

UK Reproducibility Network



Annual Report

2024-2025





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Chair of the Supervisory Board



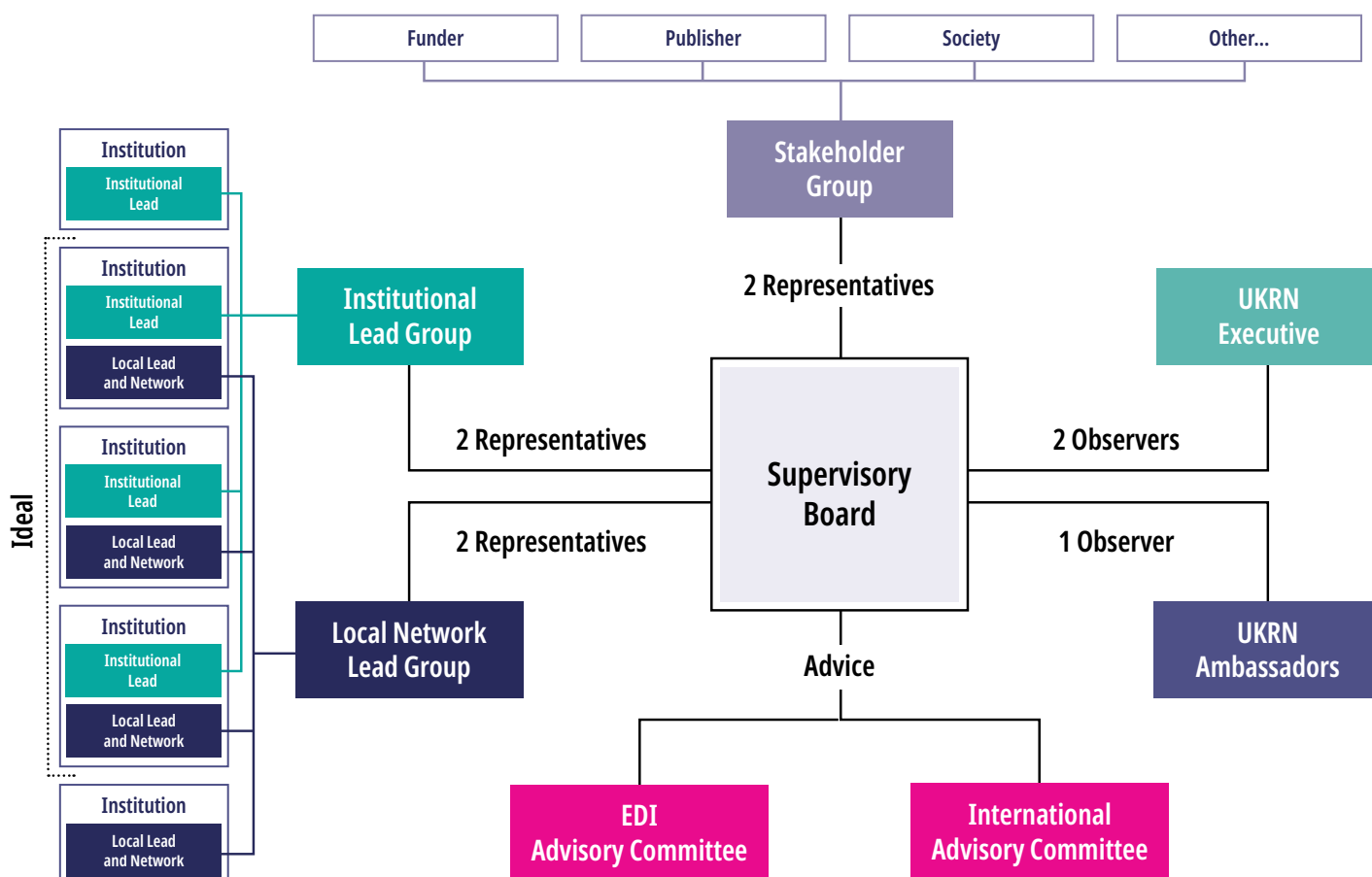
UKRN is now firmly established as an important sectoral organisation. We have retained our peer-led, community ethos, as well as our ability to both convene and foster collaboration, and provide constructive challenge (to researchers, institutions, and organisations). But as we grow and mature, we need to ensure our governance structures and processes evolve with us. This process has been ongoing for some time, with a major revision last year, and another (substantial but somewhat more minor) revision this year. Our basic structure remains the same, but the UKRN office has grown to support the various projects we are delivering and will now be known as the UKRN Executive to reflect this more substantial role.

