

Peer Review

Review of: "Risks for Academic Research and Possible Responses"

Cara Stitzlein¹

1. Independent researcher

(review of earlier version)

It's a worthwhile analysis and seems like a very interesting data set. From my review, the main findings seem to be that reported risks fall into general risk categories and don't reflect aspects of academic-specific research (that which is postulated to be associated with foundation knowledge generation and social issues). I wonder how the effort could be enhanced to provide insights above 'generality.' Could this be framed as an initial data exploration and followed on with additional bespoke analysis based on factors such as types of academic research, projects involving external partners, projects of different time scales, or a comparison of 'academic research vs industry research bodies?

I believe a more appropriate description of managerial practices in the academic sector is 'variable' rather than ad hoc - there is variability in academic institutions, and the flow-on effect of this is differences in managerial practices. In my opinion, ad hoc refers to processes that are developed 'on the fly' or without standardisation. This doesn't reflect the reality of academic institutions.

The paper focuses on 'negative risks' and provides examples related to funding, personnel, and reliable partners, etc. How does the author distinguish between a risk and a source of uncertainty? I think there is an element missing in the analysis - that being what is in and out of the control of an academic research project - and some of this inappropriately being captured as risk. If this argument holds - that aspects of most commonly reported negative risks are associated with uncertainty - then the recommendation for system/organisational level solutions would need to address how/where to reduce uncertainty to mitigate said risks.

How does data collection over 6 years act as a strength or limitation to the analysis? While it may be considered longitudinal, I also imagine some changes to the broader (Canadian) context could affect

participant perceptions. I am also curious if there were repeat participants in the study, and I apologize if I've missed this detail in the review.

The work is decently reported and the method is clear. My main point of suggestion is to consider how the analysis may be extended to go beyond a robust general finding. In the instance that an additional, targeted analysis isn't feasible, adding some 'future research directions' with this framing would add to the value of this paper.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.