



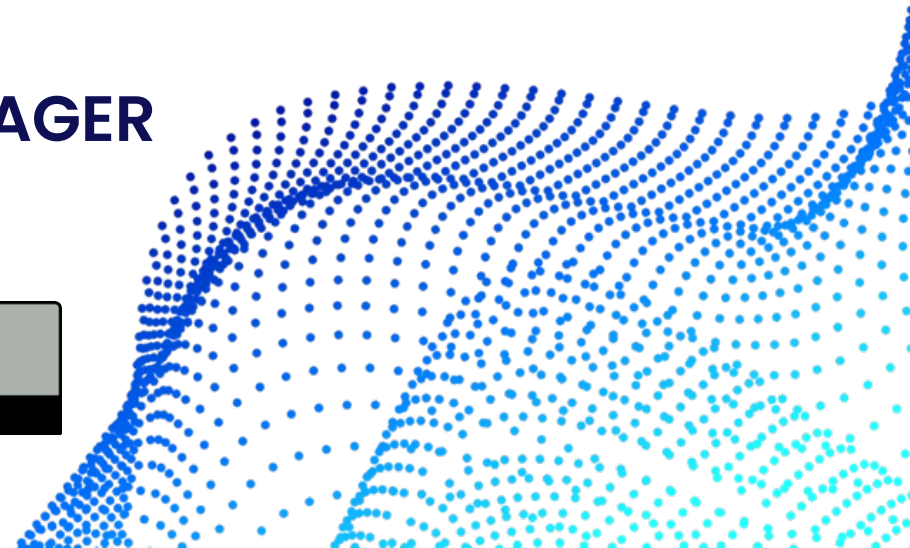
# THE AGREEMENT ON REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT: WHY SIGN IT AND WHAT DOES IT ENTAIL?

**22 NOVEMBER 2024**

**KAREN STROOBANTS, VICE-CHAIR &  
ERZSEBET TOTH-CZIFRA, PROGRAMME MANAGER**



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the European Union



# AN URGENT NEED TO REFORM EXISTING WAYS OF ASSESSING RESEARCH

Assessment processes relying predominantly on journal- and publication-based metrics **can be a hurdle to the recognition of diverse contributions and may negatively affect the quality and impact of research.**

They also contribute to an **unhealthy research culture** and an **unaffordable publication system.**



# Agreement, setting a common direction



# Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment



**Spring- Autumn 2021**  
Scoping report and EU-wide multi-stakeholder consultation on research assessment by the European Commission

**Jan-July 2022** drafting the Agreement

**20 July 2022**  
Publication of the Agreement

# 1. DIVERSE CONTRIBUTIONS

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

**Purpose:** broaden the recognition of the diverse practices and activities as well as careers in research, while considering the specific nature of research disciplines and other research endeavours

**Scope:**

- Recognition of the broad diversity of contributions to quality research, including diverse outputs, practices and activities
- Recognition and valorisation of diverse roles and careers that support research
- Allowing the organisations to broaden the spectrum of what they value in research

## 2. QUALITATIVE EVALUATION

**Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer-review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators**

**Purpose:** enable the move towards assessment criteria that focus primarily on quality while recognising that responsible use of quantitative indicators can support this where this is meaningful, which is context dependent

**Scope:**

- Peer-review is the most robust method known for the assessment of quality, recalling the fundamental principles for rigorous and transparent peer review and recognising regular improvement of peer-review
- Revised or potentially new, criteria, tools and processes that are appropriate for the assessment of quality could be explored alongside peer review
- Moving towards assessment practices that rely more heavily on qualitative methods might require additional efforts from researchers

## 3. JOURNAL/PUBLICATION-BASED METRICS

### Abandon the inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics

**Purpose:** reduce the dominance of a narrow set of quantitative journal- and publication-based metrics

**Scope:**

- Abandon inappropriate uses: i) relying purely on metrics to assess quality; ii) assessing outputs based on metrics relating to publication venue, format or language, rather than on merit; iii) relying otherwise on quantities that do not properly capture quality and/or impact.
- In particular: move away from journal impact factor (JIF), article influence score (AIS) and h-index as proxies of quality and impact

## 4. INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

### Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment

**Purpose:** help avoid that the criteria used by international rankings which are not trickle down to research assessment; help the research community and research organisations regain autonomy rather than having to abide by criteria set by external commercial companies which could include control over criteria used in 'fair and responsible' rankings

**Scope:**

- Criteria should not trickle down to the evaluation of individual researchers, research teams and research units
- Public communication can contribute to reinforcing the perception that research quality conflates with ranking positions



# SUPPORTING COMMITMENTS (5.-7.)

Three commitments to pilot and enable the move towards new criteria, tools and processes for research assessment

**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.

**7. Raise awareness** of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication, guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use.



