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MAY 19–21 HELSINKI

Research Evaluation in Social Sciences and Humanities

REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

ENRESSH

Federation of Finnish Learned Societies

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MONDAY
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SESSION 1
OPENING AND KEYNOTE

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POSTER SESSION

SESSION 1
OPENING AND KEYNOTE

RESHAPING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT: WHAT RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES HAVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

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In recent years, funders, institutions, and scholarly communities have intensified efforts to rethink ways of measuring research quality. Traditional metrics such as citation counts or journal impact factors have often fallen short in capturing the diverse, collaborative, and evolving nature of scholarship, while the long-standing focus on published final results has tended to overlook crucial scholarly activities such as data curation, software development, methodological innovation, and training. In this keynote, I will explore the role that research infrastructures can play in reshaping research assessment practices by helping us shift the focus from rigid, product-oriented models to more holistic approaches that recognize knowledge creation as a dynamic, multi-step process.

SESSION 2A
OPEN RESEARCH

OPEN RESEARCH DATA POLICY AND RESEARCH EVALUATION IN SWITZERLAND. RESULTS FROM A LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

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Open Science / Open Research has become an important concept driving science policy. In recent years, national and international strategies on different aspects of Open Science / Open Research have been published, with Open Access as the most discussed aspect. However, Open Research Data (ORD) has gained traction recently with the emergence of the "reproducibility crisis" in several disciplines (e.g., Baker, 2016; Breznau et al., 2022).

However, concepts and practices regarding Open Science / Open Research differ widely across disciplines while the discourse on the concepts focused primarily on a few specific disciplines until recently (Watchorn, 2022). Yet, if the concepts are defined in a way that do not correspond to the epistemological characteristics of a discipline, policies might affect disciplines differently, especially as there can be numerous obstacles for making data publicly available that depend on a discipline's characteristic (for an overview, see Beno et al., 2017). This could become problematic if ORD practices are made a requirement for funding, or part of evaluation procedures as is foreseen, for example, in the Action Plan linked to the Swiss National Strategy Open Research Data (swissuniversities, 2021, p.27).

Definitions of what is understood as "open" do play a role. For example, it is often reported that the social sciences and humanities lag behind regarding Open Data and Open Science in general (e.g., for the Swiss case, von der Heyde, 2019). But the situation is much more nuanced: some SSH disciplines might lag behind for specific reasons, but for others it sounds cynical when open data movement or practices are said to have "emerged after the launch of the US Open Data portal in 2009" (Beno et al., 2017) because in some SSH disciplines sharing data openly does have a long tradition with the first international archives emerging in the 1960ies (see, e.g., Late & Ochsner, 2024). Depending on how one defines "open", existing practices, sometimes

having a very long tradition, fall under the umbrella of "open" research that might be under the radar of policy makers (e.g., libraries and museums in the humanities). This also influences opinions and preferences regarding open research practices and policies. Such policies often come with trade-offs that might be more restrictive for some disciplines than others (see, e.g. Ochsner et al., 2024).

This raises the question how Higher Education Institutions (HEI) approach this topic. In this paper, we present and expand the results of a landscape analysis (Araujo et al., 2024) conducted within the project "recognise ORD (recORD)", funded by the Swiss Chamber of universities (swissuniversities). We review the situation in Switzerland regarding Open Research Data (ORD) policies and the role that ORD practices play in evaluation procedures at the Swiss HEIs and develop a classification of HEIs regarding their ORD policy implementation and its link to evaluation.

Methods

The data used in the landscape analysis is based on a questionnaire developed in March 2024, based on literature review insights. The survey, containing 75 questions on respondent background and ORD-related practices, was conducted online and targeted individuals involved in research assessment and ORD policies at Swiss HEIs. Emails were sent to 57 institutions, with responses from 53 participants across 29 HEIs and the Swiss National Science Foundation. The fieldwork period lasted from April to May 2024 (Bornatici et al., 2024).

The analysis consists of three steps. We first aggregate individual data to the institutional level. In the second step, we present descriptive results regarding different dimensions of ORD policy and its link to evaluation. In the third step, we further condense the results and develop a classification of how institutions implement ORD policies and include ORD practices in their evaluation procedures using Multiple Correspondence Analysis, a method that has already been used in the field of research evaluation for classifying national evaluation procedures (Ochsner et al., 2018).

Preliminary results

While we are still implementing the third step of our analysis, the findings after the first two steps of the analysis indicate that while Swiss HEIs broadly support ORD practices, their actual implementation varies. Most institutions have ORD policies in place or under development, yet financial and technical support remains inconsistent, with a fraction of smaller institutions facing resource constraints. Additionally, we show that ORD practices are rarely integrated into research assessment procedures, though about one-third of HEIs are developing policies to do so, suggesting a shift in the coming years.

However, challenges remain, including the need to bridge gaps between ORD policy and research evaluation, discipline-specific constraints, and the lack of strong incentives for researchers to engage in ORD beyond voluntary participation. These factors highlight the complexity of integrating ORD into research assessment and

the importance of institutional-level strategies to ensure alignment with disciplinary practices. In particular, we identified four types of barriers for supporting ORD practices within HEIs: 1) Financial barriers: ORD practices are time-consuming and resource-intensive and this in competition with conducting new research; 2) technical barriers: there is no one-size-fits-all approach and providing a productive ORD infrastructure comes with technical challenges; 3) social barriers: researchers fear scooping, lack of acknowledgement and traditions might not align with ORD practices, which takes time to change (e.g., journals not allowing for data citations); 4) epistemic barriers: the efforts for implementing ORD practices depend on disciplinary characteristics. In some disciplines, it takes much more effort than in others to implement ORD practices, for example because of data protection, high volume and complexity of data, copyright issues).

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EVALUATION AS A SOURCE OF MISERY IN ACADEMIA – BOUNDARIES OF RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

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Keywords: *responsible research assessment, research evaluation, affects, SSH, academic work*

This presentation is based on an article manuscript scrutinizing the role of evaluation in shaping researchers' emotional experiences, approaching the topic through the lens of affective practices (Wetherell 2013). By identifying the different evaluation mechanisms contributing to misery in academia, the study seeks to advance a deeper understanding of the promise of Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) and its boundaries.

Evaluation plays a crucial role in academia, acting both as a gatekeeper of research quality and a mechanism for allocating scarce resources amidst an abundance of potential contributions (Lamont & Huutoniemi, 2011; Gingras, 2021). Beyond its role in measuring success, evaluation also serves as a central source of unhappiness among researchers. The study introduces a novel framework for studying research evaluation in the context of academic work by positioning it as one of the main sources of the 'misery narrative', a commonly used perspective in the study of academic work (cf. Ylijoki 2005; Ylijoki & Henriksson 2018; O'Keefe T & Courtois 2019; Suopajärvi 2023; Ylijoki et al. 2024). At the same time, it questions the tendency to attribute academic misery solely to the neoliberal university by drawing attention to the dynamics of evaluation, including the role of researchers as peer reviewers. Furthermore, it provides a critical viewpoint on the promise of RRA, distinguishing between the aspects of evaluation-related misery that RRA can meaningfully address and those that lie beyond its reach.

