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## **Northumbria director to lead international research project**

**Northumbria University, Newcastle, is part of a consortium led by the Association for Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA) which has been awarded funding from UK research and Innovation (UKRI) to undertake a major research feasibility project.**

The study will explore how a national service for due diligence in international research could deliver benefits for UK higher education institutions and partners overseas. Experts will assess the feasibility of such a national service in UK-funded research projects and partnerships, with a

particular focus on Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) initiatives.

Led by Northumbria's Director of the Research & Innovation Service and ARMA's Chair Elect, Jennifer Stergiou, the project responds to feedback from the research management community that there should be a better way of managing due diligence in order to understand, mitigate and manage risk in an efficient way which supports both UK research organisations and overseas partners rather than increasing their burden.

The consortium includes ARMA, CASRAI (the Consortia Advancing Standards for Research Administration and Information) and Northumbria University with contributions from a number of other universities\*.

**Jennifer Stergiou said:** *"I am delighted that ARMA is able to collaborate with partners across the sector to deliver this project which responds to a clear need to improve the way in which due diligence is undertaken and managed for international research partnerships. The award will be managed on behalf of the consortium by Northumbria University and will bring together research management, researcher and finance communities, including our own Finance Director Simon Newitt"*

**Steven Hill, Director of Research at Research England,** added: *"Due diligence is vital in the establishment of partnerships between UK higher education institutions and international partners, but variance in how this is done can result in an inefficient use of both partners' resources."*

*"The project will undertake valuable work in assessing how a national service for international due diligence could benefit both UK higher education institutions and their partners overseas. This work may in turn inform a roadmap for further due diligence activity and improve efficiency across the UK's higher education sector."*

Over the next 9 months the project will deliver:

- -A core questionnaire for gathering due diligence information
- -Recommendations regarding the feasibility and operation of a 'clearing house' for due diligence questionnaire responses, which would enable UK research organisations to share questionnaire responses and information provided by partner organisations

- -Recommendations regarding the feasibility and operation of a 'national service for due diligence in UK funded research projects and partnerships'. Such a service would offer a range of services and expertise to UK research organisations and their overseas partners aimed at mitigating risk in a number of different ways.

\*The full list of contributors includes ARMA, CASRAI, Northumbria University, the RIDG Group of Directors of Research & Innovation Services, University of Stirling, and University of Glasgow. A steering group comprising representatives of these organisations plus Research England and UKRI International Assurance will provide project governance.

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