



# RDA Secretary General Recruitment

---

## 1. Introduction

The Research Data Alliance (RDA) is recruiting a Secretary General. The RDA is looking for a suitably experienced leader with a demonstrated ability to engage with the members, board and senior stakeholders of the RDA, and most importantly be a key driver of the RDA mission of rapidly building the social and technical bridges that enable sharing of data.

The Secretary General reports to the RDA Council and will report directly to the co-chairs of RDA Council.

This is the inaugural appointment to this position and is intended to be for two years, but initially with a contract for the first year. The contract will be between Monash University as the lead agent of the Australian National Data Service (ANDS) and an organisation willing to host the Secretary General.

The Secretary General can be based anywhere in the world but will need to attend many international meetings. At present most of these meetings are taking place in North America and Europe. The candidates must be able to be employed by an organisation in a country represented in the Research Data Alliance Colloquium at the time of application.

Applications for this role should be sent to Ross Wilkinson ([ross.wilkinson@ands.org.au](mailto:ross.wilkinson@ands.org.au)). The applications should provide a description of the candidate's experience relevant to the role (including a response to the key selection criteria), a CV, and a note proposing the organisation that would host the candidate, and ideally, a letter of support from the proposed host and any particular requirements of the host. The closing date is November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

## 2. The Role of the Secretary General of the RDA

The role of the Secretary General is to support the RDA membership, and supporting structures to achieve the goal of the Research Data Alliance - to accelerate international data-driven innovation and discovery by facilitating research data sharing and exchange.

The responsibilities of the Secretary General include:

### Membership

1. Engage with and represent the RDA membership in accordance with the guiding principles of RDA
2. Communicate with all members regarding the progress and issues facing the RDA
3. Have international experience in dealing with members and supporters from many countries with different cultures
4. Assist Working Groups and Interest Groups develop their Case Statements and steer them through the acceptance process in consultation with the Technical Advisory Group

### Secretariat

5. Manage the RDA Secretariat which includes managing a central office, and managing a distributed team responsible for all matters related to the operations of the RDA. This includes the servicing of Council and the Technical and Organisational Committees as well as supporting the planning and organising the plenary meetings of the RDA
6. Operating the RDA legal entity as directed by the RDA Council, which allows members from any nation of the world to join and where there is no restriction for receiving funds from a wide range of funders.
7. Be responsible for the finances and other issues of governance of the RDA when it becomes a legal entity. Depending on the finally agreed legal status will be seen as the responsible accounting officer for the purposes of tax and conforming to the accounting practices of the country under whose jurisdiction the legal entity resides
8. Active participation in the work of the Secretariat
9. Be ready to familiarise yourself with UK Charity and Company law in as much as it affects the legal entity
10. Prepare annual accounts and report for submission to the UK Charity Commission

### Council

11. Participate in the Council as an ex-officio member
12. Attend all meetings of Council and the Technical and Organisational Advisory Boards and liaise with their chairs on a regular basis.
13. Develop a five year strategic plan that builds a solid foundation for the RDA for consideration by Council.
14. Be conversant with the main issues facing the RDA as the field develops and be alert to changes in technology, practice, and international legal changes that may affect open access, intellectual property rights, and other related issues

15. Prepare and present an Annual Report to the Council for approval
16. Prepare and present to Council an annual Operations Plan for approval and update at each Council meeting depending on changing circumstances
17. Develop both a Council and Management risk register
18. Agree with Council the formation and operation of an audit and remuneration committee when funds become available

#### **General**

19. Be able to present the work of the RDA to any audience including future supporters from a wide variety of backgrounds
20. Represent the RDA in discussions with other parties and associated organisations as they arise
21. Be willing to travel extensively on behalf of the RDA especially to potential new countries that may wish to join the RDA in some capacity
22. Develop and grow a organisational culture that is open, inclusive and provides no surprises, reflective of the RDA Guiding Principles

### **3. Research Data Alliance Guiding Principles**

- **Openness** – Membership is open to all interested individuals who subscribe to the RDA’s Guiding Principles. RDA community meetings and processes are open, and the deliverables of RDA Working Groups will be publicly disseminated;
- **Consensus** – The RDA moves forward by achieving consensus among its membership. RDA processes and procedures include appropriate mechanisms to resolve conflicts;
- **Balance** – The RDA seeks to promote balanced representation of its membership and stakeholder communities;
- **Harmonization** – The RDA works to achieve harmonization across data standards, policies, technologies, infrastructure, and communities;
- **Community-driven** – The RDA is a public, community-driven body constituted of volunteer members and organizations, supported by the RDA Secretariat.
- **Non-profit** - RDA does not promote, endorse, or sell commercial products, technologies, or services.