# SUPPORTING COMMITMENTS (8.-10.)

Three commitments to facilitate mutual learning, communicate progress and ensure that new approaches are evidence-informed

**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.



# TIMEFRAME

Agreement includes touch-base points in years 1 and 5 after signature to communicate progress, based on **self-assessment**

- **By year 1** signatories share how their organisation **has started the process of reviewing or developing criteria, tools and processes.**
- **By year 5** signatories have regularly **demonstrated progress towards reviewing, developing and evaluating criteria, tools and processes** that fulfil the core commitments.



The Agreement is **only the starting point!**

Changes to be developed and implemented by the Coalition

# WHO CAN SIGN THE AGREEMENT?



The Agreement is open for signature to **organisations from across the world:**

- Universities, and their associations;
- Research centres, research infrastructures, and their associations;
- Academies, learned societies, and their associations, and associations of researchers;
- Public or private research funding organisations and their associations;
- National/regional authorities or agencies that implement some form of research assessment and their associations;
- Other relevant non-for-profit organisations involved with research assessment, and associations.

Organisations without legal personality can also sign the Agreement and join the Coalition.



## SIGNATORY

### ENDORSE PUBLICLY

Publicly signal the need and your willingness to reform the current ways of research assessment



### ACHIEVE CHANGE

Realise change in your organisation by implementing the [10 CoARA commitments](#) through an action plan developed within your organisation



- Signing the agreement is an opportunity to publicly signal **the willingness of organisations to reform research assessment.**
- Signatories keep full control on their steps to implement the Agreement and develop their own path for implementation of the Agreement.

# CoARA: from agreement to action



# Implementing the Agreement through CoARA



**Spring- Autumn 2021**  
Scoping report and EU-wide multi-stakeholder consultation on research assessment by the European Commission

**Jan-July 2022** drafting the Agreement

**20 July 2022**  
Publication of the Agreement

**1 December 2022**  
Constitution of CoARA

**Early 2024:**

- ✓ A coalition of 700 members
- ✓ 13 Working Groups operational
- ✓ 15 National Chapters
- ✓ Policy impact (ERC, REF etc.)
- ✓ CoARA Boost project up and running

# CoARA

Coalition for Advancing  
Research Assessment

Be part of the Coalition: [click here](#) to sign the Agreement and to choose to become a member



SIGNATORY

Optional  
membership  
+



MEMBER

## ENDORSE PUBLICLY

Publicly signal the need and your willingness to reform the current ways of research assessment



## ACHIEVE CHANGE

Realise change in your organisation by implementing the [10 CoARA commitments](#) through an action plan developed within your organisation



As a signatory you can level up to membership any time. There are no membership fees.

## JOIN THE COMMUNITIES

Benefit from communities of practice; propose and join [Working Groups](#) and [National Chapters](#)



## HAVE A VOICE

Shape CoARA's strategy by [participating in governance and decision-making](#)



## NETWORK AND LEARN

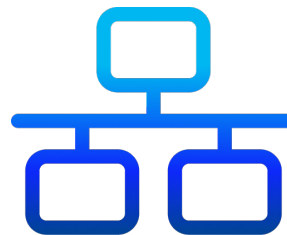
Interact and share best practices with the CoARA network of members





