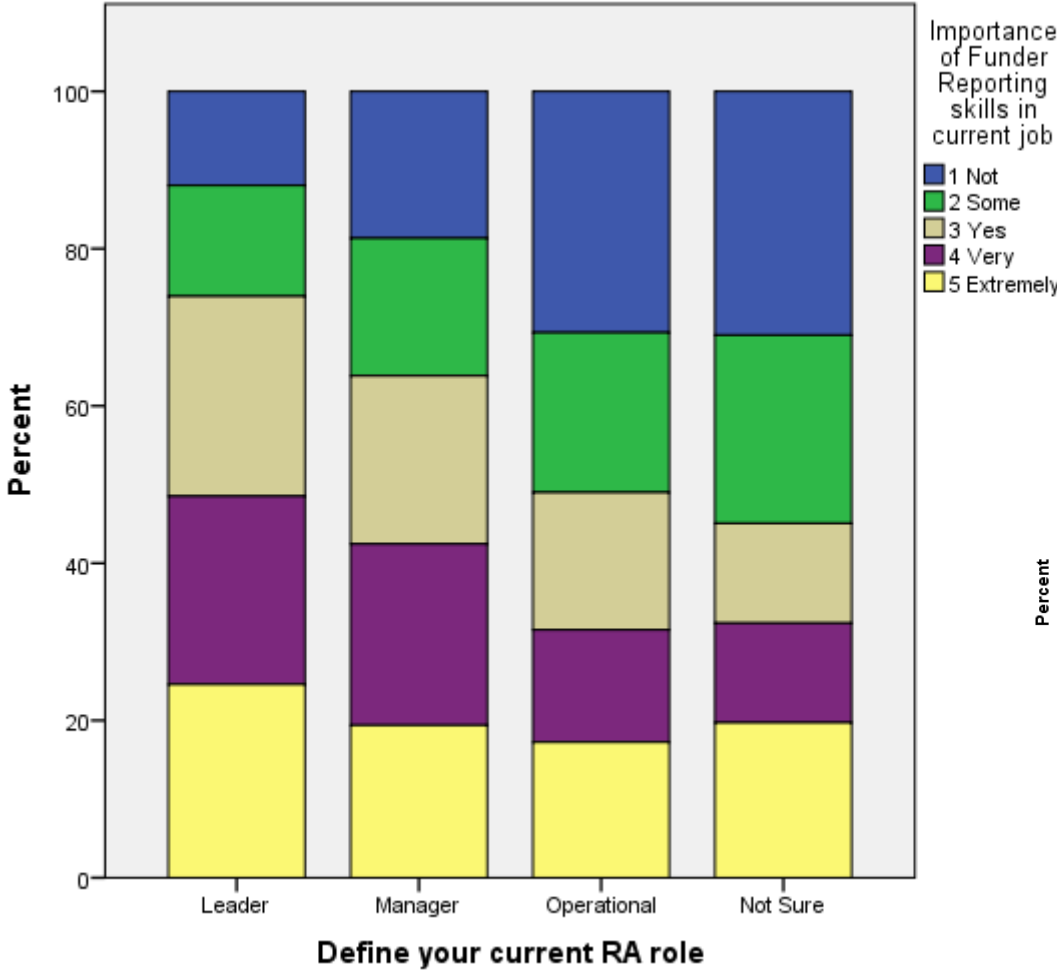
Looking at Leaders from Europe, North America and Oceania only

RAAAP: Collaboration

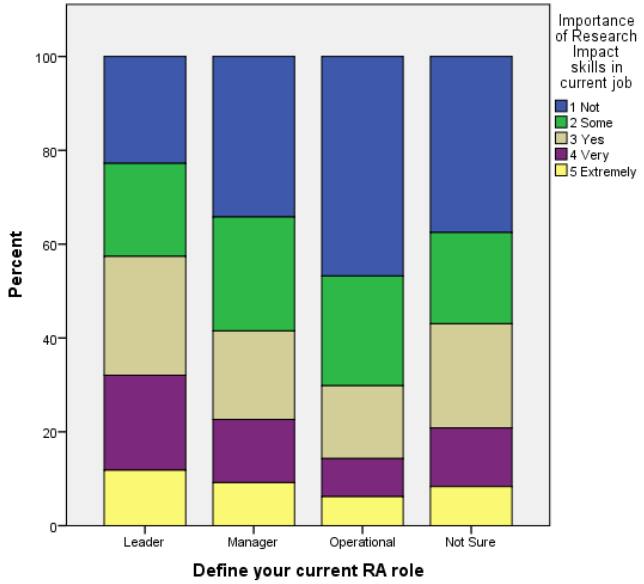


Looking at Leaders from Europe, North America and Oceania only

RAAAP: Funder Reporting



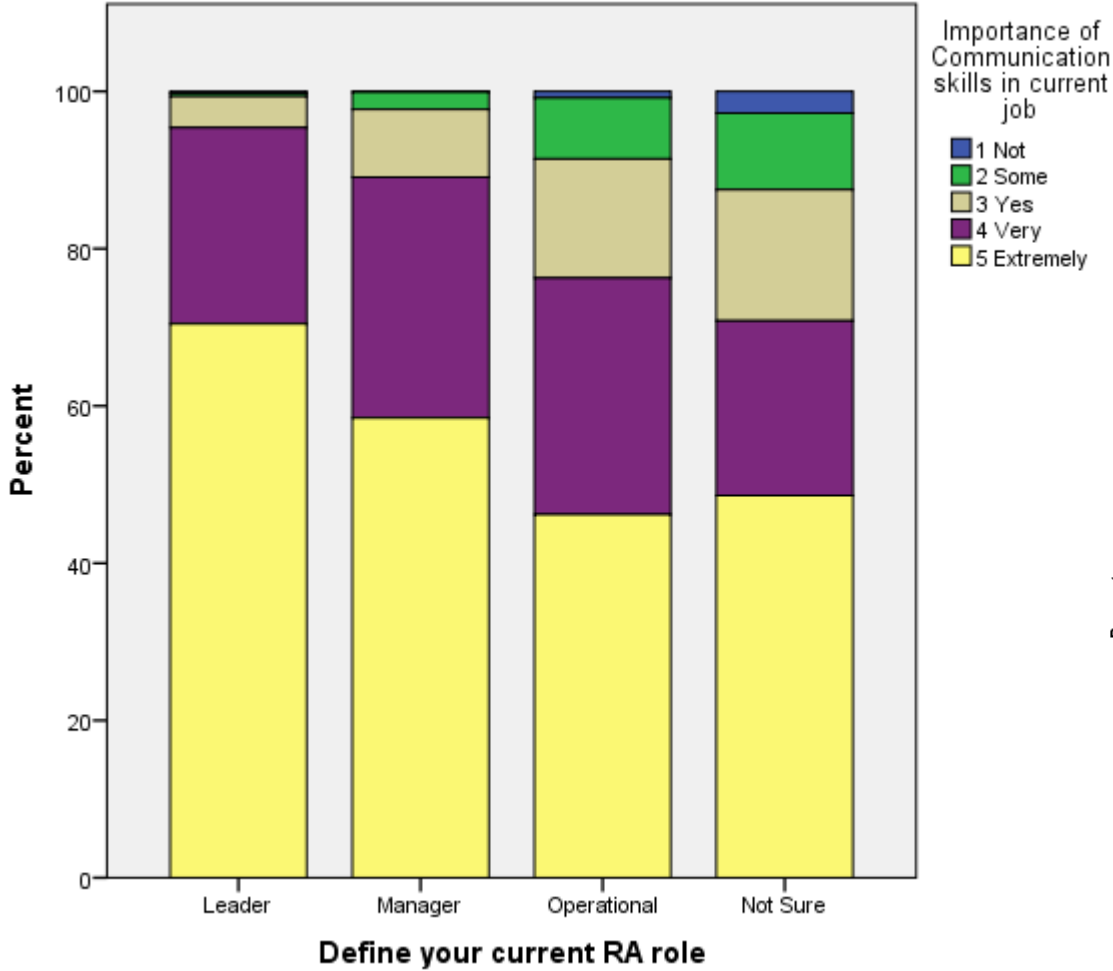
Research Impact



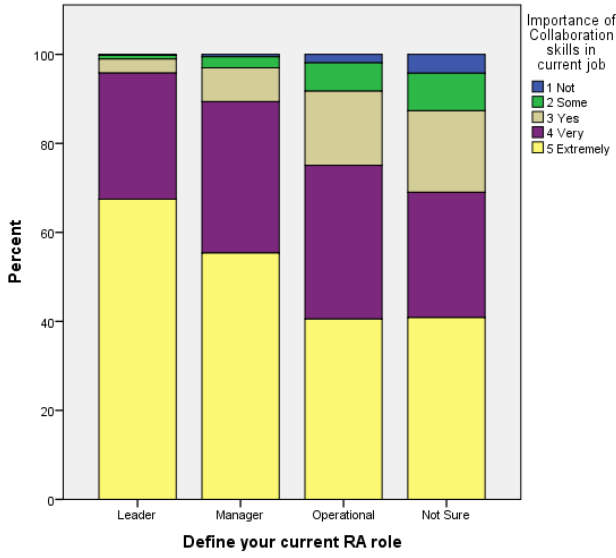
Looking at Europe, North America and Oceania only



RAAAP: Communication



Collaboration



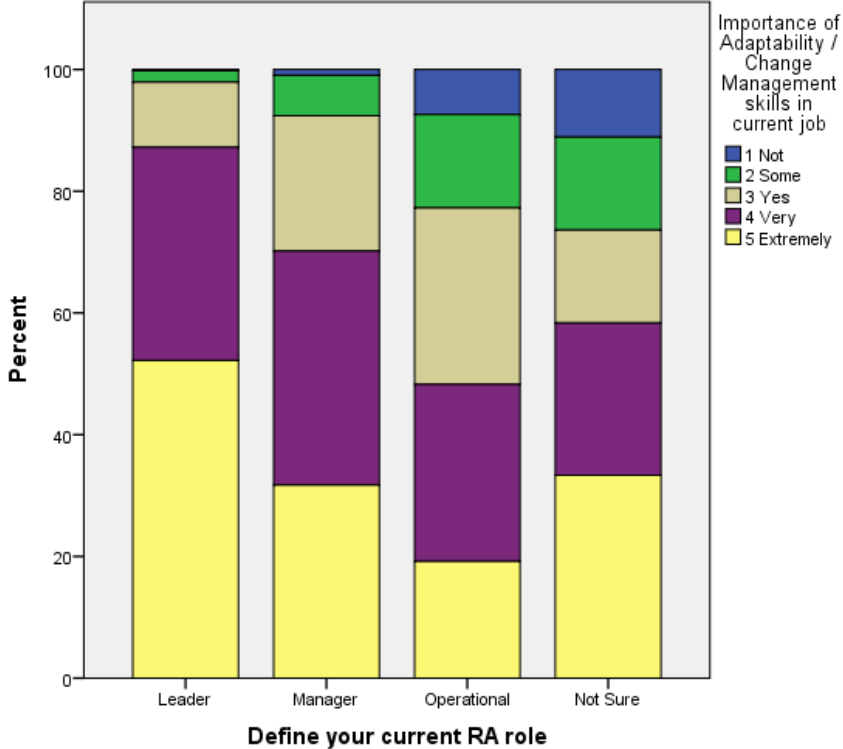
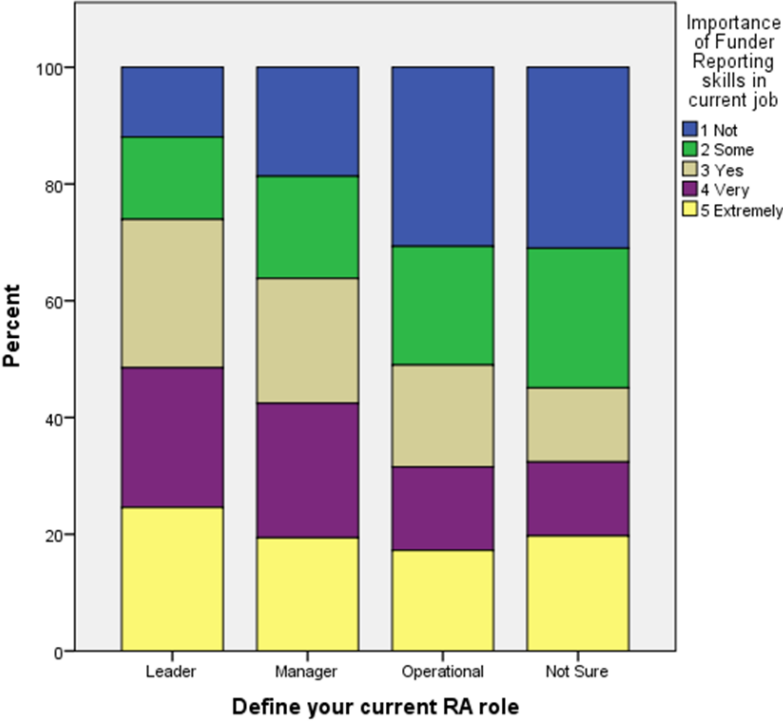
Looking at Europe, North America and Oceania only



