Introduction

This is UKRN’s first combined vision, strategy and annual plan. Its main purpose is to enable UKRN to prioritise its activities and assess how well it has delivered on its mission. We intend to set out a three-year strategy every three years, and an annual plan every year, and have these approved at the appropriate UKRN annual meeting. Those meetings will also be where we review how well we have delivered against the strategy and plan.

Vision

Our vision: The UK research system is outstanding in conducting, promoting and incentivising rigorous and transparent research.

The value of research stems from its rigour and transparency; this is what differentiates it from other ways of knowing and so means that it can be relied on by other researchers, industry, policy makers, civil society and the wider public.

The UK Reproducibility Network’s (UKRN) vision is that – by 2040 – the UK research system is outstanding in conducting and promoting rigorous and transparent research that catalyses positive societal and economic change.

To achieve this, the UK research system needs diverse and engaged communities within and beyond the academic sector, to provide scrutiny and validation, enhance representation in research, and to enable positive change that draws from trustworthy research evidence.

The UK research system also needs to operate globally; its reputation attracting investment and researchers and its research having international influence based on its rigour and its transparency.

Finally, there needs to be a commitment to continual improvement, based on evidence and collaboration between researchers, organisations, sectors and systems.

UKRN therefore envisions research being consistently reliable and trustworthy, both providing a solid foundation for decision-making across a range of sectors and bolstering public trust.

Mission statement

Our mission is to foster a research environment in the UK that encourages rigorous and transparent research practices.

This involves supporting collaborative initiatives within the research community, contributing to a collective understanding of the factors influencing rigour and transparency in research, and providing evidence-based, targeted interventions such as training and resources to enable this.

To achieve our mission, we will work at the levels of the research system, the research organisation, and the individual researcher. Inevitably activities will cross these boundaries, but we see this as a helpful way to differentiate the kinds of change anticipated.

In the tables below, outlining the three year strategy and the annual plan, activities are prioritised, with higher priority for those that have significant dedicated funding, medium priority and lower priority for those that rely on voluntary work by our members, especially early career researchers. A list of referenced activities and projects is provided at the end of the document.
Three-year strategy

Approach

There are many ways to outline a strategy. Our way recognises that the changes we seek are systemic and systematic, and that we have a particular role as a collaboration platform for institutions (partly because of the focus of the current Open Research Programme) and for researchers. Therefore, our strategy rests on three pillars, corresponding to interventions at a system level, at the level of collaboration between institutions, and at the level of research communities.

In all cases, activities are collaborations among UKRN members. There is no activity outside of this. Where the text notes that UKRN will do something, that is shorthand for ‘a collaboration of UKRN members’ will do something; UKRN has no capacity or agency beyond that of its members.

Pillar 1. The research system: Fostering collaboration across UKRN members and the broader research community

Rationale

UKRN supports and coordinates a unified and diverse network of communities, dedicated to enhancing research quality through promoting and instilling the principles of rigour and transparency in research practices. We empower our members to become effective leaders, both locally and nationally, to drive meaningful, sector-wide transformation in research practices that, in turn, promotes a broader culture of transparency and openness.

UKRN’s structure provides a unique platform to support collaboration across the research landscape to achieve these aims. By leading a collaborative network, encouraging open dialogue, and supporting shared initiatives, we promote a culture of mutual support and collaboration among our members, fostering innovative solutions to support a stronger, more connected research community. We prioritise interdisciplinary and inter-stakeholder collaboration, to encourage knowledge sharing and address challenges faced by the research community collectively. Through this approach, UKRN aims to ensure greater mutual understanding of systemic opportunities to promote and support rigorous and transparent research.

