



SOCIETY OF
RESEARCH
ADMINISTRATORS
INTERNATIONAL

Cast a Wider Net! Fishing for the Next Generation of Research Administrators

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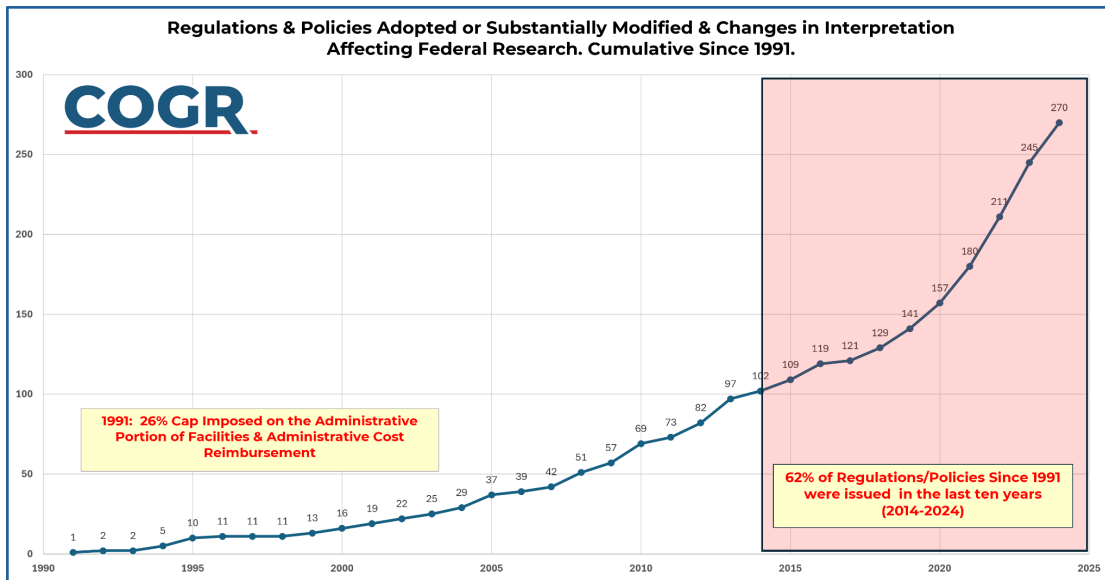
Is your pond stocked?

Research Administrators



Serpico, K. (2023). Defining institutional review board application quality: critical research gaps and future opportunities. *Research Ethics*, 20(1), 19-35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17470161231187099> (Original work published 2024))

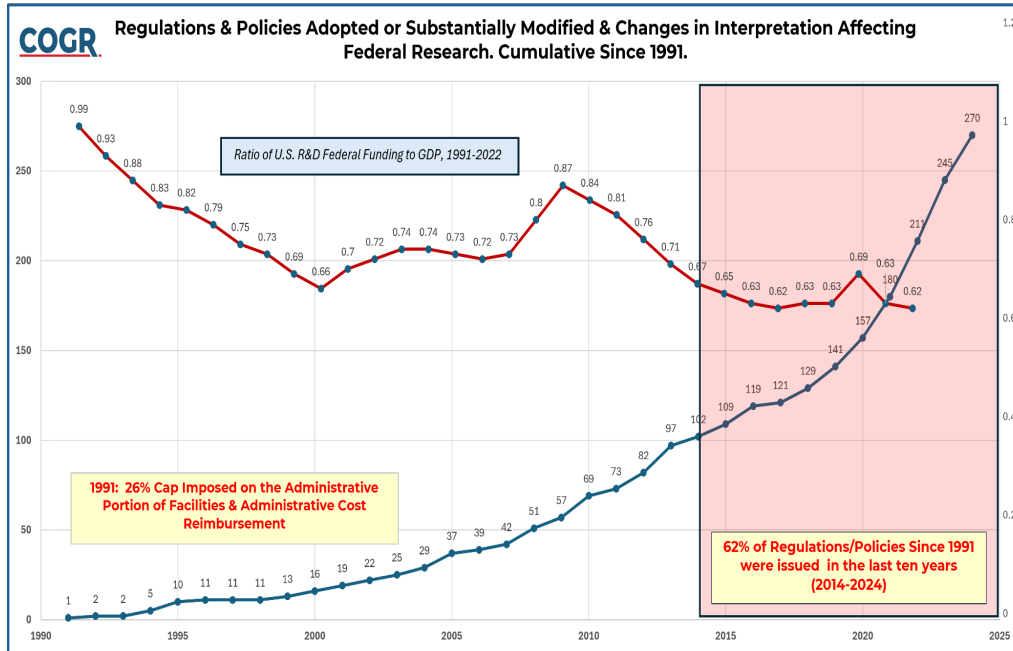
Research Administrators and Regulatory Burden