# CoARA GOVERNING BODIES

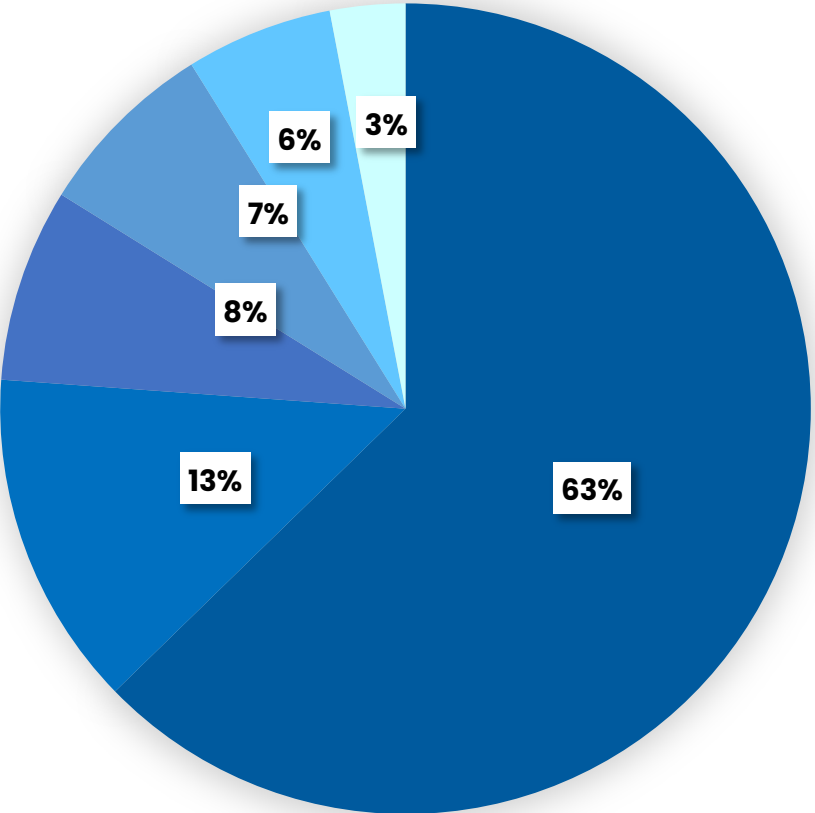
- **General Assembly of Members – All Members.** Represents all members of the Coalition. The highest-level decision-making body.
- **Steering Board – Elected.** Responsible for the overall oversight, success, strategy, business plan and sustainability of the Coalition.
- **CoARA Secretariat** – ensures smooth operation of CoARA, nurtures communities around CoARA, coordinates the CoARA Boost project.



# CoARA membership



# CoARA MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE OF ORGANISATION



In descending order of total share:

- Universities and their associations
- Research centres, research infrastructures, and their associations
- Academies, learned societies, and their associations, and associations of researchers
- Public or private research funding organisations and their associations
- Other relevant non-for-profit organisations involved with research assessment, and their associations
- National/regional authorities or agencies that implement some form of research assessment and their associations

**700 member organisations**

**798 signatories**

[20 November 2024]

# CoARA MEMBERSHIP BY COUNTRY

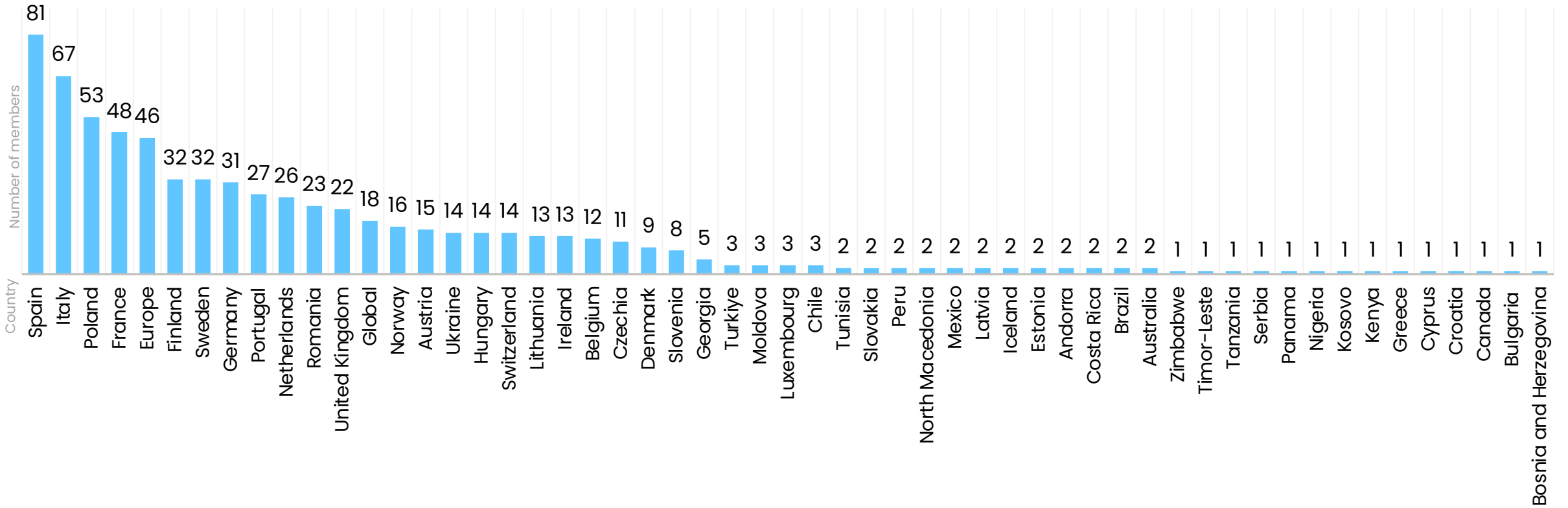
Membership total:

