

COALITION FOR ADVANCING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

REFORM OF RESEARCH ASSESSMENT COIMBRA/STEM

PROF.DR. HENK KUMMELING
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Funded by
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.**



From Agreement to action



The Agreement

The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment sets a **shared direction for changes in assessment practices for research, researchers and research performing organisations.**



Overarching goal

Maximise the **quality and impact of research** by setting a common direction



Scope

The Agreement includes **the principles, commitments and timeframe for reforms** and lays out the **principles for a Coalition** of organisations willing to **work together in implementing the changes.**

CoARA: a shared direction and harmonised lines of action



Brings together all actor groups relevant to the reform, acting as a coalition of doers



Implement the ARRA commitment within an agreed time frame and share progress



Signatories of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA) do not only advocate for change, they also commit to actively drive reform in research assessment.



889 signatories
773 members



3rd birthday
Early impact, policy changes on EU. National, institutional levels



4 core commitments

1



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

4



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

Supporting commitments

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.
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.**



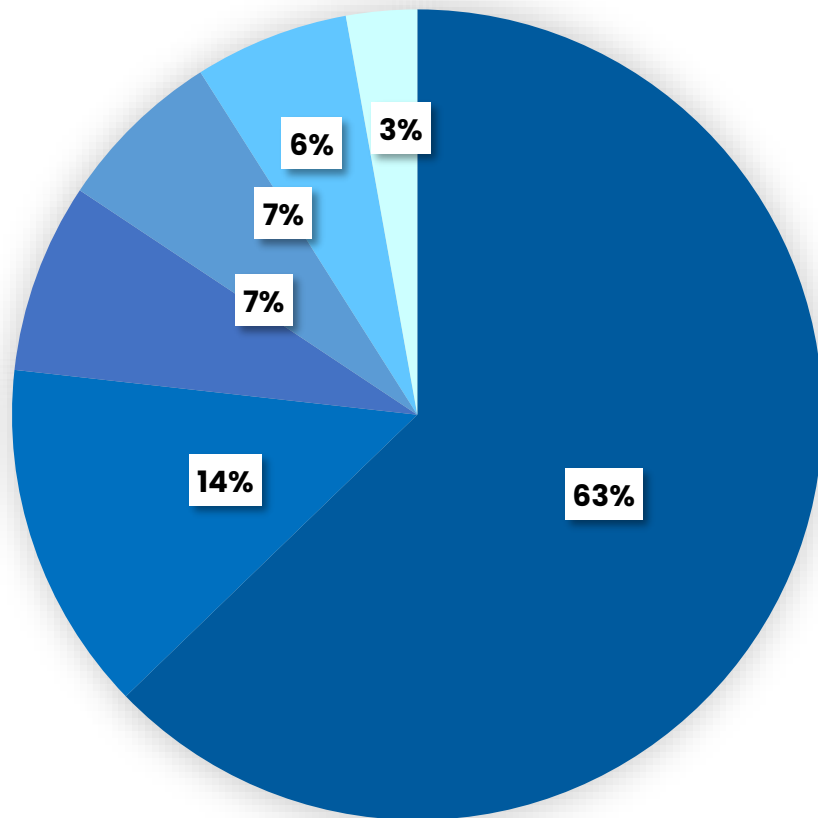
Action Plans: building blocks for advancing the reform

- Action Plans play a vital role in fulfilling the core commitments of the CoARA Agreement, helping signatories and members outline key milestones for implementing research assessment reform
- Upon signing the Agreement, organisations commit to developing an Action Plan within one year