Regulations and Policies governing Federal Research have increased exponentially since 1991 (COGR)

https://www.cogr.edu/sites/default/files/RegChangesSince1991_Dec%202024.pdf

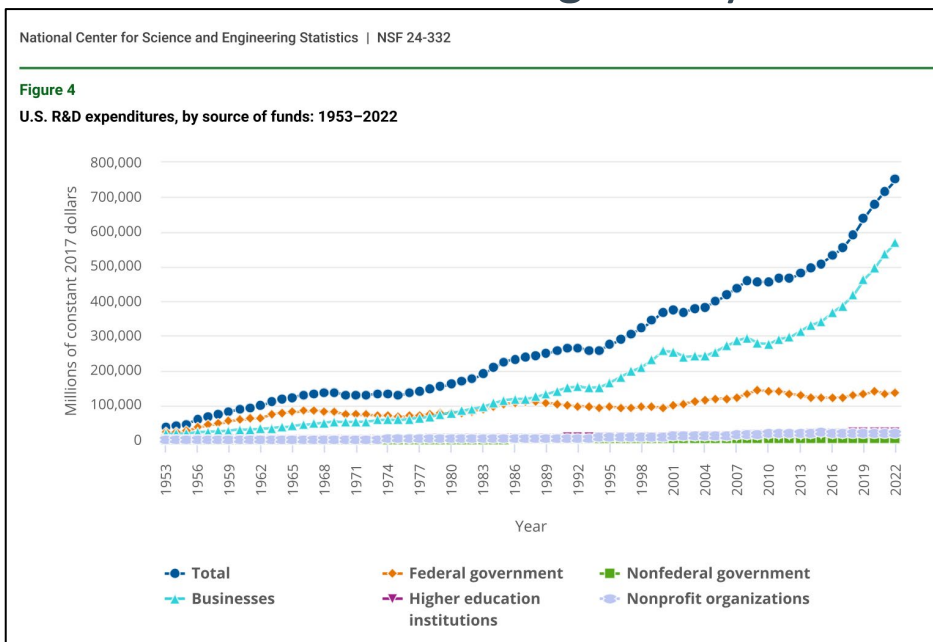
Research Administrators and Regulatory Burden



Regulations and Policies governing Federal Research have increased exponentially since 1991 (COGR) but ratio of federal funding to GDP has remained stagnant.

https://www.cogr.edu/sites/default/files/RegChangesSince1991_Dec%202024.pdf

Research Administrators and Regulatory Burden



Total R&D expenditures continue to grow with diversifying sponsors and sponsor requirements

Pece CV, Anderson GW; National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES). 2024. *Analysis of Federal Funding for Research and Development in 2022: Basic Research*. NSF 24-332. Alexandria, VA: U.S. National Science Foundation. Available at <https://ncses.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf24332>.

If Research is growing are Research Administrators?

“The US Department of Labor (DOL) does not currently track the number of jobs which would fall into the category nor are we able to accurately report on the demographics of those working in the field. Work started in 2022 that will enable DOL to have a job category for research administration and to track those jobs in the United States.” – Shaklee (2023)

It is difficult to quantify number of Research Administrators due to the variety of roles under the RA umbrella

“The comprehensive three-phase NSF GRANTED conference project identified significant challenges and critical needs within the research administrator workforce across diverse U.S. academic institutions, including inconsistent job titles, roles, and salary structures. These inconsistencies hinder recruitment, retention, and overall workforce effectiveness.” – Woodward (2025)

Shaklee, T. (2023), "Research Administration in the United States", Kerridge, S., Poli, S. and Yang-Yoshihara, M. (Ed.) *The Emerald Handbook of Research Management and Administration Around the World*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 473-481. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80382-701-820231040>