UKRN enables researchers, partner institutions and stakeholders to build a common voice, influence the wider research system, and exert influence via collective action. We convene our member communities to ensure that their practices, procedures, policies and training with regard to research quality are both more aligned and provide a shared starting point for improving research practice and evaluation. In this context, we aim to enable consistent practice across research performing and research enabling organisations and reduce bureaucracy. We continue to engage with other national Reproducibility Networks across the world to develop a coherent and effective network capable of driving systemic change.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Target</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Build a sustainability model for UKRN tied to its mission, with a theory of change, periodic reviews, covering the financial, organisational and cultural aspects of sustainability.</td>
<td>Open Research Programme – Management and Sustainability project.</td>
<td>By Sep 27, UKRN has an agreed business model and 50 institutional members, leading to resourced plans to sustain key parts of the Programme by Sep 27.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Diversify UKRN with respect to its members, and the disciplines and fields covered.</td>
<td>UKRN Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee EDI work within the Open Research Programme.</td>
<td>By 2027, UKRN’s membership and activities are representative of the sector as a whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Empower the other national Reproducibility Networks to cohere into an effective global network capable of driving systemic change.</td>
<td>Reproducibility Networks, potential EU funded project.</td>
<td>By 2027, loose RN federation is in place based on agreed governance and operating procedures. Main federation roles are shared between RNs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Convene and coordinate members so that they can exert influence across the sector via UKRN as a shared voice and collective action.</td>
<td>Institutional Leads; stakeholder members; researchers via local networks; Community Project; STAR project; METEOR project.</td>
<td>UKRN’s vision is embedded in sector initiatives and bodies such as UKRI, UKCORI, SITC, REF, Govt, etc).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Understand how research is discussed and reported in journal articles and reports, and how this might be done better, and influence those able to promote change.</td>
<td>StoryArcs project.</td>
<td>A viable research programme is established, based on evidence of the existence and effects of questionable persuasive techniques in journals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Develop the UKRN Stakeholder Engagement Group into a powerful coordination vehicle.</td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement Group</td>
<td>Three significant new UKRN activities started that each involve several SEG members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Promote initiatives that support connections between researchers in all disciplines and promote rigorous and transparent research practices.</td>
<td>DEMON Network; Free Our Knowledge; FORRT; Hidden REF; Octopus; Open Research in the Classroom; Peer Community in; Registered Reports; Practice Research Voices; ReproducibiliTea; RIOT Science Club.</td>
<td>UKRN recognised as being a good mentor and pathway for new initiatives. Five new initiatives supported per year. Five alumni initiatives become well-established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Support targeted system-wide initiatives that enable rigorous research.</td>
<td>Registered Reports Funding Partnerships.</td>
<td>Advocate for Registered Reports. Continue Registered Report Funding Partnership with Cancer Research. By 2026 have two more funder-journal partnerships established.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Pillar 2. The research organisation: Creating an environment for rigorous and transparent research

Rationale
UKRN is dedicated to supporting an organisational research environment and culture characterised by rigour, trustworthiness and transparency. Through continued engagement across the research community, as well as meta-research efforts, we aim to further understand the factors that affect trust in research, including across different disciplines. UKRN recognises that challenges and opportunities will differ across academic fields and aims to better support quality research across the spectrum and will therefore foster a culture of continuous learning through engagement among our members and more widely, to ensure responses are targeted and relevant.

Through the Open Research Programme, UKRN aims to contribute to an efficient research environment, enabling rigorous and transparent research to be conducted and supported without unnecessary barriers. By advocating for open research principles and open communication of methods, evidence and findings, UKRN strengthens the foundations of inquiry. We emphasise rigorous research practices, acknowledging that these vary between disciplines, fields, methodologies and settings, and we aim to instil a culture of accountability and responsibility to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of research.

UKRN recognises the impact of research assessment on the broader research culture and remains committed to formally engaging with initiatives such as the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) and the Leiden Manifesto. As part of this, we will work with our member institutions and more widely to advocate for and enable changes in recruitment and promotion practices, to support the recognition and reward of rigorous and open research.

Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Expand the ORP to facilitate a sector-wide reform of research assessment through sharing of best practices and collective action.</td>
<td>Open Research Programme – Reward and Recognition (OR4) project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ensure Local Network Leads are recognised and supported by their institutions to support high quality research.</td>
<td>Local Network Leads Community Project.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Enable institutions to share good practice and lessons in implementing sustainable support for open research data, based on the UK Open Research Data Concordat principles.</td>
<td>STAR project.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Share good practice and develop consensus support for the use of research evidence in university decision making.</td>
<td>METEOR project.</td>
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<td>Activity</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Enable institutions to develop and roll out methods (tools, indicators, dashboards, etc.) to better monitor the openness of their research and effects of their related interventions.</td>
<td>Open Research Programme – Evaluation design project. UKRN and institutions being able to measure progress by Aug 27 using survey, reporting tools and dashboards. Measurable improvements in the evaluation of interventions by Aug 27. Measurable benefits arising from the UKRN Open Research Programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Develop ways to facilitate institutions sharing and learning from good practice and lessons learned across the sector.</td>
<td>Open Research Programme – Sharing and integrating project. Institutional Leads meetings / retreat. Initiative on institutional quality checking research outputs / reproducibility. UKRN open research website that is used by at least 18 institutions to share resources and practices, leading to measurably better and more consistent support for open research across institutions in the Programme by Aug 26. Five substantive instances of Institutional Leads sharing practice per year by Aug 27.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Prepare common statements and other resources that can be adapted and used by institutions to promote interoperability and coordination of action.</td>
<td>Common Statements and other resources. Statements / resources used by 10 UKRN member institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Support tools that provide policy frameworks and guidance for universities.</td>
<td>Open Research Programme Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework; STRANGE; Universal Funders Policy; Accountable Replication Policies; Registered Reports. Evidence from downloads, etc that the tools are used widely across the sector. Specific targets tbc.</td>
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Pillar 3. Research practice: Providing targeted training and resources

Rationale
Central to UKRN’s mission is empowering researchers, research-enabling, professional and technical staff with skills and knowledge to enhance rigour, trustworthiness and transparency in research. UKRN aims to develop and deliver focused training programmes addressing specific challenges associated with study design, data collection, analysis and reporting practices.

Complementing the training provision, we develop a range of materials to support member institutions and others to adopt rigorous and transparent research practices by providing common statements, policy frameworks and guidance for institutions as well as primers to serve as references for researchers and research-enabling staff across different career stages. We also facilitate the sharing of community resources to provide all members with a collection of accessible materials to promote rigorous and transparent research.

Ensuring accessibility is a key focus, as UKRN seeks to remove barriers and facilitate widespread adoption of best practices. By tailoring training and other initiatives to the specific needs of researchers, including those in underrepresented communities, we aim to cultivate a culture of methodological rigour and transparency across disciplines.

Institutions play a crucial role in the delivery of our objectives, as key partners in implementing tailored training, awareness and advocacy programs and supporting researchers and research-enabling staff in adopting rigorous and transparent practices. As a result, we work closely with the academic community to ensure that our training materials and resources are signposted and shared broadly, to maximise their impact and effectiveness. We also collaborate with others undertaking similar and complementary work across the sector and internationally, to promote consistency, enable coordination and reduce duplication.
## Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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</table>
| 1 Expand the reach of training activities. | **Open Research Programme**
**Train-the-Trainer courses.** | **Train 180 trainers; trainers train a further 2700 researchers.**
Evidence of trainers embedding high quality training into their practice. |
| 2 Empower Local Network Leads to instil best practices at their institutions and become effective leaders. | **Local Network Leads**
**Community Project.**
**Leadership workshops** | **60% of LNLs agree that UKRN empowers them to be effective leaders at their institution.** |
| 3 Develop and maintain primers, working papers and other resources on key areas of interest for researchers and research-enabling staff across disciplines. | **Local Network Leads.**
**Institutional Leads.**
**External partnerships.** | **20 primers available and maintained (reviewed at least every three years), averaging unique 100 downloads per year each. 10 working papers published, averaging unique 100 downloads per year each.** |
| 4 Support researcher targeted initiatives that enable rigorous research. | Various (e.g., Octopus.ac). | Explore opportunities |
| 5 Support tools that make open research easier. | **BioModels @EMBL-EBI; IsoArch; Octopus.ac; Open Research Calendar; Tenzing.** | UKRN recognised as being a good mentor and pathway for new initiatives. Five new initiatives supported per year. Five alumni initiatives become well-established. |
One-year plan