**700**

# of countries\*:

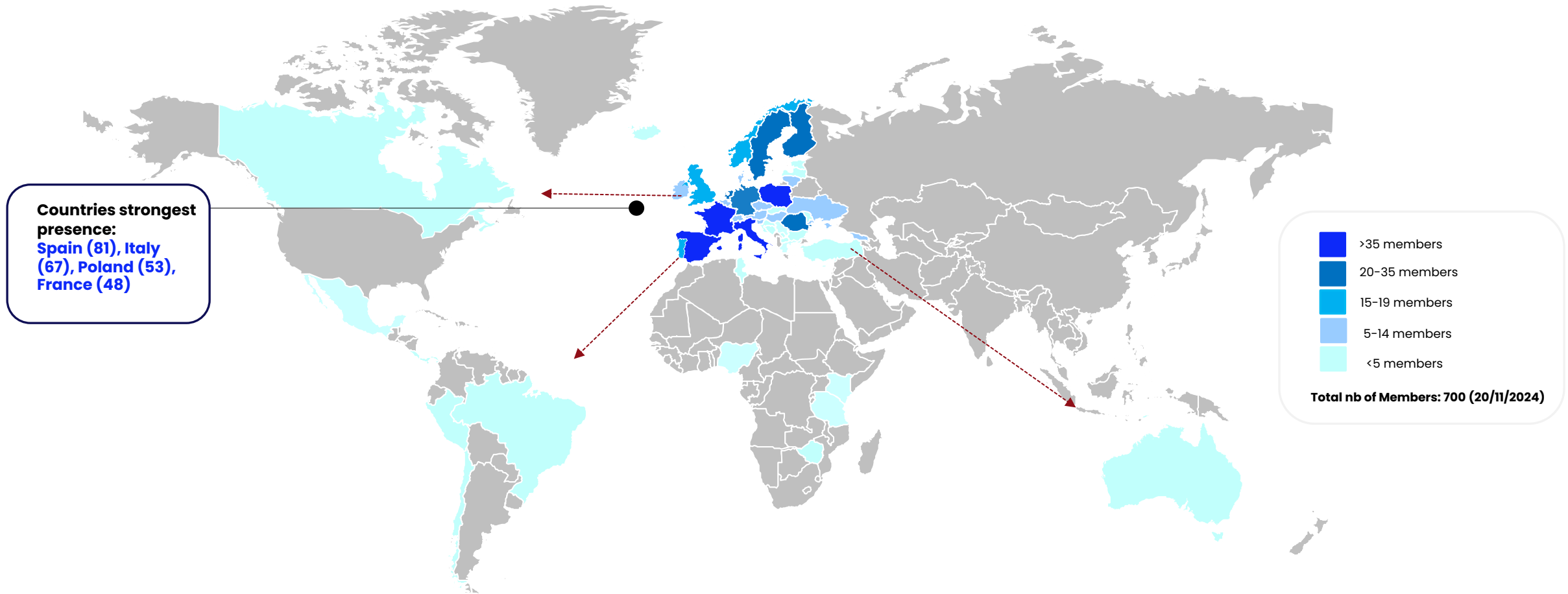
**55**

(15 October 2024)