Woodward, JE and Roberts E (2025) White Paper: "Creation of a National Job Classification System for Research Administrators: Needs and Challenges of the Research Administrator Workforce " [https://nationalrajobclass.srainternational.org/?ct=t\(NSF-Pitt_Survey-Reminder_070824_COPY_01\)](https://nationalrajobclass.srainternational.org/?ct=t(NSF-Pitt_Survey-Reminder_070824_COPY_01))

Factors that Affect Research Administrator Retention

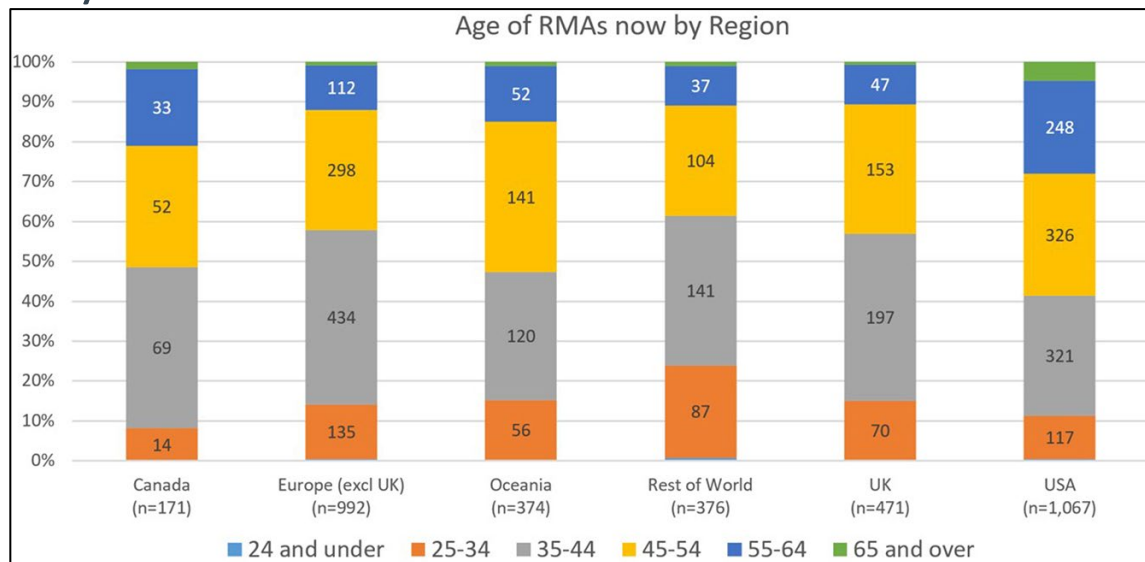
Pandemic = Great Resignation
Return to Office Mandates
Increasing Regulations/Sponsor Changes
Frustration / Poor Training
Niche area / promotion
Heavy Workload
Retirement

Houston's TMC phenomena



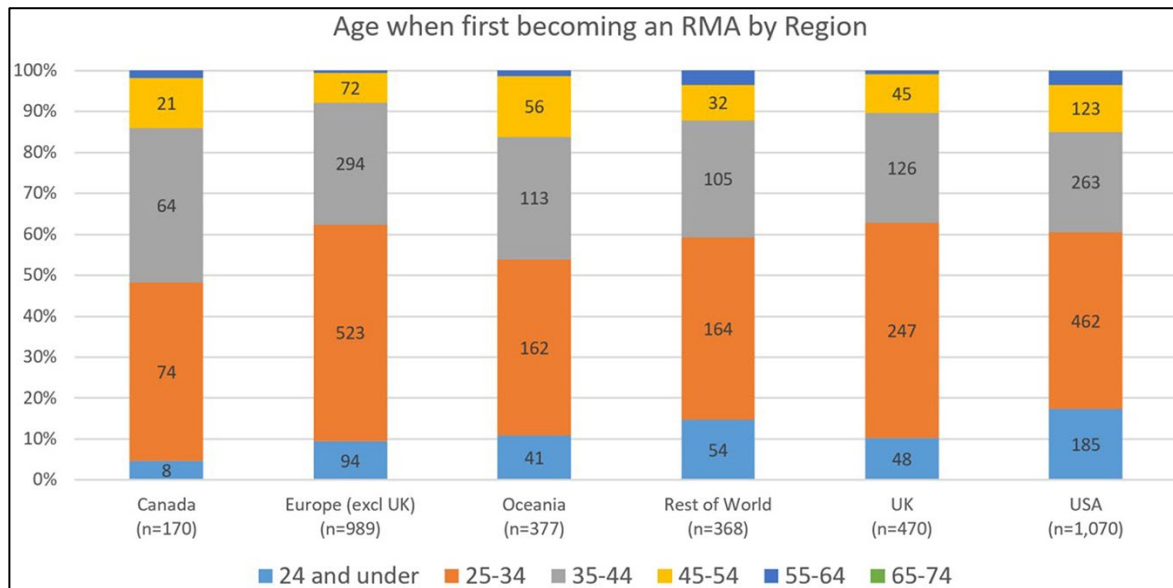
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The Research Administration as a Profession (RAAAP) Survey