The following tables present a proposed list of Year 1 activities and associated tasks implementation. To allow UKRN to address activities efficiently, some implementation tasks apply across activities; this is indicated through merged cells in the tables below.

**Pillar 1 - 2024-2025 PLAN: Fostering collaboration across the research community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Year 1 implementation tasks</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Build a sustainability model for UKRN tied to its mission, with periodic reviews, covering the financial, organisational and cultural aspects of sustainability.</td>
<td>i. Develop an options appraisal for sustainability and review models, and discuss with members and advisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Diversify UKRN with respect to its members, and the disciplines and fields covered.</td>
<td>i. Agree guidance for institutions on UKRN’s expectations on diversity in representation within UKRN. ii. Review the UKRN code of conduct and, if necessary, revise. iii. Convene discussions between research disciplines / fields on issues such as reproducibility and transparency. iv. Support local network leads as they expand and diversify their networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Empower the other national Reproducibility Networks to cohere into an effective network capable of driving systemic change.</td>
<td>i. Establish communication channels with RNs. ii. Define common goals and objectives. iii. Review and/or update UKRN’s governance structure to enable further collaboration. iv. Identify target stakeholders capable of driving systemic change. v. Scope out opportunities for pilot initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Year 1 implementation tasks</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
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</table>
| 4        | Convene and coordinate partner institutions so that they can exert influence across the sector via UKRN as a shared voice and collective action. | i. Organise preliminary meetings with Institutional Leads.  
ii. Review and/or update Terms of Reference to enable further collaboration.  
iii. Scope out requirements for marketing activities (events, seminars, training) and marketing collateral (promotional materials, branding, visual identity). | i. Office  
ii. Office  
iii. Office |
| 5        | Understand how research is discussed and reported in journal articles and reports to present an honest and transparent picture of research. | i. Continue to review findings emerging from the Story Arcs project.  
ii. Share findings with Institutional or Local Network Leads to enable discussion on actions to address barriers identified. | i. Story Associate  
ii. Story Associate, Office, Community Project |
| 6        | Develop the UKRN Stakeholder Engagement Group into a powerful coordination vehicle. | i. Host two co-creation workshops to allow SEG members to discuss and agree specific collaboration and coordination activities. | i. SEG |
| 7        | Promote initiatives that support connections between researchers in all disciplines and promote open research practices. | i. Review existing list of commitments to prioritise initiatives to support.  
ii. Complete a mapping exercise to identify new initiatives or projects to support. | i. Office  
ii. Office |
| 8        | Support targeted system-wide initiatives that enable rigorous research. | i. Continue Registered Report Funding Partnership with Cancer Research  
ii. Explore opportunities to develop similar arrangements with other funders | i. Office, all |
## Pillar 2 - 2024-2025 PLAN: The research organisation: Creating an environment for rigorous and transparent research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Year 1 implementation tasks</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Expand the ORP to support a sector-wide reform of research assessment through sharing of best practices and collective action. | i. Review support for relevant initiatives and frameworks.  
ii. Develop promotional material e.g. blog posts to communicate support to relevant communities.  
iii. Facilitate conversations between partner institutions and Institutional Leads centred around mechanisms for sharing best practice. | i. OR4 Project  
ii. OR4 Project  
iii. OR4 Project, ORP more generally |
| 2 Ensure Local Network Leads are recognised and supported by their universities or organisations to support high quality research. | i. Facilitate conversations between partner institutions and Institutional Leads.  
ii. Develop common role profiles for Local Network Leads for review and update by partner institutions. | i. Community Project  
ii. Community Project |
| 3 Enable institutions to share good practice and lessons in implementing sustainable support for open research data, based on the UK Open Research Data Concordat principles. | i. Continue assessment of open research practices across partner institutions through STAR project.  
ii. Consultation with partner institutions community to understand barriers and challenges with regard to open research data practices.  
iii. Review and/or update existing documentation to align with the principles of the UKRI Open Research Data Concordat. | i. STAR project  
ii. STAR project  
