

Competitive research environments require efficient and responsive individuals with specialised administrative, managerial and strategic skills to strengthen the research mission and intensity of the organisation. These research managers (including administrators) are vital in supporting researchers directly or supporting the research life cycle in some way or the other, including research policy or strategy development. They work in various settings and in organisations that either conduct or support research. The overall goal of research management is to support and enable the organisation to do research, as well as to ensure research impact and high standards of governance.

THE ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE IPRC

A need was identified to recognise research managers in Africa as professionals. As a result, the International Professional Recognition Council (IPRC) was established as an autonomous body of expert research managers representing the African and international research management community. It performs the following functions:

-  Confers professional status on research managers.
-  Endorses research management training for continuing education.
-  Advocates for research management as a profession.

The IPRC Secretariat is currently hosted by the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA).

Professional status holds the following advantages:

-  Demonstrates a person's competence as a research manager to current or potential employers.
-  Affirms their standing in the global research management field.
-  Widens their options for career advancement and job mobility.



HOW TO APPLY FOR A PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION

In order to gain professional status, applicants should submit a portfolio of evidence of their prior learning, experience and achievements, as well as their current competencies, which will be reviewed by their peers on the IPRC. There are three professional designations:

Research Administration Professional (RAP)

This designation recognises individuals with one to three years' experience and those who have been in the profession for some time but who have not yet advanced professionally. The purpose is to instil a professional identity, and to establish a professional development trajectory towards becoming an RMP or to maintain recognition as a RAP.

Research Management Professional (RMP)

The aim of this designation is to recognise mid-to advanced career research managers with an undergraduate qualification and a minimum of three years' relevant work experience, OR a minimum of five years' relevant work experience without a qualification.

Senior Research Management Professional (SRMP)

This designation recognises senior research managers who serve in leadership or strategic roles. They are required to hold a postgraduate qualification at a master's level or beyond, and have five years of relevant work experience.

A professional designation is valid for five years, after which it should be renewed or upgraded.

The application process consists of the following steps:

1. Applicant reviews requirements for relevant professional category.
2. Applicant completes and submits online application and pays fee.
3. Peers serving on the IPRC review application.
4. The IPRC informs applicant of the outcome within three months of submission.
5. Successful applicants add the awarded designation to their credentials.

The online application system opens in September each year and closes on 31 March of the following year. More information on requirements, application fees and the application process are available on the IPRC website at www.iprcouncil.com.

APPLY FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION TODAY

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