CoARA membership per organisation type

As of October 17th, 2025



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

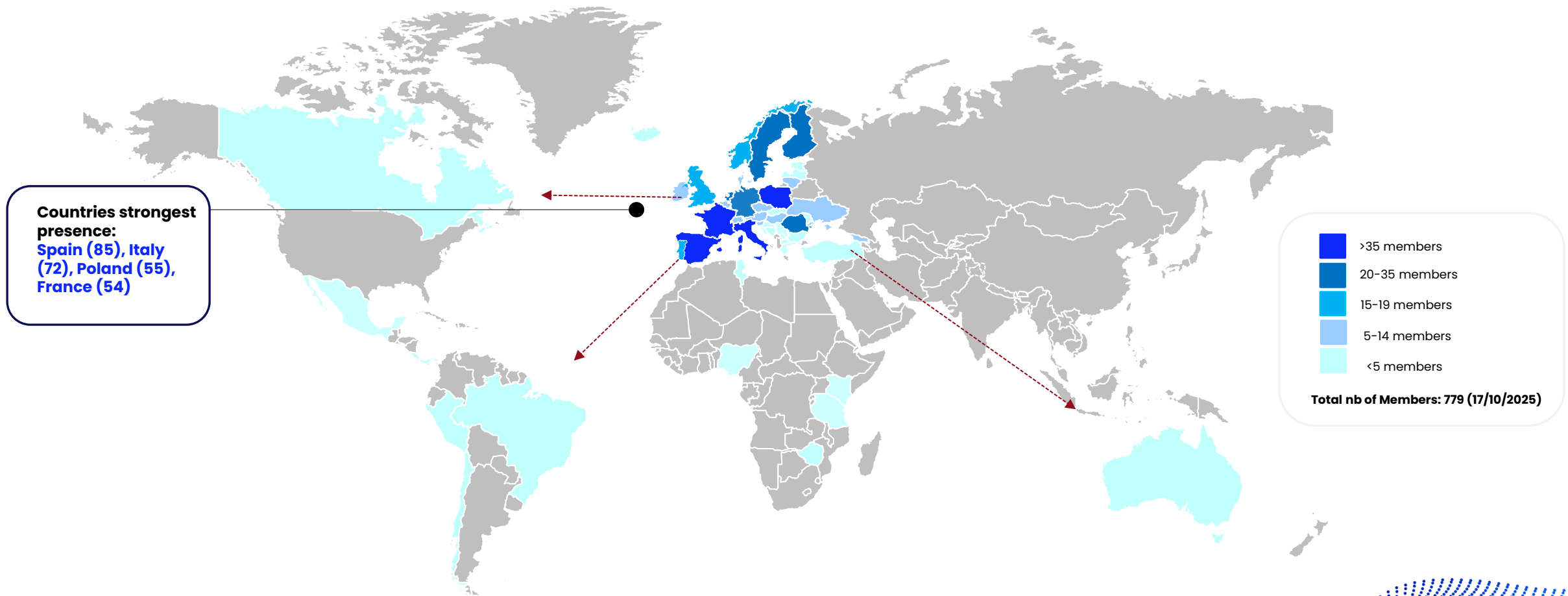
779 member organisations

895 signatories

[17 October 2025]

CoARA membership: international outreach goals

As of October 17th, 2025



Overview of the CoARA Working Groups



Reforming Academic Career Assessment



Multilingualism and Language Biases in Research Assessment



Towards Open Infrastructure for Responsible Research Assessment



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



Responsible Metrics and Indicators



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



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



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



Recognizing and Rewarding Peer Review



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



Improving Practices in the Assessment of Research Proposals



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



TIER – Towards an Inclusive Evaluation of Research



1st WGs Co-Chair meeting
17 November 2023

Working Group highlights

- 1st wave of WGs are nearing the end of their operations, early outputs
- [WG Publication and Dissemination Guidelines](#) on Zenodo
- Outputs Endorsement framework
- **Surveys, workshops, reports**
- See a progress overview here: [CoARA Boost D4.3: First progress report of WGs, including \(Co-\) Chairs Forum](#)
- Find pre-endorsed outputs in the CoARA Working Group Zenodo community: [CoARA Working Groups](#)
- Events, outputs resources... available on the CoARA website

