

EUA WORKSHOP SERIES: NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

All you want to know about the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment

Rita Morais and Vinciane Gaillard EUA Secretariat, R&I Unit

Swissuniversities, 15 September 2022





Outline



The Agreement and the Coalition



Next steps



Discussion



International context



22,081 individuals and organizations in 159 countries have signed DORA to date.

LEIDEN MANIFESTO FOR RESEARCH METRICS

Home Video version Translations Blog

10 principles to guide research evaluation with 25 translations, a video and a blog

PLOS BIOLOGY advanced sear G OPEN ACCESS 202 111 ESSAY Save Citation The Hong Kong Principles for assessing researchers: 26,919 563 Fostering research integrity View Share David Moher 👜, Lex Bouter, Sabine Kleinert, Paul Glasziou, Mai Har Sham, Virginia Barbour, Anne-Marie Coriat, Nicole Foeger, Ulrich Dirnagl Published: July 16, 2020 • https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3000737 Article Media Coverage Authors Metrics Comments ad PDF Abstract Abstract Check for updates







International context



22,081 individuals and organizations in 159 countries have signed DORA to date.

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Principles

PLOS BIOLOGY advanced sear G OPEN ACCESS 202 111 ESSAY Save Citation The Hong Kong Principles for assessing researchers: 26,919 563 Fostering research integrity Share David Moher E, Lex Bouter, Sabine Kleinert, Paul Glasziou, Mai Har Sham, Virginia Barbour, Anne-Marie Coriat, Nicole Foege Ulrich Dirnagl Published: July 16, 2020 • https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3000737 Article Media Coverage Authors Metrics Abstract Abstract Check for updates Introduction For knowledge to benefit research and society, it must be trustworthy, Trustworthy research is

robust, ridorous, and transparent at all stages of design, execution, and reporting. Assessment



Research Policy Volume 46, Issue 4, May 2017, Pages 868-879

Work organization and mental health problems in PhD students

Katia Levecque ^{a, b} 은 쯔, Frederik Anseel ^{a, b, c} 쯔, Alain De Beuckelaer ^{d, e, a} 쯔, Johan Van der Heyden ^{f, g} 쯔, Lydia Gisle ^f 쯔

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Perceived publication pressure in Amsterdam: Survey of all disciplinary fields and academic ranks

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Abstract

OPEN ACCESS

Check for updates

Citation: House TL Bouter LM Smulders VM

Publications determine to a large extent the possibility to stay in academia ("publish or perish"). While some pressure to publish may incentivise high quality research, too much publication pressure is likely to have detrimental effects on both the scientific enterprise and on individual researchers. Our research quastion user What is the local of perceived publica

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International context



PLOS BIOLOGY

Promoting inclusive metrics of success and impact to dismantle a discriminatory reward system in science

Fig 1

Science is suffering from observational bias in our value system.

This bias is analogous to the streetlight effect where (A) citations are valued because that is where we look, despite the fact that they perpetuate gender and racial biases as metrics of success. We advocate for (B), an expanded view of success and impact that is multifaceted and includes critical areas of mentorship, inclusion, and diversity.

A) Narrow View of Scientific Impact



B) Inclusive View of Scientific Impact

ESSAY

Promoting inclusive metrics of success and impact to dismantle a discriminatory reward system in science

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Abstract

Success and impact metrics in science are based on a system that perpetuates sexist and racist "rewards" by prioritizing citations and impact factors. These metrics are flawed and biased against already marginalized groups and fail to accurately capture the breadth of individuals' meaningful scientific impacts. We advocate shifting this outdated value system to advance science through principles of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. We outline pathways for a paradigm shift in scientific values based on multidimensional mentorship and promoting mentee well-being. These actions will require collective efforts supported by academic leaders and administrators to drive essential systemic change.

Change is happening

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CASE STUDY REPORT

Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change

regt Saenen (EUA), Anna Hatch (DORA), Stephen Curry DORA), Vanessa Proudman (SPARC Europe) and Ashley akoduk (DORΔ)

Link Report

Link Repository

January 2021

EXPERIENCE Yester Yester

Tools to Advance Research Assessment (TARA) is a project to facilitate the development of new policies and practices for academic career assessment.

 Dashboard
 Toolkit

 An interactive online dashboard
 A toolkit of resources informed that tracks criteria and
 by the academic community to standards academic

 standards academic
 support academic institutions institutions use for hiring, working to improve policy and review, promotion, and tenure
 practice.

around the world.

Survey
rmed A survey of U.S. academic
ity to institutions to gain a broad
ions understanding of institutional
and attitudes and approaches to
research assessment reform.