From the perspective of research evaluation, social sciences and humanities (SSH) fields can be seen as particularly vulnerable due to their dependence on varied quality criteria. The diversity of perspectives on research quality within these disciplines allows for a broader role of subjective judgment. This arises from the lower degree of codification in SSH compared to the natural sciences, leading to research outputs that frequently adopt essayistic forms rather than conforming to standardized structures. (Zuckerman & Merton, 1972). Furthermore, SSH fields are characterized

by the coexistence of multiple competing paradigms rather than a single dominant one (Kyvik, 1991; Kulczycki et al., 2018). These characteristics, coupled with the evaluative uncertainties they produce, create conditions that can be assumed to expose especially SSH researchers to affective experiences of misery.

Even though the problems involved in research evaluation methods and especially in the quantitative indicators used in evaluation have been commonly acknowledged in the fields of bibliometrics and science studies, only within the last decade or so, they have reached the awareness of the wider scientific community (Himanen et al. 2024). The start of a wider discussion can be pinpointed to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA, 2012). Since then, several other principles for responsible research assessment (RRA) have been published, for example the Metric Tide, Leiden Manifesto, and the Hong Kong Principles, all building on each other and continuing to define RRA. The latest and the most comprehensive document is the European Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment. (Hicks et al 2015; Wilsdon et al. 2015; Moher et al. 2020; European University Association et al 2022.)

While there are differences in the foci of the published principles, they all are aligned regarding the most important features of more responsible research assessments: recognizing and respecting diversity in research activities, outputs, careers, and disciplines, using quantitative methods only to support qualitative evaluation, eliminating the inappropriate use of journal- and publication-based metrics, and being open and transparent about the criteria, data and analyses used in evaluation. In an ideal world for assessments, researchers and research organisations would be constantly adapting to evolving frameworks, methodologies, and expectations. In academic work, however, integrating these principles into everyday practices is more complex than stated in the principles.

The study asks:

1. How does research evaluation contribute to researchers' affects reflecting misery in academia?
2. How do these affects intersect with and challenge the boundaries of responsible research assessment?

By positioning RRA within the wider context of academic work, our study offers a lens to critically examine its limitations. While responsible research assessment (RRA) primarily addresses procedural fairness and the implementation of evaluations, even the most responsibly conducted processes cannot escape the inherent aspects of evaluation: not only do they rank researchers and allocate resources or positions, but they also produce anxiety through constant assessments. Considering this duality—the interplay between procedural fairness and the unavoidable outcomes of evaluation—as intertwined dimensions that may be impossible to separate, this study focuses on the procedural level of evaluations as a source of misery within the context of RRA.

The data consists of a survey designed to explore researchers' preferences for evaluation practices and to identify the types of skills and expertise they believe should be recognized and rewarded in evaluations. It targeted researchers across various academic fields, career stages, and organisations in Finland. The survey was conducted in 2023 by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (Pölönen et al. 2024). This presentation focuses on the survey's open-ended questions, which address researchers' affects related to the misery stemming from evaluation processes, and specifically on responses from researchers in the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities (N=182).

Styles of valuation differ between fields (Hammarfelt et al. 2024), and SSH researchers face challenges tied to the emphasis on scientific excellence, which expects primarily publishing internationally in article format (Ocshner et al. 2023). The link between these fields and science policy priorities is evident in their ties to scientific excellence and distinct engagement with the 'impact agenda' (Smith et al. 2020). Despite growing recognition of diverse research impacts, SSH fields remain disadvantaged within the impact agenda, which prioritizes 'quick wins' like economic returns, technological advances, and scientific breakthroughs (Muhonen, Benneworth & Olmos-Peñuela 2020).

The results show that the four most important features shared by the documents defining RRA (DORA, Leiden Manifesto, Metric Tide, Hong Kong Principles and Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment) reflect the problems researchers' experience in different evaluation situations, and considering the findings it becomes evident that disregarding these principles in evaluation practices fosters misery within academia. This suggest that in the development of RRA principles researchers' key concerns have been identified well. However, the solution offered by RRA is not without challenges.

Our findings expand the understanding of RRA's boundaries by demonstrating how the procedural aspects of evaluations fail to fully align with the aims of RRA development. The study reveals how this misalignment is linked to the subjective nature of the research assessments, which extend beyond the scope of RRA and challenge its capacity to fully address the complexities of evaluation processes. This demonstrates that, while the principles of RRA are central in building a more sustainable evaluation culture, they cannot fully resolve the complexities of evaluation processes, particularly its reliance on peer review, facing challenges such as social bias, content-based bias, and the influence of institutional politics, power dynamics, and hidden criteria (cf. Ross-Hellauer et al. 2024).

The findings indicate that SSH researchers' affects related to evaluation stem largely from evaluation itself rather than discipline-specific assessments. This calls for a broader discussion on how evaluation's inherent aspects—such as reviewer subjectivity and resource allocation—shape researchers' experiences across disciplines.

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ADVANCING OPEN SCIENCE IN SSH: RETHINKING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT THROUGH THE SCIROS PROJECT

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Keywords: *SSH research, international collaboration, theory of open science, practice of open science, open science infrastructure*

The reform of research assessment is a key priority within the European Research Area, reflecting the growing recognition of the need for more inclusive, qualitative, and open approaches to evaluation. The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA) and the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) set the foundation for this transformation, emphasizing the importance of recognizing diverse research outputs and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. However, within the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), research assessment remains heavily reliant on traditional bibliometric indicators, often failing to capture the full spectrum of research contributions and societal impact.

The Strategic Collaboration for Interdisciplinary Research on Open Science in SSH (SCIROS, https://sciros.hypotheses.org/) project aims to address this gap by developing a framework for research assessment that aligns with Open Science principles. Launched in September 2024, SCIROS is a collaborative initiative involving six academic institutions across Europe, designed to investigate and promote best practices in research evaluation for SSH disciplines.

While SCIROS is not explicitly designed to reform research evaluation, its interdisciplinary workshops, collaborative research activities, and open discussions naturally provoke reflections on traditional assessment models. The project's emphasis on transparency, multilingualism, equitable knowledge sharing, and cross-disciplinary cooperation encourages new ways of thinking about how research contributions are recognized and valued. As researchers engage in these dialogues, potential alternative approaches to evaluation emerge as byproducts of SCIROS' broader mission to advance open science.

This poster outlines the strategic approach, planned methodology, and collaborative efforts within SCIROS. We discuss the project's key research questions, including how Open Science values can be effectively integrated into assessment frameworks. Our methodology involves empirical case studies, stakeholder consultations, and interdisciplinary workshops to explore alternative assessment models. Additionally, we highlight the role of international collaboration with project partners in shaping the research agenda and ensuring practical applicability of findings.

