# EU-LIFE

*Building and promoting excellence in the life sciences in Europe*

How can doctoral education navigate the reform of research assessment?

MARTA AGOSTINHO

EUA-CDE, Lausanne, 4 June 2025

# EU-LIFE

## IMPROVEMENT OF RESEARCH

- Science policy

- Optimal environment for research: Develop /share institutional practices in research culture and research governance
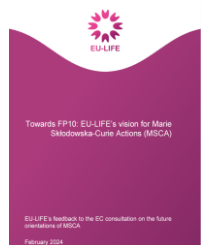
## OUR MEMBERS

- 17 leading research centres
- > 11,000 members of staff
- >600 research groups
- C. 200 research facilities
- >80 spin offs since 2014
- >160 ERC grants (>30%success rate)

EU-LIFE

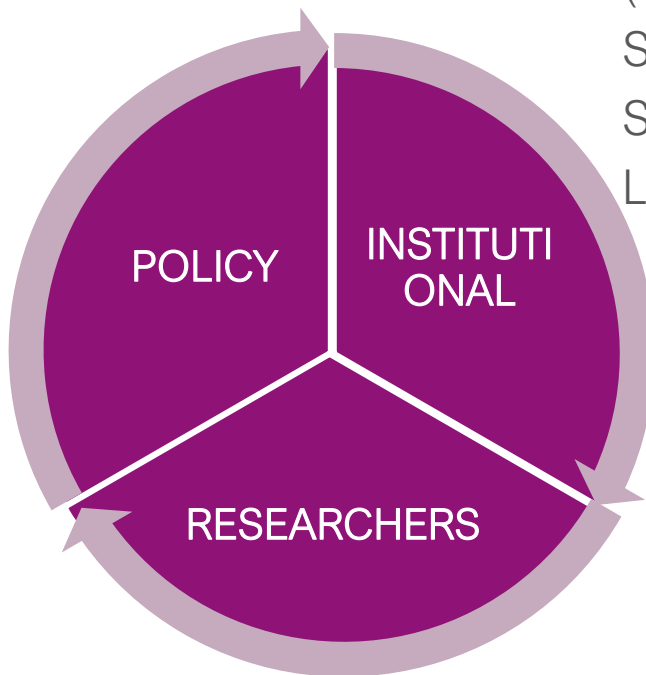Towards FP10: EU-LIFE's vision **for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)** – Feb 24

**SHARING PRACTICE & BENCHMARKING**

(DIVERSE) Careers structures
Salary scales, flexible benefits
Support to incoming/outgoing researchers
Legislative hurdles and stories of success

Scientific training strategies
Mental Health and wellbeing
GEDI
Research Assessment

POLICY — INSTITUTIONAL — RESEARCHERS

**EUROPEAN WIDE PROGRAMMES**

**EU-LIFE Pathfinder Mentorship Programme for Postdoctoral Women**

31 mentees
31 mentors
15 countries

EU-LIFE ERC Master Class

→ EU-LIFE Tech Transfer Pitching Event

**POSTDOC INITIATIVE**

EU-LIFE POSTDOCTORAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Emerald
International PhD Programme for Medical Doctors

EU-LIFE Webinar on Career Tracks
How to combine part time academic position and freelance bioinformatics consultancy

Estefania Mancini PhD
Bioinformatics consultant

Save the date!
27 November 2024
15.30-17.00 CET

EU-LIFE Better Together Sessions
Carbon accounting: a practical guide
*Action beats perfection*

Bastien Pinot
CSR Engineer
Institut Curie

Laura Tejada Sandy
Sustainability Officer
CRG

Wouter De Broeck
Sustainability Coordinator
VIB

15 May 2025
13.00-14.30 CEST
Online

For employees of EU-LIFE institutes only

**EU-LIFE**

## REPRESENTATIVENESS

### EC ERA FORUM
**EU-LIFE** I RPOsI **M. Agostinho**

**PAST**
- ✓ **EC ERA stakeholders platform** (M. Agostinho)
- ✓ **EC ERA PACT for research and innovation** (M. Agostinho)
- ✓ **EC Open Science Policy Platform** (M. Bertero)

### EC CORE GROUP REFORM RESEARCH ASSESSMENT + COARA IMPLEMENTATION

**M. Agostinho I EU-LIFE**

### EU-LIFE RESEARCHERS

- ✓ **ERC** Scientific Council (5) I **EIC** Pilot Advisory Board (1)
- ✓ HE **Missions** Boards (2) I **EIT** Board (1)
- ✓ Scientific Advice Mechanism **(SAM)** 1
- ✓ **EU Investment Fund** 1 I**Global Data Alliance** 1

(…)

**Isabelle Vernos,** CRG, Spain
**Giulio Superti-Furga**, CeMM, Austria
**Genevieve Almouzni**, Inst. Curie, France
**Dirk Inze**, VIB, Belgium
**Nektarios Tavernarakis**, IMBB, Greece
**Jo Bury**, VIB, Belgium
**Regina Beets-Tan**, NKI, The Netherlands
**Elio Sucena**, IGC, Portugal
**Janusz Bujnicki**, IIMCB, Poland
**Jerome van Biervliet**, VIB, Belgium
**Christine Durinx**, VIB, Belgium

Agostinho M
EU-LIFE

EU-LIFE

**EU-LIFE's 10 guiding principles for FP10**

The challenges that humankind and our planet are facing are unprecedented. While the geopolitical and social context becomes increasingly complex, a united, strong, bold and resilient European Research & Innovation programme is needed to help address these challenges successfully and to provide Europe with an economic competitive edge worldwide. For that, **European politicians must have an ambitious and yet realistic vision for FP10**, the next Research & Innovation programme, and therefore focus on strategies that bring impact in the long term.

**EU-LIFE Webinar**
Moving forward in research assessment
Perspectives from research institutes, researchers and funders

eulife

Perspectives from funding agencies and policymakers

Kostas Glinos
Head of Unit for Open Science
DG Research & Innovation
European Commission

Paola Bovolenta
ERC Scientific Council Member and
Research Professor at the
Center for Molecular Biology
Severo Ochoa, CSIC-UAM

Ignasi López Verdeguer
Director of the Department
of Research and Innovation
at "la Caixa" Foundation

Registration is now open!

