

PRECONFERENCE

Navigating Agreements Module

As someone who has operated only in the pre-award/development space, I found this module a helpful and easy to follow introduction to the basics of agreements. I came away from this session with a solid understanding of the different types of agreements and in what context they are most commonly used, as well as the key components of an agreement and some standard terminology. We also discussed the role of research management professionals in the lifecycle of a project and how we can best facilitate. Communication is key!

AI in Research Management:

AI was a strong theme of the conference throughout, particularly following the Keynote presentation by Professor Seyedali Mirjalili. I found that there was a lot I didn't previously understand about AI, and educating ourselves is essential given the inevitability of AI in all aspects of our lives/work in the future. Professor Mirjalili's presentation provided some really useful insights into the risks, potential, and limitations of AI. Throughout a number of other sessions, the use of generative AI in grant writing and reviewing was discussed, providing me with a fundamental understanding of what is acceptable and what is not advisable or permissible in the current climate. I've already implemented this knowledge in advising a researcher recently on the use of ChatGPT in drafting a grant application.

Keynote Presentation: Associate Professor Siouxsie Wiles – New Zealander of the year

An inspiring presentation which illuminated the potential for a non-traditional academic career path. As a research development professional responsible for the broader success of research across my institute, I recognise that this can and does extend beyond grant applications and winning grants. This presentation really emphasised the importance to the other aspects of science communication and research dissemination beyond traditional methods. A/Prof Wiles is a testament to the fact that there is an alternate method to and measure of success in academia.

Below are the plenary sessions which I found particularly informative:

How Advancement can add value to research outcomes and broaden engagement opportunities:

Working within a relatively small research institute, my role in grant development can often intersect with my philanthropic colleague in advancement. I was able to take away some useful concepts for working harmoniously alongside this colleague to best support our institute.

Optimising Research Budgeting: The importance of collaboration when developing a digital budgeting tool

Some great insights on best practice around accurate and compliant budget development, and the importance of providing effective budgeting tools to researchers.

Research Management Data Visualisation: Drawing Strategic Insights for Research Talent Enhancement Using Three Data Analytical Models

I found this personally a really great way to get me thinking about how I might collate present data when looking at research performance within our Institute.