RAAAP: Hard

v

Soft skills



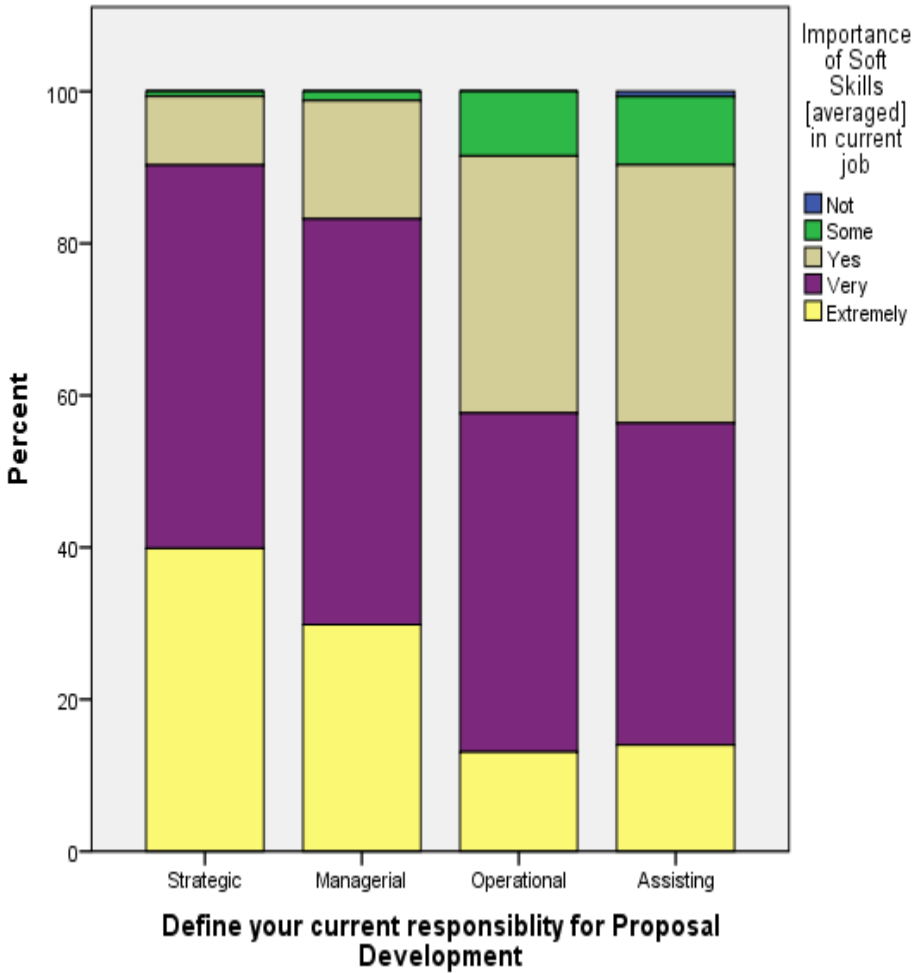
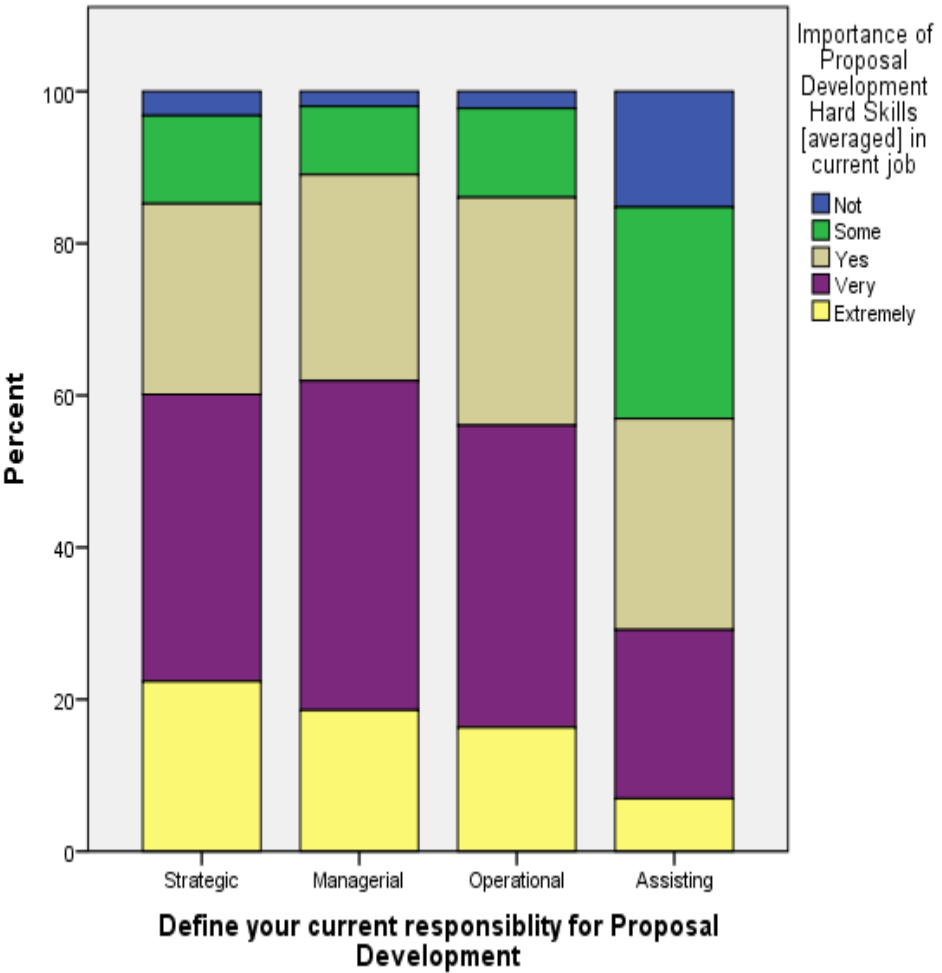
Looking at Europe, North America and Oceania only



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RAAAP – Hard v Soft (averaged)

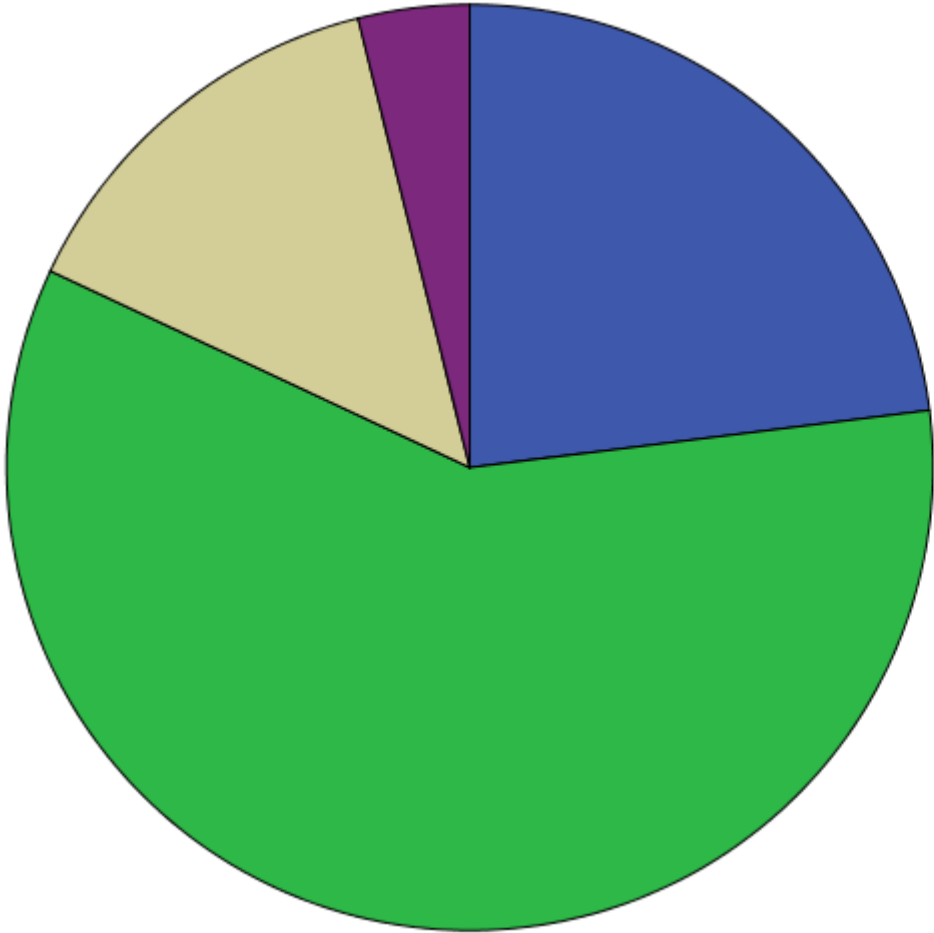


Valid: 474 667 717 302 (2,160)

Valid: 474 667 718 300 (2,159)