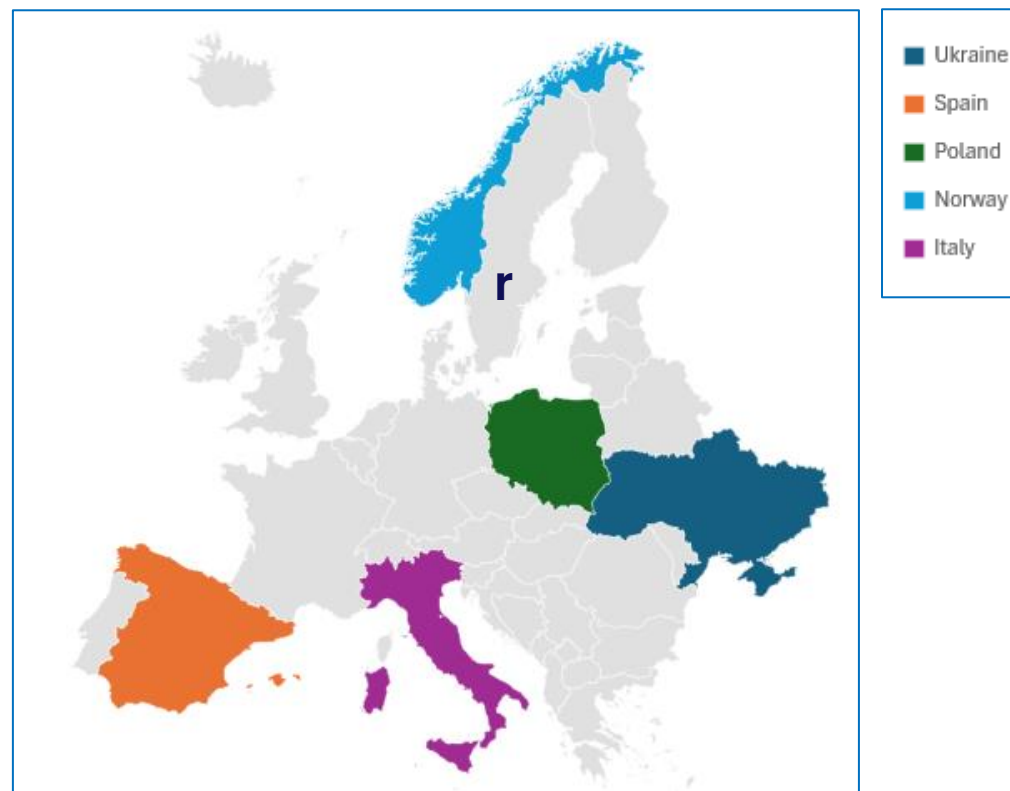


National Chapters are central for a coherent and diverse CoARA

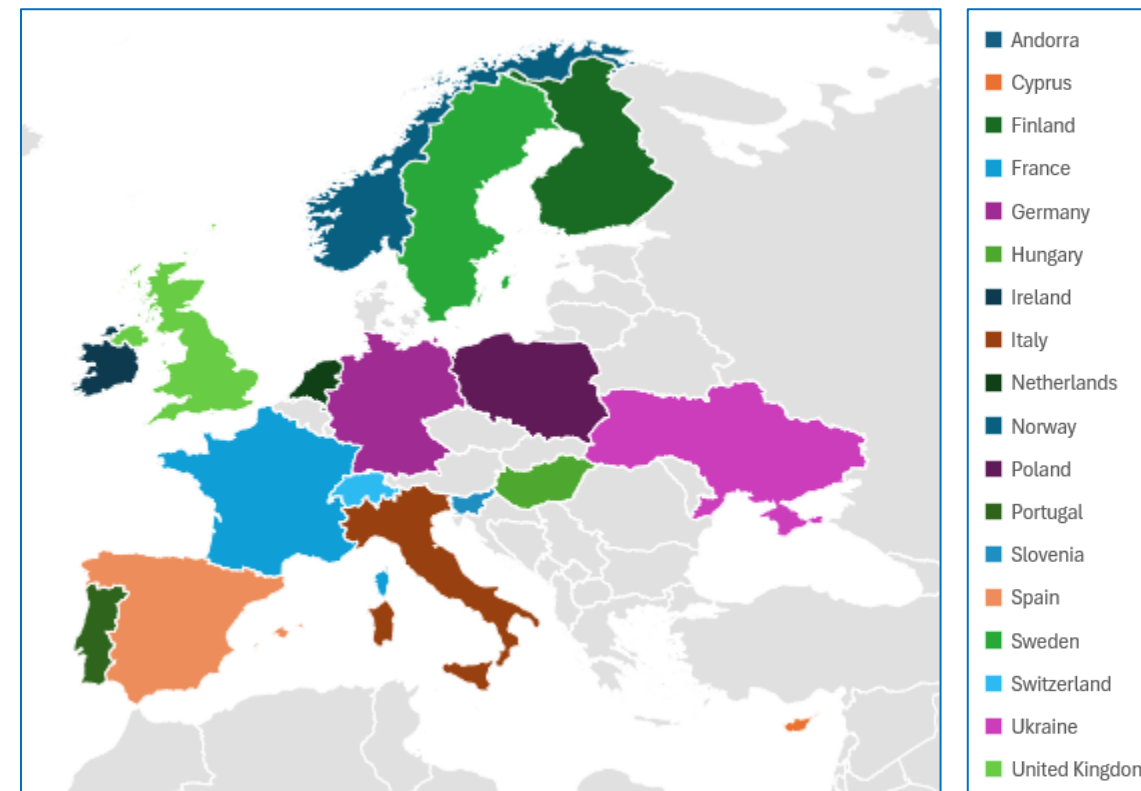


No cut-off dates!
Monthly submission review

National Chapters in 2023



National Chapters in 2025



Cascade Funding: facilitating institutional change

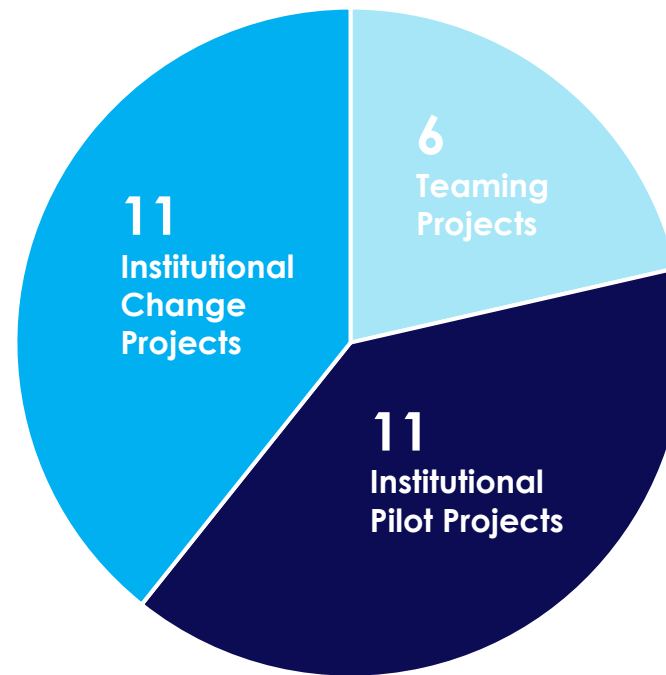
