



European initiative for advancing research assessment

Javier Lopez Albacete

European Commission, Directorate-General for Research & Innovation,
Unit A.4 'Open Science'

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Need for reform of research assessment

- To reflect **evolving research processes**
 - ✓ Digital transition; Iterative and recursive; Collaborative and open
- To reflect **increasing demands on research**
 - ✓ Societal, environmental, economic challenges; Diversity of outputs
- To move away from **inappropriate uses** of journal- and publication-based metrics
 - ✓ Rewards quantity and publication venue rather than quality; does not reward sharing, collaboration and outputs other than publications
- To further support the **quality of research** and the **attractiveness of research environments**
 - ✓ Requires a system and cultural change, involving institutions, funders and researchers

Community context

- **Not a new initiative, e.g.:**
 - San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)
 - The Leiden Manifesto for research metrics
 - Hong Kong Principles for research assessment
 - Magna Charta Universitatum (2020 revision)
 - ...
- **With challenges ahead:**
 - Limited and fragmented progress
 - Limited autonomy and legal/administrative frameworks.
 - Cultural and systemic change!

...but a call for collective action!



Political context

- **Commission Communication on ERA** (Sep 2020) proposed to improve the research assessment system
- **Council Conclusions on ERA** (Dec 2020) and on research careers (May 2021) invited the Commission to work with stakeholders to effect change
- Council Conclusions on the Future Governance of the ERA (Nov 2021) and the **ERA Policy Agenda 2022-24** include priority action on reforming research assessment – interactions with ERAC and the ERA Forum
- **EU Presidency conference** and Paris Call on Research Assessment (Feb 2022)
- **Council Conclusions on Research Assessment** and Implementation of Open Science (June 2022)

Stakeholder consultations



<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/707440>

- **Scoping report** in November 2021
- **Summary of consultations** with stakeholders throughout 2021
- **Objectives, principles and actions** that could be agreed between organisations responsible for the assessment of research, researchers, research units and research institutions
- **Way forward** for implementation

A stakeholder-owned initiative

Scoping report

Agreement on principles and way forward
November 2021



Agreement

Commits signatories to act on the basis on commonly agreed principles and commitments, within an agreed timeframe
July 2022

Coalition

Facilitates exchange of information and mutual learning
December 2022

Coalition of research funding organisations and research performing organisations (and their associations), national/regional assessment authorities and agencies, learned societies, and other organisations, all willing to take the lead in reforming research assessment

Vision

Assessment of research, researchers, and research organisations supports the **quality** and **impact** of research,

by **recognising the diverse outputs, practices and activities** that maximise the quality of research and resulting impacts;

this requires basing assessments primarily on **qualitative judgement**, supported by **responsible use of quantitative indicators**.

Structure of the Agreement



Published on 20 July 2022

https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/agreement-reforming-research-assessment_en

	Preamble
I	10 principles
II	10 commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 core commitments• 6 supporting commitments
III	Principles on how to organise and operate the Coalition
IV	Timeframe
	<i>Signature box</i>
	Annexes (non-prescriptive) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rationale and Context• Reform journey• Toolbox

10 commitments

Core commitments:

1. Recognise the **diversity of contributions to, and careers in research** according to the needs and the 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 the inappropriate uses** in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular the inappropriate uses of journal impact factor (JIF) and h-index
4. **Avoid the use of international rankings of research organisations in research assessment**

Support commitments:

- Three commitments to **pilot** and enable the move towards **new criteria, tools and processes** for research assessment
- Three commitments to facilitate **mutual learning, communicate progress** and ensure that new approaches are **evidence-informed**

Rolling out the initiative

- **Concrete piloting** of changes to research assessment practices - in research performing organisations, in research funding organisations, in evaluation agencies - would then be rolled out **over the coming years**
- Constantly seeking to improve practices based on **sharing of experience and evidence** of what changes are leading to higher quality and impact of research
- In the process:
 - ✓ Important to continue to **respect of the autonomy, profile, strategic goals and context** of research organisations, and to allow for differences in implementation
 - ✓ Seeking to ensure that **national framework conditions** allow and support changes
 - ✓ Openness to **non-European organisations**

Bottom-up and Top-down



Stakeholder-driven coalition

- Members committed to pilot and implement changes in their research assessment criteria and processes
- Active mutual learning and sharing of experiences

National authorities

- Support to organisations willing to implement changes (importance of national framework conditions)
- Help preventing contradictions across different assessment systems and types (metrics trickle down)

Timeline

20 July 2022: Final Agreement published

28 September 2022: Launching the signature process and Coalition website (European R&I days)

13 October 2022 (tentative): 4th Stakeholder Assembly continuing discussions on governance and operations of the Coalition

1 December 2022 (tentative): Constitutive Assembly for the Coalition

European R&I days Sep 28



Plenary session : European initiative for reforming research assessment (17:45 – 18:30h)

- **Mariya Gabriel** (Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth)
- **Sylvie Retailleau** (Minister of Higher Education and Research, France)
- **Marc Schiltz** (President, Science Europe)
- **Paul Boyle** (Vice-President, European University Association (EUA))

Opening of Agreement for signature + CoARA website + early signatories

<https://europa.eu/!Fr43pX>