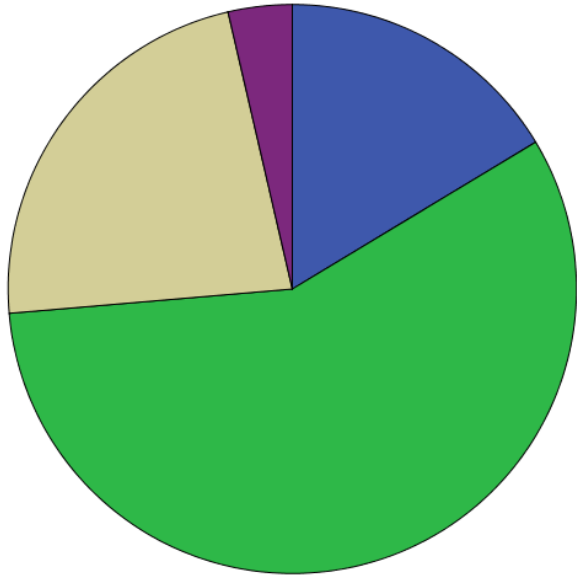
RAAAP: RMAs bring skills with them



All Responses

When were these most important skills learned

- Mainly Prior
- Some Prior
- Mainly in Role
- Mixed



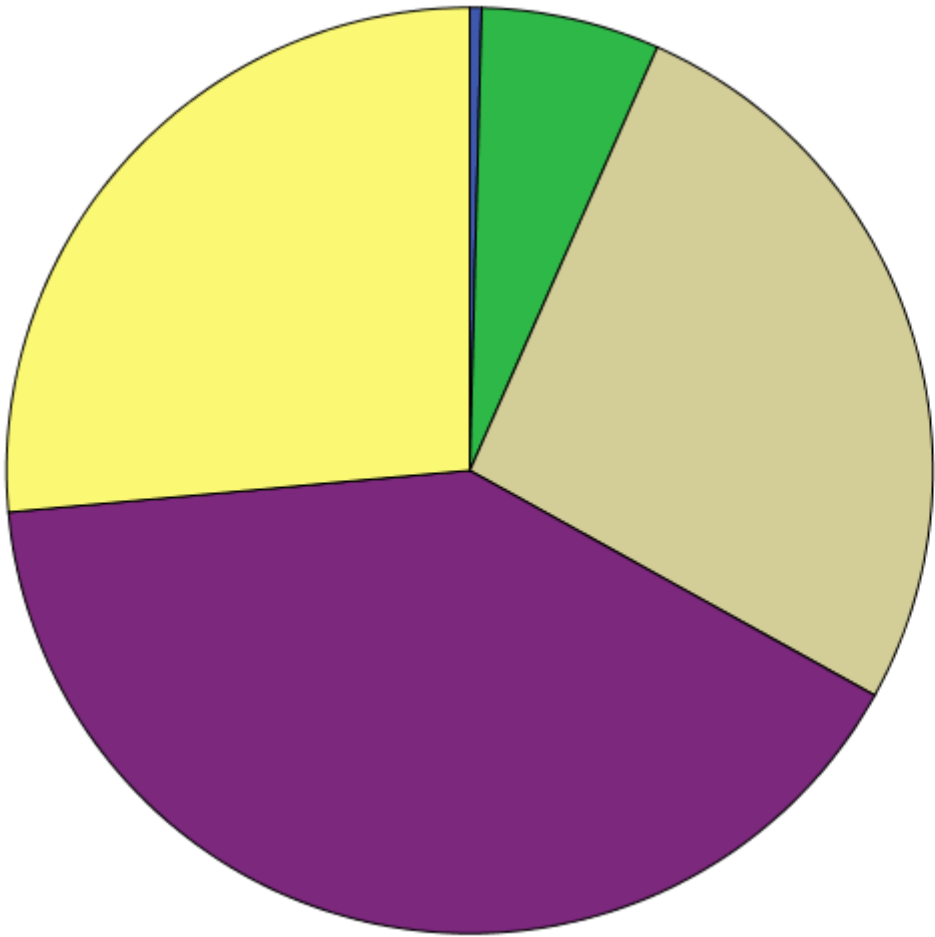
NARMA Members

When were these most important skills learned

- Mainly Prior
- Some Prior
- Mainly in Role
- Mixed



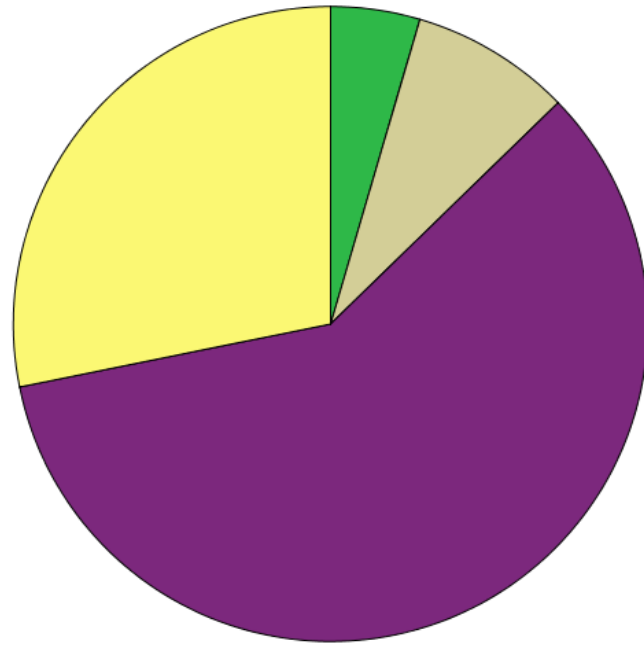
RAAAP: RMAs are highly qualified



All Responses

What is your highest academic qualification

- None
- High School
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctorate



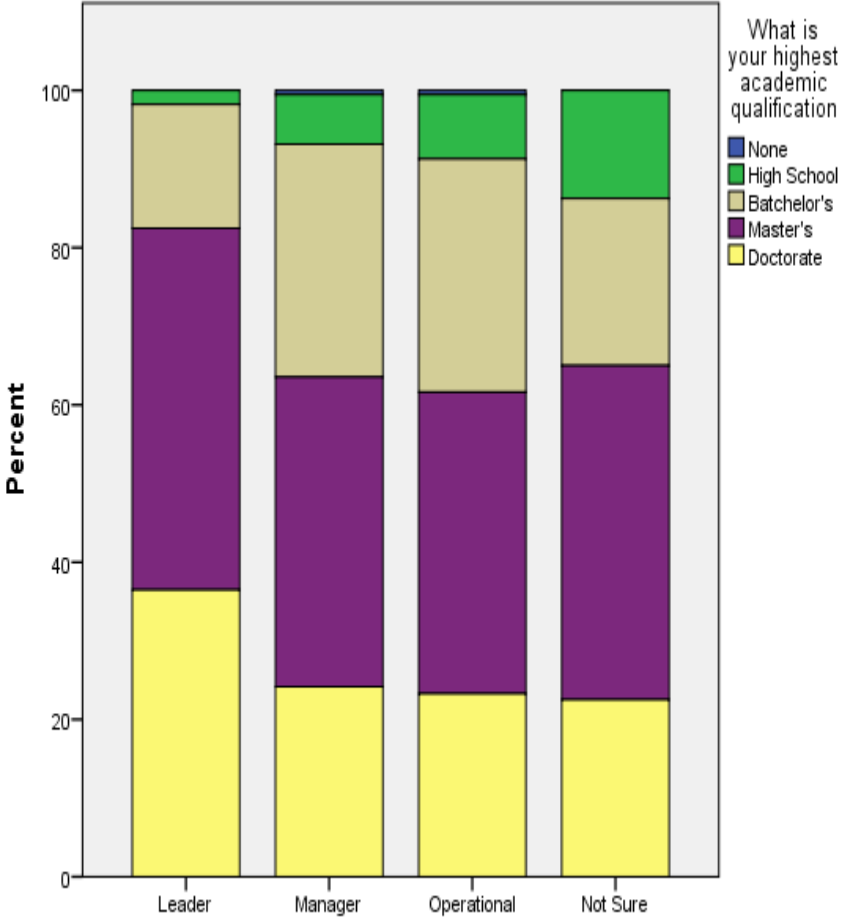
NARMA Members

What is your highest academic qualification

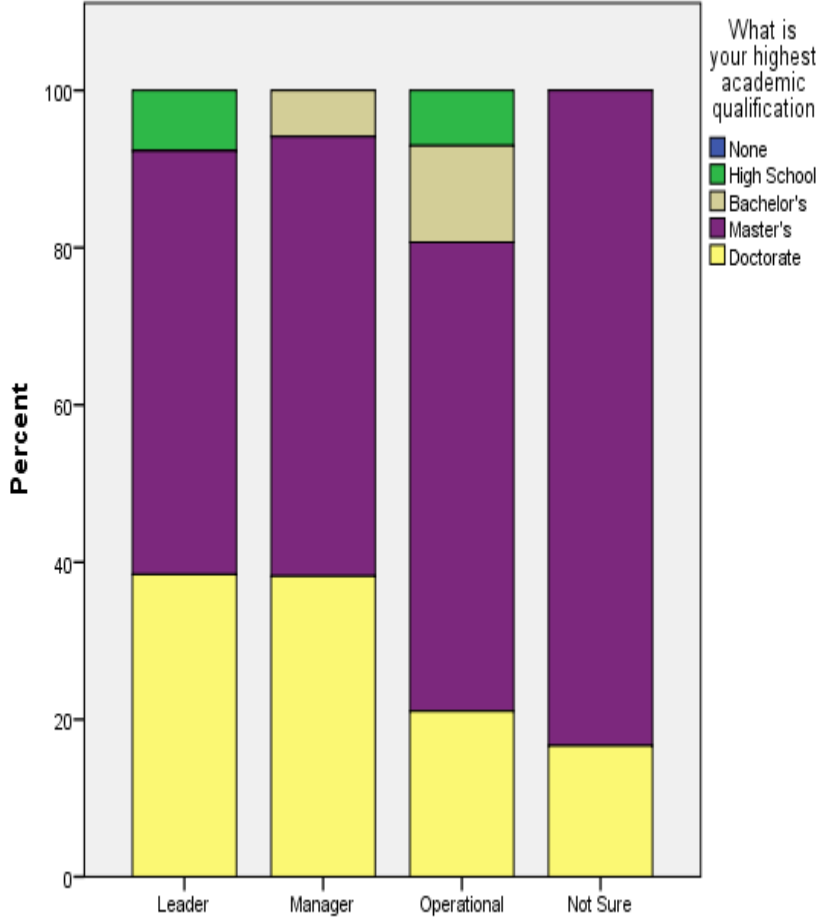
- None
- High School
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctorate



RAAAP: RMA Leaders/Managers are more qualified



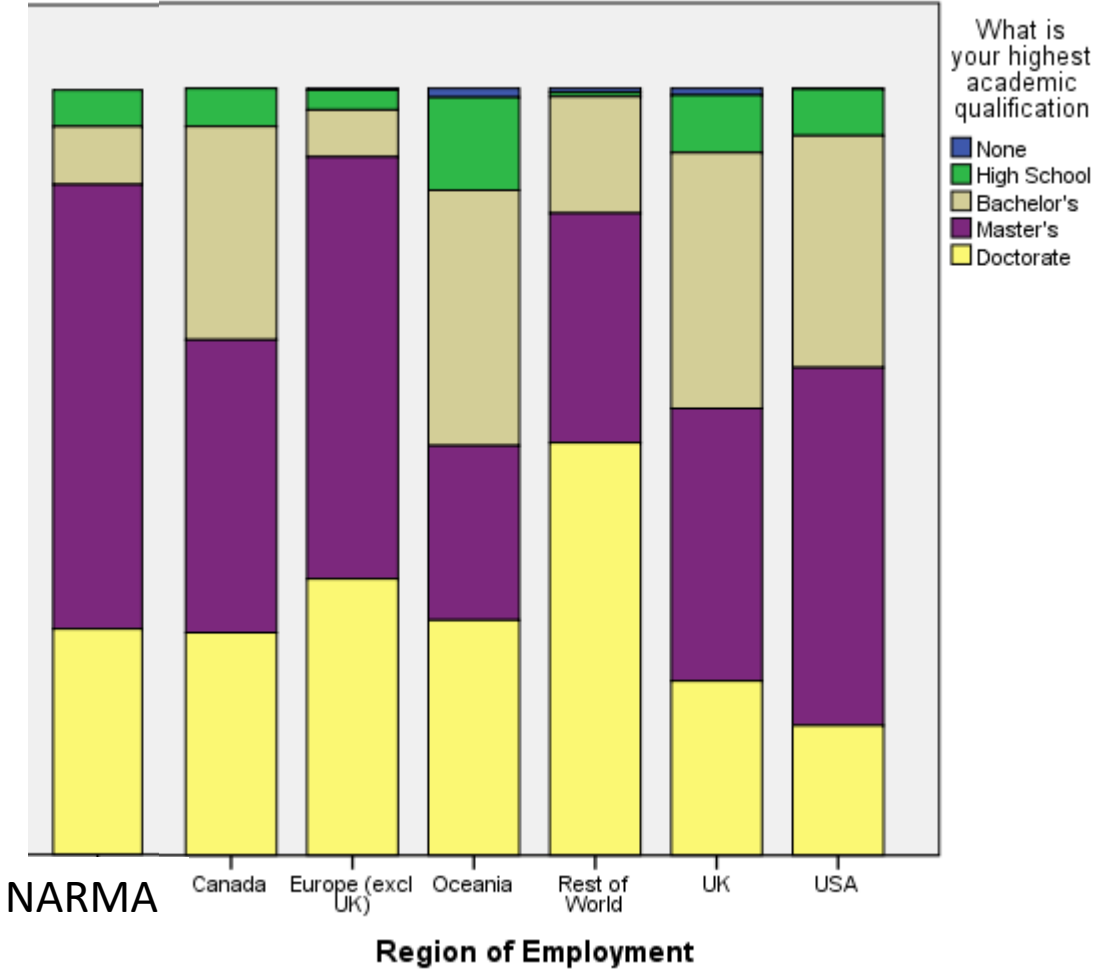
Define your current RA role
All Responses



