ARMS Conference Travel Award Report

Project Management Workshop

I attended the Project Management masterclass and found this workshop most informative. It was very useful to work through case studies on varying scenarios and listen to the different perspective's attendees had on how to manage projects and the proposed solutions and templates.

Conference

The keynote speaker Professor Seyedali Mirjalili's presentation on the evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in research management was most pertinent given the significant increase in the use of AI. The presentation highlighted the areas that research managers need to consideration, given that there is currently little guidance or regulation in place.

The talk on "Will AI be writing our grant applications?" was also very informative given the topic. It was good to see a research proposal abstract generated by AI and learn ways to identify what mistakes to look out for, such as, the language it used and the use of words whose meaning wasn't quite correct for the context.

The session on "Improving post-award contract management at The University of Melbourne" was very informative as it described challenges that are faced by most universities. It was very helpful to learn how the University of Melbourne approached the challenge and how it successfully implemented the changes required to deliver a positive outcome.

The session titled "Frank, the ChatGPT bot" was most relevant as, once again, it is a very 'hot topic'. It was interesting to hear how the bot was developed and the issues that were encountered. Hearing about how the students interacted with the bot was very informative, as was learning about how the bot could be adapted depending on the needs of the users.

The presentation by Siouxsie Wills provided an insight into the life of a researcher who has taken an alternative path in their career. I learnt about the pressures researchers face to conform to accepted practices and the challenges they face when they take the path less travelled.

From the presentation by Bronwyn Fox, I learnt how open the CSIRO are to collaborating with universities and supporting higher degree by research students. It was great to hear examples of the projects they had worked collaboratively on with institutions and what positive outcomes had resulted from these collaborations. I will encourage my institution to explore opportunities for greater collaboration with CSIRO.

Overall, the conference allowed me to share in the experiences of research managers and administrators at other institutions and learn about the challenges they faced, how they dealt with those challenges and the outcomes. At times, the outcome was unsuccessful, so hearing their experiences was most informative and is likely to allow me to avoid running into similar situations at my institution and, instead, consider other alternatives. Through several presentations I learnt how other institutions managed continuous improvement of processes and workflows.

Attending the conference presented the opportunity to network and build/rebuild relationships with other institutions. Being able to put a face to a name that you correspond with regularly by email was a great plus and will help improve my working relationships with other institutions. It will also help me to build on these relationships and develop greater collaboration across institutions including sharing information and being more responsive to each other's requests, for example with signing research agreements in a timely manner.

ARMS Conference Travel Award Report