28 October 2021
12.30-14.00 CET

## > 40 EU-LIFE POSITION PAPERS

- ✓ **Horizon Europe I H2020 I FP10**
- ✓ The European **MFF**
- ✓ **European Research Area** (ERA)
- ✓ **ERC**
- ✓ **European Innovation Council**
- ✓ **MSCA**
- ✓ The future of **health research**
- ✓ Research **Infrastructures**
- ✓ **Open science & Responsible research**

## EC PROCESSES

- ✓ Research assessment
- ✓ MSCA mobility and widening pilot
- ✓ Research careers framework
- ✓ Gender based-violence I COVID impact
- ✓ Knowledge valorization guiding principles
- ✓ Global cooperation
- ✓ ERA Priorities of MS and the EU
- ✓ ERA Implementation and monitoring

## >15 EC PAPERS / REPORTS

## > 500 MEETINGS & EVENTS

Participation in + 450 policy meetings @ European level
EU-LIFE events & webinar series

EU-LIFE

**What is going on regarding reforming research assessment?**

**I don't know**        **I follow some developments**        **Iam deeply involved**

**How do you feel about reforming research assessment?**

**Its necessary**                **Not sure**                **It's a huge risk**

**EU-LIFE**

QUALITY

SUCCESS

CAREERS

IMPACT

What is **(excellent) quality research**?

Multi and **transdiciplinary** research

What is **scientific success**?

What is a **sucessful** PhD/postdoc?

Individual versus **collaborative** effort

What is **scientific impact**?

Broader I Longer term

Project I Programme Levels

**Innovation** and **societal** valorisation

EU-LIFE

**ETHICS**

Authorship

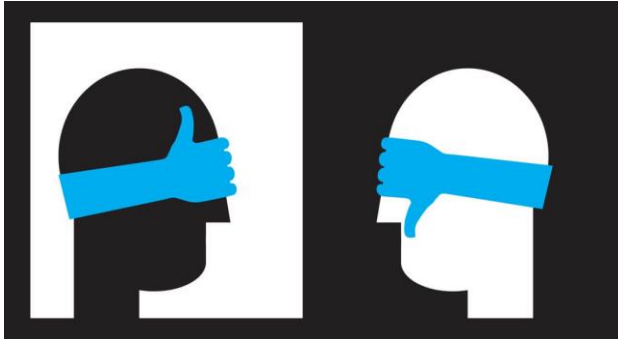Reproducibility

Research conduct

Leadership

Anti bullying & anti-harassment

**PROCESSES & METHODOL.**

FAIR Data Management

Sex and Gender Dimension in research?

https://lattice.com/library/how-to-reduce-unconscious-bias-at-work
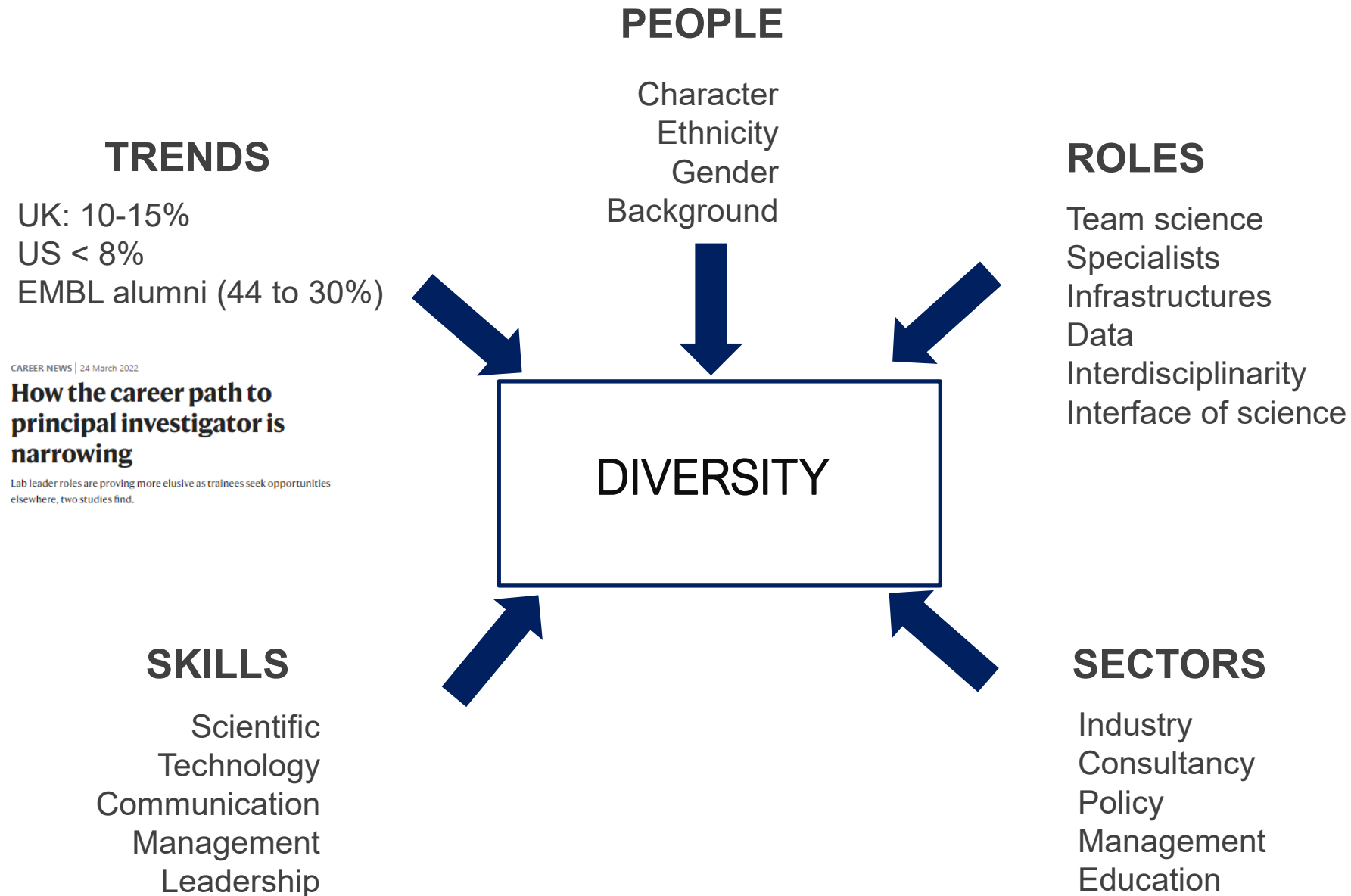
**Biases in science**: gender, age, geographical, institutional, resources-related