Define your current RA role
NARMA Members



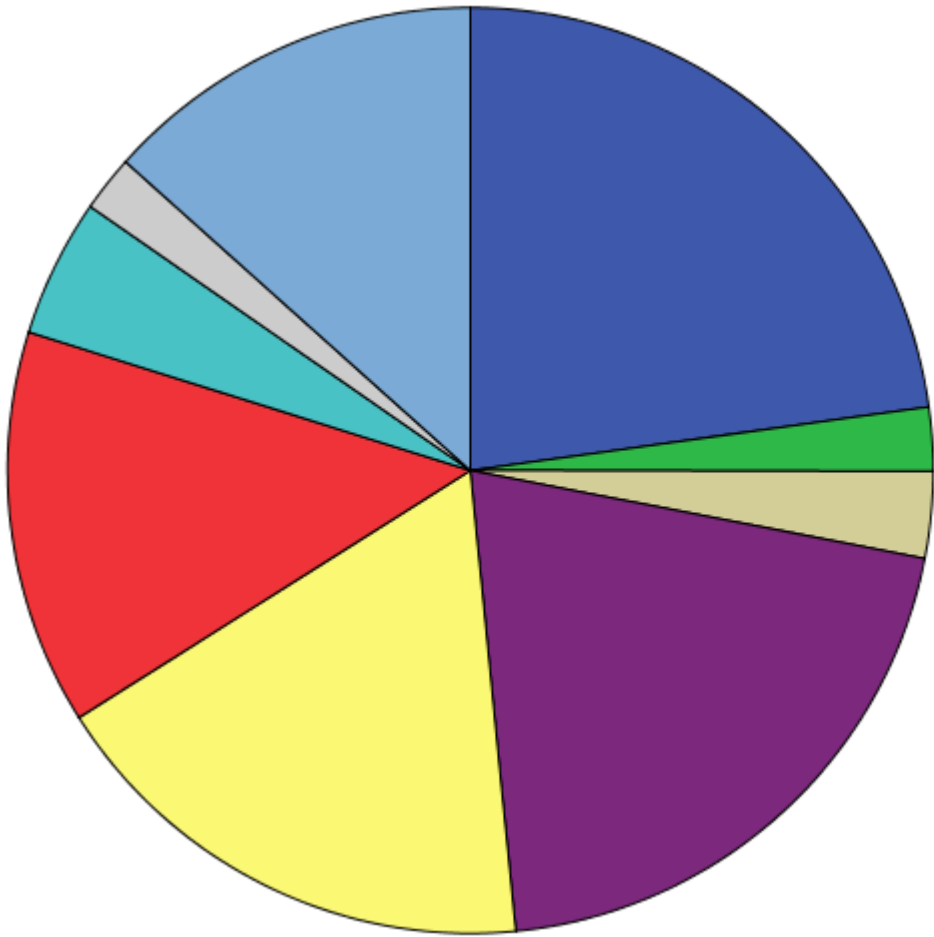
RAAAP – Academic Attainment by Region



Number of valid responses: 241 391 339 184 453 939 (2,547)



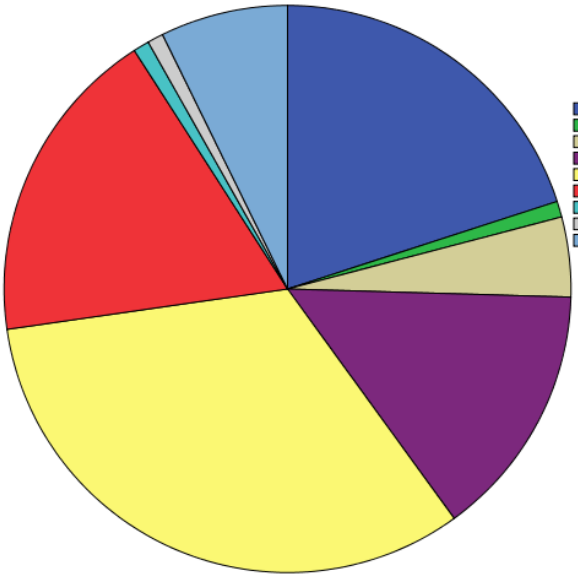
RAAAP: RMAs come from all subjects



All Responses

What is subject area is your highest academic qualification

- Science
- Medicine
- Engineering
- Business
- Social Science
- Humanities
- Arts
- General
- Other



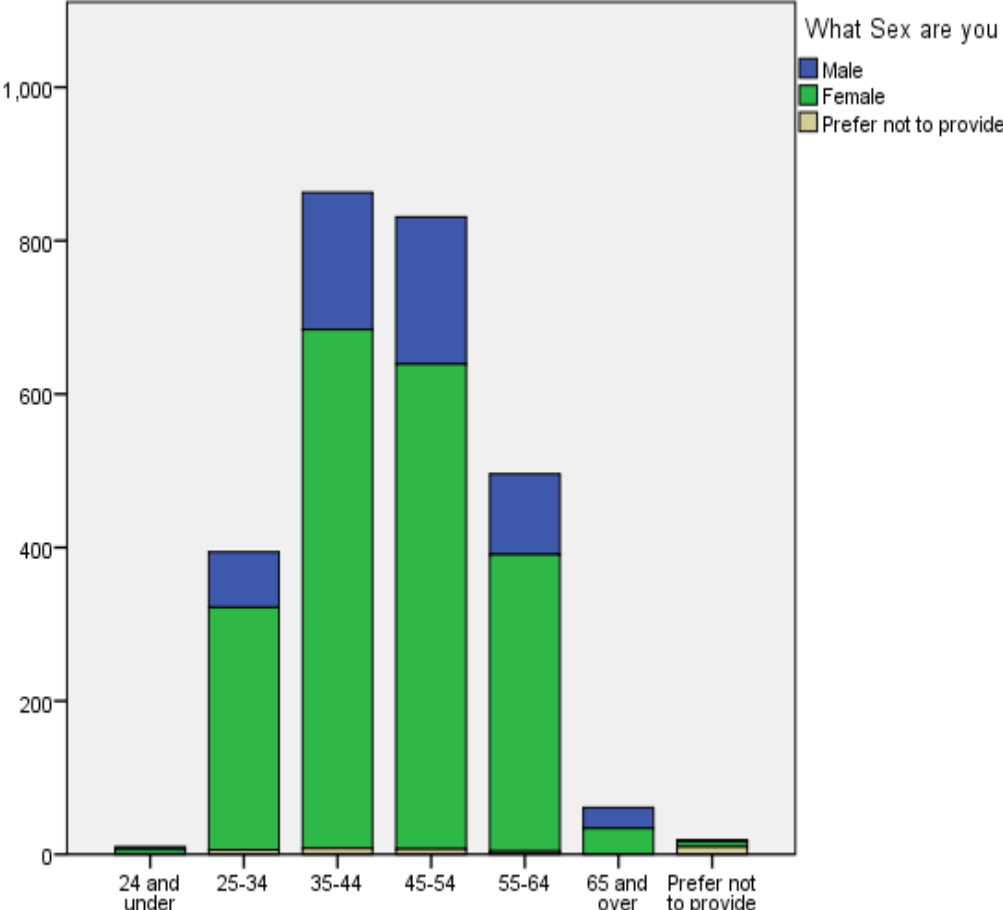
NARMA Members

What is subject area is your highest academic qualification

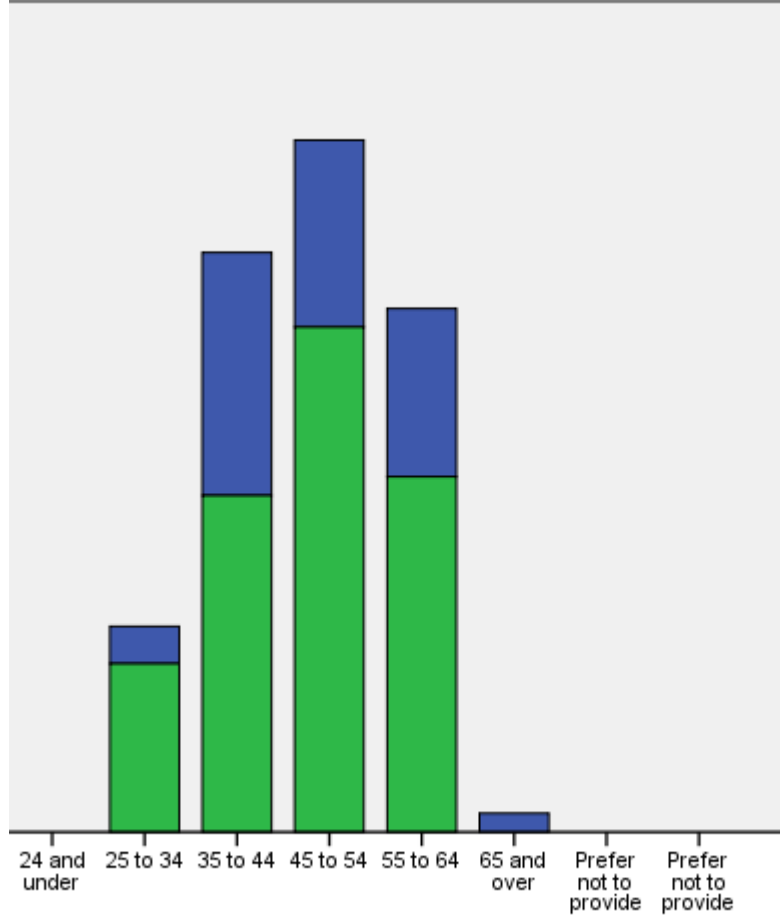
- Science
- Medicine
- Engineering
- Business
- Social Science
- Humanities
- Arts
- General
- Other



RAAAP: RMA Gender by Age



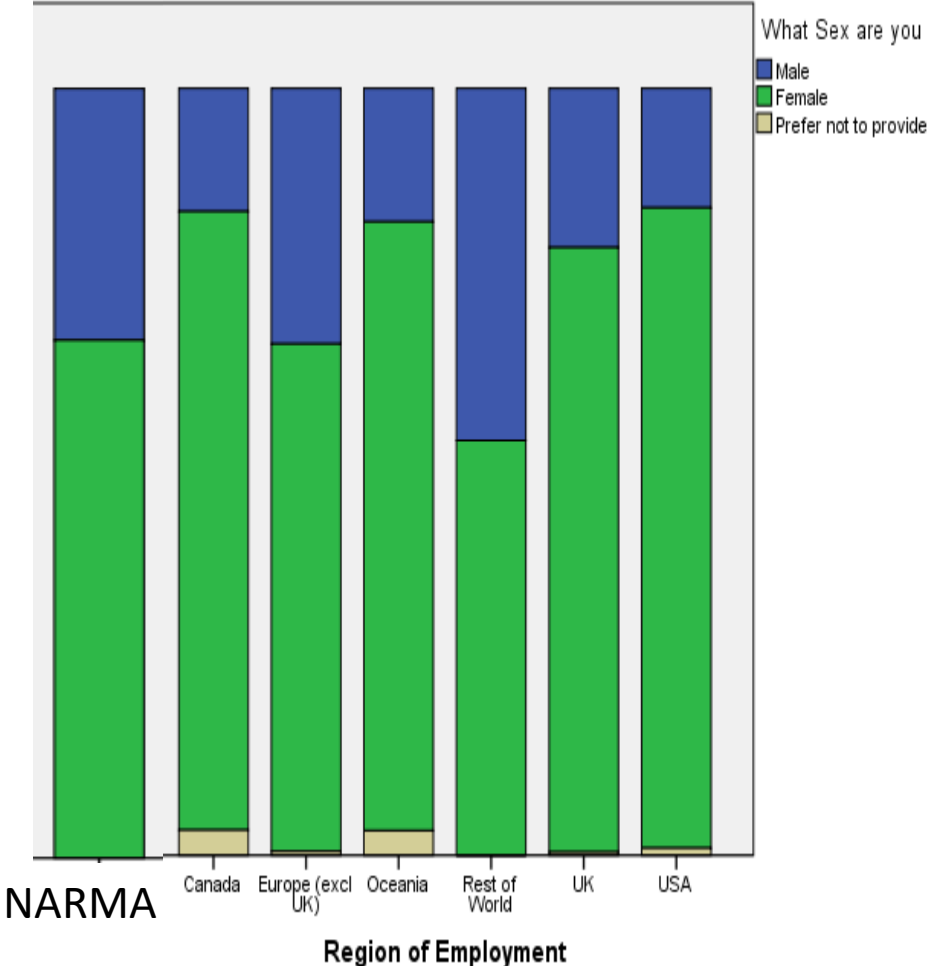
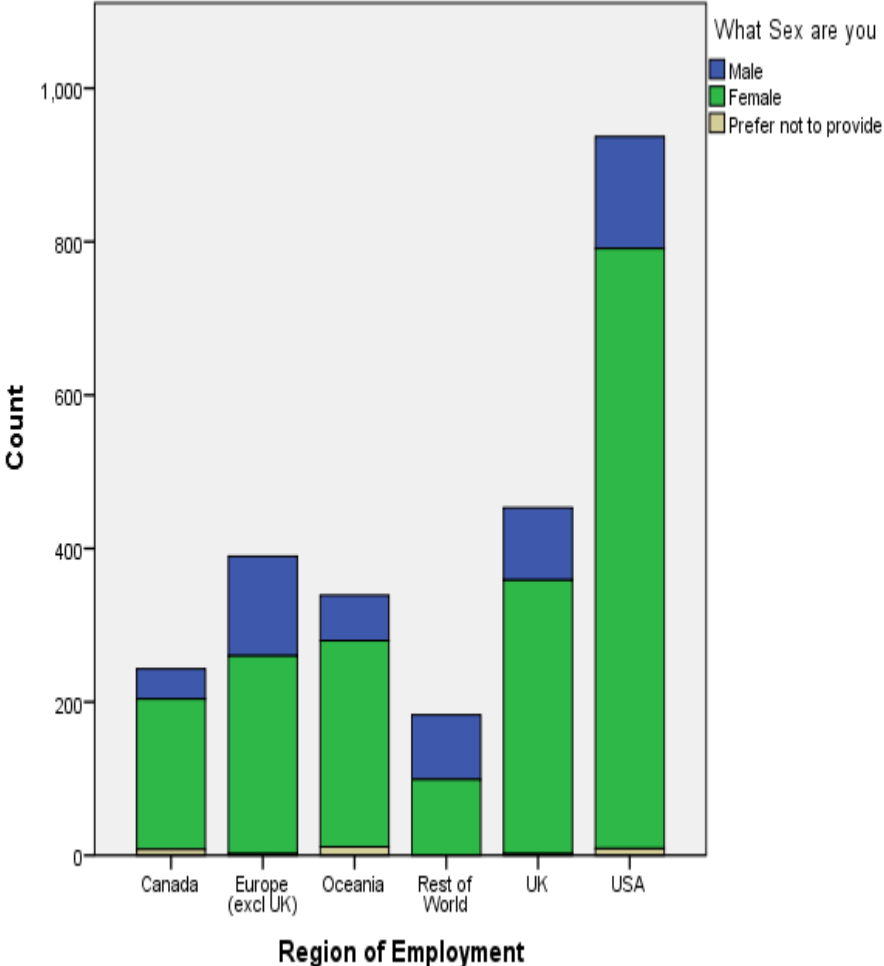
What Age Range are you
All Responses