# CoARA membership 20 November 2024

## International outreach goals



# From Agreement to Action



Marta Agostinho  
EU-LIFE Executive Director

“ Developing a CoARA action plan is a considerable challenge, filled with strategic decision-making, so it is vital that organizations openly share their strategies and outcomes, not just to foster a culture of openness but to aid others in their journeys. ”



Michal Petr @Michal\_Petr\_MU · Dec 4, 2023

I am happy to share that we have recently published the Masaryk University **Action Plan for CoARA**. [zenodo.org/communities/co...](https://zenodo.org/communities/co...) Responsible assessment is our important institutional value. Time for communication, analysis, collaboration and transparency.



Pastora Martínez Samper @pastorams · Apr 5

Replying to @pastorams and @UOCuniversitat

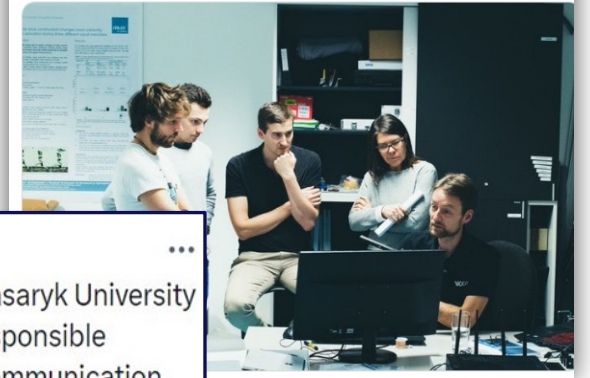
Many thanks to the UOC community involved in the writing, discussion and improvement of our 1st **action plan** linked to [#CoARA](#), specially to our Rector [@afitob](#) our vicerectors for Research X.Vilajosana and for Academic Policy [@mjmartarguelles](#) and the newly created [#CoARA](#) Committee



Aktionsplan zur Qualität in der Forschung

Wir haben einen Aktionsplan erstellt, um die Qualität unserer Forschung zu stärken.

Der Plan ist Teil des Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA) der [@CoARAssessment](#), bei der wir Mitglied sind.



CoARA Action Plan -webinaari järjestettiin 12.3.2024. Webinaarin tarkoituksena oli tukea organisaatioita CoARAN edellyttämän toimintasuunnitelman laatimisessa sekä jakaa tietoa ja hyviä käytäntöjä.

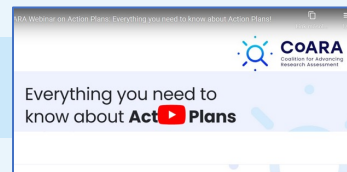
Webinaarissa Oulun yliopisto, Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulu ja Metropolia-ammattikorkeakoulu esittelivät toimintasuunnitelmansa (Action Plan). Webinaarin alussa kuultiin myös lyhyt alustus tutkimuksen arvioinnin uudistamista edistävästä eurooppalaisesta yhteistyöstä CoARasta (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment) sekä Suomen kansallisen osaston toiminnasta.

Tilaisuuden esitykset löytyvät alta.



# CoARA COMMUNITIES

## Members committing through action plans



- ✓ Established corpus
- ✓ Webinar and other support mechanisms
- ✓ National level discourse

## Active Working Groups



- ✓ Consultations, events
- ✓ First outputs
- ✓ Regular updates via the website and newsletter

## Growing number of National Chapters



- ✓ Established corpus
- ✓ Webinar and other support mechanisms
- ✓ National level discourse

## Cascade Funding



- ✓ Grants to implement the ARRA
- ✓ 80+ applications received for the first round

## CoARA Events



- ✓ Online, hybrid
- ✓ Call for hosting events for CoARA members

# CoARA working groups, national chapters and cascade funding





# Overview of the 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



Improving Practices in the Assessment of Research Proposals



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



1<sup>st</sup> WGs Co-Chair meeting  
17 November 2023



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

# Working Group Highlights

**Reforming Academic Career Assessment: current insights and future directions**

25 JUN 2024 | WORKSHOP  
ONLINE

[Register now](#)

**Experiments in Assessments - CoARA WG**

CoARA is the Coalition on Advancing Research Assessment. CoARA's 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.