Room for everyone's talent

towards a new balance in the recognition and rewards of academics







Universities needed to bring about change



It is crucial that universities are actively involved in the reform of research assessment



Universities should make an informed decision on this process



Universities should be properly represented in the future coalition and its governing bodies



Only a substantial number of universities joining the coalition will guarantee that the interests of the sector are taken into account in the reform process



EU policy context



Council Conclusions on the new ERA (Dec 2020) and on research careers (May 2021)

Invited MS, RFOs, RPOs and the EC to work together towards a revised system for research assessment and strengthen European coordination.

December 2020

Council Conclusions on research assessment and implementation of Open Science

Highlights the need to advance in a concerted effort towards reforming the various research assessment systems and practices for research, researchers, research teams and institutions to improve their quality, openness, performance and impact.

June 2022

November 2021

Council Conclusions on "Future governance of the European Research Area (ERA)" incl. ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024

Include an action to advance towards the reform of the assessment system for research, researchers and institutions to improve their quality, performance and impact. 2022

ERA Forum for Transition

Broad commitment from MS to include ERA Action 3 "Advance towards the reform of the Assessment System for research, researchers and institutions to improve their quality, performance and impact" in the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024.



Momentum and broad consensus





Link

Reforming research assessment is increasingly considered a priority to ensure the quality, performance and impact of research. Reform, however, requires cultural and systemic changes which are proving to be very complex and slow to implement. During the period March-November 2021, the European Commission consulted European stakeholders on how to facilitate and speed up changes.

This scoping report presents the findings from the consultation, identifies the goals that should be pursued with a reform of research assessment, and proposes a coordinated approach based on principles and actions that could be agreed upon by a coalition of research funding and research performing organisations committed to implement changes.



Principles

PRINCIPLES FOR A REFORMED RESEARCH ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

An agreement between stakeholders may contain the **principles** listed below. All proposed principles are based on the consultations and discussions with stakeholders (see Annex 1), building on:

 the values and principles enshrined in the 2021 Council Recommendation on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe;

 the principles, values and respone <u>Universitatum</u>, revised in 2020;

the recommendations identified by

Principles for overarching conditions

- Comply with ethics and integrity rules and practices, and en integrity are the highest priority, never compromised by any cour before or during assessment that the highest standards of ge specific ethics and integrity are met. Value methodological rige sources of bias, and promote extended forms of professional an showing adherence to moral standards of conduct, and include early sharing of research data and results, building on the subjecting oneself to critical external validation.
- Safeguard freedom of scientific research. By putting in frameworks that do not limit researchers in the questions they a implementation, methods or theories. By limiting the assessmen those necessary, as assessment must be useful for research funders.
- Assessment (DORA), the principles p metrics, and the Hong Kong Principles A first set of higher-level principles corres set of principles corresponds to assessmen to principles corresponds to assessmen between institutions, to avoid fragmentation of the research and innovation landscape and to enable the mobility of researchers.
 - Ensure independence and transparency of the data, infrastructure and criteria necessary for research assessment and for determining research impacts; in particular by clear and transparent data collection, algorithms and indicators, by ensuring control and ownership by the research community over critical infrastructures and tools, and by allowing those assessed to have access to the data, analyses and criteria used.

Principles for assessment criteria and processes

Quality and impact

- Focus research assessment criteria on quality. Reward the originality of ideas, the professional research conduct, and results beyond the state-of-the-art. Reward a variety of research missions, ranging from basic and frontier research to applied research. Quality implies that research is carried out through transparent research processes and methodologies and through research management allowing systematic re-use of previous results. Openness of research, and results that are verifiable and reproducible where applicable, strongly contribute to quality. Openness corresponds to early knowledge and data sharing, as well as open collaboration including societal engagement where appropriate. Assessment should rely on qualitative judgement for which peer-review is central, supported by responsibly used quantitative indicators where appropriate.
- Recognise the contributions that advance knowledge and the (potential) impact of research results. Impact of research results implies effects of a scientific,

Diversity, inclusiveness and collaboration

- Recognise the diversity of research activities and practices, with a diversity of outputs, and reward early sharing and open collaboration. Consider tasks like peer review, training, mentoring and supervision of Ph.D candidates, leadership roles, and, as appropriate, science communication and interaction with society, entrepreneurship, knowledge valorisation, and industry-academia cooperation. Consider also the full range of research outputs, such as scientific publications, data, software, models, methods, theories, algorithms, protocols, workflows, exhibitions, strategies, policy contributions, etc., and reward research behaviour underpinning open science practices such as early knowledge and data sharing as well as open collaboration within science and collaboration with societal actors where appropriate. Recognise that researchers should not excel in all types of tasks and provide for a framework that allows researchers to contribute to the definition of their research goals and aspirations.
- Use assessment criteria and processes that respect the variety of scientific disciplines, research types (e.g. basic and frontier research vs. applied research), as well as research career stages (e.g. early career researchers vs. senior researchers), and that acknowledge multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary as well as inter-sectoral approaches when applicable. Research assessment should be conducted commensurately to the specific nature of scientific disciplines, research missions or other scientific endeavours.
 - Acknowledge and valorise the diversity in research roles and careers, including roles outside academia. Value the skills (including open science skills), competences and merits of individual researchers, but also recognise team science and collaboration.
- Ensure gender equality, equal opportunities and inclusiveness. Consider gender balance, the gender dimension, and take into account diversity in the broader sense (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic, disability) in research teams at all levels, and in the content of research and innovation.