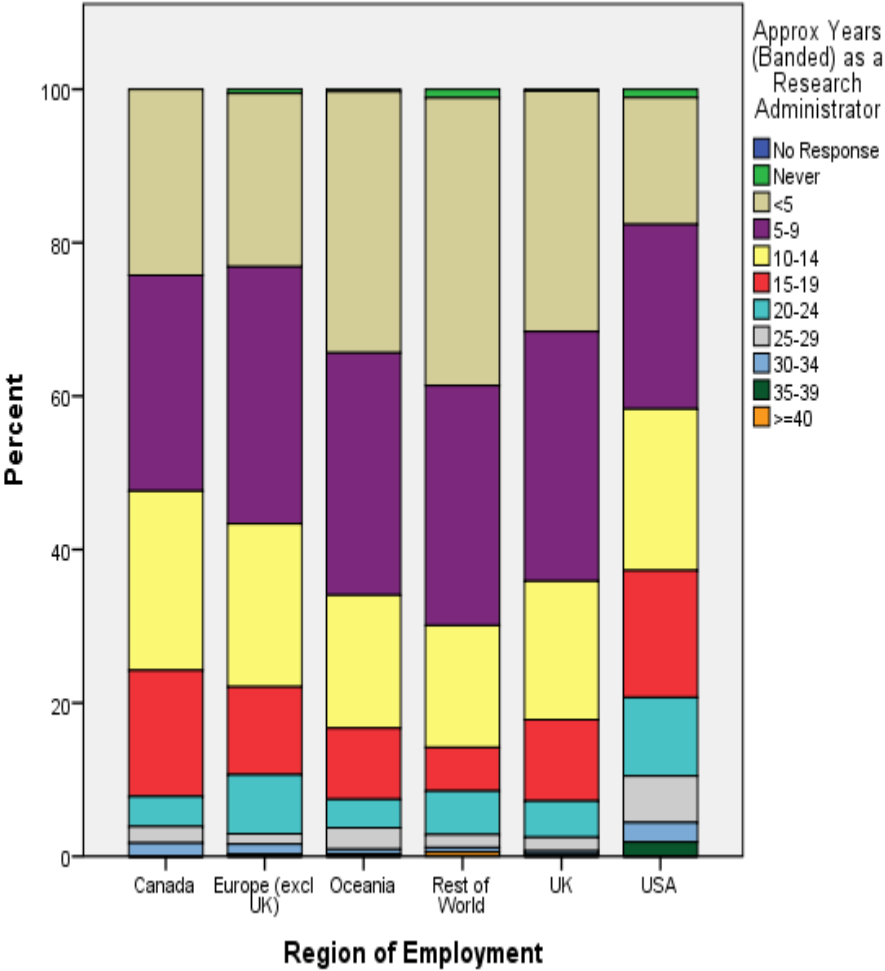
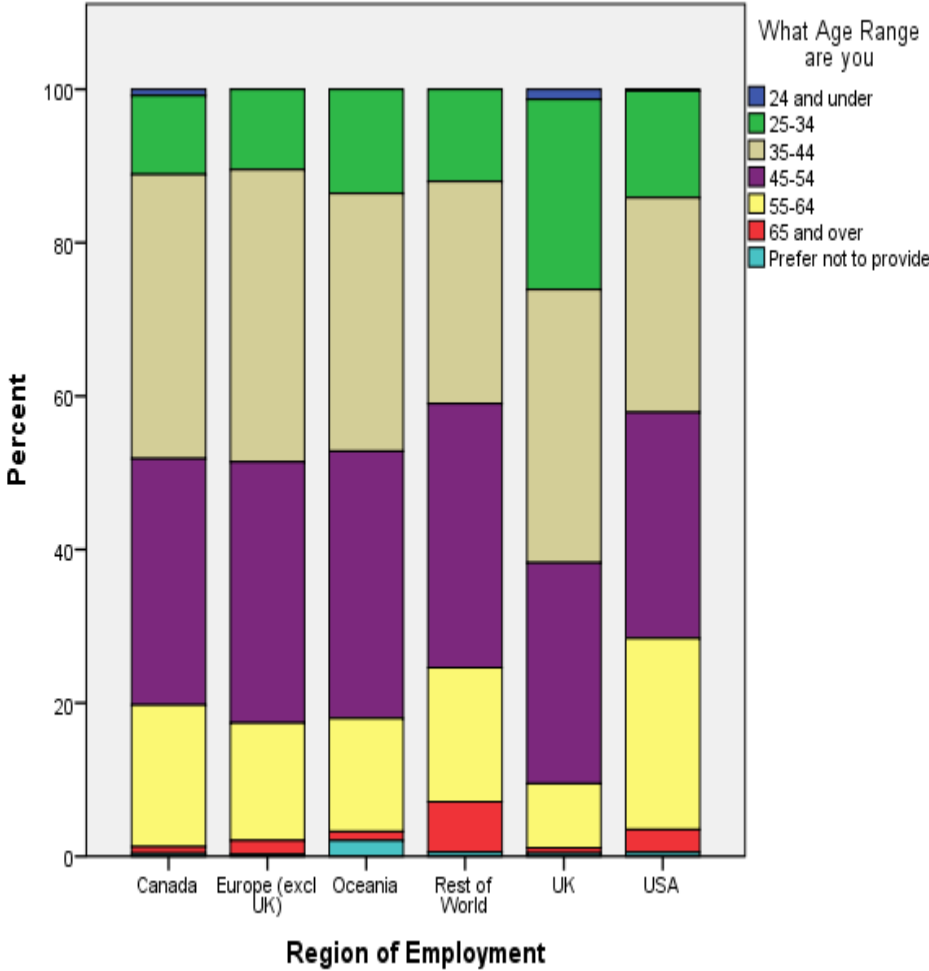
What Age Range are you
NARMA Members