OPEN HUMANITIES MANIFESTO – REFORMING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT IN THE HUMANITIES

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Keywords: *open science, research assessment, humanities, advocacy, open access*

Researchers often perceive Open Science (OS) reforms as an external imposition by funders and policymakers, and that perception is a serious hindrance for its implementation. To overcome that obstacle, it is worth reminding that the impulse has often come from below and from within the academic community. One such case is the Open Humanities Manifesto (OHM – https://operas.pl/manifest-otwartej-humanistyki/), a bottom-up initiative for reforming research assessment in the humanities within the evolving Open Science (OS) landscape and research assessment reforms discussed within the European scholarly community (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment, 2022; Hicks et al., 2015). Drafted collaboratively by researchers, librarians, and publishers in Poland, the OHM underscores the humanities' alignment with the principle of openness, emphasising the free flow of ideas as an intrinsic value of scholarly inquiry (Leonelli 2023).

The OHM addresses the failure of existing research assessment frameworks to adequately recognise and reward Open Science practices in the humanities, thus hindering their sustainable implementation. In response to this challenge, the OHM sets forth four key recommendations advocating reform in research assessment in Poland. These include:

1. **The evaluation system should acknowledge and support open science practices.** The evaluation system and, consequently, the funding of scientific entities in Poland should not only support the development of open science practices but, in the long term, adopt its values and standards as the foundation of science policy. This involves greater recognition and credit for practices such as publishing in open access, sharing research data according to FAIR principles, creating open textbooks and teaching materials, or engaging in citizen science projects.
2. **The evaluation of achievements should acknowledge the diversity of research outputs specific to the humanities.** It is essential to establish clear evaluation criteria for scientific communication forms beyond articles or monographs. These criteria should reflect scientific value, innovation, and social impact. The entire scientific community needs to collaborate on developing these standards and integrating them into the evaluation system.

This way, we can truly recognize the diversity and richness of contemporary scientific communication within the humanities.

3. **Open publishing models should be supported and sustained.** We call for the creation of a systemic open access policy that includes not only "soft" recommendations for publishers and research funding agencies, but also a detailed funding program for scholarly publishers (academic publishers in particular) embarking on digital transformation towards open science principles.
4. **Development and internationalization of the humanities require strengthening the national infrastructure of open science.** The Polish science policy, based on the principles of openness, should invest in the development of teams and tools to support open access and the application of FAIR principles and other standards developed by the international open science movement. These measures will help strengthen the visibility of our publications and research results in globally used databases and the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC).

By aligning with international initiatives such as Plan S, CoARA, and DORA, the OHM seeks to catalyze systemic change in the way humanities scholarship is assessed and valued. Rooted in the OPERAS Research Infrastructure principles and values, the Manifesto highlights the unique characteristics of humanities, particularly multilingualism and bibliodiversity. OHM advocates for a scholarly communication system free from economic and prestige barriers, ensuring the unrestricted flow of ideas and discoveries within the academic community and between science and society while maintaining academic quality control mechanisms. Such a system empowers society to effectively respond to crises, better evaluate opinions, and counteract the spread of socially harmful myths. By embedding these principles into research assessment, OHM seeks to create a more equitable and sustainable model for humanities scholarship.

This paper will present the OHM as a strategic intervention to promote Open Science within the humanities and explore the initiative's potential as an advocacy tool for policy change. The presentation will offer insights into the advocacy process behind the OHM, analyse its reception among various stakeholders, and propose pathways for expanding its influence at both national and international levels. Additionally, it will discuss the critical role of researchers, editors, and science managers in scaling up advocacy efforts to integrate Open Science principles into institutional and national research evaluation frameworks (Banks et al. 2018). The paper will further discuss the implications of these challenges for policymakers, funders, and academic institutions, proposing concrete strategies to bridge existing gaps. The findings will serve as a foundation for future advocacy efforts and policy interventions aimed at enhancing the visibility and impact of humanities scholarship in the digital era.

The authors will contextualize the OHM within a broader historical and policy-oriented framework, focusing on how past and current advocacy movements in Open Science have shaped research assessment debates. By examining the broader context of research assessment reform (European Commission, 2021; European Council,

2022; CoARA 2022) from the point of view of these bottom-up initiatives this paper aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on creating more inclusive and equitable evaluation models that recognize the full spectrum of scholarly contributions in the humanities. By incorporating a multifaceted approach that blends theoretical perspectives with practical recommendations, this paper aims to foster a deeper understanding of the intersection between Open Science and humanities research assessment. It calls for increased collaboration among researchers, institutions, and policymakers to co-create sustainable and inclusive evaluation models.

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SESSION 2B
COARA IMPLEMENTATION

ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN THE COALITION FOR ADVANCING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT: LESSONS FROM THE UK COARA NATIONAL CHAPTER

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Keywords: *coalition for advancing research assessment, responsible research assessment, research culture, organisational practices, stakeholder engagement*

Research assessment in Europe is changing. There is growing momentum towards evaluation models that are more inclusive, qualitative and holistic. This shift reflects increasing recognition across the region of the flaws of the traditional assessment systems. Since 2013, for example, many research institutions and organisations in Europe have signed the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)[i]. Calls for more active reform, however, has intensified with a 2021 Scoping Report from the European Commission[ii] and the 2022 conclusions of the Council of the European Union on research assessment and open science[iii]. In response, a major milestone was reached with the launch of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) in December 2022.

i https://sfdora.org/read/
ii European Commission: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Towards a reform of the research assessment system – Scoping report, Publications Office, 2021, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/707440
iii https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/56958/st10126-en22.pdf

CoARA brings together a wide range of organisations involved in research assessment. This includes research funders, universities, assessment agencies, learned societies, and researcher organisations. These groups have committed to working together to reform research assessment based on shared principles and commitments set out in the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment[iv], which was published in July 2022. However, while the shift towards more responsible research assessment is gaining momentum, obstacles still hinder some organisations from feeling that they can make these commitments.

One of CoARA's key aims – which would help more organisations to see how they can make changes – is to provide platforms for mutual learning and collaboration for those working towards the reform of research assessment. Signatory organisations, for example, can participate in Working Groups and National Chapters, both serving as communities of practice to help drive adoption. Working Groups brings together members to explore and implement reforms in specific thematic areas. National Chapters, on the other hand, offer organsiations a forum for sharing experiences, navigating and advocating for reform within their national and regional contexts.

In February 2024, the UK CoARA National Chapter was established, co-led by the University of Strathclyde, Loughborough University, and Swansea University. Following some closed meetings with CoARA signatories to establish our priorities and plans as a Chapter, we held our first open meeting in October 2024 to engage with non-signatories and support their wider participation in CoARA. This meeting attracted over 100 attendees. From this, there is clearly significant interest in CoARA within the UK, potentially reflecting the fact that the UK already has a well-developed understanding of responsible research assessment from reviews of the national research quality assessment, the Research Excellence Framework.

However, despite this momentum, significant barriers remain in organisational commitment to CoARA. As of early 2025, only 27 UK institutions have formally signed the Agreement[v], compared to the 285 UK organisations that have signed DORA[vi]. This indicates that while many organisations are supportive of the principles, few have made formal commitments.

