Knowledge Asset Senior Responsible Owner:

Guide to appointing and the role

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This guidance is intended to:
A. Help organisations appoint a Knowledge Asset (KA) Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), a recommendation in the Rose Book[1] and Managing Public Money[2]
B. Support new and existing SROs to understand their responsibilities

Knowledge Asset management includes the identification, development, protection and exploitation of KAs. The SRO acts as a senior sponsor for KA management in their organisation and is responsible for realising benefits from effective KA management. The SRO should hold a senior leadership position within the organisation and be able to influence the business area(s) and/or resources from which KA management outcomes will be delivered.

The SRO's four core responsibilities are set out in the checklist below with some recommended actions and examples of how these can be implemented. The actions are not exhaustive, but some actions should be considered fundamental to the SRO role. It is recommended that SROs of organisations who identify a large stock of KAs to manage, should consider the 'additional' actions and examples to enable efficient and effective KA management within their organisation.

Figure 1.A: Four Core Responsibilities for a Knowledge Asset SRO

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1   The Rose Book.
2   See Annex 4.15 Managing Public Money for more details on asset management. 'Managing Public Money', HM Treasury, 2023.

Senior Responsible Owner Checklist

Figure 2.A: SRO Champion Checklist

Champion

Act as a visible leader for KA management within the organisation.

Outcome	Actions to take
• To increase organisational awareness and understanding of KAs that will drive top-down and bottom-up support for KA management • To enact culture change which will encourage employees to adopt behaviours that are consistent with good KA management • To influence senior leaders to increase buy-in for the KA management agenda that will facilitate top-down culture change	**Fundamental** • Advocate for and raise awareness of the Rose Book principles - for example, at organisational board meetings and when decisions are being made about organisational priorities • Introduce new behaviours and champion best practice around KA management such as identification and recording of KAs, and (if appropriate) protection of KAs • SROs in central government departments - Advocate for KA management and the Rose Book principles in your department's ALBs - for example, when meeting senior leaders or at board meetings **Additional** • Demonstrate commitment to embedding the principles of KA management (identify, protect, exploit) into the organisation as a whole • Actively promote appropriate training and resources on KA management from GOTT to all staff

Illustrative examples of how to take action

Fundamental

- Identify opportunities to promote the importance of KA management in senior leadership meetings

- Signpost existing KA training and resources to heads of professions for example IP training on CS learning or KA training available through GOTT

- Use existing organisational structures and networks to raise awareness of the Rose Book and the principles of KA management for example, through all-staff calls or intranet articles
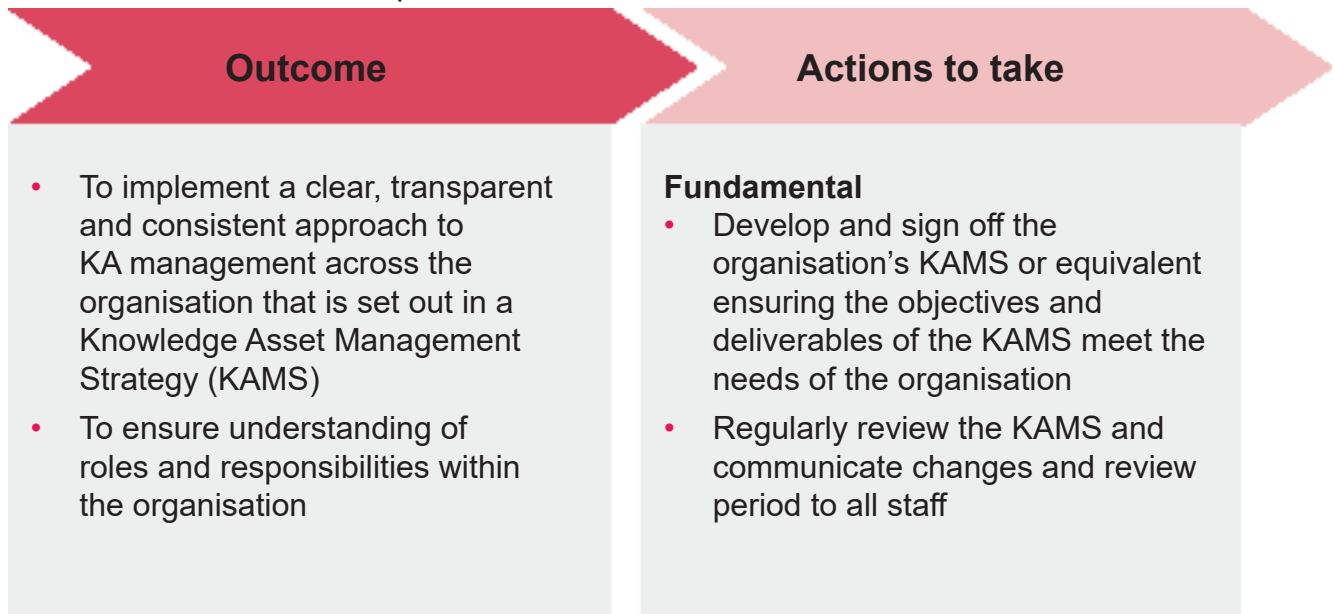
Additional

- Introduce the Rose Book and KA management as a KPI in performance reviews to support culture change

- Incorporate KA educational material into the staff L&D offer

Senior Responsible Owner Checklist

Figure 2.B: SRO Strategic Direction Checklist

Strategic Direction

Define and communicate the vision and objectives of KA management within the organisation in line with Rose Book Principles.