Our CoARA Working Group is focused on collecting and implementing experiments in research assessment – new ways to measure and recognize quality and excellence. The results from the survey will be bundled in a catalogue consisting of the experimental ideas. This catalogue may be published, presented, and shared online.

You are welcome to complete this form as many times as you like.

**@EULIFEnews** @EULIFE\_news · Nov 8, 2023

We are thrilled to announce that the **#CoARA Working Group** on 'Supporting the alignment of **#ResearchAssessment** systems with **CoARA** in biomedical disciplines through administrative reforms & **#governance**' had its kick-off meeting last Friday and is now working on its action plan!

**CoARA**  
Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment

**SATELLITE EVENT**  
**CoARA Working Group on multilingualism and language bias in research assessment**

Thursday 14 March 2024, 13:00-17:00

[Open to all, join us online!](#)

#EUCARDF2024



**Officially Launched: CoARA Working Group:**  
Ethics and Research Integrity Policy in Responsible Research Assessment for Data and Artificial Intelligence (ERIP)

Watch the Launch Meeting!

#ReformingRA

<https://coara.eu/> #ReformingRA

**Working Group on Ethics and Research Integrity Policy in Responsible Research Assessment for Data and Artificial Intelligence (ERIP)**

**You are invited! Join the Virtual Session:**

**Developing a Global Approach for Science Policy with Local Impact on the Development of Digital Tools in Research Assessment**  
May 10 2024 (Friday)  
12:30-14:00 (UTC) / 14:30-16:00 (CEST)

Organised by: **CoARA WG ERIP, European Commission, ALLEA, United Nations Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for SDG**

**OpenCitations** @opencitations · Aug 1, 2023

In the next months, the **@CoARAAssessment Working Group Towards Open Infrastructures for Responsible Research Assessment #OIRRA** will start its activities, focusing on having open infras for making **#researchassessment** more transparent and responsible:

[opencitations.hypotheses.org](https://opencitations.hypotheses.org)

OpenCitations is part of the CoARA Working Group Tr

Last March, the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) launched its call for members...