Through consultations, open meetings, feedback and one-to-one conversations with non signatory organisations as National Chapter coordinators, we have identified several challenges that typical pose barriers to participation, which are preventing interest from translating into signatures. These challenges include:

- Risk aversion among senior leaders: Many organisations remain cautious about signing the CoARA as their senior leaders have expressed concerns

iv https://coara.eu/app/uploads/2022/09/2022_07_19_rra_agreement_final.pdf

v https://coara.eu/agreement/signatories/?category%5B0%5D=united-kingdom#signatories

vi https://sfdora.org/signers/?_organization_country=united kingdom&_signer_type=organisation

that recognising a broader range of research contributions could dilute traditional definitions of "research quality". Additionally, there is a hesitancy to be early adopters, with some organisations preferring to wait and assess the experiences of those that commit sooner.

- Concerns about employability and funding: Another concern among universities is the potential impact of broadening assessment criteria on the employability of staff and their ability to attract funding for research. Institutions worry that moving away from traditional metrics could affect graduates' employability and staff members' ability to secure research grants, particularly from funding bodies that still rely on more established, but more restrictive, sets of success criteria.
- Financial and resource constraints: Many research managers involved in research assessment highlight the substantial workload involved in updating organisational policies to align with CoARA's principles. Organisations that already implement responsible assessment practices may perceive limited additional benefit in formalising their commitment to CoARA.
- Established use of institutional rankings: Institutional rankings play a central role in attracting students, staff, funding and partnerships. For institutions that rely heavily on rankings for visibility and prestige, CoARA's opposition to the use of rankings in research assessment is perceived to present a significant barrier.
- Organisational complexity: Research assessment processes involve multiple departments within organisations, particularly within universities (e.g. Human Resources, Research Funding, Research Policy, Staff Development). Aligning these departments with CoARA's principles of responsible research assessment requires robust coordination, making reform seem like an intricate and potentially resource demanding task.

These barriers are important as they significantly slow the pace of reform. Organisations that avoid signing the Agreement may struggle to embed responsible assessment practices fully. Additionally, those working on internal reforms in isolation often miss opportunities for shared learning and the avoidance of duplication of effort.

This presentation will explore these organisational barriers in detail and provide practical strategies for overcoming them. Drawing on feedback from consultations and discussions with research managers, we will outline approaches for mitigating perceived risks, addressing resource constraints, and navigating institutional complexities. Attendees will gain actionable insights and recommendations on how to overcome common organisational challenges to CoARA participation, ensuring that their organisations can contribute to the advancement of responsible research assessment.

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i https://sfdora.org/read/

ii European Commission: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Towards a reform of the research assessment system – Scoping report, Publications Office, 2021, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/707440

iii https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/56958/st10126-en22.pdf

iv https://coara.eu/app/uploads/2022/09/2022_07_19_rra_agreement_final.pdf

v https://coara.eu/agreement/signatories/?category%5B0%5D=united-kingdom#signatories

vi https://sfdora.org/signers/?_organization_country=united kingdom&_signer_type=organisation

UPTAKE OF THE COALITION FOR ADVANCING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT ACROSS HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN EUROPE

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During the past decade, several international initiatives have been launched to advocate responsible research assessment. In a report for the Global Research Council, Stephen Curry and colleagues have defined responsible research assessment as practices that "incentivise, reflect and reward the plural characteristics of high-quality research, in support of diverse and inclusive research cultures" (Curry et al., 2020; Rushforth & Hammarfelt, 2022, Peruginelli & Pölönen, 2023).

In 2022, an Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment was published, as the result of a co- creation process involving more than 350 organisations from 40 countries. The Agreement includes a set of principles, 10 commitments and action plan with 5-year timeframe for carrying-out organisational reforms. The 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.

CoARA is the community of organisations that have signed the Agreement, offering members a space for mutual learning from others' experiences. To facilitate implementation in diverse national contexts, CoARA members have established 16 National Chapters, which also allow discussion about the reform in national and local languages. In addition, CoARA also has 13 thematic working groups, enabling members to work together to find practical solutions to various assessment challenges.

Currently the agreement has been signed by over 800 organisations, of which more than 700 are members of CoARA. Large majority of the CoARA member organisations are universities, research centers and infrastructures. But a very broad range of organisation have joined the community, including academies and learned societies, research funders, evaluation agencies and other relevant non-profit organisations. CoARA is growing increasingly global, actively inviting organisations from all continents to join and contribute to the reform. Nevertheless, most CoARA member organisations are from Europe.

In Europe, the European Commission has promoted the recognition of diversity in career-assessment since 2005 through the *European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* (European Commission, 2005). The HR Excellence in Research award is granted to research performing organisations that

are progressing in the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers in their policies and practices. It is important to notice that the Charter was updated in 2023 to align with ARRA (European Commission, 2023).

Aims and methods

The aim of this work-in-progress study is to better understand the uptake of CoARA across Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in Europe. While it is well-known that there are large differences in number of CoARA member organisations across different European countries, this study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What share of HEIs are members of CoARA across European countries?
2. What share of HEIs with different relative specialization in natural sciences and engineering are members of CoARA across European countries?
3. What share of research intensive HEIs in Europe are members of CoARA?
4. What share of HEIs are members of COARA and/or have the HR in Excellence award?

While the structure of higher education and the definition of HEI in different European countries may differ, this study uses as data (all information retrieved in early November 2024):

1. List of CoARA member organisations from CoARA website: a total of 698 organisations, including 438 Universities and their associations
2. European Tertiary Education Register (ETER) is used to estimate the number of HEIs, and those with relative specialization in natural sciences and engineering. From the ETER database, 2513 HEIs with ROR (Research organisation Registry) identifier are identified for analysis.
3. Leiden Ranking Open Edition 2024 is used to identify 483 most research intensive HEIs across Europe in terms of production of research outputs in OpenAlex
4. HR Excellence in Research Dashboard is used to identify HEIs and other type of organisations that have gained the HR Excellence award: a total of 736 organisations.

Preliminary results

What share of HEIs are members of CoARA across Europe?

- 13% of 2513 HEIs with ROR in ETER are CoARA members. There are, however, large differences between countries and regions of Europe.
- the share of HEIs with different relative specialization in natural sciences and engineering are members of CoARA across European countries will be analysed for the presentation.

What share of research intensive HEIs in Europe are members of CoARA?

- 40% of HEIs included in the Leiden Ranking Open Edition are CoARA members. However, there are large differences between European countries and regions.

What share of HEIs are members of COARA and/or have the HR in Excellence award?

- Overall, 6.4 % of 2513 HEIs with ROR are only CoARA members, 6.2 % are both CoARA members and have HR in Excellence label, and 9.6 % have only HR Excellence label. There are important differences between European countries with large share of HEI engaged in both CoARA and HR Excellence, while in some countries HEIs are engaged with only one or the other, or neither.

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ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH ASSESSMENT IN SSH: INSIGHTS FROM COARA ACTION PLANS

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Keywords: *SSH, research assessment, Gargantext, CoARA, open science, qualitative peer review, responsible metrics*

The Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), launched on December 1, 2022, following the signing of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, is an international initiative promoting responsible, inclusive, and qualitative research evaluation. Alongside related efforts such as Agorra and OPERA, CoARA is fostering global discussion on inclusive and context-sensitive assessment practices. In response to the specific challenges faced by the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH), several CoARA partners—including networks like ENRESSH and large multidisciplinary institutions—have supported the creation of SSH-focused working groups, such as "Evaluating Social Sciences and Humanities Globally" and "Multilingualism and Language Biases in Research Assessment."