Outcome	Actions to take
• To implement a clear, transparent and consistent approach to KA management across the organisation that is set out in a Knowledge Asset Management Strategy (KAMS) • To ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities within the organisation	**Fundamental** • Develop and sign off the organisation's KAMS or equivalent ensuring the objectives and deliverables of the KAMS meet the needs of the organisation • Regularly review the KAMS and communicate changes and review period to all staff

Illustrative examples of how to take action

Fundamental

• Identify relevant existing strategic documents and strengthen, where needed, to incorporate KA management

• Initiate assessment of key policy documents and processes, such as the organisation's approach to IP protection, procurement or asset register use to incorporate KA management

• Sign off an organisational KAMS which is proportionate to the KA management needs of the organisation. This may simply be a high-level document which brings together key relevant policies and processes (see KAMS Checklist, to be published by GOTT late 2023 for more detailed guidance)

• Ensure the KAMS remains up to date/fit for purpose and relevant associated policies are developed and kept up to date and curated centrally (e.g. staff intranet) to ensure easy access

Additional

• Identify existing organisational structures relevant to KA management and recommend development/improvement where there are siloed areas

• Provide strategic guidance to the KA officer

Senior Responsible Owner Checklist

Figure 2.C: SRO Oversight Checklist

Oversight

Provide and ensure organisation-wide oversight and coordination of KA management.

Outcome	Actions to take
• To ensure appropriate and proportional structures and processes are in place to facilitate effective management of the organisation's KAs • To implement mechanisms to secure necessary resources to deliver effective KA management • To ensure KA management across the organisation remains aligned with organisational strategic objectives and any changes in political or business priorities • To facilitate a sustainable approach to KA management within the organisation	**Fundamental** • Oversee monitoring and reporting of KA management and outcomes, internally and externally • Oversee strategic decisions relating to KA management and provide an escalation route for any significant risks or issues • Ensure appropriate governance is in place to provide a coordinated approach to KA management and if necessary, recommend changes to internal management processes to optimise the recognition and efficient management of KAs **Additional** • Accountable for/lead any associated governance. For example, a KA management committee or equivalent • Implement efficient practices and processes for management of KAs and ensure these remain up to date • Develop a resource plan to support KA management and co-ordination of resource, secure resources to deliver and keep under continual review

Illustrative examples of how to take action

Fundamental

- Put regular agenda items for KA updates and decision making on relevant senior committee(s) (e.g. SMT, ExCo) or governance structure(s)

- Assess the need for a KA officer and identify where the role would sit e.g. could be a part of or all of the role. (See Annex B for overview of KA officer role)

- Implement a regular light touch review of identified KAs

- Sign off changes to organisational IP policy

- Approve or delegate a decision on when to protect vs share KAs as appropriate

Additional

- Appoint a KA officer and support them in their role

- Establish and chair a KA management committee (See Annex A for suggested responsibilities for the chair of management committee)

- Implement a simple and continuous process for identification and evaluation of KAs - for example a light touch method for all staff to automatically update the KA register, or a decision tree for evaluation of identified KAs

- Regular (as defined in a KAMS) reporting on KAs performance to the organisation's board

- Review and sign off strategic high-level decisions such as the proposed route for exploitation of a KA, while empowering the KA officer to deliver day to day activities

- Lead discussions on KA Management at senior management fora and/or with Policy Sponsor ship team within parent/sponsoring organisation where applicable

Senior Responsible Owner Checklist

Figure 2.D: SRO Network Checklist

Network

Build and maintain relationships with senior partners

Outcome	Actions to take
• To generate insights for more effective KA management • To help identify and accelerate KA opportunities • To share lessons learned and best practice • To influence policy and practice	**Fundamental** • Build relationships with the KA network of SROs and KA practitioners across government • Identify and progress opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange **Additional** • Engage key stakeholders and experts in government, academia, relevant sectors and industries, and investment communities

Illustrative examples of how to take action

Fundamental

• Engage with GOTT channels, networks and events to participate in sharing knowledge and best practice

• Build relationships with other SROs

• Ensure KA officer/rep attends KA champions network

Additional

• Regularly engage with the GOTT team to share lessons and examples of KA management in practice to inform policy development and the wider KA network in government

Annex A – Additional SRO Actions and duties as chair of knowledge assets management committee

As Chair of the KAs management committee some duties could be:

- Ensure the effective governance of KAs in the organisation including developing or working to the organisation's KAMS

- Review novel or high risk KA management opportunities

- Identify novel or high risk KA management opportunities for escalation e.g. to organisational board, executive committee or equivalent

- Ensure KAs are being reported and recorded appropriately on the organisation's KA tracker

- Consider and make recommendations on any employee rewards and incentive schemes for acknowledging and rewarding the role of employees in KA generation

- Recommend changes to internal management processes to optimise the recognition and efficient management of KAs

Annex B - Knowledge assets officer responsibilities (or as part of delegated governance structure e.g. working group)

- The KA officer should be responsible for the management of KAs as part of their existing day-to-day role (distinct from the SRO)

- Raising profile of KAs

- Delivering training on KA management for relevant staff

- Use KA tracker to evaluate individual opportunities for development potential and take decisions about valuable and impactful knowledge transfer in accordance with central guidance

- Determine the applicable and most appropriate protection routes for KAs

- Make recommendations on whether assets should be published as part of a defensive publication strategy

- Make recommendations on when to apply for registered IP rights

- Developing and executing on exploitation strategies

- Recording and reporting on KAs

- Agreeing decision making with SRO

- Taking certain decisions to appropriate internal committees/boards as per the organisational KAMS and associated internal policies

- Liaison with Government Office for Technology Transfer e.g. attending KA champs meetings

- Managing the KAs budget

- Liaising with external experts