- Support for organisations to **carry out concrete, tangible changes** in research assessment in relevant institutions
- To **implement the ARRA commitments**
- To **exchange, pilot, and implement new practices, processes and tools**



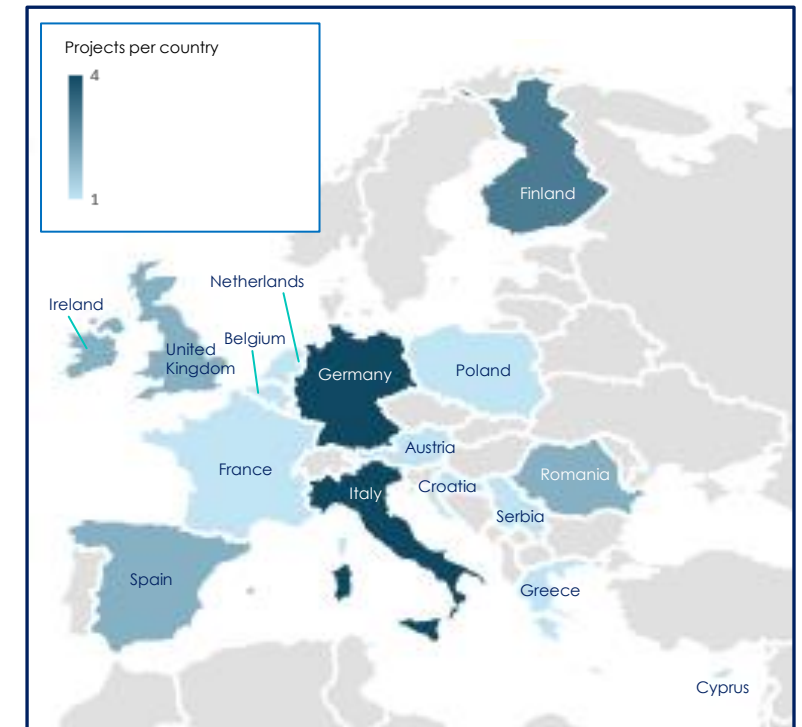
Cascade Funding Call 2: facilitating institutional changes