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technological, economic and or long-term, and that vary frontier research vs. applied

ful for research • Recognise the **diversity of** • U: • Recognise the **diversity of**

Recognise the diversity of outputs, and reward ear peer review, training, ment
 Use assessment disciplines, res as well as re





As of mid-June, 345 organisations declared they are committed to the principles in the Scoping Report and have expressed interest

Additionally, 34 organisations expressed interest in being observers



A total of 141 universities and NRCs expressed interest in joining the coalition and 17 registered as observers

The HE sector represents 54% of organisations expressing interest in joining the coalition.

Universities/univ. alliances represent 42% of registered interest.

EUA members having expressed interest in joining the coalition: 107 universities and 5 NRCs (including

swissuniversities



AGREEMENT ON REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

20 July 2022



Introduction

As signatories of this Agreement, we agree on the need for reform of research assessment practices.

Vision: The assessment of research, researchers and research organisations recognises the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research. [...]

Scope: RPOs and research units, research projects, individual researchers and research teams. [...]

This Agreement establishes a **common direction** for research assessment reform practices, while respecting organisations' **autonomy**.

We commit to realise reform through a **coalition** of RFOs, RPOs, national/regional assessment authorities and agencies, as well as associations of the above organisations, learned societies and other relevant organisations, that is **global in scope**.

We will **work together** to enable **systemic reform** on the basis of **common principles** within an **agreed timeframe**, and to facilitate **exchanges of information and mutual learning** between all those willing to improve research assessment practices.





Core commitments

- Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research
- Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators
- 3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index

4. Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment



Supporting commitments (1)

- 5. Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to
- 6. Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes
 - 6.1 Criteria for units and institutions

With the direct involvement of research organisations and researchers at all career stages, review and develop criteria for assessing research units and research performing organisations, while promoting interoperability 6.2 Criteria for projects and researchers

With the direct involvement of researchers at all career stages, review and develop criteria, tools and processes for the assessment of research projects, research teams and researchers that are adapted to their context of application





Supporting commitments (2)

- 7. Raise awareness of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication, guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use
- 8. Exchange practices and experiences to enable mutual learning within and beyond the Coalition
- 9. Communicate progress made on adherence to the Principles and implementation of the Commitments
- 10. Evaluate practices, criteria and tools based on solid evidence and the state-of-the-art in research on research, and make data openly available for evidence gathering and research







NB: Organisations can sign the Agreement at any point in time beyond 2022. The timeline for organisations signing after 2022 will be adjusted accordingly.



Annexes

- Do not form an integral part of the Agreement.
- Annex 1 outlines the need for reform.
- Annex 2 clarifies the terminology used.
- Annex 3 suggests a reform journey.
- Annex 4 provides an initial toolbox.





Is this Agreement legally binding?

- Not legally binding, but...
- It is an Agreement, with clear commitments.
- Signing the Agreement is a precondition for joining the Coalition.
- Participation on a voluntary basis.
- Full autonomy of organisations, full control on the steps towards the implementation of the Agreement and the speed of the reform journey.
- More of a morally binding signature, towards peer organisations and own community.
- Organisations and their staff can leave the Coalition at any time.





Signing the agreement - what does it mean for my institution? (I)

POSSIBILITY TO BE PART OF A STAKEHOLDER-OWNED COALITION (MORE INFO BELOW)

RESOURCE ALLOCATION:

Commitment 5: Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to

Purpose: "This commitment will ensure that organisations allocate the necessary resources, whether in the form of budget or staff capacity, to improve research assessment practices within their agreed timeframe."

"Resources should be allocated as is needed for each organisation to achieve the changes that will enable adherence to the Principles and to implement the Commitments."

Each institution will be autonomous in deciding the type and amount of resources they will commit to implement the Agreement. There is no minimum requirement.



Signing the agreement - what does it mean for my institution? (II)



- Concrete steps and activities to be developed in Year 1 and up to Year 5 will be decided by each institution.
- Each institution will develop its own path in the implementation of the Agreement.
- No benchmarking with other institutions.



Signing the agreement - what does it mean for my institution? (II)



- Concrete steps and activities to be developed in Year 1 and up to Year 5 will be decided by each institution.
- Each institution will develop its own path in the implementation of the Agreement.
- No benchmarking with other institutions.