As part of their commitment, each CoARA member institution is required to publish an Action Plan outlining current evaluation practices, key challenges, and proposed steps for reform. These plans, aligned with the principles of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA), typically include initiatives such as adopting alternative metrics, promoting qualitative peer review, and enhancing recognition of diverse research outputs and societal impact.

ANVUR, the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes, was one of the first evaluation agencies to join the Coalition, and it has been actively involved in its activities since the beginning, collaborating in several working groups (such as Evaluating SSH globally and multilingualism) and participating as

a partner in the CoARA Boost Project. Building on ANVUR's activities within CoARA and its collaborative efforts with CNRS through the CoARA Boost project, this paper offers a systematic analysis of institutional CoARA action plans. More specifically, it examines how SSH-specific considerations are being integrated into policies and strategic actions proposed by the coalition's international partners.

To extract data relevant to SSH from the extensive number of available action plans, we utilized Gargantext, a textual data-mining tool provided by CNRS. A total of 167 action plans (as of January 2025) has been systematically analysed using a targeted search, based on carefully selected keywords that reflect the unique requirements of SSH research assessment. These keywords include "social sciences and humanities," "Arts/artistic research/artistic", "Inter/multi/transdisciplinary research or inter/multi/transdisciplinarity", "multilingualism", "monograph(s)," "book(s)."

This filtering process was necessary to highlight action plans explicitly tailored to SSH while also capturing innovative and transferable methodologies and strategies from other institution not directly related with SSH. Through this approach, we identified 50 action plans that include references to the selected keywords. Of these, 34 originate from universities, 11 from academies, associations, organizations, or societies, and 5 from governmental agencies or bodies. Twenty-seven action plans come from comprehensive institutions, 10 from mostly STEM-oriented institutions and one each from SSH-focused and arts-oriented institutions. Geographically, the vast majority are European institutions, with a notable concentration from Finland and Italy—though this distribution is likely influenced by the current composition of the dataset and the number of action plans available for analysis.

Among the preliminary findings emerging from our keyword frequency analysis, several trends are particularly noteworthy. First, universities appear to lead the discourse on the assessment of Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities (SSH), as evidenced by the higher occurrence of relevant keywords within their action plans. In particular, multidisciplinary universities register the highest frequency across all SSH-related categories—especially Social Sciences and Arts—underscoring their broad engagement with these themes. STEM and Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS), while showing a comparatively lower number of SSH-related references, reveal a stronger presence of terms related to inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinarity. This suggests a focus on cross-disciplinary collaboration and applied research within these institutions. Conversely, institutions explicitly categorized as SSH- or Arts-focused, although clearly emphasizing their disciplinary specialization, do not tend to include references to interdisciplinarity, indicating that this discourse may be less prominent in these contexts.

From a geographical perspective, Italy and several Central European countries appear particularly active in addressing SSH-related challenges within their action plans, reflecting a high level of institutional engagement with research assessment reform. However, references to inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary approaches remain relatively limited across most national contexts, potentially pointing to a broader gap in policy discussions on interdisciplinarity.

It is important to note that these observations are based on the 167 action plans currently published. Given that the total number of CoARA signatories is significantly higher, it is likely that many institutions are still in the process of developing and submitting their plans. As the dataset continues to expand, future analyses may reveal a more comprehensive picture of institutional priorities and innovations in SSH research assessment.

A contextual analysis of the selected keywords within the action plans reveals important nuances in how institutions conceptualize and operationalize SSH-related terms. "Social Sciences," "Arts," and "Humanities" frequently co-occur, often embedded within institutional mission statements, strategic research agendas, or as part of internal evaluative frameworks such as disciplinary panels or observatories. These terms are not merely nominal, their usage signalling varying degrees of integration into broader discourses of research assessment reform. Multidisciplinary institutions, in particular, tend to mobilize SSH terminology to articulate cross-sectoral engagement and responsiveness to societal challenges, often positioning the Arts and Humanities as vectors for innovation, user-centered design, and public value. In contrast, SSH- or Arts-specialized institutions, while consistently referencing their core disciplinary identities, exhibit a lower incidence of inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary framing—highlighting potential epistemic or structural barriers to interdisciplinary integration. Notably, several institutions are actively recalibrating their evaluative mechanisms to better accommodate the epistemological diversity of SSH, including the establishment of dedicated SSH assessment panels and the recognition of non-traditional outputs such as monographs and practice-based research. The alignment of SSH terminology with overarching themes—such as inclusivity, societal relevance, and responsible metrics—further underscores its emerging role within a paradigm shift toward more pluralistic and reflexive models of research evaluation.

In conclusion, this analysis offers an initial but significant insight into how SSH considerations are currently articulated within CoARA institutional action plans. While some promising patterns emerge—particularly in the commitment of multidisciplinary institutions and specific national contexts—the uneven distribution of SSH-related terms and the limited integration of interdisciplinarity indicate areas where further development is needed. As more action plans are published and analyzed, these findings will provide a critical foundation for refining research assessment practices and informing the next stages of the SSH evaluation framework within CoARA.

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ADVANCING RRA IN A CANADIAN CONTEXT

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Canada's post-secondary research ecosystem doesn't fit into an easy comparison with many countries. But then again, neither does Canada, as a federation of former British and French settler colonies on Indigenous land. Today, Canadian society is officially bilingual and officially multicultural (Théberge 2021). Only in the last decade has the general public begun a process of Truth and Reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples (NCTR 2015). Recently, this has included the legal implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (Government of Canada). For scholars in Canada, responsible research assessment takes place in this context, alongside efforts to decolonize systems of knowledge production, to support research in the French language, and to foster a more equitable and inclusive research ecosystem that properly reflects the full diversity of Canadian society.

In Canada's federal constitution, education is a defined area of provincial jurisdiction. Thus the largest share of a university's operating budget is provided by its provincial government (Statistics Canada 2022). Thus, Canadian researchers and their universities are not subject to national assessments. Questions related to measurement of research impact are consequently not conflated with institutional funding requirements as they may be in other countries (Pearce 2018). In Canada, the role of the federal government in post-secondary education is to support research, by providing scholarships and grants. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) is an arm's length agency of Canada's federal public service. It works very closely with two sister agencies, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). As granting agencies, we have opportunities to positively incentivize change by integrating RRA principles in our policies, our practices, and into the terms and conditions of the funding that we administer. My remarks, from this position as a representative of SSHRC, will be to share some of our experiences, as a funding body dedicated to supporting the SSH and to advancing RRA, albeit from a non-European context.

The federal research funding agencies have signed DORA, the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (SSHRC 2021). Many Canadian universities have not. Clearly, RRA principles are unevenly implemented in different domains and stages of the research cycle. Many researchers believe that review, promotion and tenure processes require publication in "high impact journals" (Niles et al 2020, Wu 2025), even when university documents might appear to emphasize research's benefits to "community" and "public good" (Alperin et. al. 2019). Funders attempt to leverage their funding opportunities and policy leadership to indirectly influence change in the system as a whole, but change requires both the implementation of new practices and the "de-implementation" of others (Gagliardi et al. 2023).