**Priviledge** is invisible for the privileged

**Unconcious biases** are universal

INEQUALITIES



**(False) Dicothomy QUALITY versus DIVERSITY**

**Meritocracy in science**
what is "pure meritocracy"?
How have we been assessing it?
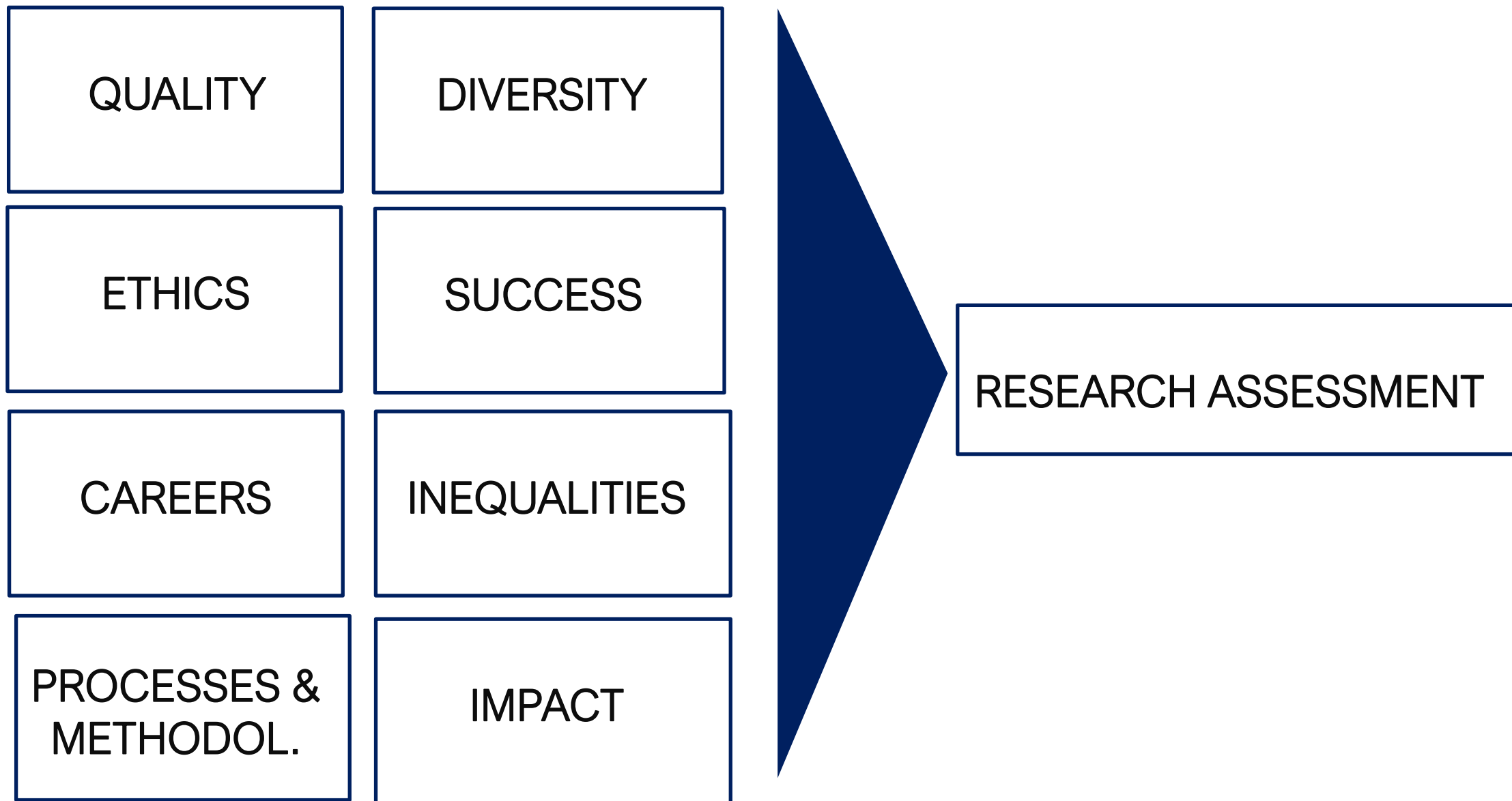
EU-LIFE

QUALITY

DIVERSITY

ETHICS

SUCCESS

# RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

CAREERS

INEQUALITIES

PROCESSES & METHODOL.

IMPACT

Values & Priciples

Culture

**ETHICS OF RESEARCH** ⟵━━━━━━━━━━⟶ **RESEARCH CULTURE**

Processes

Ecosystem

| | |
|---|---|
| QUALITY | DIVERSITY |
| ETHICS | SUCCESS |
| CAREERS | INEQUALITIES |
| PROCESSES & METHODOL. | IMPACT |

RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

**DORA** The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) recognizes the need to improve the ways in which researchers and the outputs of scholarly research are evaluated. Initiated in 2012

**INITIATED BY THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY**



https://www.isglobal.org/en/research/what-we-do

# LEIDEN MANIFESTO FOR RESEARCH METRICS

## 10 principles to guide research evaluation

**2015**

CWTS
Meaningful metrics

# The Metric Tide

Report of the Independent Review
of the Role of Metrics in Research
Assessment and Management

July 2015

19
18
17
16
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12
11
10
9
8
7

World Conferences on Research Integrity

## Hong Kong Principles

WCRI WORLD CONFERENCES
ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY

The Hong Kong Principles for assessing researchers were formulated and endorsed at the 6th World
Conference on Research Integrity, June 2019 in Hong Kong. These principles will help research institutions
that adopt them to minimise perverse incentives that invite to engage in questionable research practices or
worse.