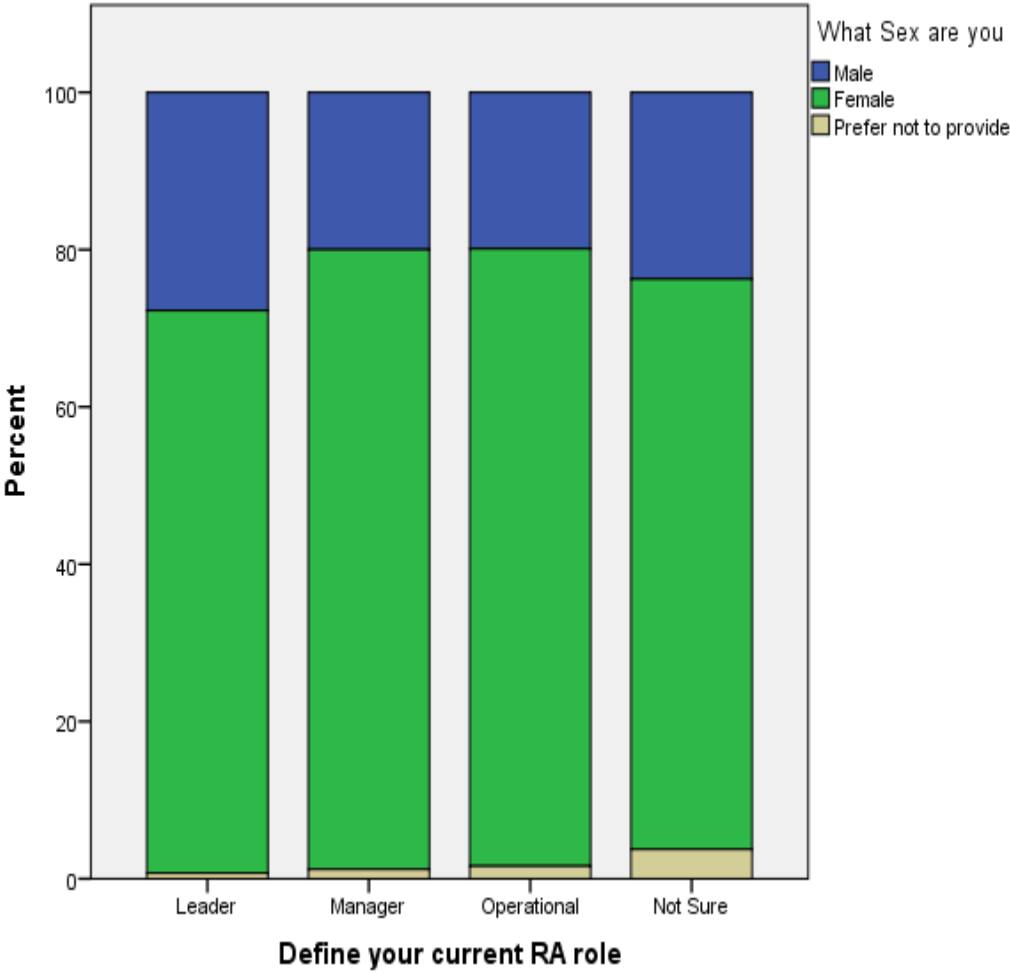
RAAAP: Gender by Region



RAAAP: Age and Work-length by Region

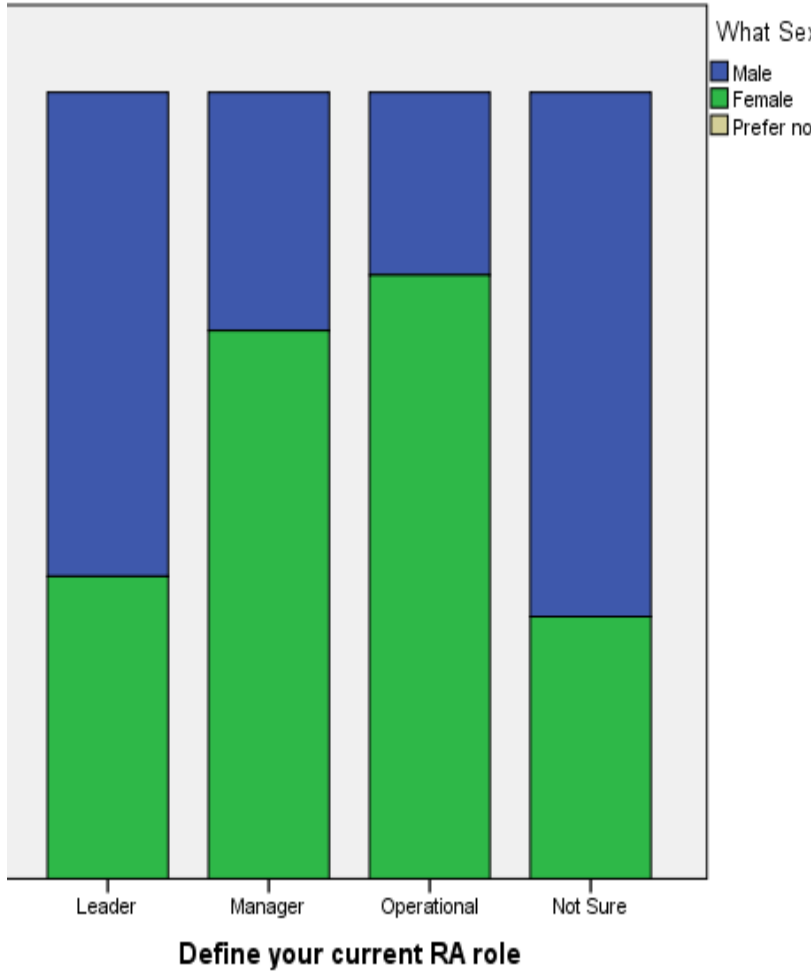


RAAAP: Gender by Level



Define your current RA role

All Responses

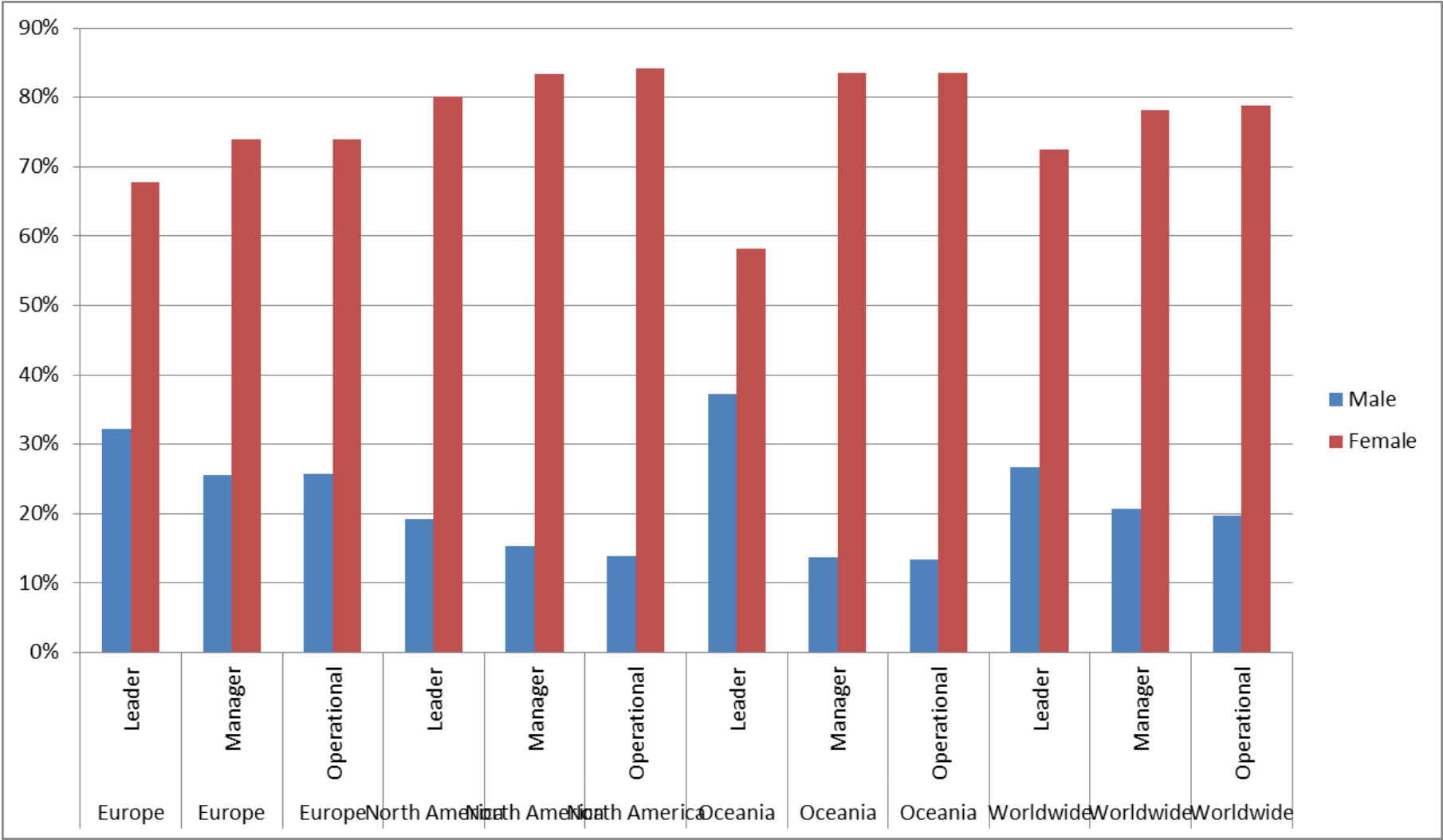


Define your current RA role

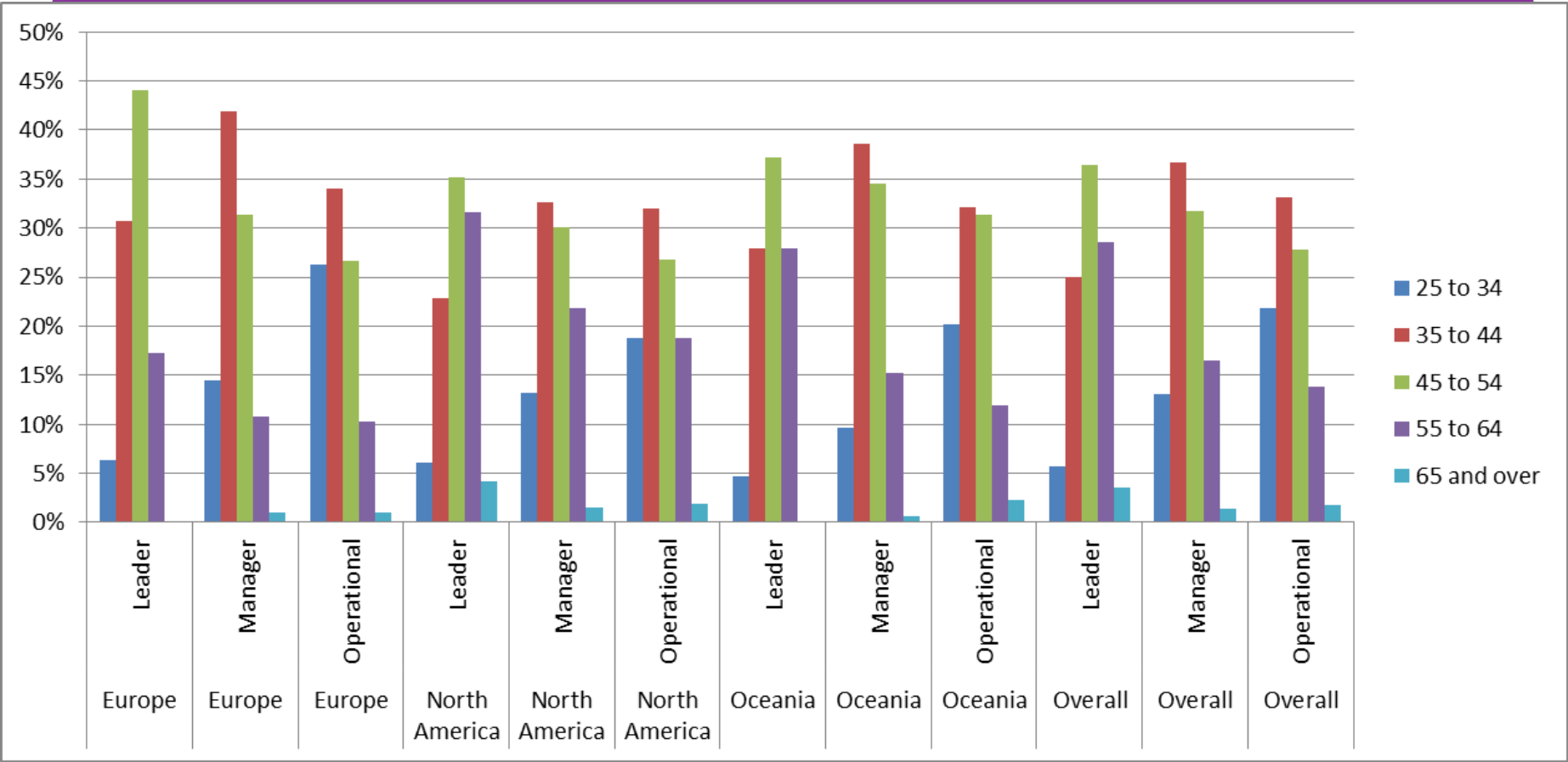
NARMA Members



RAAAP: Gender by Level and Region



RAAAP: Age by Level and Region



RAAAP – What we found out



RAAAP – What we found out – free text

- Over 500 text responses – focused on the role
 - Number of roles people have held and the role details
 - Why and how did you become a research administrator?
 - Why have you stayed in the profession?
 - When were the skills you needed developed?
 - Thanks to Deborah Zornes for these slides (& images!)

RAAAP – What we found out

Text analysis – Tell us about your role

- We are a small university and I do almost everything with shared/part time support
- I held two different titles
- I started in one role which grew
- I'm a career research academic now directing researchers
- Hired into one role, then shifted and covered another
- Have been administrator, manager, director



RAAAP – What we found out

Text Analysis – Why and how did you become a Research Administrator?

- Opportunity
- Need for a person's existing skills and expertise or a fit with their skills (legal, accounting, proposal writing, contracts)
- Shift in career trajectory – from private to public sector, from research to administration
- Was asked to take on the role (by President or VP)
- I did not plan to go into research administration
- Choice – post PhD



RAAAP – What we found out

Text Analysis – Why and how did you become a Research Administrator?

- I wanted to get out of working for the profit sector, contribute to something greater than shareholder pockets
- Recommendation from colleagues
- Interest in the research world
- I wanted to continue to have an impact in the world of research but didn't want a traditional academic career
- I didn't realize that what I was doing was research administration initially



RAAAP – What we found out

Text Analysis – Why have you stayed?

- Sense of purpose
- Forefront of innovation
- Little to no choice
- Good at it – I am a perfect fit, and damn good at the role
- Team – consulted by Deans/VP; enjoy the members of the team; good boss/leadership
- Autonomy and creativity
- Able to reduce the administrative burden of the PIs
- Opportunity to learn



RAAAP – What we found out Text Analysis – Why have you stayed?

- Can see the bigger picture
- Satisfaction from helping researchers
- I value and admire the researcher(s) I work for
- Researches that we support do important work, it feels good to support them
- Good pension / benefits
- Professional development
- Close to retirement
- Flexible schedules



RAAAP – What we found out

Text Analysis – When were the skills you needed developed?