Another change is that many of the individuals in key roles – Local Network Leads, Institutional Leads, and stakeholder organisation representatives – have rotated out of those roles and been replaced by others. This is both a testament to the maturity of UKRN, and an important test of our robustness as an organisation. We will only thrive if our local networks are not critically dependent on one individual, and our institutional members and stakeholder organisations are willing to sustain their commitment to UKRN. Of course, we need to continue to encourage institutions to formally support their Local Network Leads, which continues to be uneven across our community. But so far, we seem to be passing that test!

I continue to be inspired by the energy of all the individuals that make up our community, and I am enormously grateful for all the different contributions to our activities that are, together, making a real difference to the sector. We still have some way to go before we are a sustainable organisation that can continue beyond the term of our current funding, but we are making excellent progress toward this. Onwards and upwards!

Marcus Munafò

Governance Structure



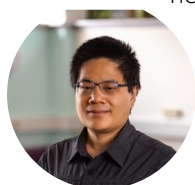
Highlights

METEOR/STAR update

The METEOR project examined how universities use meta-research evidence in shaping research culture decisions. Interviews with 22 staff across 14 English universities showed that, while meta-research influences strategies, it is often ad hoc and lacks systematic integration. Evaluation of culture improvement efforts is minimal, with barriers including limited researcher input and concerns about negative findings. Recommendations include embedding evaluation in culture initiatives, promoting cross-institutional collaboration, and increasing diversity in decision-making, particularly for early-career and underrepresented researchers.

The STAR project explored open research data practices at UK universities, guided by the 2016 Concordat. Interviews with 52 staff across 21 universities found that while policies and repositories exist, open research data adoption is limited. Challenges include capacity, unclear data labour costing, and varying disciplinary engagement. Recommendations include incentivising open research data in academic career frameworks, engaging non-STEM disciplines, improving monitoring infrastructure, and supporting disciplinary repositories.

Both projects emphasized the value of cross-institutional networks like N8, GW4, GuildHE, RLUK, and ARMA for knowledge sharing, though METEOR participants noted that competition hinders collaboration.



Pen-Yuan Hsing, Senior Research Associate, METEOR and STAR projects

Community Project update

The UKRN Community Project, led by Will Gawned and Diane Hird since October 2023, has significantly strengthened connections within the research community. With a no-cost extension until May 2025, the project focuses on empowering Local Network Leads, Stakeholders, and Global Reproducibility Network member groups. Will Gawned's interviews with 80 Local Network Leads and 10 Stakeholder organisation representatives provided key insights into the communities' needs and how UKRN can better support them.

Local Network Leads have been supported through newsletters, recognition letters, a guidebook, a buddy system, and online activities like virtual cafés and webinars. The project also facilitated the first in-person Stakeholder Group meeting in October 2024, which William Nixon from RLUK called “a watershed moment in terms of engagement.” In May 2024, the global community of national and regional Reproducibility Networks met in Berlin to discuss creating a federation for enhanced international collaboration.

The UKRN Community Project is set to continue its impact, having hosted a retreat for Institutional Leads in Cardiff in March 2025, and with a summer retreat planned for Local Network Leads at the London School of Economics in June 2025. As Bethan Iley from Queen's University Belfast noted, “one of my favourite things about UKRN is that it's genuinely really interdisciplinary.” Several regional local networks have already met in person, with plans for the remaining groups to meet before the project concludes.