**INITIATED BY THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY**



**CATALYSED BY THE POLICY MAKERS**

EU-LIFE

**2019-2024**
A European **Green Deal**
A Europe fit for the **digital age**
An **economy** that works for people
A stronger Europe in the **world**
Promoting our European **way of life**
A new push for European **democracy** in Europe

**2025-2029**

**Defense & Security**
**Competitiveness**
**EU Industrial Strategy**
**Resilience**

Quality I Value I Impact of _____ search

Attractive & sust_____ in Europe

_____k conditions

RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

_____tion & Retention

_____lity I Intersectoral

EU-LIFE

**2018:CHALLENGE?**   **2021: WHAT**

# A COMMON AGREEMENT TO
# REFORM RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

Towards a reform of the
research assessment system

Scoping Report

**WHAT**
**WHO & HOW**

**CoARA - 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 rankings** of research organisations in research assessment

https://coara.eu/agreement/the-commitments/

**CoARA - SUPPORTING COMMITMENTS**

5. **Commit resources** to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve organizational changes committed to

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

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 in research**, and make **data openly available** for evidence gathering and research

EU-LIFE

**2018:CHALLENGE?**　　　**2021: WHAT**　　　　　　　**2022: WHO & HOW**

Towards a reform of the research assessment system

Scoping Report

November - 2021

**WHAT
WHO & HOW**

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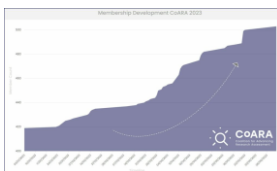
CoARA

**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.

# A "COALITION OF THE WILLING"

**EU-LIFE**

## CoARA - CORE COMMITMENTS

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- Organisations joining CoARA commit to **ACT** on the 10 concrete commitments

- 19/22 May 2025:
- 837 organisations signed the agreement
-  735 CoARA member organisations

- They develop an action plan
- They can join Working groups

**IMPROVING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT THROUGH REFORMING:**

**Academic Careers**

**Early** and **mid** career researchers

**Infrastructures** for RA

Responsible metrics and **indicators**

Assessment of **research proposals**

**Inclusive evaluation**

**Peer review**

**Experiments** in RA

**Biomedical Research** (processes in)

**Social Sciences and Humanities**

**Transdisciplinary**, **applied** research & **impacts**

**Multilingualism**

**Ethics and Research Integrity** for data and AI

**18 National Chapters**: ES, IT, FR, NO, SW, IE, HU, FI, UA, CY, PL, UK, CH, SI, PT, NL, DE, AD

**+second call for WGs ongoing (start Sep 25)**

**CoARA - CORE COMMITMENTS**

1. **Recognise the diversity of contributions** to, and careers in, research according to the needs and the ...

2. B... **eval**... by re...

3. ... **asse**... in p... fact...

4. A... in re...

https://coara.eu/agreement/the-commitments/

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... **riteria, tools** ... reform and ... and training ... heir use

... able **mutual** ... ence to the ... nts

... sed on solid evidence and the state of the art **in research in research**, and make **data openly available** for evidence gathering and research

**LONG LASTING EFFECT:**

**THE AGREEMENT WILL SHAPE THE NEXT DECADES OF RESEARCH ASSESSMENT POLICY**

**2024 Work programme**

> " The proposals will continue to be judged on their originality, creativity and ground-breaking ideas. For the evaluation of the researchers, we wanted to allow applicants to provide - and evaluation panels to see - a more holistic and fuller account of their research careers and contributions. "

**Major weight in Project proposal**

Applicants

**Excellence and ability to carry out the Project**

**Max 10 scientific outputs:    brief narrative on how output advanced knowledge**

**"Narrative elements" - more comprehensive view of career, contribution and potential that may not be reflected on traditional metrics**

**NWO Talent programme: VENI-VIDI-VICI**

Start independent career with international scientific criteria

2000
VVV started (approx)

2009
Knowledge utilization policy
**40% quality of researcher**
**40% quality of research**
**20% social impact**

2019
Changes in assessment of aplicants CVs
(Recognition and Valuation Programme)
**Research performance**
**Teaching**
**Team**
**Societal impact**
**Leadership**
**Patient care**

**Young Dutch Researchers Letter to NWO (2022)**

✓ Assessing researchers beyond research performance: by the institutions, not the funder of Research projects

✓ Assessing researchers should be made on international criteria of Research outputs such as:
**Total number of publications**
**Total number of citations**
**H index**
**J IF**

✓ **NWO is for scientific Research, not for education, social outreach and leadership**. This is a **task for the Universities and Research institutes**. Mixing assessment criteria is undesirable.

➢ How can institutions and researchers navigate through the reform?


➢ How can we further use Coara as an oportunity to improve ourselves?

**Use CoARA to move forward in institutes' priorities**

## In CoARA

➢ Actively shaping 3 CoARA working groups;

- ▪ Early career researchers
- ▪ Academic careers
- ▪ Biomedical Research (processes)

➢ Participating in Spanish National Chapter

## Internally with 17 leading institutes

- How do we **recruit and evaluate PIs** for their career progression? (Commitment 1, 2 and 3)

- How do we recruit and evaluate **ALL talent** in our institutes? (Commitment 1)

- **Indicators** to measure the success of our research institutes (ALL 4)