- **28 projects** were selected for the 2nd round of Cascade Funding, with projects expected to start in September 2025.
- **A huge thank you to the dedicated reviewers!** Without your efforts, this milestone would have not been possible!
- [Read more about the selected projects here](#)

Types of Projects Selected:

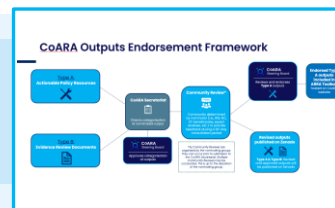


Geographical Diversity of Projects Per Country:



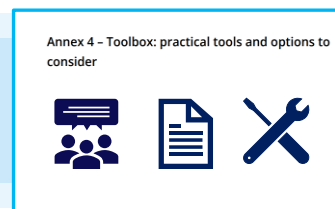
Strategic priorities for 2025

CoARA Outputs Endorsement Framework – implementation started



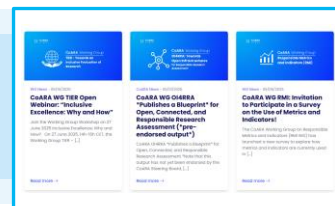
- ✓ Building consensus over collectively endorsed resources
- ✓ Overview of WGs' outcomes
- ✓ Up for approval by the GA

Releasing the first enhanced version of the CoARA Toolbox



- ✓ Collection of CoARA-endorsed outputs
- ✓ Clear versioning and endorsement information

Maintaining responsiveness and enhanced support for CoARA members



- ✓ New website to improve connectivity
- ✓ Webinars and events

Voluntary sponsorship campaign



- ✓ Enhance community ownership
- ✓ Build capacity for increased support to NCs, CoARA events, enhanced dissemination, etc.
- ✓ Targets co-defined by the GA

Early Impact on European and National Policies

- An increasing number of policy documents refer to CoARA, at the EU and international levels
- 160+ documents indexed by the [Overton](#) database refer to CoARA in documents from 20+ countries and 15 gov. organisations.

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

29 Feb 2024 | News



REF 2029
Research Excellence Framework

Modernisation of ERC's understanding of excellence – main principles for evaluating a proposed project

- ERC proposals continue to be judged on **excellence** in creativity, originality and potential for significant advances in knowledge (“Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the proposal”)
- No structural or procedural changes, but some revisions of terms used:
 - Term high-risk/high-gain no longer used in evaluation question; better terms are ‘ambitious’, ‘creative and original’; not to be misunderstood: ERC continues to encourage risky research!
 - Development of novel methodologies removed from evaluation question: may be positive but not necessary
- More weight on excellence of the project, less weight on PI past achievements (“panels primarily evaluate the excellence of the project”)

Modernisation of ERC's understanding of excellence – main principles for evaluating the applicant

- **No prescriptive Principal Investigator profiles in Work Programme**
- Allowing researchers to provide narrative descriptions of their work (not only stories, but evidence based)
- Room for explaining career breaks or unconventional career paths
- Room for describing contributions that go beyond standard academic duties
- Extramural funding not an evaluation criterion
- Supervision of graduate student or post-docs not an evaluation criterion

ERC Novelties – Research Assessment (as from work programme 2024)

- Evaluation **primarily focused on** the ground-breaking nature, ambition, and feasibility of **the proposed research project**.
- **No numerical scoring of Principal Investigator**, instead an overall assessment of the PI's intellectual capacity and creativity, with a focus on the extent to which the applicant has the required expertise and capacity to successfully execute the project

Draghi/ERA

- Policy harmonisation key for succes
- Reform of research assessment is key pillar new ERA framework, precondition for research excellence
- 5th freedom (movement of research, innovation, knowledge) only possible if differences in RA systems per country are minimized (see ARRA)
- Increase in of FP10 budget is to the benefit of a healthy change in research culture. FP10 is backbone of ERA

Key Elements of ERA

- Investment target, national commitment 3% GDP R&D
- Alignment of Policies
- Research Framework improvements
- Safeguarding values

CoARA

Consultation

ERA Act > https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14608-European-Research-Area-Act/public-consultation_en