Open Research Programme update

Launched in 2021 and running through to 2027, the Open Research Programme, funded by Research England's Development Fund, is UKRN's flagship project. In 2024-25, it made significant progress by delivering key training and materials to help institutions reform recognition and reward for open research.

The focus now shifts to ‘benefits realisation’. A major milestone was the 2024 launch of the OR4 toolkit, offering a maturity framework, implementation guidance, and case studies to help institutions reform recruitment, promotion, and staff appraisal. An online event in November 2024 drew over 300 participants, and a community of 50+ institutions is now working with the toolkit. Additionally, over 160 trainers have been trained, with efforts shifting to supporting them in training their peers.

The year also focused on preparations for the final phase of the Programme, including the upcoming sharing platform, EDI review, automated indicators, and a redesigned survey to be deployed in 2025.

The Programme has already made a significant impact, which we expect to grow markedly in the next two years.



Neil Jacobs

UKRN and the REF

The REF continues to play a central role in discussions about research culture and skills, key to UKRN's mission. In 2024, UKRN partnered with Technopolis and Vitae to develop proposals for indicators in the People, Culture, and Environment section, influencing the pilots running in 2025. UKRN members are involved in many of these pilots, sharing insights within the Institutional Leads group.

In response to concerns that the REF may prompt institutions to retreat from collaborative work, UKRN issued a [statement](#) reaffirming its commitment to working together to improve research culture. UKRN is also piloting its own project to test the feasibility of an institutional report based on data from its members, particularly those in the Open Research Programme. The report will complement the ways in which the People, Culture, and Environment section is designed, to make it as useful as possible for institutions over the next few years.

Telling the right story about research

What are the best stories to tell about research? Are these stories designed to inform or to persuade? Why does it matter? These questions have inspired and animated innovative work in 2024-25 by Anna Ploszajski. She has been the UKRN Story Associate during this time, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of the [StoryArcs Programme](#) hosted by Bath Spa University.

Anna's podcast series, [Storyology](#), explores how research stories shape the work of researchers, publishers, funders, journalists, and others. The series highlights both positive and problematic aspects of narrative strategies in research, shedding light on their impact on trust and credibility. This initiative demonstrates how humanities scholarship and professional practice can contribute to research improvement.

Initiative in Focus: The Open Research Calendar

The Open Research Calendar has thrived with support from UKRN, becoming a vital resource in the open research community. Since 2020, UKRN has funded the Open Research Calendar's infrastructure, improved its professional image, and raised awareness. UKRN's funding ensures seamless automation via Make.com, a custom domain name (openresearchcalendar.org), and Open Research Calendar stickers to boost engagement.

The UKRN logo on the Open Research Calendar website and X bio builds trust, while the Open Research Calendar's presence on UKRN's initiatives page further

enhances its credibility. Through technical and promotional support, UKRN has been integral to the Open Research Calendar's growth, and this partnership will remain crucial to its continued success.



Brad Kennedy, ORC

UKRN resources

UKRN members have shared valuable expertise this year through new primers and working papers on open qualitative research practices (led by Sheffield, Cardiff, and LSE), using Wikimedia in research (led by Leeds and Bristol), and working with vulnerable communities (led by Bristol, Bath, and Leeds). Other papers explored reproducibility and transparency in arts and psychology research (co-led with the British Psychological Society, UCL, and Glasgow). The University of Surrey and UKRN updated the open research practices primers and associated web pages for each discipline, including case studies highlighting how all research disciplines benefit from openness, while remaining aware of associated challenges.

Assessment, evaluation and indicators: An international picture

With the growing global interest in research reform, UKRN has become a leading player in monitoring and evaluating progress. A key example is CoARA, the international coalition to reform research assessment, where UKRN is represented in working groups on Academic Career Assessment (via Salford), Recognising and Rewarding Peer Review (via Warwick), early- and mid-career Researchers (via Queen's University Belfast) and Open Infrastructure (via Bristol). UKRN is also a founding member of the CoARA UK National Chapter, coordinating closely with the Open Research Programme Project in 2025.