## Research assessment

Share practices in how we recruit and promote researchers



PI Career Progression

Qualitative and bibliometric measures

2017

Score 4   Score 3   Score 2   Score 1
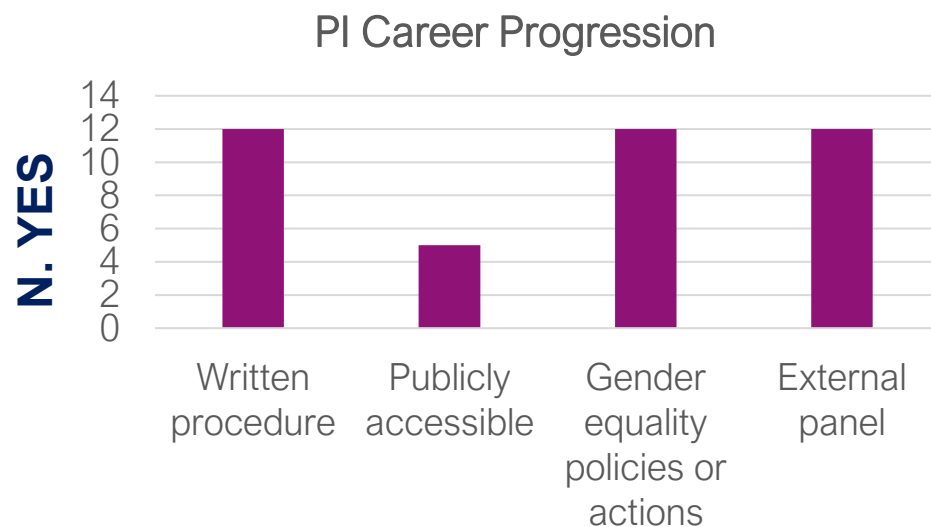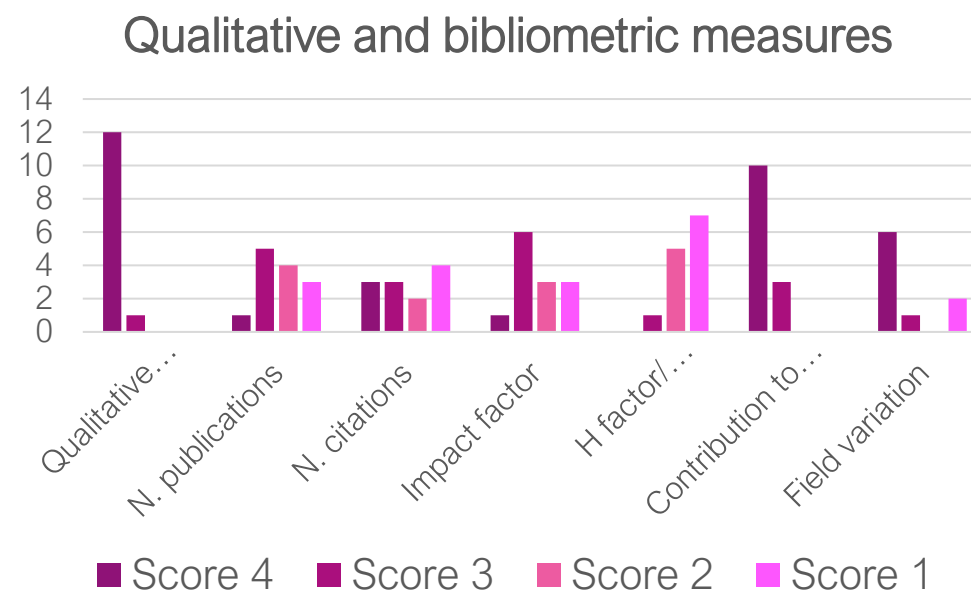
Junior PI Progression Evaluation (2017)
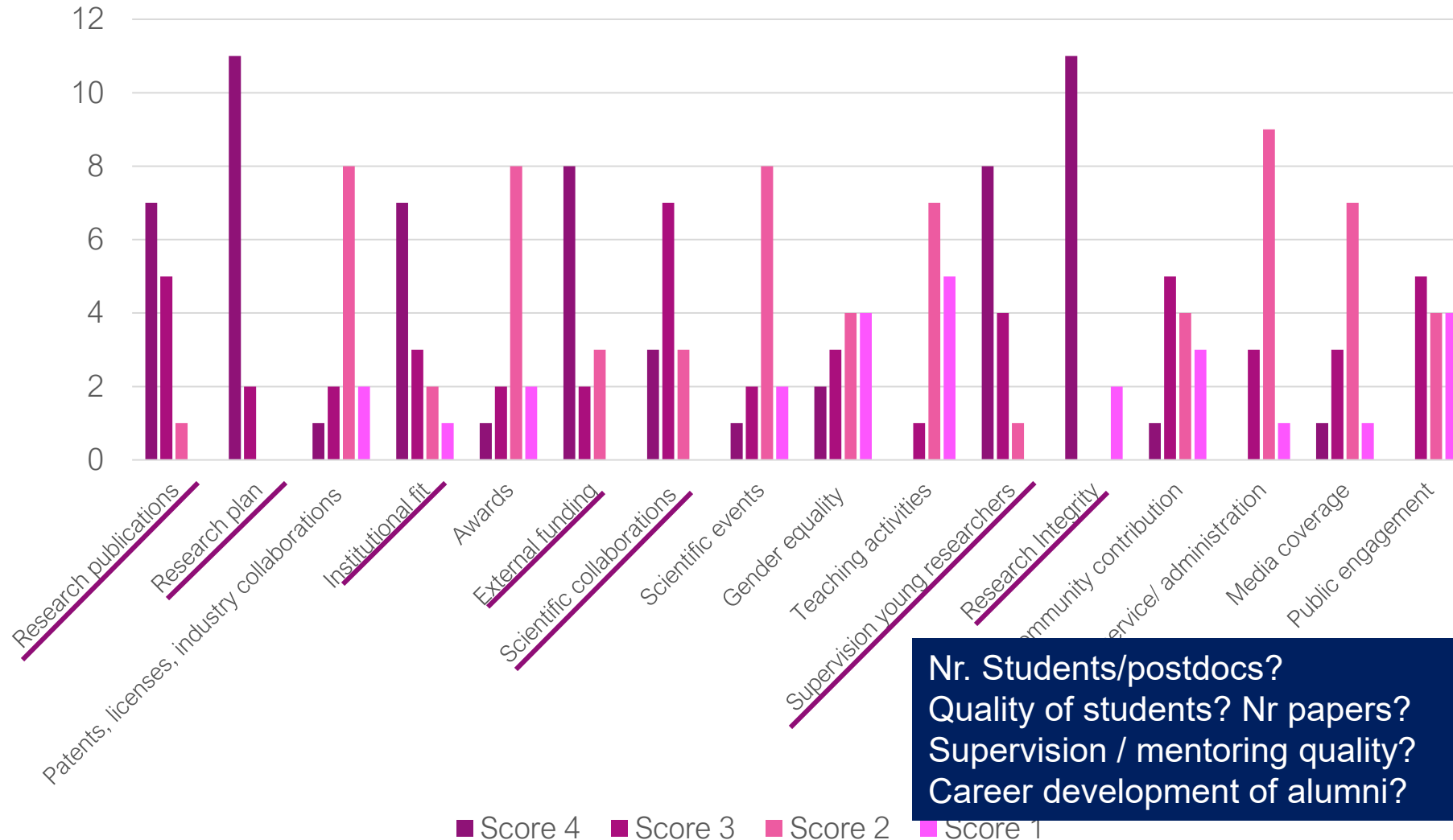
Staff
Funding
Evolution Jr PIs
Tech Transfer
**Research output**
Publication's metrics:
    Total Publications
    Total citations
    Average citations per article
    Average article influence
    Average impact factor
    Average SNIP
    Average CiteScore
    Fraction open
    Fraction Scopus Top 10 / WoS Top 10
    Fraction EU-LIFE Top 10