Impact – further contexts

- **CoARA's Impact in National and European Contexts:**

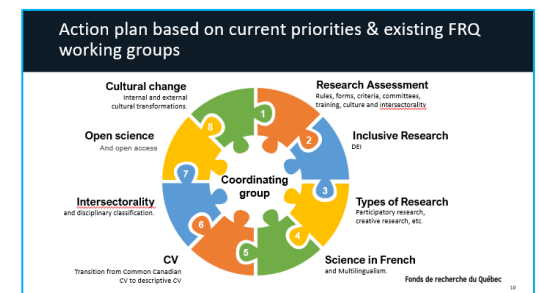
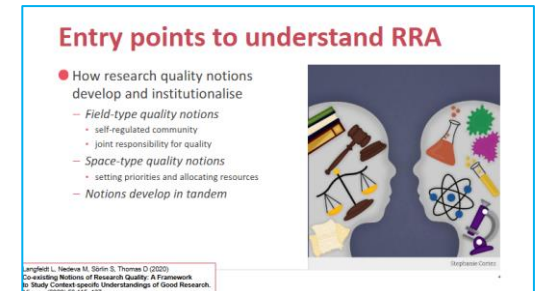
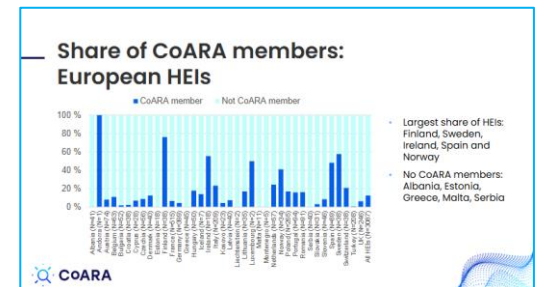
- *Uptake of CoARA across the Higher Education Institutions in Europe* – presented by Janne Pölönen (Federation of Finnish Learned Societies)
 - [Click here for the Uptake of CoARA in Higher Education in Europe presentation.](#)
- *Accompanying research on CoARA in the Norwegian research system* – presented by Prof. Liv Langfeldt (NIFU)
 - [Click here for the NyEval presentation.](#)

- **Global Perspectives on Research Assessment:**

- *The Implementation of the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ)'s Action Plan* – presented by Prof. Rémi Quirion (FRQ)
 - [Click here for the recording of the presentation.](#)
 - [Click here for the Powerpoint presentation.](#)

- **The European Research Council (ERC)'s research assessment reform journey**

- *The ERC's research assessment reform journey* – presented by Dr. Angela Wittelsberger (ERC) on the evaluation of research proposals and the understanding of excellence
 - [Click here for the ERC presentation.](#)



Upcoming in December 2025: CoARA Library

Details on filter categories

Search and Filter

Keywords

Output type:

- ☐ CoARA Toolbox
- ☐ Contextual Support Documents

Creator group:

- ☐ Working Group
- ☐ National Chapter
- ☐ Cascade Funding Projects
- ☐ 3rd Party

Related Commitments*:

- ☐ 1. Diverse contributions
- ☐ 2. Qualitative evaluation
- ☐ 3. Avoid metric-based evaluation
- ☐ 4. Avoid use of rankings
- ☐ 5. Commit resources to RRA
- ☐ 6. RA criteria, tools, and processes
- ☐ 7. Raise awareness of RRA
- ☐ 8. Mutual learning
- ☐ 9. Communicate progress
- ☐ 10. Accessible data & RoR

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Search and Filter

Keywords

Short introduction description of how to navigate the CoARA Library


Select output typeSelect creator groupSelect related Commitments

**CoARA Working Group**
OIARRA: Towards
Open Infrastructures
for Responsible Research
Assessment


Conceptual Architecture for the Implementation of a Responsible Research Assessment Framework Built on Open Infrastructures

Working Group: OIARRA

September 9th, 2025




Read more

**CoARA Working Group**
Reforming Academic
Career Assessment
(ACA)


Rethinking academic career assessment - Lessons and tools for reform (CoARA Working Group ACA)

Working Group: ACA

September 9th, 2025




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Read more

3 columns

Banner image

Publication title


Creator group

Publication date

Endorsement Type A badge: Endorsed by CoARA Steering Board image

Link to read more

- **CoARA Library** currently in development, with an expected launch in December 2025
- **Streamline resources** endorsed by the CoARA community and/or the Steering Board, to be hosted on www.coara.org
- **Searchable database** to make endorsed tools for implementation readily accessible to the coalition

 **CoARA**

To be hosted on the new coara.org website
CoARA Library with outputs linked via Zenodo

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