In 2024, UKRN signed the Barcelona Declaration on Open Research Information, which advocates for open data and methods to support research indicators. UKRN members have explored how to monitor open research through six pilot projects, set to report in 2025, contributing to international initiatives like the Open Science Monitoring Initiative, associated with UNESCO. These projects will lay the foundation for improved monitoring of open research. As a result, UKRN continues to influence research monitoring and evaluation both in the UK and globally, working towards better practices and standards across the research system.



Local Network Leads retreat, Newcastle, 2024



Institutional Leads retreat,

Community Update

Local Networks

The Local Network Leads, currently based at around 80 institutions in the UK, promote open, reproducible research practices at the grassroots level. They achieve this by organising ReproducibiliTea journal clubs, training events, seminars, and providing advice/resources to colleagues. Over the past year, they have collaborated to publish a guidebook for new leads and held regional meetings to foster collaboration among neighbouring institutions.

More recently, clusters of Local Network Leads have begun collaborating on meta-research projects, leveraging their shared expertise and building partnerships among those with similar interests. In addition to continuing these efforts, a key goal for the coming year is to increase the diversity of the Local Network Leads group, such as by establishing best practice guidelines for 'succession planning' when a lead transitions the role to someone else at their institution.



David Smailes, chair of the Local Network Leads Group

Stakeholder Group representatives meeting, Bristol, 2024

Institutional Leads

Key activities for the Institutional Leads this year included collaborating with the UKRN Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee chair to monitor and improve the diversity of Institutional Leads. In addition, the group engaged with international organizations, such as national Reproducibility Networks and the European University Association's Expert Group on Open Science. Institutional Leads remain central to UKRN's initiatives, including the Open Research Training Programme and special interest groups.

The group aims to continue expanding and contributing to UKRN's evolving portfolio and direction.



Tom Stafford, chair of the Institutional Leads Group



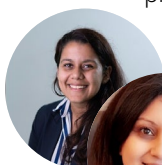


Cardiff, 2025

EDI Advisory Committee

The EDI Advisory Committee has recently undergone a change in leadership. Shraddha Chaudhary, the inaugural chair, reflected on her role in shaping the committee's work, including reviewing reward and recognition criteria for inclusivity, increasing diversity within the Institutional Leads, and setting clear EDI priorities in the UKRN Action Plan. She has enjoyed collaborating with UKRN colleagues and is excited for continued progress on goals like conducting Equality Impact Assessments within the Open Research Programme, and further diversifying the communities Local Network Leads and Institutional Leads.

Savita Rana, the new chair, steps into the role with enthusiasm. The committee's goals for the coming year include refining the Terms of Reference, clarifying their advisory role, and revisiting the committee's name and purpose to reflect its focus on meaningful change. Priorities will be finalized and regularly reviewed, with a focus on EDI, community projects, and sustainability. The committee will continue supporting both project and Institutional Leads, promoting diversity in community projects, and securing funding for EDI initiatives. Regular updates and a clear process for assigning responsibilities and tracking progress will help maintain momentum.



Shraddha Chaudhary, former chair of the EDI Advisory Committee



Savita Rana, chair of the EDI Advisory Committee

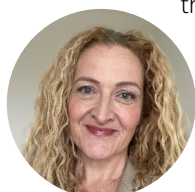
Stakeholder Organisations

The Stakeholder Group comprises funders, publishers, learned societies, and other external stakeholders who support and collaborate with UKRN. This partnership ensures that UKRN's activities align with their strategies, fosters the exchange of ideas, and provides a platform for gathering feedback on new initiatives from the research community.

Over the past year, the group has worked to strengthen its identity and purpose. With diverse interests and activities across their organisations, they have focused on getting to know each other and sharing priorities. Since the last annual report, the group has held two formal meetings and two virtual cafes. A highlight was the face-to-face workshop hosted by Jisc in Bristol, where the shared interest in methodologies emerged as a key theme.