**How do we introduce / recognize …**

Qualitative elements?

Different outputs?

Impact of research: scientific, technologic, societal, educational, economic

Team work & collaboration?

How do we move forward in GEDI?

Different expertise?

Diverse career paths?

**EU-LIFE Indicators workshop: March 2024 (30 people I 15 institutes)**  ➡️  **EU-LIFE indicators 2.0**

**EU-LIFE**

Institutional metrics

Supervisor

PhD
Candidate
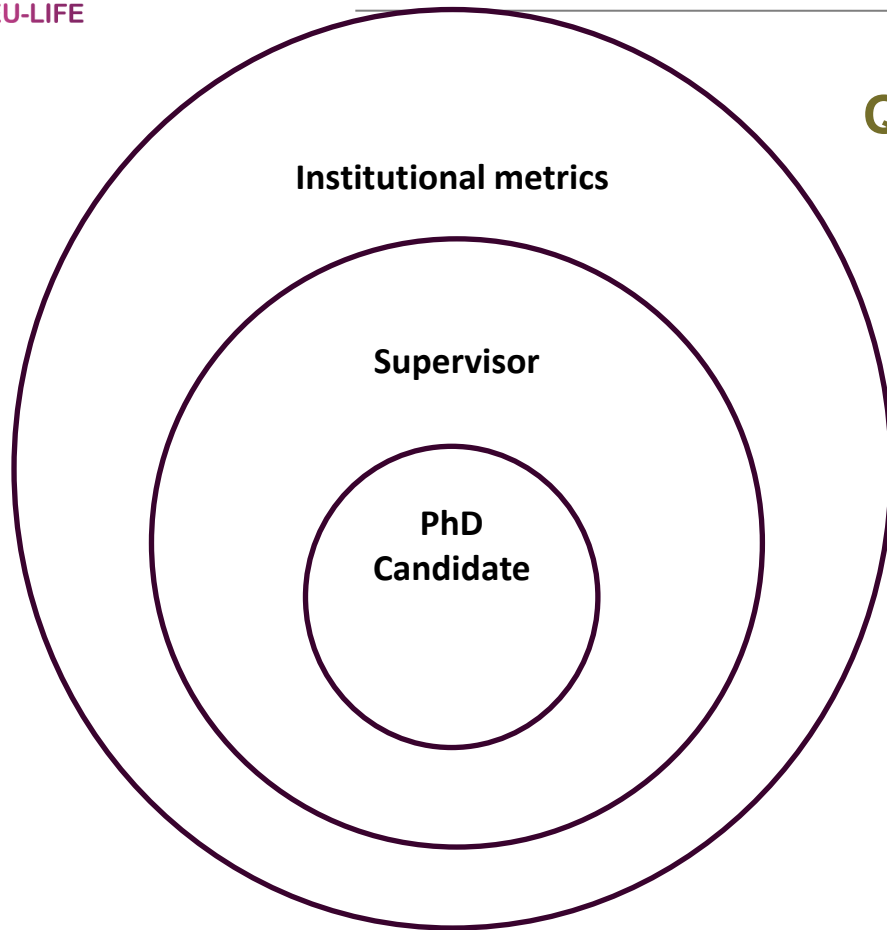
**Quality and impact of the institute/university** - organisations

**Criteria for recruitment and career progression of supervisors** – Individuals and teams

**Criteria & Training for PhD Candidates** - Individuals

➢ **Individuals >>> teams >>> institutional level**

➢ **What you mesure is what you get**

➢ **Address multiple needs: candidates, supervisors, institutions**

*INVOLVEMENT OF ALL SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY IS CRITICAL*

Have a vision and an action Plan – timescales are important!

