

22nd Ethical Forum of the University Foundation

« Towards a **Revolution** in Researchers' Assessment? »
Rather Pursuing the Path of **Solutions**
and **Resolute Evolution...**”

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Secrétaire générale du FNRS

University Foundation (Brussels)
December 5, 2024

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Reimagining university rankings: exploring strategic priorities and alternatives, report is out!

News

This report published today outlines perspectives on the future of commercial rankings, offering recommendations for ranking agencies, students, national authorities, and universities of science and technology.



25th November 2024

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SURVEY REPORT
**STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO
AND RESEARCH ASSESSMENT OF
OPEN SCIENCE**
2024

SCIENCE
EUROPE
Shaping the future of research

BRIEFING

European University
Association CoARA Action
Plan (2023-2027)

October 2024

Next Generation Metrics for Scientific and Scholarly Research in Europe

LERU position paper
April 2024

The logo for the League of European Research Universities (LERU). It consists of the letters 'L', 'E', and 'R' stacked vertically on the left, and 'U' on the right. The 'L' and 'R' are in a dark grey color, while the 'E' and 'U' are in a bright orange color.

PUSHING
THE FRONTIERS
OF INNOVATIVE
RESEARCH

University of Amsterdam • Universitat de Barcelona • University of Cambridge • University of Copenhagen
Trinity College Dublin • University of Edinburgh • University of Freiburg • Université de Genève
Universität Heidelberg • University of Helsinki • Universiteit Leiden • KU Leuven • Imperial College London
• University College London • Lund University • University of Milan • Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
München • University of Oxford • Sorbonne University • Université Paris-Saclay • University of Strasbourg
• Utrecht University • ETH Zurich • University of Zurich

A Pathway towards Multidimensional Academic Careers

A LERU Framework
for the Assessment of Researchers

Prof. Bert Overlaet

LERU position paper
January 2022



LERU

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Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München • University of Oxford • Sorbonne University
Université Paris-Saclay • University of Strasbourg • Utrecht University • University of Zurich



fnr's
FREEDOM OF RESEARCH
FREEDOM OF MEDICINE

fnr's
FREEDOM OF RESEARCH

- 
- Not totally concerned by the assessment of academic careers at universities.
 - Research and researchers assessment is FNRS core activities
 - Evolution of methods and international standards for the assessment of research (e.g. working groups within Science Europe).



« Towards a **Revolution** in Researchers' Assessment? »
(research activities)

Rather Pursuing the Path of **Solutions**
and **Resolute Evolution...**”

2005

h-index

2005
h-index

- **Web of Science: 2007**
- **Scopus: 2008**
- **Google Scholar: 2011**

2005
h-index

- **Used to evaluate the productivity and impact of researchers, make employment decisions, rank universities, countries**
- **A phenomenon that varies from country to country and from institution to institution (but has never been dominant in WBF)**

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2005
h-index

FNRS 2010

- In-depth reform
- Applicants : no publication metrics
- Members Scientific Commission : h-index drawn up by them !