iii. STAR project |
| 4 Share good practice and develop consensus support for the use of research evidence in university decision making. | i. Facilitate conversations between institutions and Institutional Leads to review current initiatives.  
ii. Explore opportunities with institutions and Institutional Leads to include research evidence in institutional decision making. | i. METEOR project  
ii. METEOR project |
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Year 1 implementation tasks</th>
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</table>
| 5        | Enable institutions to develop and roll out methods (tools, indicators, dashboards, etc.) to better monitor the openness of their research and effects of their related interventions. | i. Have agreement on four core indicator sets (open/FAIR data, data availability statements, Preregistration and CRediT).  
ii. Have an agreed plan for roll-out of the core indicator sets across UKRN institutions within the ORP. | i. ORP indicators  
ii. ORP indicators |
| 6        | i. Develop ways to help institutions share and learn from good practice and lessons learned across the sector. | i. Have UKRN open research ‘living website’ live, with protocols for its population, use and evaluation. | i. ORP sharing and integrating project |
| 7        | i. Prepare common statements and other resources that can be adapted and used by institutions to promote interoperability and coordination of action. | i. Review existing statements / primers used to support institutions and organisations.  
ii. Identify areas for improvement or revision through feedback from Institutional Leads or Local Network Leads.  
iii. Revise existing statements / primers to reflect evolved institutional needs.  
iv. Establish an asset register, curators for each asset, and a revision schedule | i. Office  
ii. Office, Institutional Leads, Local Network Leads  
iii. Office, Institutional Leads, Local networks  
iv. Office |
| 8        | i. Support tools that provide policy frameworks and guidance for universities. | i. Complete a landscape mapping exercise to ensure awareness of broader contextual influences e.g. policy changes/initiatives affecting UK universities and other research performing organisations.  
ii. Review and/or update existing guidance for UK institutions to ensure alignment with organisational aims.  
iii. Gather feedback on updated guidance from Institutional Leads  
iv. Update UKRN website to ensure latest resources are communicated. | i. Office, institutional leads  
ii. Office, institutional leads  
iii. Office, institutional leads  
iv. Office |
## Pillar 3 - 2024-2025 PLAN: Providing targeted training and resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Year 1 implementation tasks</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Expand the reach of training activities.</td>
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</table>
 i. Review existing training provision and conduct gap analysis to identify areas for potential new training.  
 ii. Revise, refine or build training curriculum for selected training areas.  
 iii. Develop a schedule for training activities.  
 iv. Create a communications plan to reach trainers within relevant institutions or organisations.  
 v. Select institutions to advertise and run training initiatives.  
 vi. Update UKRN website to ensure latest resources are effectively communicated. | i. ORP Training Project  
 ii. ORP Training Project  
 iii. ORP Training Project  
 iv. ORP Training Project  
 v. ORP Training Project  
 vi. ORP Training Project |
| **2** | Empower Local Network Leads to instil best practices at their institutions and become effective leaders. |  
 i. Consult with Local Network Leads to understand current processes, challenges and barriers in their roles.  
 ii. Review and/or update resources to support Local Network Leads in sharing best practices.  
 iii. Establish communication channels between Local Network Leads and Institutional Leads to share best practice. | i. Community Project  
 ii. Community Project  
 iii. Community Project |
| **3** | Develop and maintain primers, working papers and other resources on key areas of interest for researchers and research-enabling staff across disciplines. |  
 i. Review existing statements/primers used to support institutions and organisations.  
 ii. Identify areas for improvement or revision through feedback from Institutional Leads or Local Network Leads.  
 iii. Revise existing statements / primers to reflect evolved institutional needs. | i. Office, institutional leads, LNLs  
 ii. Office, institutional leads, LNLs  
 iii. Office, institutional leads, LNLs |
| **4** | Support researcher targeted initiatives that enable rigorous research. |  
 i. Review and / or update existing list of initiatives / tools supported by UKRN.  
 ii. Conduct gap analysis to consolidate or add to existing list of initiatives/tools.  
 i. i. Develop promotional material e.g. blog posts and marketing collateral to communicate support for initiatives/tools.  
 iii. Update UKRN website to ensure latest initiatives are reflected and relevant resources are communicated. | i. Office  
 ii. Office / members  
 iii. Office  
 iv. Office |
| **5** | Support tools that make open research easier. |  |
Annex: List of referenced projects and activities