### **4. Selection process**

The process will be run by the RDA Council. An international search will be conducted between by November 25th. Short-listing will take place by November 30<sup>th</sup>. The interviews will be conducted by videoconference for all candidates. The RDA Council wishes to conduct these interviews in the week of December 9<sup>th</sup>, ideally on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

The candidates must be able to be employed by an organisation in a country represented in the Research Data Alliance Colloquium at the time of application.

Candidates will be interviewed based on the following criteria:

Key selection criteria:

1. Proven management experience including board engagement
2. Proven experience in management of finance, human resources, planning, and operations of an organisation
3. Strong understanding of RDA
4. Proven community development expertise
5. Proven senior representation experience
6. Proven “doer” – the role requires an activist, as well as a leader

Desirable

7. Proven experience in international relations
8. Data infrastructure expertise
9. Able to start quickly

## 5. Appointment

A successful candidate will be employed by an organisation local to the successful candidate. That organisation will be contracted to supply the services of the “RDA Secretary General”, and would be provided the salary expenses and on-costs associated with that role. In the first instance Monash University, as the lead agent of the Australian National Data Service (ANDS), will be the funder and contracting body. In the second year the contract will be between the newly formed RDA company that is currently being established in the U.K.

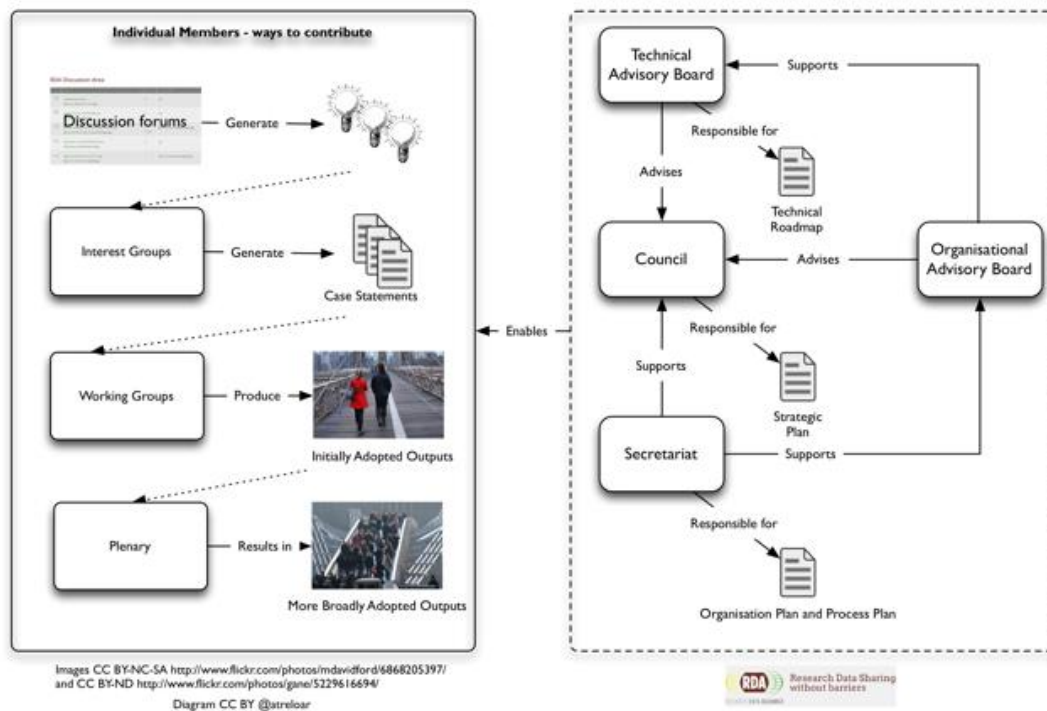
## 6. Additional Context: Supporting Bodies of the RDA

