Reforming research assessment

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Why do we need to reform research assessment?

• The research process is in (digital) transition
  ➢ Less linear, more collaborative and open, diversity of outputs; team science

• The system currently used to assess research and researchers is not fit for this new reality
  ➢ Rewards quantity and publication venue rather than quality; does not reward sharing, collaboration and outputs other than publications

• A reform is needed to increase the efficiency, impact and social responsibility of research
  ➢ Requires a system and cultural change, involving institutions, funders and researchers
Objectives

• Reform the assessment system of research proposals, researchers, research units and research institutions to increase the quality, performance, and impact of research.

• Towards a research assessment system that:

  ➢ Promotes qualitative judgement with peer-review, supported by a more responsible use of quantitative indicators;

  ➢ Considers the value and impact of a diversity of research outputs, beyond just publications: datasets, software, protocols, patents etc.

  ➢ Rewards the diversity of tasks and roles of researchers: data curation and management, peer-review, mentoring and supervision, leadership, science communication and citizen engagement etc.

  ➢ Supports team science and incentivizes open collaboration and early knowledge and data sharing.
Report published in November 2021

- **Summary of consultations** with a large group of stakeholders
- **Objectives, principles and actions** that could be agreed between the organisations responsible for the assessment of research projects, researchers, research units and research institutions
- **Way forward** for implementation

A way forward - A stakeholder-owned initiative

A **Coalition** of funders, research performing organisations (including universities) and their associations, national/regional assessment authorities and agencies, as well as learned societies, and other organisations all willing to take the lead in reforming the current research assessment system. **2 steps:**

- **Agreement** on principles, commitments guiding changes and timeline for implementation (we’re almost there!)

- **Coalition**: Joint ownership and implementation of the initiative by the participating organisations (Fall 2022).

- Clear political support: priority action in the ERA 2022-24 agenda and Council Conclusions 10th June. The EC acting as facilitator.

- Respect to the autonomy of involved organisations is a key element.
Call for interest: a growing response

• Published on 16 December 2021

• As of today, **over 330 organisations** declared they are committed to the principles in the Scoping Report and have expressed interest. These include:
  
  ➢ 121 Universities, 22 Universities associations and 10 European Universities Alliances;
  ➢ 42 Research centers/institutes, 4 Research infrastructures;
  ➢ 23 Public funders, 4 Private funders, 2 Funders associations;
  ➢ 5 National/regional evaluation agencies, 3 Ministries, and 2 Regional authorities;
  ➢ 20 Academies, learned societies, researchers associations;
  ➢ 8 National reproducibility networks;
  ➢ 64 other organisations (research management, standardisation, consultancy, etc.).

The call remains open for organisations to join: europa.eu/!gy8BU3
Draft Agreement (version of 13 May 2022)

- **Introduction**: sets the common vision and the means to realise it (a stakeholder-driven Coalition)

- **Signatories agree to:**
  - Base actions on common **Principles** (from Scoping Report)
  - Implement **Commitments** for change, incl. timeframe for implementation
  - Operate and organise the Coalition along some common principles

- **Annexes (supporting materials, non prescriptive):**
  - Preamble (rationale and motivation for reform)
  - Glossary
  - Reform journey
  - Toolbox
Global dimension

• Initiated as an European initiative, it has a clear global scope:
  
  • Crucial to avoid creating incompatibilities and to facility mobility and scientific exchange
  
  • Strong support to the uptake of Open Science practices.
  
  • Many international or non Europe-based organisations have already joined.
  
  • The future coalition aims at cooperating with like-minded initiatives and organisations worldwide (e.g. DORA). Related discussions already happening with global partners (GRC, UNESCO …)
  
  • Preliminary governance model largely inspired by RDA: community driven, inclusive, work-oriented and light on bureaucracy / reporting.
Thank you