2005
h-index

FNRS 2011

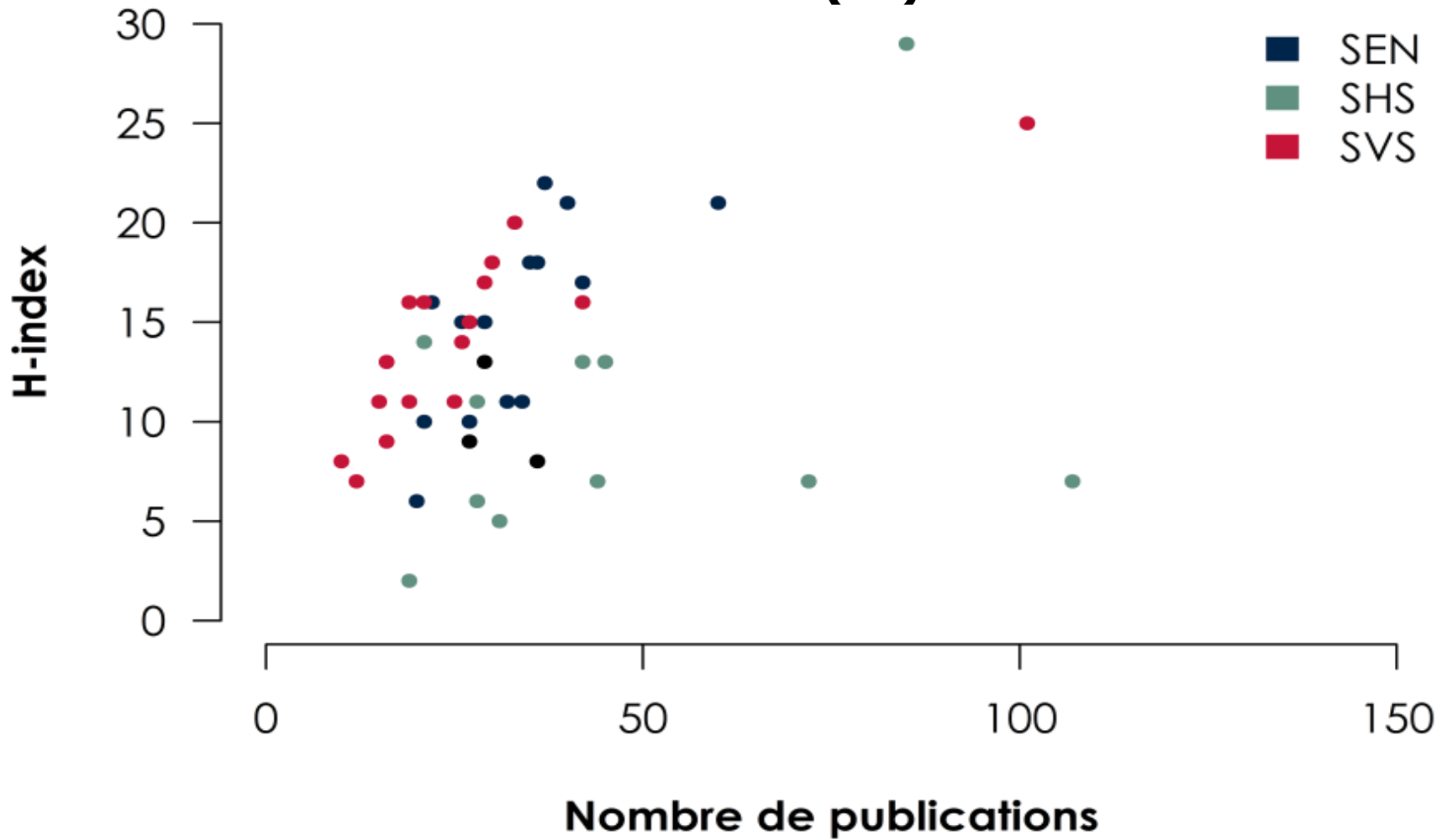
- Applicants : provide their own indicators and publication strategy
- Instructions start of each Scientific Commission : h-index only ONE element