The group has contributed to UKRN's strategic planning through discussions on the value proposition, sustainability, and an updated Terms of Reference.

Looking ahead, members are eager to collaborate further with Institutional Leads and Local Network members. They plan to join relevant UKRN-wide special interest groups as they emerge and are organising a workshop to identify priority areas for future action.



Helen Clare, chair of the Stakeholder Group

International Advisory Committee

The International Advisory Committee advises on UKRN vision and strategy, providing both solicited and unsolicited input, and acts as a 'critical friend' to the Supervisory Board. Over the past year, the committee contributed to structural improvements aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts within UKRN and supported policy development for the growing network of national reproducibility networks.

A task force of International Advisory Committee and EDI Advisory Committee members managed the Dorothy Bishop Prize 2025 process, evaluating nominations and implementing changes to increase transparency and ensure a fairer, more objective process.

Internally, the International Advisory Committee elected Tony Ross-Hellauer as deputy chair alongside Anne Scheel, who continues to chair the group. Tom Hardwicke will step down, with a new member to be selected.

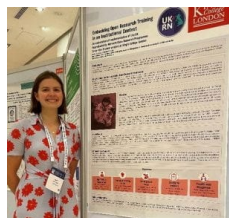
The committee also refined processes to facilitate discussion of critical or sensitive issues.



Anne Scheel, chair of the International Advisory Committee

UKRN On the Road

With growing global interest in research reform, UKRN has expanded its international collaboration in open science and reproducibility. UKRN colleagues Ruth Davies, Malcolm MacLeod, Tim Newton, Marcus Munafò, and Diane Hird reflect on their international efforts.



The 8th World Conference on Research Integrity was held in Athens in June 2024. Ruth Davies presented a poster on how King's College London has implemented the UKRN Open Research Programme train-the-trainer initiative in their local context.

“It was wonderful to be able to share this work with those at the conference and at the same time be able to speak with people connected to research integrity from across institutions, initiatives and projects”.

Ruth Davies, Open Research Coordinator and Advisor (ORCA) for King's College London

In September 2024, Malcolm attended the Open Science Dynamic Convergence Workshop in Washington DC, where participants discussed open science practices and challenges. Tim Newton attended the Toronto Workshop on Promoting Transparency in Academic Institutions in December 2024, focusing on adapting the Transparency and Openness Promotion guidelines for academic appointments. Both events fostered global knowledge exchange and collaboration, with discussions on improving open research practices and sharing successful implementation strategies.



Representatives from national Reproducibility Networks, Berlin, 2024



Marcus reflected on his visit to Ukraine for the launch of the Ukrainian Reproducibility Network, held under challenging circumstances. The event, hosted at Lviv Polytechnic University, was attended by representatives from displaced universities and institutions in liberated areas, with remote participation from the Georgian Reproducibility Network. The launch underscored the crucial role of transparent research in supporting and rebuilding economies. Marcus was struck by the resilience of the Ukrainian research community, with the conference dinner taking place in a cellar restaurant that also served as an air raid shelter! It was a privilege to witness such an inspiring initiative and to welcome Ukraine into the global community of Reproducibility Networks. Special thanks to Oleksandr Berezko, the driving force behind [UARN](#).

Will Gawned and Diane Hird attended the first in-person meeting of national Reproducibility Network representatives, which took place at the Berlin Institute of Health in May 2024. This meeting was attended by representatives from 10 Reproducibility Networks (Austria, Brazil, Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, UK). Other representatives joined online.

Chaired by UKRN's Marcus Munafò, the meeting focused on strengthening global collaboration, sharing ideas, and discussing the framework needed for RNs to engage with researchers, funders, and institutions.

Delegates also explored sustainability options for the national Reproducibility Network community, with UKRN working to identify unique benefits for members to support a sustainability model. The final session included discussion around sustainability options and opportunities for Reproducibility Networks. UKRN is working to identify the exclusive and unique benefits of being part of a Reproducibility Network. These benefits will be used to develop a sustainability model.