The supporting bodies of the RDA provide the environment to support the work of the individual members, interest groups, working groups, and plenary, and ensure that the organisational perspective remains focused on the longer term aims of the Research Data Alliance. The RDA bodies are:

- **COUNCIL:** The **Council** is responsible for maintaining the vision of RDA, ensuring the guiding principles of the organisation are maintained, and formally endorsing the outcomes of the RDA activities in line with RDA principles . Evidence of general consensus within the RDA bodies in support of an action is a key factor in Council decision-making. Council members are expected to be “statespersons” committed to delivering the aims of the RDA rather than promoting special interests, domains or disciplines. The Council is responsible for the overall oversight, success, strategy, and sustainability of the RDA, as well as the development and

maintenance of the RDA Strategic Plan document. The procedures which govern Council membership and activities are described in the Organisational and Process Plan.

- TAB:** The **Technical Advisory Board (TAB)** provides technical expertise and advice to the Council, as well as helping to develop and review RDA Working Groups to promote their impact and effectiveness. Membership of the TAB is elected from the RDA membership. The TAB is responsible for the technical approach of the RDA and the development and maintenance of an RDA Technical Roadmap document. One of the co-chairs of the Technical Advisory Board serves as an ex-officio member of Council. The procedures which govern TAB membership and activities are described in the Organisational and Process Plan.
- OAB:** The **Organisational Advisory Board (OAB)** provides organisational advice to the RDA Council. Its membership is drawn from representatives of the Organisation Members. The OAB advises Council on the directions, processes, and mechanisms of RDA. With support from the Secretariat, the OAB is responsible for the development and maintenance of the RDA Organisational and Process Plan document. The chair of the OAB serves as an ex-officio member of Council. The procedures which govern OAB membership and activities are described in the Organisational and Process Plan.
- SECRETARIAT:** The **Secretariat** supports the administrative, logistical, and other activities of the RDA by implementing the processes defined in the planning documents. This includes supporting the Membership and Bodies of the RDA in their undertaking of RDA activities. The Secretariat is led by a Secretary General who serves as an ex-officio member of Council.



The Secretariat is supported financially by the RDA. The Secretariat is responsible for operation of the RDA including development and maintenance of the annual work plan. An annual budget proposal is prepared by the Secretariat for Council review and approval.

## **7. Additional Context: From Governance Document: RDA Secretary General Reporting Relationships**

The RDA Secretary General reports to the RDA Council.

The Secretary General is appointed by a process agreed to by the RDA Council, and by a selection committee selected by the RDA Council.

The Secretary General is responsible for the work of the RDA Secretariat. The Secretary General is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the Secretariat. All members of the Secretariat will work under the direction of the Secretary General though members of the Secretariat may be employed by many organisations . provided as an in-kind contribution by an RDA organisational member. RDA staff provided by organisational members may be hosted within their home organizations but for RDA purposes will report to the RDA Secretary General. The size and constitution of Secretariat staff will be described in the annual Operating Plan and approved by Council.

The Role of the Secretariat will

- Support the activities of the WGs, Plenary, Council, OAB and TAB as appropriate including logistical, administrative, and other support.
- Be responsible for operating the RDA in line with the Technical Roadmap, the RDA Organisational and Processes Document, the RDA Strategic Plan and the RDA Operations Plan
- Be responsible for preparing and maintaining an annual Operating Plan which is approved by Council. The Operating plan includes a Financial plan, Staffing plan and Activities plan.
- Be responsible for event and other planning for the RDA bi-annual Plenaries
- Be responsible for communications and promotion of RDA efforts and deliverables, including the development of appropriate reports to stakeholder groups and partners
- Be responsible for open dissemination of the RDA Technical Roadmap, the RDA Organisational and Processes Document, the RDA Strategic Plan and the RDA Operations Plan
- Be expected to work with the Council Nominating Committee and the TAB to conduct elections for Council and TAB members respectively