[Oliveira, C.](#), [Fischer, M.](#), [Kerridge, S.](#) and [Dutta, M.](#) (2023), "The Research Administration as a Profession (RAAAP) Survey", [Kerridge, S.](#), [Poli, S.](#) and [Yang-Yoshihara, M.](#) (Ed.) *The Emerald Handbook of Research Management and Administration Around the World*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 113-123. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80382-701-820231011>

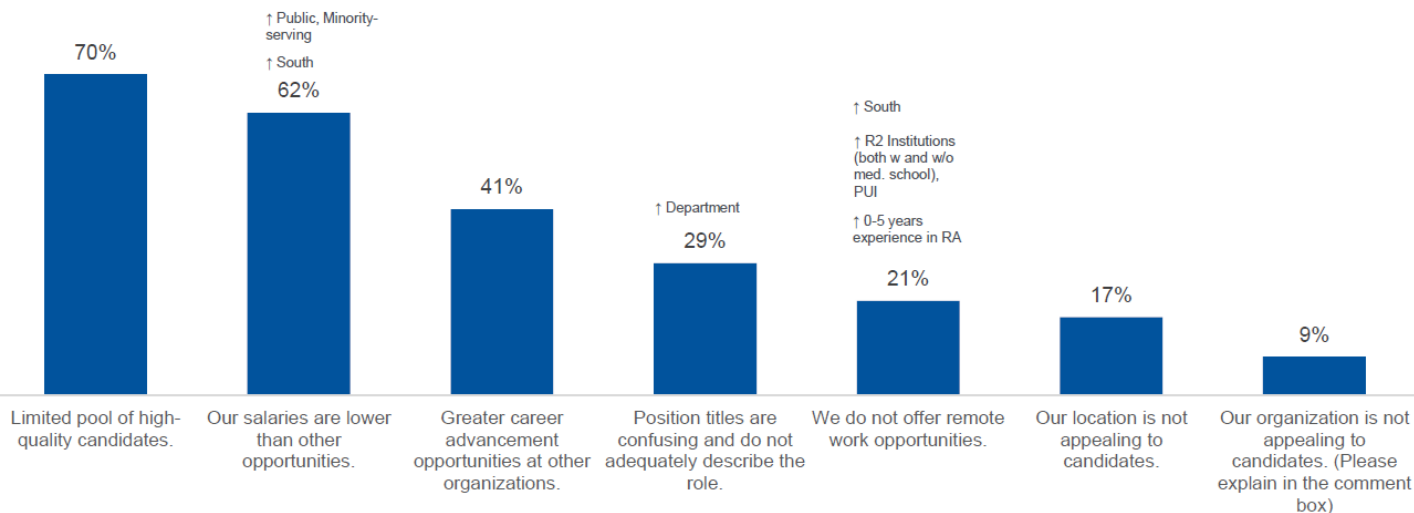
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Challenges in Recruitment

Limited pool of high-quality candidates and lower salaries compared to other opportunities are seen as the biggest challenges for recruiting research administrators.



Woodward, JE and Roberts E (2025) White Paper: "Creation of a National Job Classification System for Research Administrators: Needs and Challenges of the Research Administrator Workforce" [https://nationalrajobclass.srainternational.org/?ct=t\(NSF-Pitt_Survey-Reminder_070824_COPY_01\)](https://nationalrajobclass.srainternational.org/?ct=t(NSF-Pitt_Survey-Reminder_070824_COPY_01))

Getting Creative to Grow Research Administration

Research Administrators have never come from one traditional path.

There is no definitive entry point into the profession.

“Research Administration has been a profession that most entered with training in some other field such as accounting, business administration, management, procurement, law, or even as trained researchers.”



