

# ARMS 2024 CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

**Theme:** Professional Research Management as an Embedded Practice

**Title:** Building a Research Culture through a Supportive Ecosystem and Effective Grant Management: Insights from Swinburne Sarawak

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**Abstract:**

The shift from a primarily teaching-focused institution to a research-intensive university presents unique challenges and opportunities. The Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak exemplifies this transition. However, the disproportionate ratio of early career researchers to established ones makes grant applications particularly challenging, necessitating innovative solutions. To address these challenges, SUTS's research management centre (RMC), the School of Research, spearheaded the development of internal grant schemes and a supportive ecosystem designed to enhance the research capabilities across its diverse researcher demographic. Initiatives such as research micro funds (RMFs), strategic research grants (SRGs), Knowledge Transfer Programs (KPTs), and research collaboration grants (RCGs) are pivotal in providing both emerging and established researchers with the necessary financial support and collaborative opportunities to advance their work. In particular, this paper outlines effective strategies from the School of Research (SoR) for improving research performance, particularly in creating a critical mass of principal investigators for grant applications. The strategies were executed through several steps, including (i) setting annual grant targets, (ii) identifying grant opportunities and disseminating this information through various research platforms, (iii) offering workshops and training on grant applications, (iv) overseeing awarded grants, (v) keeping stakeholders informed and tracking progress through audits and reports, and (vi) finalising award closures. Complementing these mechanisms, the ecosystem is further strengthened by the implementation of a recognition program for researchers achieving grant success (i.e. Research Success Awards, Research Excellence Awards). These measures collectively foster a robust research culture at SUTS, demonstrating the institution's commitment to supporting its researchers' development.