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Report highlights need for consistent national approach to international research collaborations

Experts from Northumbria University have published a report outlining the need for a sector-led approach for international research projects.

The report, which was produced for Research England, was led by Jennifer Johnson, Director of [Research and Innovation Services](#) at Northumbria and chair of [ARMA](#), the Association of Research Managers and Administrators.

[Research England](#) awarded ARMA almost £100,000 to establish the current challenges facing the higher education sector in international research collaborations, particularly around issues relating to risk assurance, due diligence, trusted research and security.

The [*Complex Collaborations – Efficiency, Equity, Quality and Security in International Research*](#) report recommends the creation of a Research Collaboration Diligence Exchange and System to address unmet needs and drive cultural change in international research activity.

Alongside a series of quick win practical solutions, such as improvements to guidance and training resources, the report also recommends the creation of an independent Research Collaboration Diligence Exchange and supporting system to drive operational and cultural change.

Jennifer Johnson explains: “This project set out with the aim of understanding the current challenges facing the sector in relation to due diligence and security and to assess whether a national system and service for due diligence remained part of the solution.

“Our report demonstrates that the sector is facing a complex legislative landscape and unique challenges in this space and whilst I am left in no doubt that as a sector, we can do better, there is an overwhelming need for the creation of national provision and capacity to support due diligence and security in international research.

“International collaborations are an essential feature of research activity. As Director of Research and Innovation Services at Northumbria University I am well aware of the challenges relating to the complexity and cross-cutting nature of the legislation that colleagues face when establishing projects. I look forward to seeing our recommendations improve practice for universities across the UK.”

Professor Dame Jessica Corner, Executive Chair at Research England said: “We are grateful to ARMA for their practical and thoughtful report. Continued dialogue across sectors, with government, in the UK, and internationally is critical to successful implementation in delivering Trusted Research.

“We must continue to share experiences and best practices; to identify what

is working, and where greater attention might be needed. ARMA has prompted a significant discussion that will promote engagement at all levels with this important agenda.”

Visit the [ARMA website](#) for full detail on the report and its recommendations.

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