A few examples of harmonized efforts undertaken by all three agencies:

- To assess research grant applications, all three agencies rely on qualitative peer review processes and exclude the consideration of journal metrics. DORA principles are explicitly referenced in the merit review process, in reviewers' manuals and training materials. Review committees are instructed to evaluate research on its own merits, valuing a diversity of research approaches, outputs and impacts.
- More indirectly, a number of DORA-aligned Tri-Agency policies provide clear expectations to the research community. These include Tri-Agency policies on Open Access, Research Data Management, Research Ethics, The Responsible Conduct of Research, (Government of Canada 2024), and a Research Training Strategy (Government of Canada 2024).
- The three agencies also have cross-cutting commitments to transform the research ecosystem, through a Strategic Plan for Indigenous Research (CRCC 2022) and an Action Plan for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (Government of Canada 2018).
- The merit review committees all receive training. For example, there is a training module on unconscious bias, that covers both bias concerning identity factors, and also those related to research, such as biases for or against methods, fundamental/applied research, institutional size or reputation and bibliometric bias. (Tri-Agency Institutional Programs Secretariat 2024)
- All three agencies are also moving together on the adoption of a narrative style CV for grant applications. This form provides the applicant with open fields to describe significant research contributions that demonstrate the capacity to successfully execute the proposed research project. The new form invites applicants to emphasize their unique research impacts in prose, rather than entering an index score (SSHRC 2024).

SSHRC takes a harmonized approach to the above policies and implements them in a manner appropriate for the needs of SSH researchers. SSH researchers study human agency, addressing historicity, positionality, and cultural relativity, and using mixed methods and interdisciplinary approaches. SSH is a heterogeneous category, whose multiple disciplines and subdisciplines have different norms and criteria for validating research outputs.

In a discussion paper on assessment, Canada's Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences called for a "flexible, pluralistic approach to impact assessment" given the "highly diverse" work undertaken in SSH. It highlighted the challenges associated with attribution and the difficulties in quantifying direct and indirect impacts of SSH research, which occur across societies and over time (Severinson et al 2017).

Rather than seeking universal "best practices" for RRA for all disciplines, a phenomenology of SSH practice would suggest pluralistic approaches that share general RRA principles yet recognize the need to address the unique characteristics (structural and

cultural) specific to different disciplines, institutions, languages and regions. In this light, there are SSHRC-specific policies, practices and strategies that were designed to meet the needs of the SSH research community.

- SSHRC's discipline-specific merit review committees (SSHRC 2024) apply the criteria and sub criteria in a manner suitable to each field. For example, those experienced in community-based participatory research methods understand that research happens "at the speed of trust," affecting the pace of research outputs.
- The manual for review committee members (SSHRC 2024) explains the importance of DORA principles, as well as other mutually reinforcing policies.
- SSHRC requests that all committee members be bilingual. Every Canadian has the right to receive federal services in either English or French.
- SSHRC has developed specific guidelines for some SSH fields. Artists, for example, can obtain research grants for "research creation" (Definition, Guidelines)
- the merit review process is not merely a means of adjudication, but a continual process of recalibration and opportunity to promote RRA principles across the research community, as evidenced in surveys responses of our review committees published in annual reports on competitions (SSHRC 2024)

SSHRC benefits from regular engagement with our research community. Because SSH scholars study colonization, inequality, racism and other social issues, SSHRC has been challenged to move on these area frequently before our counterparts in the natural and health sciences. My spoken remarks will dedicate more time to a description of how the preceding elements are concretely illustrated in two case studies that have both enriched and expanded our understanding of responsible research assessment: (i) our decade-long collaboration and co-development with SSHRC's Advisory Circle on Indigenous Research (SSHRC 2024), addressing epistemological, ethical and rights issues as they relate to research. (ii) our recently published Action Plan for Black Researchers (SSHRC 2024).

POSTER SESSION

THE ATLAS OF ASSESSMENT: AN IMPORTANT NEW WEB RESOURCE FEATURING NATIONAL RESEARCH ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS AROUND THE WORLD

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The number of national research assessment and funding systems has expanded dramatically across many countries in recent years, although there is no single formula. In fact, designs and rationales vary considerably, from performance based funding systems to feedback-oriented advisory procedures, from those relying on qualitative peer review to quantitative bibliometrics methods, or from focusing on evaluating the performance of individual researchers to entire universities or disciplines, the sheer diversity is at times disorientating. Given this situation, what can be learnt from comparing diverse national systems and how can this be done in a legible, accessible way to support mutual learning?

Step forward the Atlas of Assessment, a state-of-the-art web resource presenting expertly curated data and information on national research assessment systems from all corners of the world. Based on a cutting-edge typology that simplifies, categorizes and compares multiple dimensions of these large complex systems, the Atlas will serve as a publicly available resource enabling policymakers, institutional leaders and researchers to browse countries, highlight and find regional trends, and learn about what others are doing.

The Atlas will be launched in the weeks running up to RESSH 2025.

The aim of this poster will be to introduce meta-researchers to this important new resource, walk them through its main features, provide instructions on navigating its

layout, suggest potential use cases, and, importantly, provide a QR link that allows them to get straight onto the website.

The Atlas of Assessment is a non-commercial product, publicly available to all. It is a co production effort between meta-researchers in the Research on Research Institute's AGORRA project and expert policymakers and funding administrators from 13 countries (and counting).

AN ECOSYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVE ON INTERDISCIPLINARY EVIDENCE-INFORMED POLICYMAKING

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Keywords: *evidence-informed policymaking, impact of SSAH, SSAH research policies, research evaluation, interdisciplinary research*

The #StrongerTogether-STEP2024 conference, held on 6–7 May 2024 under the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, explored ways to enhance evidence-informed policymaking (EIPM) ecosystems by integrating social sciences, arts, and humanities (SSAH) expertise into interdisciplinary research and policy processes. The conference brought together policymakers, scientists, knowledge brokers, and civil society actors to discuss strategies for fostering a collaborative and effective EIPM system that fully recognizes SSAH contributions alongside science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

The first outcomes of the conference were presented and discussed at RESSH2024. Since then, a report has been drafted by Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO), in collaboration with the members of a scientific committee. Through an open peer review all conference participants were also enabled to contribute to the final document. The resulting conference brief will be disseminated at RESSH 2025 under the form of a poster, and made available in its paper format to all participants interested.

The conference brief emphasises the need for a "system of systems" approach to scientific expertise, recognizing the diverse structures of EIPM across Europe. Rather than a one-size-fits-all model, stakeholders should adopt context-sensitive strategies that respect national and regional policy environments while advancing interdisciplinary collaboration. Key challenges identified include ensuring the political neutrality of scientific research, improving SSAH representation in research funding, and overcoming barriers to policy engagement for SSAH scholars.

The conference brief outlines five core dimensions for developing integrative EIPM ecosystems:

1. Collaboration and Co-Creation – Establishing platforms for sustained dialogue between SSAH and STEM researchers, policymakers, knowledge brokers,

and stakeholders to foster trust, mutual understanding, and co-designed research.