**8th WCRI 2024**  
Athens | Greece

**CoARA ERIP SIDE-EVENT**

18:30-19:30  
Monday 3 June

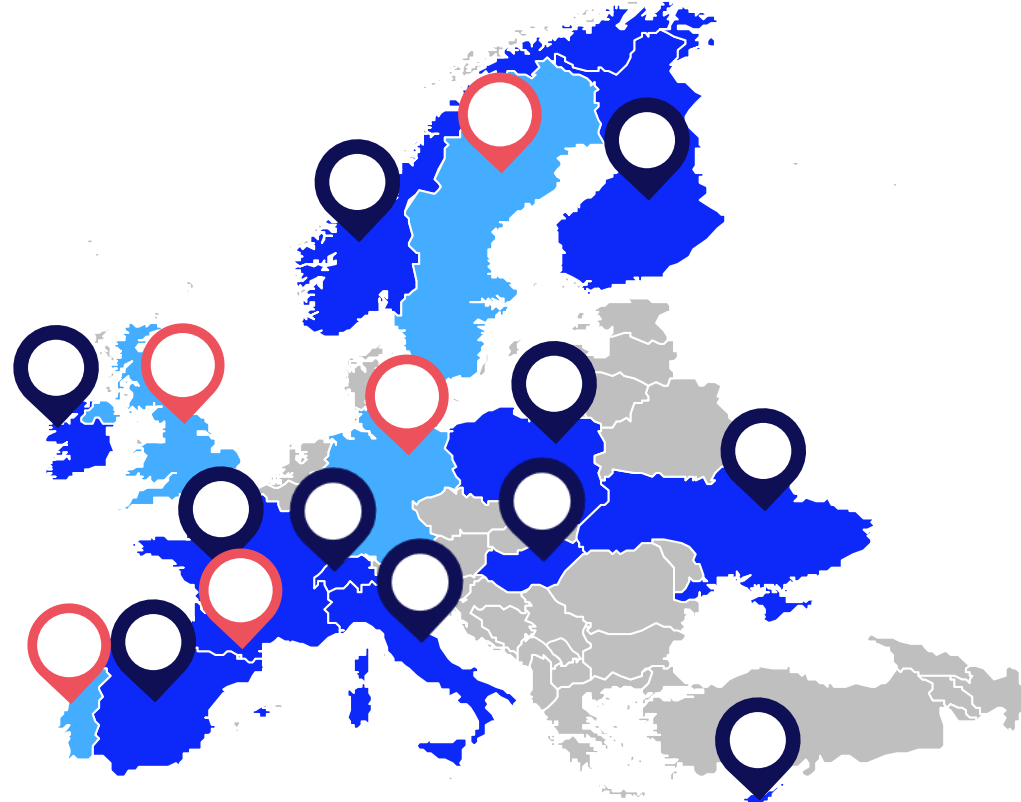
#WCRI2024



# 16 National Chapters

2023

- Cyprus
- Finland
- France
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Norway
- Poland
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Ukraine



2024

## 5 New NCs:

- Andorra
- Germany
- Portugal
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

**No cut-off date**



-> monthly  
submission review

# Cascade Funding:

## To facilitate institutional change

- Support for organisations to carry out concrete, tangible changes in research assessment in relevant institutions
- To implement the ARRA commitments
- To exchange, pilot, and implement new practices, processes and tools
- Diverse starting points
- Meet the selected projects: [25 Projects Selected For the First Cascade Funding Call - CoARA](#)



**2nd call opens  
in December  
2024**

# CoARA's impact





# Early Impact on European and National Policies

- Mitigating the weight of prestige-based indicators
- Rethinking balance between career history and future potential
- Supporting a greater diversity of career paths.

The European Research Council has changed how it evaluates applicants. Here's why

29 Feb 2024 | News



**REF 2029**  
Research Excellence Framework

# Early Impact on Scholarly Discourse: Towards a Multilingual Coalition

## 1. A Fiatal Kutatók Akadémiájának javaslatai a magyarországi fiatal kutatók helyzetének javítására

Proposals of the Hungarian Young Academy for the Improvement of the Status of Hungarian Young Researchers  
Wilhelm Imola1, Dékány Éva2, Hatvani István Gábor3, Fröhlich Georgina4, Micskei Zoltán5, Pach Péter Pál5, Toldy Andrea6, Solymosi Katalin7, Szentgáli-Tóth Boldizsár8, Lengyel Balázs9

Hem / Arkiv / Nr 14 (2023): Sluttrapport från rektorsuppdraget Öppen vetenskap vid Malmö universitet / R

## Sluttrapport från rektorsuppdraget Öppen vetenskap vid Malmö universitet

en lägesbeskrivning utifrån Unescos rekommendation

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Practicing responsible research assessment: Qualitative study of faculty hiring, promotion, and tenure assessments in the United States

Alexander Rushforth ✉, Sarah De Rijcke

Nuevamente sobre el impacto negativo de los rankings universitarios en la gestión de los sistemas de educación superior universitaria.

OPEN ACCESS  
DISKUSSIONSFORUM

Empfehlungen zur Bewertung wissenschaftlicher Leistungen bei Berufungsverfahren in der Psychologie

Anne Gärtner ✉, Daniel Leising, and Felix D. Schönbrodt

ПРО РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ «ПІДВИЩЕННЯ ДОСЛІДНИЦЬКОЇ СПРОМОЖНОСТІ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ УКРАЇНИ В УМОВАХ ВІЙНИ ТА ПОВОЄННОГО ВІДНОВЛЕННЯ У КОНТЕКСТІ ІМПЛЕМЕНТАЦІЇ КОНЦЕПЦІЇ «ВІДКРИТА НАУКА»

MARTA GMUREK\*, ANNA KLOS\*\*, JACEK Ł. KOLANOWSKI\*\*\*

Inicjatywa „Doskonałość naukowa nie ma płci” – od świadomości do transformacji

- In the research community, a decentralised, increasingly global, and rich discourse has been emerging around CoARA (and ARRA).

## #InAllLanguages

- Find more in a curated Zotero library:  
[Research Assessment Reform | Zotero](#)



# Stay updated on CoARA's progress

- Zenodo Community
- <https://coara.org/news/>

- Newsletter for CoARA Members



## #ReformingRA

- @CoARAssessment
- @CoARAssessment
- Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment



## Advocacy Materials

<https://coara.org>

Contact us: [secretariat@coara.org](mailto:secretariat@coara.org)