

## Symposia Abstract Book - Main Abstract Book with Submissions and Programme (All Symposia)

Are we becoming more professional and if so, how? International developments in various fields of higher education management ( 0347 )

**Contributors:** Jürgen Enders, Anna Gerchen, Susi Poli, Susan Harris-Huermann

**Chair:** , [Susan Harris-Huermann](#)<sup>2</sup>

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**Rationale Text:** Higher education (HE) is a super-complex field (Barnett, 2013). Where university leaders may have formerly thought about research initiatives or student numbers, for example, at local or national level, they now need to consider these in global terms and be aware of the wider context of higher education and its changing needs. This symposium, which picks up on the conference theme of rebuilding/reconstructing, brings together empirical data from ongoing research projects in the UK, Germany and Italy, which explore how professionalism within the HE sector is being developed to meet present and future needs and challenges. To do so, the symposium addresses different areas and levels within HE. Starting from a meta UK perspective, Jürgen Enders explores the overall development of new HE professionals, who are being introduced into the sector to support growing and more diverse institutional needs, in particular in teaching and learning. His paper discusses organisational order, how these professionals are becoming institutionally embedded (or not) and what fluidity of collaboration means within an institution. Leading on from this Susan Harris-Huermann examines the roles of German HE leaders from two vantage points. Firstly: how they prepare for and become more professional as institutional heads, and secondly: how these leaders ensure that their academic or administrative staff members are also being professionally trained and developed. This research considers not only how disciplinary background may be of influence on leadership and the development of professionalism, but also how civil servant status in Germany impacts upon how skills may, or may not be developed. In the third paper Anna Gerchen discusses how globalisation has changed the demands on recruitment processes in German HE, in particular those regarding professorial appointments. This is becoming a new field of expertise and is becoming increasingly important within the sector. Lastly, Susi Poli turns the lens towards Italy in particular, and the role of those specialised in the management of research projects, many of whom come directly from academic backgrounds. She asks to what extent academics are qualified for this specific role, and how the use of professional associations and networks has a role to play in improving their professionalism. In the concluding discussion, Michael Hoelscher will address the various themes and examine how European countries can learn from comparative research in professionalism within the sector.

**|Linked Submissions:**

University Leaders in Germany: Towards Greater Professionalism and the Professionalisation of Others? ( 0350 )

Susan Harris-Huemmert<sup>1</sup>, Julia Rathke<sup>2</sup>

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**Research Domain:** Management, leadership, governance and quality (MLGQ)

**Paper Abstract:** <p style="text-align:justify">While university chancellors (<em>Kanzler</em>) are not required to be professors, this is the case for presidents, rectors and vice-presidents who are the most senior managers of their institutions. In Germany it is assumed that the professorial title qualifies sufficiently for taking on such senior management roles. However, the tasks of university leaders have become highly complex and require a wide breadth of knowledge and skills, for example in legal matters, human resource management, controlling and quality management. These may not, arguably, be actually acquired along the traditional pathway to becoming a professor. This paper presents data gained from website research into senior management staff and their disciplinary backgrounds, in addition to qualitative interviews conducted with leaders who were asked about their support of informal leaders, so-called science managers.&nbsp; It explores how senior managers themselves are engaging with growing professionalism, and helping staff, in turn, to develop their own professional skills.&nbsp;

Managing Professorial Appointment Procedures: Increasing Professionalism and New Specialists at German Universities ( 0365 )

Anna Gerchen<sup>1</sup>

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**Research Domain:** Management, leadership, governance and quality (MLGQ)

**Paper Abstract:** Following a recommendation by the German Council of Science and Humanities <em>(Wissenschaftsrat)</em> on the organisation of professorial appointment procedures (2005) and the subsequent revisions of the state higher education laws, more and more German universities now established officers for professorial appointment procedures. These new specialists are supposed to ensure the (procedural) quality assurance of the appointment procedures by taking responsibility for &quot;the proper and smooth running of the procedure&quot; (ibid., p. 5). In order to explore how concretely the task profiles and the organisational anchoring of these positions are shaped and to gain insights into the professional self-image of the position holders, I conducted a quantitative survey. On the basis of qualitative expert interviews and group discussions, I am further able to give an overview on extent to which the Covid 19 pandemic demanded new adjustments in the work processes regarding the running and quality assurance of professorial appointment

procedures.

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**Session G** | Mon 10:55-11:15

Research Management Staff Towards Greater Professionalism: Associations, Training Opportunities and Qualifications ( 0369 )

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**Research Domain:** Management, leadership, governance and quality (MLGQ)

**Paper Abstract:**

Higher education is under attack following a period of transformation and identity crisis; staff in the sector is not exempt from this crucial juncture which, following Barnett, involves re-setting a discourse as modern professionals in an age of *super complexity* where even knowledge has a limited lifespan. Research managers are one of the groups making the professional workforce in this sector and the one under the lens here. This paper provides an overview of their associations, professional development frameworks and qualifications to show what has been done to boost these professionals. Moving from a national report, the paper maps frameworks globally before focussing on an example developed in South Africa. The question is whether these frameworks fit for *super-complexity* and aligns with an up-to-date idea of greater professionalism. The paper suggests that associations move towards doing research into the practice to cope with even more complex scenarios.

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The Rise and Work of New Professionals in Higher Education ( 0375 )

Jürgen Enders<sup>1</sup>

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**Research Domain:** Management, leadership, governance and quality (MLGQ)

**Paper Abstract:**

The paper will discuss research on the emergence of a relatively new staff category in higher education that does no longer fit the traditional academic-administrative divide: new professionals who support processes in research, teaching, public engagement, and management. Focussing on the UK, their rise is tied to the overall rise of management in higher education and to changes in contexts and conditions for universities over recent decades. Based on conceptualisations of institutional work and qualitative interview data, the paper discusses their roles as hybrid professionals serving in a wide variety of specialised expert roles, their sources of professional legitimacy and power as well as their contestation. As situated professionals, this new staff group is not only embedded in but also dependent on local

organisational orders that influence their professional boundary work with academics: reflecting rather traditional academic-administrative divides, third spaces of fluid collaborations, or managerialist disruptions of academic values and powers.

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