2. Capacity Building and Skilling – Developing interdisciplinary training programs for policymakers and researchers to enhance literacy in science-policy interactions and promote SSAH-STEM integration.
3. Recognition of SSAH Contributions – Formalizing policy engagement within SSAH career structures, ensuring funding mechanisms include SSAH expertise, and recognizing their contributions through awards and research grants.
4. Monitoring and Funding for Interdisciplinary Research – Implementing mixed-method approaches to assess SSAH integration in research projects and securing long-term funding for interdisciplinary studies.
5. Openness and Trust – Promoting transparency in policymaking, ensuring open access to research and policy reports, and distinguishing between scientific evidence and value-driven political decisions.

This conference brief and its ecosystemic model of interdisciplinary EIPM serve as a foundation for fostering robust, inclusive, and impactful EIPM ecosystems that leverage SSAH expertise for human-centric policymaking in an increasingly complex world.

TRENDS AND GAPS IN GERMAN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Keywords: *thematic analysis, social sciences, German universities, large language models, university ranking*

There is an ongoing debate about the evaluation of scientific work of individual researchers and at the university level (Acuna et al., 2012; Formoso, 2023; Hönekopp & Khan, 2012). Various metrics, such as the h-index, are studied to assess their role, and indicators of academic success are often used in grant decision-making. Bibliometric research is becoming more and more common. They can be used to track trends and underrepresentation of certain issues, as well as to evaluate the productivity and success of certain fields of knowledge, individual researchers, and journals. Such studies are often conducted within a single discipline or subject area. This descriptive study aims to analyse current and past trends in social science research, focusing on the coverage and underrepresentation of different research areas. It explores patterns in the coverage of social issues and reflects on how prioritization affects public attention and governmental support. Social sciences produce scientific results and conclusions regarding the most diverse spheres of society, social phenomena and processes (Benton & Craib, 2023; May & Perry, 2022; Weber, 2017). In this study, social sciences are understood in a broad sense. Data were collected not only from sociological and political science fields, but also from historical, educational, linguistic, partly psychological (the part that does not concern clinical psychology), respectively all sciences and disciplines that are not related to exact or natural sciences with the exception of statistical methods. The analysis is based on data from representatives of the social science areas of German universities included in the QS 2024 ranking (49 universities). Publication data were automatically collected from employee pages in Google Scholar (Google Scholar). 27 thematic categories were then created based on the frequency of words used in the abstracts. Large Language Models were used to determine the presence of each of the thematic categories in the range 0 to 10. The thematic structure of the English-language publications of German academics has been compiled. Thematic trends in dynamics are also considered. The model's text processing results are used to construct graphs depicting the evolving strength of involvement in specific topics. In addition, various academic metrics were found to be correlated with the position in the university ranking. This study concluded that choosing a university based on ranking in Germany is not a significant attribute for researcher success. However, highly ranked universities may have different writing norms, in particular, there is less encouragement to refer to classic theorists. It is clearly shown that there is a positive

statistically significant correlation between the number of articles on the same topic and the growth of the Hirsch index. Consequently, it can be concluded that the most successful publication strategy is to concentrate research interests around a single topic rather than to participate in projects with different thematic focus. It is also interesting to note that according to the results, topics related to gender and religion are the least popular, despite the active discussion of the gender agenda and the large number of departments in various fields for religious studies in Germany. In the future, it is planned to analyse German-language publications by the same authors and compare them with current data. The findings not only contribute to the understanding of research dynamics in Germany but also serves as a valuable framework for similar studies in other countries and academic fields. The tools used for the analysis were the programming languages R, Python and the Gephi tool for visualising the thematic category network.

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FRAUDULENT, CLONED AND HIJACKED JOURNALS IN LATIN AMERICA: DARK SIDE OF TRADITIONAL METRICS

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Keywords: *scientific publishing, misconduct ethics in publishing, fraudulent journals, cloned journals, hijacked journals*

Introduction

In Latin America, platforms such as the SciELO Network, RedALyC, Latindex, and La Referencia are successful initiatives promoting publishing through open access routes. But the proliferation of predatory publications impacts the development of scientific communication, the promotion of research and all its actors. Latindex — a Mexican journal directory and evaluation system — has implemented measures to combat predatory journals in the Ibero-American and Caribbean region (Abejón Peña, et al, 2024).

New types of fraudulent journal practices have recently become known, such as hijacked and cloned journals, which take advantage of expired domains or imitate legitimate sites. The increase in non-legitimate journals or publishers or those with poor editorial practices influences the communication of science, its development and its reliability in the scientific community (Beall, 2021; Jiménez-Yañez & Colmenares-Díaz, 2022). The emergence of new methods of fraud in scientific publishing such as hijacked journals (Dadkhah et al. 2015).

Recently, not only are hijacked journals, publishing companies have been identified that are buying scientific journals included in indexes such as WOS or Scopus. To makes a series of bad publishing practices: publishing large quantities of articles, articles on different topics than the journals, low quality studies, and to charge high

APC (Ansede, 2025; Cabeza-Clavijo et al., 2023; Martín-Martín & Delgado López, 2025; Sánchez Caballero, 2025).

The study presents the case of hijacked and cloned journals evidenced in Latin America.

Methods

Descriptive qualitative case study. Several hijacked scientific journals were identified, which are listed in various sources that monitor web pages with hyperlinks similar to the original ones and that use Open Journal Systems in their process. These sources include *Hijacked Journals* (Beall, 2021), the *Retraction Watch Hijacked Journal Checker* list (Brainard, 2023), and the *List of Cloned Journals – Group II* (University of Pune, 2024). A sample of 22 titles were identified in this case study.

Case study

There are still few documented and public cases, such as the one in Colombia, where the Kepes journal was cloned with a duplicate website replicating the original interface (Figure 1). Upon discovering this, the editorial team has alerted potential authors (Universidad de Caldas, 2024).

Figure 1. Kepes Journal (Colombia) alerts. Source: Revista Kepes retrieved on 30th May, 2024.

A recent study by Alhuay-Quispe, *et al.* (2025) reports that twenty journals from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela were listed among hijacked journal sources. Following their methods, we updated this list, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Source: Own authors, Beall, (2021), Abalkina (2025).