- Previous work developed the skills
- Position developed as I took it on
- Experiential learning
- Developed while in the role – through mentorship, conferences, network, formal education, learning on the job
- Skills developed through PhD lend themselves well to the role
- I report to a very strong Director who has coached me and allowed me to interact with those in senior positions



RAAAP: DRAFT Results

Data cleansing now complete
First paper almost complete
Datasets being released... soon

MORE TO COME
RAAAPworldwide.wordpress.com

Skills needed for RMA Leadership

- **Analyses suggest:**
- Technical Skills needed at all levels, inc Leadership, but
- “Soft” Skills even more important for managerial & leadership
 - Communication
 - Collaboration
 - ...
- Can enter the profession at any level
 - But, also, can work your way up... have a career
 - In this case, plan your professional development
- North America is the most “mature” region for RMA
 - Still a Gender imbalance at leadership levels

Certification in the UK

Qualifications	Live	Passed	Withdrawn	Grand Total	Autumn 2017 intake
(CRA-A) Certificate in Research Administration - UK Research Organisations	80	47	13	140	15
(CRA-CAN) Certificate in Research Administration - Canada	38	8	1	47	
(CRM-A) Certificate in Research Management - UK Research Organisations	75	33	3	111	15
(CRM-B) Certificate in Research Management - Europe	26	13	2	41	10
(CRM-C) Certificate in Research Management - UK Funding Organisations	12	5		17	2
(CRM-CAN) Certificate in Research Management - Canada	22	3		25	1
(CLRM-A) Certificate in the Leadership of Research Management - UK Research Organisations	13	1	3	17	
(CLRM-C) Certificate in the Leadership of Research Management - UK Funding Organisations	6		1	7	
(DipLRM-A) Diploma in the Leadership of Research Management - UK Research Organisations	6			6	
(DipLRM-C) Diploma in the Leadership of Research Management - UK Funding Organisations	1			1	
Grand Total	279	110	23	412	43

NB others also have certification

- USA (RACC)
- Australasia (ARMS self accredited)



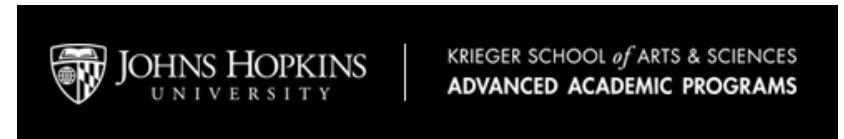
Certification in Europe

- CRM – (through ARMA)
 - 41 students
 - In 3 cohorts – next cohort starts Oct 2018 – registration open!
 - 13 graduations (from the first cohort)
- Induction and Leadership
 - Are not currently certified
- I'm sure that Ragnar would be happy to talk about any of these!



Academic RMA Awards

- Masters available, e.g.
 - Johns Hopkins



<http://advanced.jhu.edu/academics/certificate-programs/international-research-administration-management/>

- Central Florida

<https://www.ucf.edu/online/degree/research-administration-m-r-a/>



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL FLORIDA

- Emmanuel College

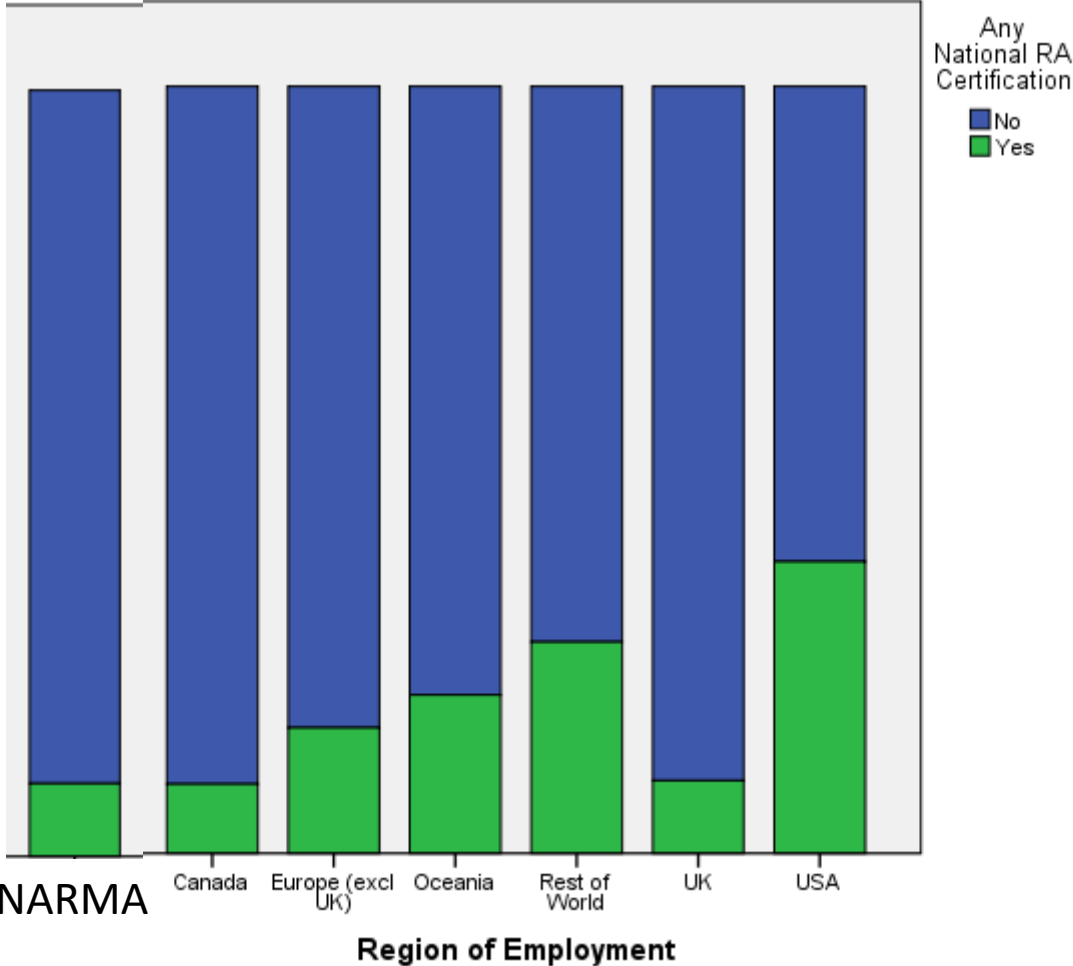


<https://www.emmanuel.edu/graduate-and-professional-programs/management/research-administration.html>

- Doctorates can of course also be done



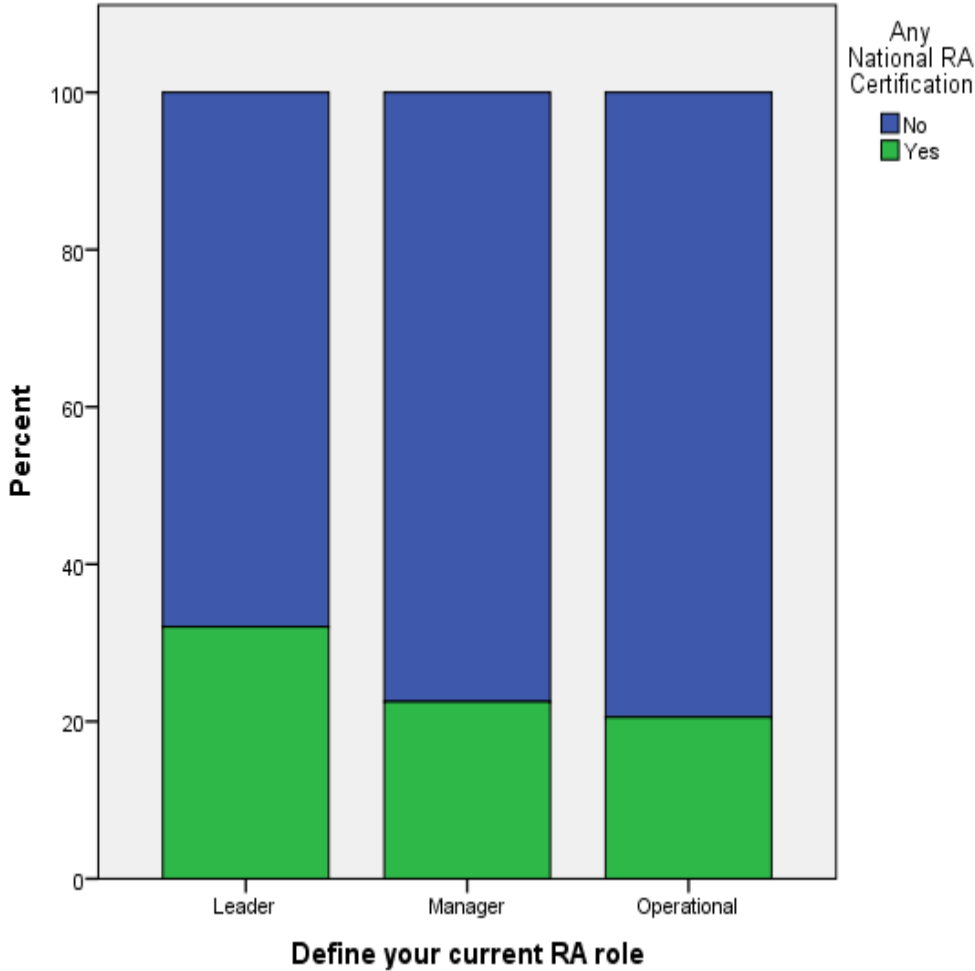
RAAAP – RMA Certification



Number of valid responses: 243 391 339 185 453 941 (2,552)