Oleksandr Berezko (left) with Marcus Munafò and others at the launch of the Ukrainian RN, Lviv, 2024

Looking Ahead

National Reproducibility Networks

The growth of the global community of Reproducibility Networks has continued, with the last year seeing the launch of Reproducibility Networks in yet more countries, including Ukraine and Georgia. UKRN – as the first Reproducibility Network – continues to provide support for the regular meetings of this community.

This year also saw the launch of TRUSTparency, a Horizon Europe project that aims to develop tools and models to enhance the reproducibility of research findings and the replicability of methods, including fostering reproducibility communities. We are closely involved in and supporting this project to ensure that its activity is well coordinated with that of the RNs.

We are also exploring ways to grow the global community of RNs into a more formal structure with its own secretariat. To this end, we have formed a working group to explore sustainability options, including how to generate income to support the community (as well as individual Reproducibility Networks).

The goal is to create a formal structure, with funding to support it, that enables the individual Reproducibility Networks to work together effectively at a supra-national level – and deliver the collaborative and cooperative working that is at the heart of all Reproducibility Networks.

The next stage of the Community Project, Ground-Up: Enhancing Rigour and Transparency in Grassroots Research Communities

UKRN believes in reproducibility as a foundation for transparent, rigorous research, ensuring methods, data, and findings can be shared and reused with confidence. Through the “Ground-Up: Enhancing Rigour and Transparency in Grassroots Research Communities” project, we aim to broaden perspectives across disciplines and represent the full diversity of the UK’s research community.

We are also focused on amplifying the grassroots voice in the sector. With its networks of Local Network Leads, Institutional Leads, and Stakeholders, UKRN is uniquely positioned to connect researchers with those shaping research policy and systems. To foster collaboration, we will support the creation of special interest groups, facilitating action-led forums for shared topics.

Will Gawned and Diane Hird



COMET

The Wellcome-funded COMET study, led by the University of Bristol in partnership with UKRN and the University of Sussex's Science Policy Research Unit, aims to improve evidence use in institutional decision-making in UK Higher Education Institutions.

Building on the 2024 UKRN METEOR project (co-funded by UKRN institutions), COMET will explore how decisions are made, and the role evidence plays at both institutional and local levels. The project began in September 2024 and will conclude in December 2025. Focused interviews will be conducted with staff involved in decisions affecting research culture at six diverse UK institutions. Approximately 80 interviews will be held with academic and professional services staff.

The research will identify practices, barriers, and challenges to embedding evidence-informed decision-making. Following data collection in April 2025, interview transcripts will be analysed and findings triangulated with literature reviews. Results will be shared by Autumn 2025.

In Summer 2025, COMET will work with stakeholders to co-design practical outputs based on early findings, supporting institutions in using high-quality evidence for decision-making. This project aims to foster healthier, more sustainable research environments in Higher Education Institutions, improving talent attraction and research excellence.

Thank You!

UKRN remains a peer-led organisation, and our success depends on the efforts of our wider community that is represented by our Local Network Leads, our Institutional Leads, and our Stakeholder Group representatives. We're not a membership organisation exactly – our members, such as they are, are the local networks, institutions, and organisations that are represented in those groups.

But we are definitely a community, and one that continues to grow whilst remaining open, collegial and supportive. As we mature, the people serving as representatives will change – this year, for example, the Supervisory Board said goodbye to Malcolm Macleod and Emily Farran and welcomed Sofia Fernandes. But the hope is that those that have been part of the UKRN community – whether or not in a formal role – will always see themselves as such.

We are looking at ways in which we can recognise people's contributions – institutional recognition of Local Network Leads, Doscars as a small token of appreciation, and a community of UKRN ambassadors. We will continue to evolve, particularly as we look towards our long-term sustainability. Key to this will be remaining valuable to the sector that we aim to serve and improve – and in ways that we can demonstrate!

Hopefully, what people will take away from their involvement in UKRN is a dual sense of community and achievement: things that we have done that have improved the sector, in small ways and large, that we have done together.

Thank you to all of you.



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