**Community Project:** Strengthening the UKRN communities through events and new resources, to help them be more resilient, empowered and sustainable, with a focus in particular on the local network leads. Co-funded in 2023-24 by UKRI and UKRN member institutions.

**METEOR Project:** (METa-research for the Enhancement Of Research culture): A project to improve the use of applied meta-research evidence in institutional decision-making affecting research culture, rigour and transparency. It will do this by identifying, documenting, and developing consensus support for good practice. Co-funded by UKRN member institutions in 2023-24.

**Open Research Programme:** The UKRN Open Research Programme (ORP) aims to accelerate the uptake of high quality open research practices, through the provision of train-the-trainer courses, reform of institutional recognition and reward policies, enabling sharing of practice, and development of insight and indicators to monitor change. The ORP is supported by a grant from Research England to 2027.

**OR4 Project:** (Open and Responsible Researcher Reward and Recognition): A project to reform the ways in which institutions recruit, promote and appraise their staff, to better reward open research practices. It is doing this by developing management tools and resources, and by nurturing a community of practice. Part of the ORP, and so supported by a grant from Research England, but also by in-kind contributions from participating institutions.

**ORP Indicators Project:** A project to explore how best to monitor particular aspects of open research that have been prioritised by UKRN institutions, comprising a set of pilots in partnership with solution providers. Part of the UKRN Open Research Programme (ORP), and so supported by a grant from Research England, but also by in-kind contributions from participating institutions.

**ORP Sharing and integrating Project:** A project within the ORP to enable institutions and their staff to better sharing, adapt and learn from practice elsewhere, comprising building a community of practice for those staff and developing a ‘living website’ to support community activities and host outputs from the ORP.

**ORP Training Project:** A project within the ORP to build institutional capacity for developing open research skills among staff at partner institutions through train-the-trainer courses and nurturing a community of trainers.

**Stakeholder Engagement Group:** The Stakeholder Engagement Group is one of the UKRN membership groups, for funders, publishers, companies, societies and other organisations not represented as institutions.

**STAR Project:** (Sustainable & TrAnsparent Research data): A project to support the development by institutions of sustainable arrangements for open and transparent research data, reflecting the practice and needs of a diverse range of institutions. Co-funded by UKRN member institutions in 2023-24.

**Story Associate:** A project to explore how reports of research, such as journal articles, can aim both to inform and to persuade readers, the tensions that can provoke, and the ways in which we might draw from scholarship about ‘story’ and narrative might prompt creative possible solutions.

**WIDERA:** Many of the national Reproducibility Networks are collaborating in the context of the European Union WIDERa (‘Widening the European Research Area’) programme of work.