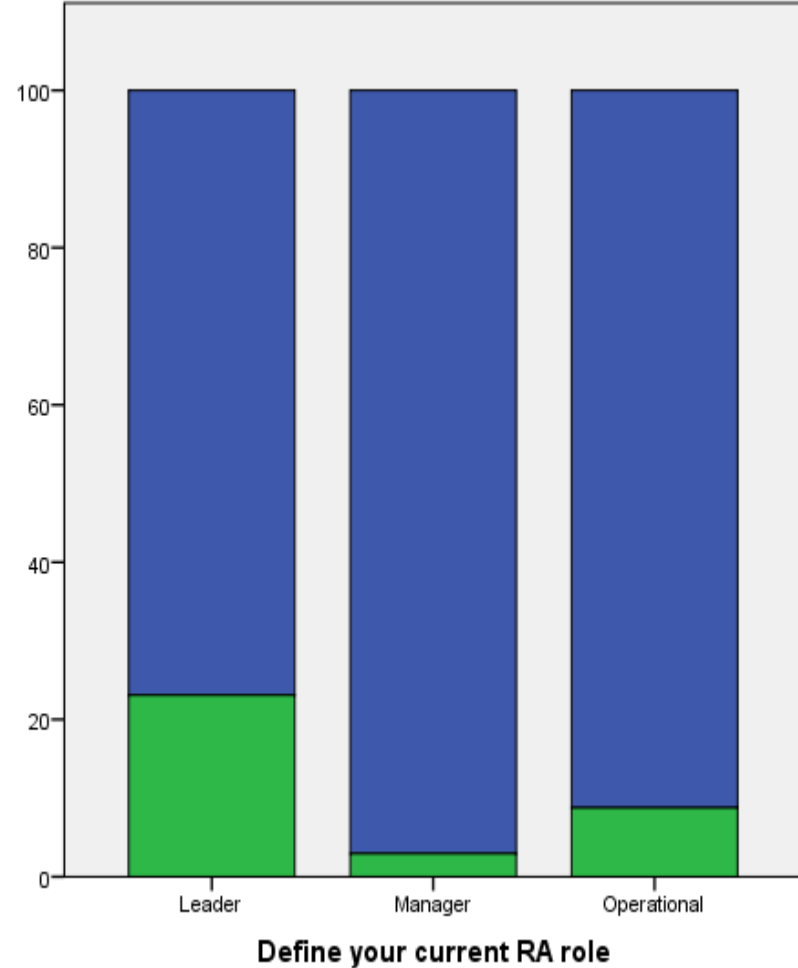


RAAAP – Certification by Level



Define your current RA role

All Responses



Define your current RA role

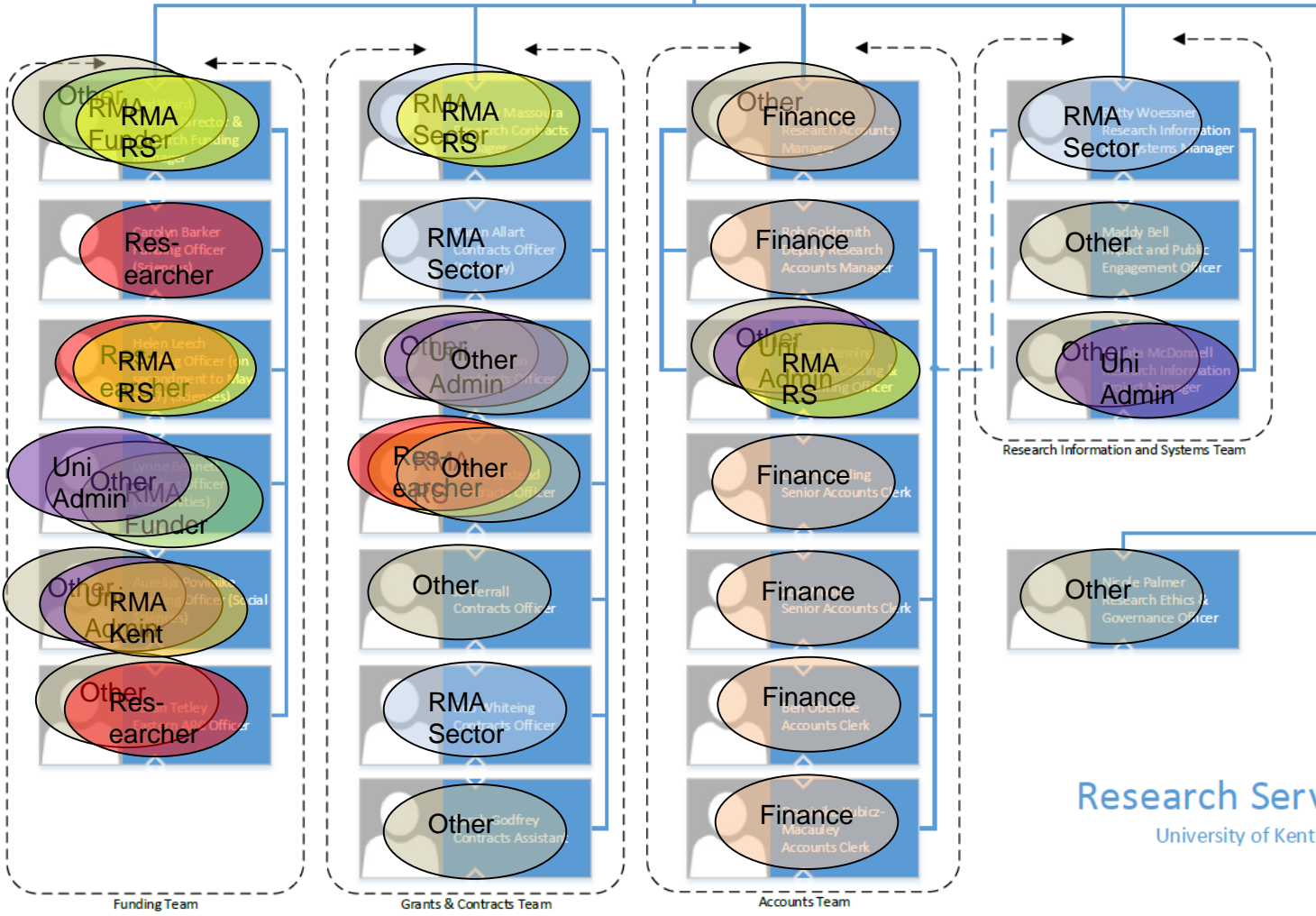
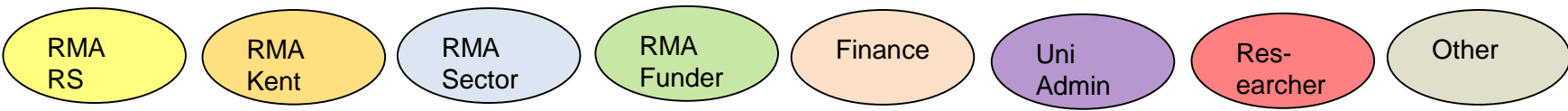
NARMA Members

Career Paths into RMA

- Researcher → RMA
- Admin → RMA
- Finance → RMA (post-award)
- Legal → RMA (contracts)
- RMA → RMA

- CRA → CRM → CLRM

Key:



Research Services
University of Kent



The Dataset

- Planned to be released in early 2018
- 2,691 records (including 110 NARMA members)
 - Up to 222 data-points per record
 - Some extra derived data (eg *AnalysisRegionOfEmployment*)
 - However to preserve anonymity
 - All text fields have been checked, some redaction, and
 - Some text fields will be disconnected from the main dataset
- Available on: RAAAPworldwide.wordpress.com
 - And figshare

Disclaimer

- ***These data are still under review***
- Analyses are still being conducted
- Peer Review is pending

- However
 - We are relatively confident that the broad picture portrayed is a reasonable representation of the responses provided to our survey

- BUT
 - Please remember the 110 NARMA responses in most cases will not make for statistically significant results

Conclusions

- RMA *is* a profession
- The skills, knowledge and experience needed are:
 - Wide and varied
 - Often underappreciated
 - Well known
 - Can be certificated
 - Generic skills also needed (more for leadership)
- More detailed analyses to come
- Data available early 2018
- *Potential for a longitudinal survey*
 - *Perhaps run through INORMS*

RAAAP – Out and About

Dissemination Activities (Presentations)

- INORMS2016 in September 2016 – very preliminary results
- CARA West in December 2016 – some preliminary Canadian results
- Forschungsreferenten.de (GARMA) delivered in February 2017 in Potsdam, Germany – some preliminary European results
- EARMA delivered in April 2017 in Valetta, Malta – more preliminary European results
- SARIMA in May 2017 – preliminary results
- CARA in May 2017 – preliminary Canadian results & text analysis
- ARMA in for June 2017 – preliminary UK results
- NCURA AM59 in August 2017, Washington DC, USA
 - Including the award winning poster: <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.5278195.v1>
- ARMS 2017 in September 2017, Wellington, New Zealand
- SRAi 50th AM in October 2017, Vancouver, Canada
- ARMS Singapore Chapter in December 2017, Singapore
- *NARMA 2018, Lillestrøm, Norway ← Here! ;-)*
- to come: EARMA2018, INORMS2018

RAAAP – In Print

Dissemination Activities (Articles)

- Research Insights 1 Aug 2016
 - A global view of research administration
 - <http://www.researchprofessional.com/news/article/1361984>
- NCURA magazine May/June 2017 (Vol XLIX, No.3) p44-45
 - RAAAP - research administration as a profession
 - http://www.ncura.edu/Portals/0/Docs/Magazine/2017/NCURAMagazine_MayJune2017.pdf
- Research Fortnight, 31 May 2017 p21-22
 - Survey shows value of soft skills
 - <http://www.researchprofessional.com/news/article/1368187>
- Europe Insights 22 Jun 2017
 - Research administration as a profession in Europe
 - <http://www.researchprofessional.com/news/article/1367945>
- The Protagonist (004) p36-37
 - RAAAP - research administration as a profession
 - [print only]

RAAAP – Potential Impact

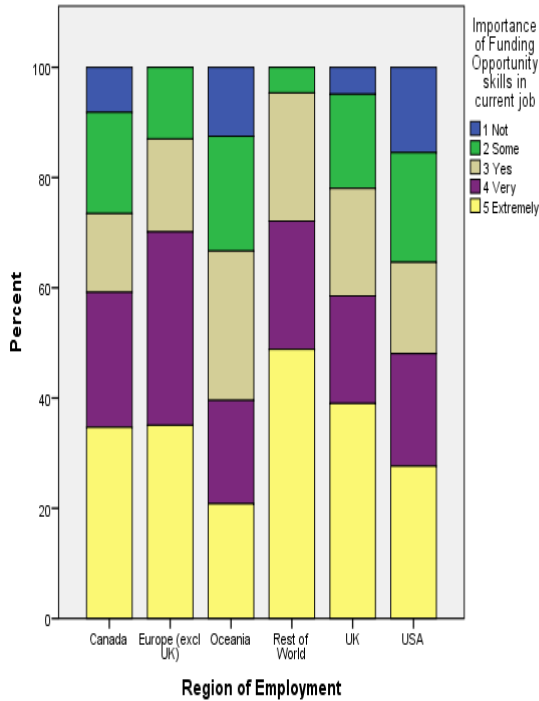
- Use in Portuguese government feedback
- GARMA, DARMA, EARMA, NARMA etc
- INORMS biennial survey?
- Used by: other Unis

RAAAP – Potential Impact

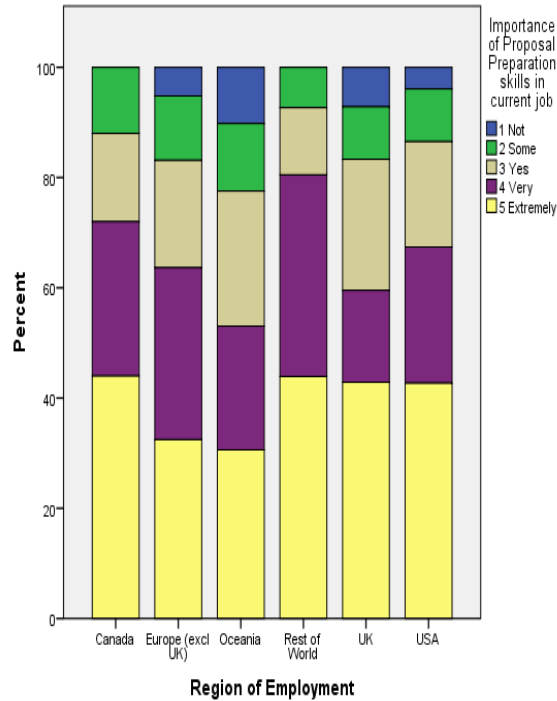
- Use of data
 - To identify skills needed
 - What do I have... what do I need to develop
 - Benchmarking (what do I need)
 - EXAMPLE eg Strategic Responsibility in Pre-Award
[See next slide]
- Linking up with other datasets
 - Eg compliments Jo Ann Smith / Jennifer Shambrook

RAAAP – Example Analysis

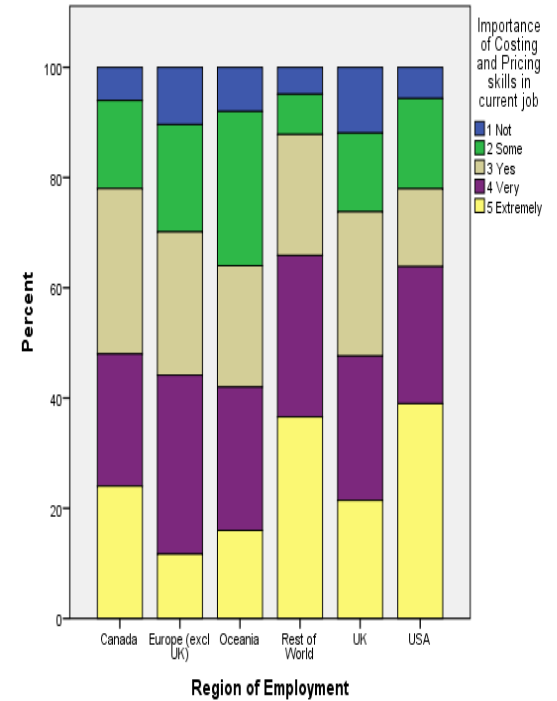
Strategic Responsibility in Pre-Award: Importance of related “hard skills” by region



Valid: 49 77 48 43 41 181 (439)



Valid: 50 77 49 41 42 178 (437)




Valid: 50 77 50 41 42 177 (437)

RAAAP – What is still to do

- More statistical analysis
- RMR / JRA Papers
- More presentations and outreach
- Publish the data (figshare)
- Phase 2?
- Longitudinal survey (via INORMS?)?
- A Book...?
- Put our feet up! ;-)

RAAAP

Questions?

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University of Kent (UK), *and Chair CASRAI*  CASRAI
INFORMATION HARMONY

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#NARMA2018

<https://www.sli.do>

narma2018