

ARMS Conference 2025 – Report

Name: Louise Norman

Position: Research Development Manager, Division of Research & Enterprise, UNSW

Conference: ARMS Conference, 10-12 September 2025, Melbourne

Overview:

I was very grateful for the opportunity to attend the ARMS Conference in September 2025. My key highlights include:

- 1) Presenting in a concurrent session with my colleague, about *Enhancing Support for ECRs: a Central Research Office perspective*. It allowed me to showcase our work at UNSW, gain exposure and increase my engagement with research professionals across Australia, and to gain confidence in presenting to large audiences.
- 2) Meeting new colleagues from other institutions during the morning and afternoon teas. I managed to speak to a few people that also work in grant strategy, so we compared our support initiatives.
- 3) Attending presentations under *Theme 4: "Game changers: Research support that secures success in a competitive field"*. It was very interesting to hear about the support initiatives for large schemes at other institutions.
- 4) Chairing Concurrent Session 26. This opportunity was very rewarding – it allowed me to meet more research professionals, and develop skills in meeting coordination, which pushed me out of my comfort zone.

Key Learnings

Sessions under Theme 4 highlighted approaches to supporting researchers in competitive funding environments. I gained insights into how other institutions support researchers applying for grants, and it encouraged me to consider how we can enhance our support at UNSW.

Presentations in Theme 6 showcased automation tools and data-driven solutions that enhance research management workflows. These ideas will inform future improvements in our systems and processes.

Application to role at UNSW

The conference has enabled me to build confidence in presenting and communicating with impact, which I will implement into my work when presenting and communicating to researchers. I have also taken away some fantastic insights from other institutions, as to how grant development can be enhanced. Furthermore, in November, I attended a post-ARMS meeting with other UNSW attendees to discuss how we could implement some of the ideas that came from our learnings from the conference. Key topics of discussion included use of AI agents for research support, improving industry

engagement, grant development models including peer review programs and mentoring schemes, and cross-Faculty/Central collaborations.