[Shaklee, T.](#) (2023), "Research Administration in the United States", [Kerridge, S.](#), [Poli, S.](#) and [Yang-Yoshihara, M.](#) (Ed.) *The Emerald Handbook of Research Management and Administration Around the World*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 473-481. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80382-701-820231040>

Getting Creative to Grow Research Administration

- Open-Minded Hiring for Transferable Skills
- Consideration of those from Alternative Backgrounds
- Removal of Barriers to Hiring
- Skilled Training is a Must!
- Grow Your Own



Shaklee, T. (2023), "Research Administration in the United States", Kerridge, S., Poli, S. and Yang-Yoshihara, M. (Ed.) *The Emerald Handbook of Research Management and Administration Around the World*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 473-481. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80382-701-820231040>

Transferable Skills/Alternative Backgrounds

- Former Scientists
- Post Docs
- Teachers
- Sales People
- Accountants
- Add your own!



Research Administration Past Lives Mini Survey

Surveyed GAM Team

- 5 responses!

- 1) What did you do as a career before you found research administration?
- 2) you engaged in this career, is there anything that excites you about this field?

Journalism, graphic designer, Design manager, brand manager, marketing communications manager, Math teacher, Research Administrator!

Elementary School Teacher (Prek and 3rd), Librarian (Prek-5th)

Administrative coordinator whose boss wanted to apply for a grant

Accountant→Financial Aid→Administrative Coordinator

Research Administration Past Lives Mini Survey

Surveyed GAM Team

- 5 responses!
- 1) What did you do as a career before you found research administration?
- 2) What keeps you engaged in this career, is there anything that excites you about this field?

I like figuring things out and going down the rabbit hole. Every day has a new puzzle to solve.

Knowing that I take part in helping research move forward and people overall.

Working with the deadlines keeps me engaged and on my A game. I like the pressure (most days)

Evaluate the Job Description

Minimum qualifications

Is a degree really necessary?

Years of experience are a barrier for entry-level jobs

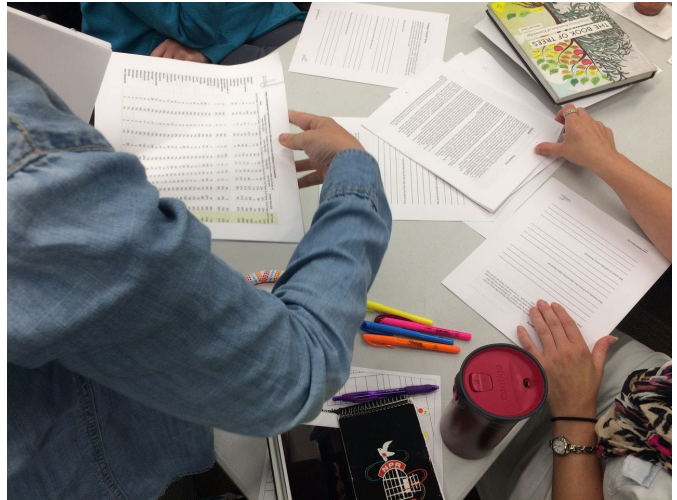
Training is Key

Do not assume knowledge

Develop training resources

Knowledge Transfer

Training is only as good as the trainer(s)



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UTHealth Research Administration Internship

**Inaugural, one-year, paid internship to launch dynamic careers in
Research Administration**

TIMELINE

Applications due 6/1/24

16 applications received

Top candidates selected and
interviewed by committee

4 interns in first cohort, started 9/1/24

CURRICULUM

10 Units (4-8 weeks each)

Starting with “How a University Works”

Classroom and Hands-on Training
Guest Speakers & Webinars

Mentorship-for 1 year in first RA job

Limited applications to: Masters or PHD prepared, US Citizens or Permanent Residents.

Goal: Create an entry point into the field:

- Provide broad knowledge of Research Admin
- Place in positions at UTHealth and Mentor
- Retain and develop depth of knowledge

UTHealth Research Administration Internship

Insights Gained

- Controlled, consistent training with structured schedule (Trainer's have 3+ years experience)
- Reordered Units to move Award Management to the end:
department based, asked to do things they've not yet learned (IRB)
“try out” for position
- Build on hands-on (keep assigning tasks from completed units)
- Weekly touch base – how are they doing, feedback, what they like or don't like doing
- Strong program leader and faculty evaluator

Discussion: What do you look for when hiring into Research Administration?



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