



Open Science and the European Initiative on Reforming Research Assessment

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Open Science is the new normal

“Open science is defined as an inclusive construct that combines various movements and practices aiming to make multilingual scientific knowledge openly available, accessible and reusable for everyone, to increase scientific collaborations and sharing of information for the benefits of science and society, and to open the processes of scientific knowledge creation, evaluation and communication to societal actors beyond the traditional scientific community. It comprises all scientific disciplines and aspects of scholarly practices, including basic and applied sciences, natural and social sciences and the humanities, and it builds on the following key pillars: open scientific knowledge, open science infrastructures, science communication, open engagement of societal actors and open dialogue with other knowledge systems”.

UNESCO recommendation on open science,
November 2021



A radical reform of research assessment, in terms of rewards and incentives for researchers, is desired at multiple levels, and many experts agree that a **crucial factor to accelerate the uptake of open Science is to establish a system of rewards and incentives for it.**

In fact, the Achilles heel of Open Science is the lack of recognition of such work at researchers' level, and has cascading effects to the other levels: institutions, national and international.

The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment

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28 Sept. 2022:
Launched and opened
to signatures

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NEWS ARTICLE | 20 July 2022 | Directorate-General for Research and Innovation

Reforming research assessment: The Agreement is now final

Launched in January 2022 as a co-creation exercise, the [process](#) ^{EN} of drafting an agreement for reforming research assessment has reached an important milestone. On 8 July, the final version of the agreement was presented at a Stakeholder Assembly bringing together the [350+ organisations from 40+ countries](#) ^{EN} having expressed interest in being involved in the process. Today, the final Agreement is made public with this news.

Organisations involved include public and private research funders, universities, research centres, institutes and infrastructures, associations and alliances thereof, national and regional authorities, accreditation and evaluation agencies, learned societies and associations of researchers, and other relevant organisations, representing a broad diversity of views and perspectives. They have provided feedback to the evolving drafts of the agreement, as prepared by a team composed of representatives from the European University Association (EUA), Science Europe, the European Commission, and Dr Karen Stroobants, in her individual capacity as researcher with expertise in research on research. A core group of 20 research organisations, representing the diversity of the research community across Europe, also contributed to the drafting process, while EU Member States and Associated Countries have been consulted on the agreement in the framework of the ERA Forum and the European Research Area Committee (ERAC).

The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment sets a shared direction for changes in assessment practices for research, researchers and research performing organisations, with the overarching goal to maximise the quality and impact of research. The Agreement includes the principles, commitments and timeframe for reforms and lays out the principles for a Coalition of organisations willing to work together in implementing the changes.

[Final version of the Agreement](#) ^{EN}

The process towards the agreement

- **2021:** consultation of the EC with stakeholders and publication of the scoping report.
- **December 2021:** publication of a call for expressions of interest to join the coalition that helped drafting the agreement.
- **Jan -July 2022:** Drafting by drafting team + meetings with core group and stakeholder assembly to discuss the elements of the agreement + member states consultation process (ERAC and ERA Forum). June: Council conclusions.



Content

1. Principles

It establishes a **common direction** for a research evaluation reform, based on 10 commitments, respecting the autonomy of organizations.

2. Commitments

3. CoARA

In particular, it includes the principles, commitments and timeframe for reforms and establishes the principles for a coalition of organizations willing to work together in implementing such reform.

4. Timeframe

Annexes

1. The need for a research assessment reform
2. Glossary
3. Reform journey
4. Toolbox

Vision

Our vision is that the assessment of research, researchers and research organisations recognises the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research. This requires basing assessment primarily on qualitative judgement, for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators.

Goal

To facilitate and to accelerate a research assessment reform that:

- Promotes **qualitative assessment** based on peer review, supported by a more responsible use of quantitative indicators
 - Considers the value and impact of a **plurality of research outputs** (bibliodiversity) and of multilingualism
 - Recognizes the **diversity of a researcher's activities**, and supports collaborative science (team science) and interdisciplinary research.
 - Encourages **open collaboration and the sharing of preliminary results and data**
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Core commitments

- 1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research*
- 2. 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

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
(For units and institutions - promoting interoperability - and for individuals and projects, with the direct involvement of researchers)*
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*

Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment

Our vision is that the assessment of research, researchers and research organisations recognises the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research. This requires basing assessment primarily on qualitative judgement, for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators.

In practice...



<http://coara.eu>

First assembly: **1st December 2022**

CoARA will work to **enable systemic reform** based on common principles within an agreed timeframe and to **facilitate information exchange and mutual learning** among all who wish to improve research evaluation practices.

CoARA

Reporting of individual members' progress in implementing the Commitments will primarily be based on a **publicly shared self-assessment**.

What does joining the Coalition entail?

Timeframe

By the end of 2023 (or one year after signing), Coalition members publish a **Roadmap and an action plan with milestones** to be respected in the reform plan.

Periodically, they publish and showcase their progress and **participate in Working Group** activities.

After 5 years (end of 2027) they undertake to have carried out at least one review and development cycle of the new evaluation criteria, processes and tools.



Thanks for your attention