2005
h-index

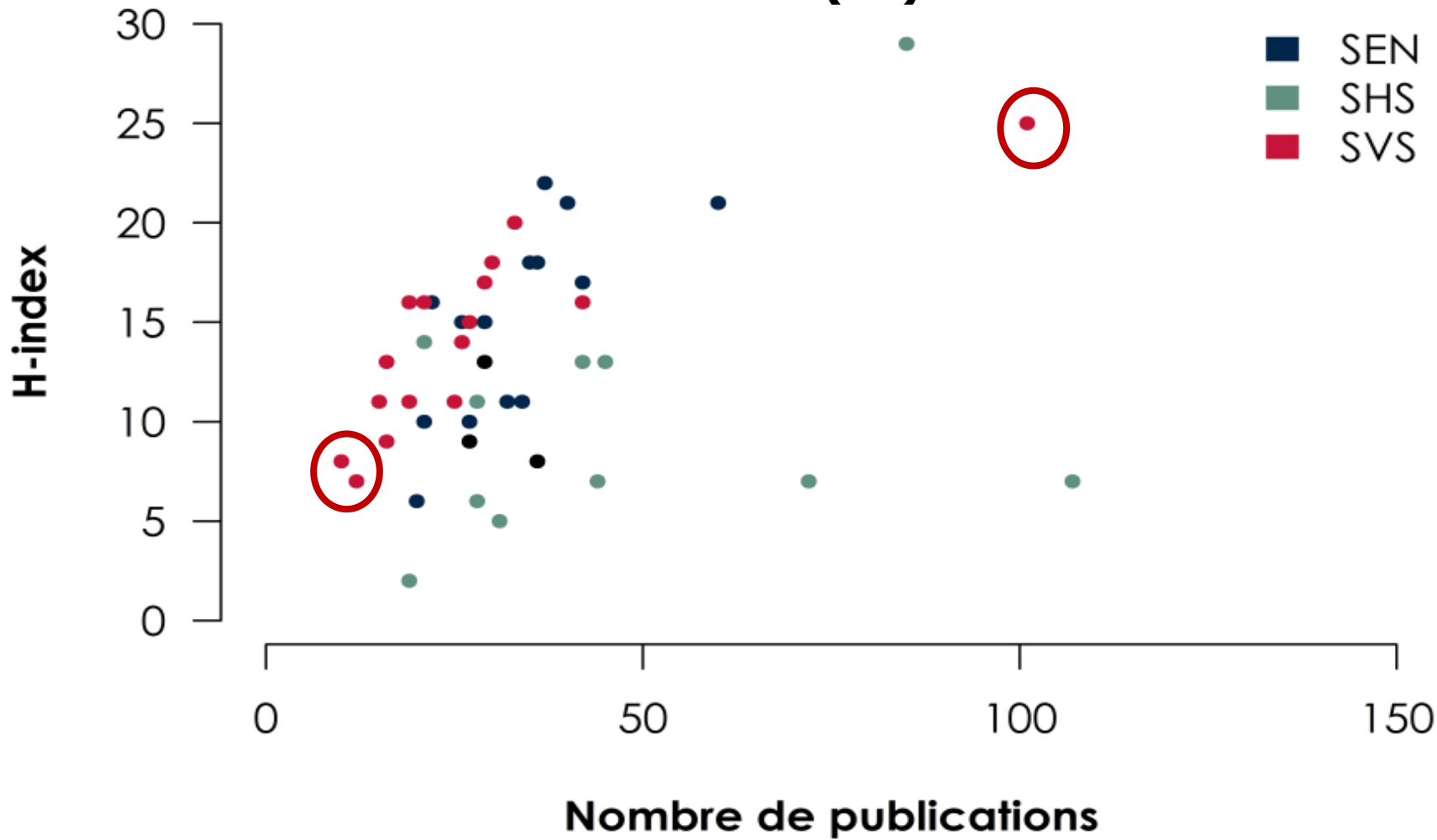
FNRS 2011

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Octrois CQ 2021-2023 (47)



Octrois CQ 2021-2023 (47)





2010



2012

San Francisco

DORA



Declaration on Research Assessment

General Recommendation

1. Do not use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist's contributions, or in hiring, promotion, or funding decisions.



For funding agencies

2. Be explicit about the criteria used in evaluating the scientific productivity of grant applicants and clearly highlight, especially for early-stage investigators, that the scientific content of a paper is much more important than publication metrics or the identity of the journal in which it was published.



For funding agencies

3. For the purposes of research assessment, consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets and software) in addition to research publications, and consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice.



25,643 individuals and organizations in 166 countries have signed DORA to date.



0 50
Signatures per Million People

- ● Individual (22293)
- ● Organization (3353)



DORA

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FREEDOM OF RESEARCH

FNRS endorsed DORA declaration

- Applicants for Postdoc and Research Associates now invited to include the 5 most representative publications of their career in their application file in full-text format.
- Applicants specify the role played in each publication.

This approach encourages evaluators to focus on the intrinsic quality of the publications rather than the names or impact factors

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THE HONG KONG PRINCIPLES FOR ASSESSING RESEARCHERS



2019



FOSTERING RESEARCH INTEGRITY



What are the HKP?