Attainable action

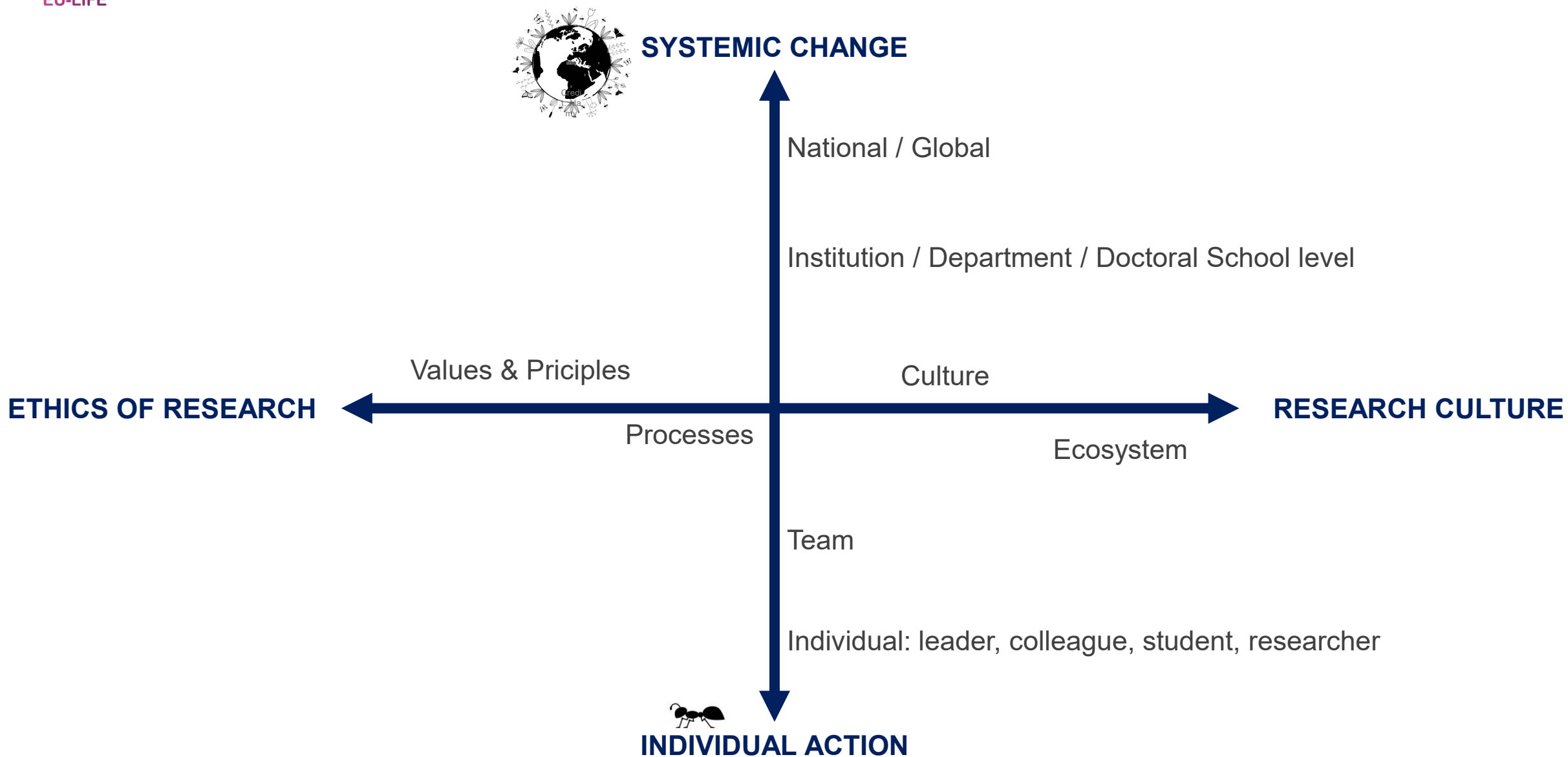Allocate staff and resources

Scientific community involvement

Clear articulation with stakehodlers and external decision makers

Courage to lead the change – and make bold strategies (e.g. HR)

