Robin Edgard Ulrik Mertens

Enterprise Portfolio & Strategy Leader | Governance, Prioritisation & Decision Systems
Long-Horizon Value • Institutional Learning • Strategy-to-Execution Coherence
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Profile

Practitioner–researcher working at the intersection of **institutional governance, portfolio decision systems, and long-horizon value creation** in complex organisations.
Over 20 years of professional experience in life sciences, public institutions, and other regulated environments, supporting senior decision forums responsible for large strategic portfolios operating under long feedback cycles. My work focuses on how organisations translate strategy into coordinated action through governance structures, prioritisation mechanisms, and decision signals.
Alongside professional responsibilities, I develop conceptual work on **decision-system coherence, governance integrity, and institutional learning**. This work seeks to articulate patterns observed in large organisational portfolios and contribute to broader reflection on responsible long-term value creation.
Research outputs and materials are shared openly through public repositories (e.g. Zenodo and OSF).

Research Interests

Institutional decision systems; governance and strategy translation; portfolio prioritisation under uncertainty; organisational learning in complex systems; long-horizon value creation in institutional settings.

Core Capabilities

• Enterprise Portfolio Governance
• Strategy-to-Execution Alignment
• Capital Allocation & Funding Logic
• Portfolio Prioritisation under Uncertainty
• Decision-Forum Design & Calibration
• Institutional Learning & Governance Integrity
• Programme Orchestration in Regulated Environments
• Executive Decision Support in Complex Systems

Professional Experience

Enterprise Portfolio Manager, Novonesis, Denmark | Apr 2025 – Present

Enterprise-level portfolio leader supporting senior decision forums across IT and business.
Responsibilities include analysing governance practices, prioritisation logic, and portfolio coherence across strategic initiatives in a long-horizon, high-uncertainty environment.

Key contributions:

• Lead portfolio-level prioritisation and funding discussions across large cross-functional initiatives.
• Conduct governance and decision-forum reviews to identify systemic friction and decision-signal misalignment.
• Design and pilot improvements to portfolio prioritisation and governance processes.
• Align funding logic and resource allocation with real-world adoption and behavioural-change signals.

• Act as integrator and pattern-spotter across programmes, enabling earlier course correction.

Director, Portfolio Management and Funding, Novo Nordisk, Denmark | Nov 2023 – Apr 2025

Senior responsibility for portfolio management and programme orchestration in a research-driven, highly regulated environment.

• Developed holistic portfolio-management approaches linking strategy, funding and resource allocation.
• Introduced shared evaluative language to assess value, risk and adoption across programmes.
• Supported executive-level governance forums by synthesising insights across strategic initiatives.
• Strengthened institutional learning by making implicit trade-offs explicit in portfolio decision processes.

Portfolio scope: digital and business initiatives with annual funding exceeding DKK 1bn.

Senior Digital Portfolio Manager, Novo Nordisk, Denmark | Dec 2021 – Nov 2023

Project Portfolio Manager within the Office of the CIO.

• Built portfolio-management structures for cross-functional IT-enabler initiatives.
• Supported investment and prioritisation decisions across decentralised programmes.
• Developed portfolio visualisation and governance mechanisms for value-realisation tracking.

Lean Project Portfolio Manager, Danmarks Nationalbank, Denmark | Feb 2018 – Dec 2021

Established and led a project-portfolio-management function in a central bank environment.

• Designed governance structures linking strategy to portfolio execution.
• Developed prioritisation models aligned with institutional strategy.
• Delivered portfolio insights and reporting to board and division heads.

Managed portfolios with annual budgets of approximately DKK 250m.

Senior Project Director, KMD, Denmark | 2017

Led transition of IT services from Danmarks Nationalbank to KMD and established PMO and portfolio structures.

Senior Project Manager – Product Supply IT, Novo Nordisk, Denmark | 2014 – 2017

Integration Manager for the Global Serialization Programme (~DKK 1bn).

Programme Manager – Strategy & Planning, Takeda / Nycomed | 2012 – 2014

Led design and implementation of global serialization IT deliverables across multi-vendor international teams.

Earlier Career (Selected)

Technical Lead / Senior Project Manager – Hewlett-Packard (HP / HPE)
Led global infrastructure and service-delivery transformation programmes.
Senior Project Manager – Interse A/S
Delivered international data-management programmes for global clients including Microsoft and Pfizer.
Economic & Political Attaché – Belgian Embassy, Copenhagen
Policy analysis and coordination in diplomatic and institutional contexts.
Project Manager / Research Coordination – Centre of Excellence for Environment and Health
Coordinated international research initiatives linking science, policy and public health.

Education

• Master's Degree — History and International Politics, Ghent University, Belgium
• Erasmus Exchange Programme — International Relations, Lund University, Sweden
• Bachelor's Degree — History, University of Antwerp (UFSIA), Belgium

Certifications

SAFe Lean Portfolio Manager
PRINCE2 Certified Project Manager

Open Research & Scholarly Engagement

Research Programme
The Coherence Programme — a conceptual research programme examining how complex organisations translate strategic intent into coordinated action through governance structures, prioritisation mechanisms, and decision signals.

The programme develops conceptual lenses for analysing decision-system coherence, institutional learning, and long-horizon value creation in large organisational portfolios.
Research outputs are shared openly through public repositories to support transparency and scholarly discussion.

• **Zenodo** — Open research repository. The *Coherence Programme* research series currently includes 16 conceptual papers, accessible through the programme entry paper: Mertens, R. U. (2026). *The Coherence Programme: A Conceptual Overview and Entry Point to the Research Programme*.
• **Open Science Framework** — Project workspace containing research materials and supporting documentation: https://osf.io/9cvky/

Current research explores governance signals, prioritisation logic, and decision-system coherence in complex institutional portfolios. Research materials are organised to allow independent examination of conceptual development and supporting sources.

Languages

• Dutch / Flemish — Native
• Danish — Fluent
• English — Fluent
• French — Intermediate
• German — Basic
• Spanish — Basic

References

Available upon request.