The Hong Kong Principles (HKP) were developed as part of the 6th World Conference on Research Integrity. They were developed to reinforce the need to ensure that researchers are rewarded for specific behaviors that promote trustworthy research. The HKP have been developed with the idea that implementation of them could assist in how researchers are assessed for career advancement with a view to strengthen research integrity.

PRINCIPLE

IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES

1 Assess responsible research practices.



The NIH recommends Experimental Design Assistant (EDA) developed by N3CRs. This 10-module on-line tool helps researchers prepare the design and analysis requested for grant applications.

2 Value complete reporting.



Wellcome Trust's Open Research (WOR) editorial policies require authors to use reporting guidelines for protocols (e.g., SPIRIT) and completed studies (e.g., ARRIVE). The Universidade Federal de Ciências da Saúde de Porto Alegre (UFCSA, Brazil), has a formal course on reporting guidelines that students can complete as formal credit towards their degree.

3 Reward the practice of open science.



The University of Cambridge has introduced 'data champions'. Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands, is implementing this as a career assessment criterion. The Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore, implemented an Open Access policy in 2011. At NTU's faculty of medicine, random audits are conducted to ensure adherence.

4 Acknowledge a broad range of research activities.



The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research is in its third call for replication studies. PLOS Biology and eLife have meta-research sections in their respective journals.

5 Recognize essential other tasks such as peer reviewing and mentoring.



The University of Glasgow's academic promotion criteria rewards researchers for participation in peer review and other related activities (e.g., journal editorship).

The full HKP article can be accessed at <https://osf.io/m9abx>. Individuals and/or academic institutions and other groups can endorse the HKP at <https://www.wcrif.org/guidance/hong-kong-principles>.

Current research assessment methods rely heavily on publication-based metrics such as citation counts, and often fail to recognise the wide array of contributions made by researchers.

2022



CoARA

Coalition for Advancing
Research Assessment

Over 700 research organizations, funders, assessment authorities, professional societies, and associations (common direction, guiding principles to implement reforms)

2022



CoARA

Coalition for Advancing
Research Assessment

CoARA Working Groups



Reforming Academic Career Assessment



Multilingualism and Language Biases in Research Assessment



Towards Open Infrastructure for Responsible Research Assessment



Recognizing and Rewarding Peer Review



Global Framework for Research Evaluation in the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH)



Experiments in Assessment – Idea Generation, Co-Creation, and Piloting



Responsible Metrics and Indicators



CoARA
Coalition for Advancing
Research Assessment



Improving Practices in the Assessment of Research Proposals



Towards Transformation, Transdisciplinarity, Applied/Practice-Based Research, and Impacts



Ethics and Research Integrity Policy in Responsible Research Assessment for Data and Artificial Intelligence



Early-and-Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs) – Assessment and Research Culture



TIER – Towards an Inclusive Evaluation of Research



Supporting the Alignment of Research Assessment Systems with CoARA in Biomedical Disciplines Through Administrative Reforms and Governance



CoARA

The Commitments

The Agreement, based on 10 commitments, establishes a common direction for research assessment reform, while respecting organisations' autonomy.

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 

6. Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes 

Diversity of contributions, Metrics, Peer review, Criteria, Tools

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

At FNRS: for years, in-depth analysis after each call (procedural biases or improvements to be made to regulations & policies?)



CoARA

Coalition for Advancing
Research Assessment

A lot of expectations: desire for transparency, hope of recognition of diversity, ...

But also criticism:

- Does it aim for excellence? (German universities)
- Challenge of peer review (labor-intensive, cost, bias)
- Balance between qualitative and quantitative methods?
- ...

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Differences and connections universities VS research funding agencies

Evaluation criteria must be adapted to the object being evaluated and to the purpose of the evaluation

1. Past performance **vs** future research projects
2. Local contexts **vs** unrealistic in inter-university competition
3. Promoting profiles with little investment in research **vs** being properly evaluated by the research funding agencies

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3. Promoting profiles with little investment in research **vs** being positively evaluated by the research funding agencies

Challenges universities and funding agencies share

1. Peer review workload (AI, qualitative assessment)
2. Interdisciplinary
3. "Safe" research projects > < "High-Risk"

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3 principles as a provisional conclusion...

1. Transparency
2. Conflicts of interest
3. Monitoring

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Thank you!

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