Take care of all levels of career – in particular the PhD Candidates

Monitor and evidence-based

EU-LIFE

**SYSTEMIC CHANGE**

National / Global

Institution / Department / Doctoral School level

Values & Priciples

Culture

**ETHICS OF RESEARCH**

**RESEARCH CULTURE**

Processes

Ecosystem

Team

Individual: leader, colleague, student, researcher

**INDIVIDUAL ACTION**

Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

The time to act is now

It can be our story

**What is one action you could implement tomorrow to improve assessment of research /researchers?**

# Thank you and stay tuned!

🌐 www.eu-life.eu

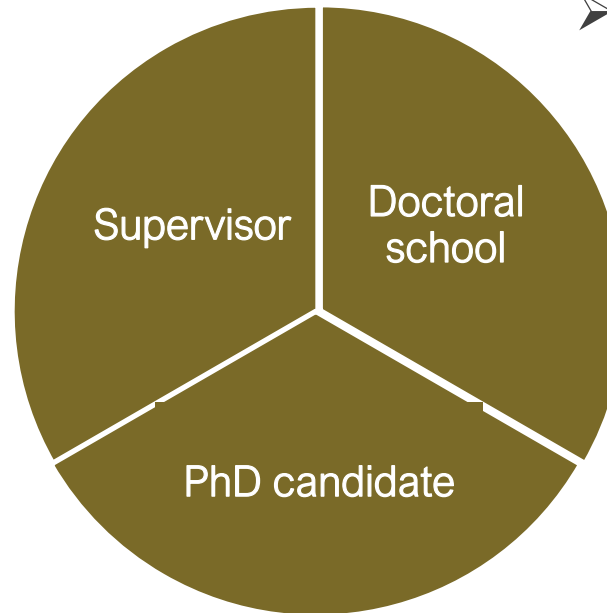in /company/eu-life

🦋 @eu-life.bsky.social

✉ contact@eu-life.eu

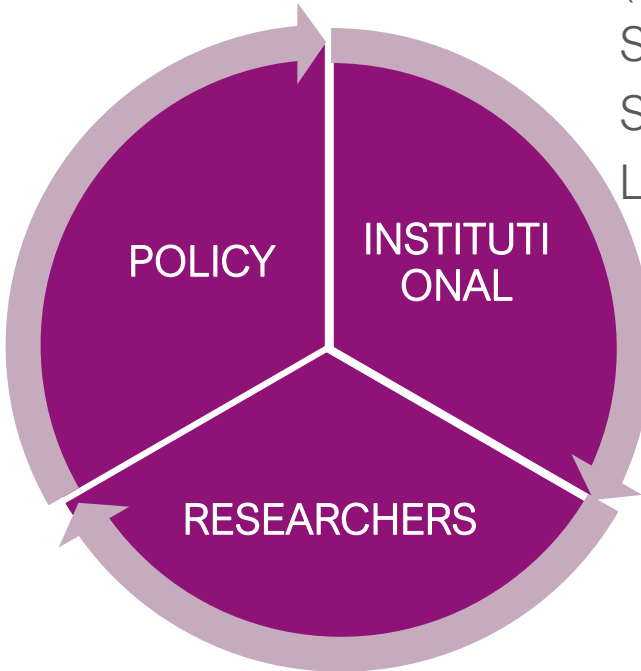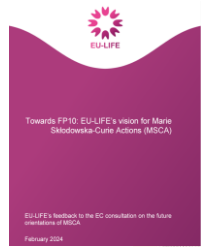➢ **How current career incetives at your institution align with the role of mentoring fo supervisors?**
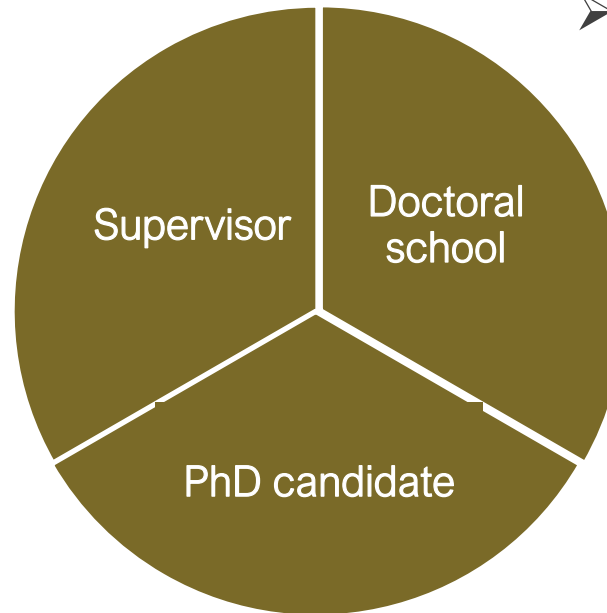
➢ **How does your Doctoral school measure a susscefull PhD?**



➢ **What are the biggest opportunities / challenges for the PhD students regarding reforming research assessment?**

**EU-LIFE**

Towards FP10: EU-LIFE's vision **for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)** – Feb 24

**SHARING PRACTICE & BENCHMARKING**

(DIVERSE) Careers structures

Salary scales, flexible benefits

Support to incoming/outgoing researchers

Legislative hurdles and stories of success

Scientific training strategies

Mental Health and wellbeing

GEDI

Research Assessment

**POLICY**

**INSTITUTIONAL**

**RESEARCHERS**

**EUROPEAN WIDE PROGRAMMES**

**EU-LIFE Pathfinder Mentorship Programme for Postdoctoral Women**

31 mentees

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15 countries

**POSTDOC INITIATIVE**

**EU-LIFE ERC Master Class**

**EU-LIFE Tech Transfer Pitching Event**

**EU-LIFE POSTDOCTORAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME**

Do you want to... boost your academic career?

- Visit another EU-LIFE institute
- Present your work to prospective PIs
- Network at an international level
- Boost your career profile

APPLY NOW AT www.eu-life.eu

EU-LIFE is the alliance of independent research institutes in the life sciences across Europe

**Emerald** International PhD Programme for Medical Doctors

**EU-LIFE Webinar on Career Tracks**
How to combine part time academic position and freelance bioinformatics consultancy

Estefania Mancini PhD
Bioinformatics consultant

Save the date!
27 November 2024
15.30-17.00 CET

**EU-LIFE Better Together Sessions**
Carbon accounting: a practical guide
*Action beats perfection*

Bastien Pinot
CSR Engineer
Institut Curie

Laura Tejada Sandy
Sustainability Officer
CRG

Wouter De Broeck
Sustainability Coordinator
VIB

15 May 2025
13.00-14.30 CEST
Online

For employees of EU-LIFE institutes only

5 BEST PRACTICES FOR POSTDOC CAREER SUPPORT IN THE LIFE SCIENCES

Point of contact for postdocs | Promoting early independence | Providing appropriate working conditions | Training key skills | Providing career support

**CoARA**

**WG Supporting the alignment of research assessment systems with CoARA in biomedical disciplines through administrative reforms and governance**
Henri van Luenen, NKI
Marie Witt, MDC
Iris Uribesalgo

**WG Reforming Academic Career Assessment**
Natalia Dave, CRG
Roberta Carbone, IEO
Iris Uribesalgo

**WG Early-and-mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs) – Assessment and Research Culture**
Dörthe Nickel, Institut Curie
Michaela Herzig, MDC
Iris Uribesalgo

**Iris Uribesalgo**





Board of Directors I Main Representatives
EU-LIFE policy task force & Indicators TF

**DORA Resource Library:** collection of materials to develop policies and practices for responsible research assessment



ADVOCACY RESOURCES | TOOLS

## Rethinking Research Assessment: Ideas for Action

Ideas for Action outlines five common myths about research evaluation to help universities better understand barriers to change and provides analogous examples to illustrate how these myths exist inside and outside of academia.

ADVOCACY RESOURCES | TOOLS | FOR: FUNDERS

## Balanced, broad, responsible: A practical guide for research evaluators

This is part of DORA's toolkit of resources to support academic institutions that are improving their policies and practices. Find the other resources in the toolkit here. Balanced, broad, responsible: A practical guide for research evaluators is a short, informative video that is accompanied by a one-page brief. The video and document are meant...

# 5 COMMON MYTHS ABOUT EVALUATION

**Hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions are largely made on "merit."**

**Quality research is easy to recognize and rises to the top**

**JIF and other similar journal-based indicators measure research quality**

**Researchers mostly care about journal reputation**

**Assessment practices will naturally improve over time**

John      All women



There are more male CEOs named John than the total number of female CEOs[1].



Low-profile, high impact research on extending the life of mangoes transformed the industry, where transportation damage had historically reduced yield by 40% and incurred $1 billion in losses[4].

Faculty members claim to prioritize peer readership when publishing, yet the perception that their peers value prestige and a reliance on university rankings puts pressure on researchers to publish their work in high impact factor journals[7].

Based on a model of current post-doc to faculty transitions, faculty diversity will not significantly increase until 2080 without active intervention[11].