Participants will keep full control on the steps they make to implement the Agreement and the speed of their reform journey, which can vary from one organisation to another depending on many factors (...)

Organisations commit to share information on the progress made and lessons learnt in their reform journey, according to the timeframe included in the agreement. Sharing of information shall be done on the basis of self-assessment and by no means the progress of individual organisations will be validated by the Coalition.

(cf. FAQ)



Creation of a stakeholder-owned coalition

- Mission:
 - Enable systemic reform of research assessment on the basis of common principles and commitments within an agreed timeframe, as set in the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment.
 - Through exchange of information and mutual learning between all those willing to improve research assessment practices.
- A coalition of funders, research performing organisations (including universities) and their associations, national/regional assessment authorities and agencies, as well as learned societies, all willing to take the lead in reforming the current research assessment system
 - Agreement on principles and actions between funders and performers;
 - Building on DORA and other declarations;



with the support of

- Committing signatories to act according to a roadmap for delivery;
- Joint ownership of the initiative by the participating organisations;



Role of the Commission: facilitate the establishment of a coalition



Principles guiding the conduct and evolution of the Coalition

- **Openness** to signatories of agreement; globally; accessible outputs
- **Responsibility** general assembly responsible for rules and procedures of operation
- **Collaboration** mutual learning and collaboration; also with other initiatives
- **Commitment and autonomy** supports implementation of commitments; autonomy
- Community-driven volunteer members; driving force
- Inclusiveness global; different levels of progress
- Trust self-assessment shared publicly
- Funding voluntary in-kind; potential cash contributions from members



• Non-profit – no commercial activities; open and re-usable outputs





Work of the Coalition

- Working Groups operating as 'communities of practice' and offering space for mutual learning and collaboration
- **Examples** of communities of practice:
 - "Interest communities", on ad-hoc horizontal topics
 - "Discipline communities", on approaches to tailor criteria and processes by discipline, inter-disciplinary field, thematic area
 - "Institution communities", on topics specific to a given type of organisation
 - "National communities", on issues specific to different types of organisations of a given country or group of countries



Working Groups identified and proposed bottom-up by members



Organisation and operations

- Governance, including Code of Conduct
- Rules of procedure for Working Groups, elections, etc.
- Membership
- Support and financing
- All work in progress, with the Implementation Group
- Near-final version of these documents will be presented and discussed during the 4th Stakeholder Assembly (13 October 2022, 14:00-17:00 CET)



 Final version of these documents will be presented during the Constitutive Assembly (early December 2022).



A word on coalition funding

- Support to the operation of the Coalition will consist primarily of voluntary in-kind contributions from its members, as well as funding obtained from research funding organisations and/or cash contributions from members (cf. FAQ).
- Options for more detailed funding models are currently being prepared.
- Initial discussion on funding model for the coalition will take place during the 4th Stakeholder Assembly.
- Specific options for funding models will be submitted for approval during the Constitutive Assembly.





Timeframe

- 20 July: Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment published
- July-October:
 - Continue the development and finalise the Governance Document including a Code of Conduct (CoC)
 - Initiate the development of Rules of Procedure (RoPs) for working groups, for electing Steering Board members, etc.
 - Identify options for the financing of the Coalition and draft its budget
- 28 September: open the Agreement for signatures early indications of signature can already be sent to: <u>researchassessment@scienceeurope.org</u> & <u>researchassessment@eua.eu</u>
- 13 October, 14:00-17:00 CET: 4th Stakeholder Assembly



with the support of

- Mid-November: indicative deadline for institutions to be invited to the Constitutive Assembly
- **December** (indicative): **Constitutive Assembly**
 - Launch of the Coalition



Advantages of signing early on

- Signing the Agreement by mid-November 2022, will allow institutions to be invited to the Constitutive Assembly in early December.
- During the Constitutive Assembly, organisations will:
 - Adopt the Governance documents, Rules of Procedure, Code of Conduct
 - Elect the Steering Board and President (only organisations already part of the coalition will be able to apply to the Steering Board of the coalition)
 - Decide on the Secretariat of the coalition
 - **Decide** on the funding model for the coalition
 - Become involved in the creation of the working groups from an initial stage (e.g. proposing working groups)



Resources



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE — AGREEMENT AND COALITION FOR REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT 20 July 2022





















Thank you for your attention

UPCOMING EUA MEETINGS

28-29 Sept	Leadership and Organisation for Teaching and Learning at	
	European Universities – LOTUS project final conference,	
	Brussels, Belgium	in У Ғ 🚻
25 Oct	A Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment	
17-19 Nov	2022 European Quality Assurance Forum, Timisoara, Romania	
18-20 Jan 2023	2023 EUA-CDE Thematic Workshop - Greening doctoral	
	education, Cluj-Napoca, Romania	