Journal	Country	Publisher	ISSN	Subject
Acta Bioethica	Chile	Universidad de Chile – Uchile	1726-569X	MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
Acta Scientiae	Brazil	Lutheran University of Brazil	1517-4492	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
Acta Cirúrgica Brasileira	Brazil	Sociedade Brasileira para o Desenvolvimento da Pesquisa em Cirurgia	1678-2674	MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
Acta Pediátrica de México	México	Instituto Nacional de Pediatría	2395-8235	MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
Agrociencia	México	Colegio de Postgraduados	2521-9766	AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
Anais da Academia Brasileira de Ciências	Brazil	Academia Brasileira de Ciências	1678-2690	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
Andamios	México	Universidad Autónoma de la Ciudad de México	2594-1917	SOCIAL SCIENCES
Iheringia. Série botânica	Brazil	Jardim Botânico de Porto Alegre	0073-4705	BIOLOGY
Interciencia	Venezuela	Asociación Interciencia	0378-1844	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
Kasmera	Colombia	Universidad de Caldas	2462-8115	HUMANITIES
Latin American Journal of Pharmacy = Acta Farmaceutica Bonaerense	Argentina	Colegio de Farmaceuticos de la Provincia de Buenos Aires	0718-5758	HUMANITIES
Opción	Venezuela	Universidad del Zulia	2477-9385	SOCIAL SCIENCES
Prensa Medica Argentina	Argentina	Ediciones Médicas del Sur	0326-2383	MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
Revista AUS	Chile	Universidad Austral de Chile	0718-7262	ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING
Revista Brasileira de Medicina do Esporte	Brazil	Atha Comunicação e Editora	1806-9940	MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES
Revista Tecnica de la Facultad de Ingenieria Universidad del Zulia	Venezuela	Universidad del Zulia	0254-0770	ENGINEERING
Scientia Guaianae	Venezuela	Universidad Nacional Experimental de Guayana	0798-1120	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
Tec Empresarial	Costa Rica	Tecnológico de Costa Rica	1659-2395	BUSINESS SCIENCES
The Ciência and Engenharia = Science and Engineering journal	Brazil	Universidade Federal de Uberlândia – UFU	0103-944X	ENGINEERING
Vitae	Colombia	Universidad de Antioquia	2145-2660	AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

By conclusion way

- Fraudulent journals are a well-studied variant of so-called predatory publishing, whereas cloned or hijacked journals are a recent and poorly documented phenomenon in Latin America.
- In order of frequency, the countries with the most affected journal titles in the sample are Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, and Chile.
- Only 18% of the total hijacked journals sampled belong to Social or Humanities academic areas.
- Most of the 90% of identified predatory journals are still indexed or were discontinued from databases such as Scopus.
- Half of the journals in the study are also registered in the SCIELO network portal.

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COARA EXPECT – EXCHANGE & PROMOTE EVALUATION CRITERIA CHANGES TOGETHER

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Keywords: *changing culture, sharing good practices, instructional videos, promoting CoARA's vision*

CoARA ExPECT is a joint project of the Ruhr University Bochum, Tampere University and University of Oulu, the purpose of which is to promote CoARA's vision of reforming research assessment. The project provides evaluators with concise but sufficiently comprehensive instructions for responsible evaluation of the different stages of a researcher's career.

In CoARA ExPECT, three universities from two academic systems – ranging from more advanced and intermediate players to a comparatively newcomer in the field of responsible research assessment – join forces to share their vision for improving research assessment practices and combine complementary strengths. The wide multidisciplinarity of the participating universities brings challenges but also provides fruitful stimuli to common guidelines and practices. In responsible assessment, there is no "one size fits all" solution, but the process must be built in such a way that the particular characteristics of different disciplines are taken into account.

ExPECT is dedicated to advancing the principles of CoARA through the collaborative development and implementation of innovative instructional materials. Our mission is to foster a culture of responsible research assessment that emphasises quality, impact, sustainability and diversity across academic communities. Through our joint effort, we aspire to contribute significantly to the global dialogue on reforming research assessment and to be at the forefront of implementing persistent change that reflects CoARA's values and objectives.

Through utilising high-level expertise in responsible assessment, we create a suite of joint instructional materials for researchers, evaluators, administrative staff and management of the organisations to facilitate the effective and systematic implementation of CoARA. By creating accessible and engaging instructional videos tailored to address different stages of researcher's career, supported by more detailed written

instructions, we will elucidate CoARA's guidelines and best practices and promote a unified approach to research assessment that aligns with CoARA's vision of inclusivity and excellence. Mutual learning is at the very core of CoARA ExPECT and all parties involved in CoARA (and beyond) are invited and encouraged to freely use the project's results.

In May 2025, the instructions and video scripts produced by the CoARA ExPECT project will be ready. Video production is scheduled to begin in summer 2025. With our poster, we want to share information about the project with the whole community, but also collect feedback and comments that can be used to finalize the project's outputs.

TUESDAY
MAY 20

SESSION 3
QUALITY AND QUANTITY

SESSION 4A
FROM RESEARCH TO CHANGE

SESSION 4B
RESEARCH CAREERS AND THEIR IMPACT

SESSION 5A
EVALUATION PRACTICES AND TOOLS

SESSION 5B
CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

SESSION 6A
PUBLICATION PAHTWAYS

SESSION 6B
METRICS AND INDEXING

SESSION 3
QUALITY AND QUANTITY

A NEW "EON" IN RESEARCH ASSESSMENT: IMPLEMENTING EVIDENCE-INFORMED OUTPUT NARRATIVES AT LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY, UK

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Keywords: *responsible research assessment, research quality, research visibility, academic promotion, non-traditional outputs*

Introduction

In academic promotion and other internal assessments, researchers are typically expected to discuss the quality and significance of their research. This activity requires methods to both evidence and assess such qualities in research. These methods will naturally vary between disciplines, yet will often involve some level of peer review, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative indicators. Compared to a decade ago, there is now wider recognition that using journal-level metrics, such as journal impact factors, and other citation indicators, for the purpose of assessing research *quality* is fundamentally flawed and are particularly unsuitable for assessing non-journal, and/or practice-based outputs. These types of outputs are more common in the social sciences and humanities, meaning this issue disproportionately affects researchers in these fields. It can also make assessment of the outputs particularly challenging for those outside their immediate discipline as is often required in internal processes such as promotion and appraisal.

To address these challenges, Loughborough University has co-developed Evidence-Informed Output Narratives (EONs) with its research community to provide a more equitable and discipline-sensitive approach to research output assessment. EONs offer a structured yet flexible way for researchers to demonstrate the quality and visibility of their outputs, recognising disciplinary differences and the diverse nature of work in the social sciences and humanities. This paper outlines the rationale, development, pilot, and implementation of EONs, aiming to gather wider feedback and support other institutions in adopting similar approaches.

Background and Rationale

The push for responsible research assessment is gaining global momentum, with initiatives such as the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)[i], the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)[ii], and the Leiden Manifesto[iii] advocating for more holistic evaluations of research. These efforts have also highlighted the limitations of many traditionally used metrics and the need for fairer assessment practices.

The EONs framework aligns with these principles and Loughborough's longstanding commitment to advance more responsible research assessment[iv]. The University's promotion process asks candidates to demonstrate how their "research profile [is] clearly advancing in terms of quality and visibility of outputs" using "a range of evidence." Candidates are also asked to write free-text narratives for selected that best showcase the quality and visibility of their work. However, previously, no further guidance was provided on how candidates should do so. This lack of clarity was felt to be particularly problematic in disciplines where traditional bibliometric measures do not apply, making it harder for researchers in these fields to evidence their contributions fairly and effectively.

Development of the Evidence-Informed Output Narratives (EONs)

Co-developed with research-active colleagues at Loughborough University, particularly those from the School of Social Sciences and Humanities and the School of Design and Creative Arts, the new approach asks researchers to select up to three recent outputs and write a short narrative evidencing each output's quality and visibility. A key component of the framework is a weighted menu of evidence that candidates can draw upon to support their claims. The menu has been weighted by each School to reflect disciplinary standards, providing clearer guidance for both candidates and reviewers on the most relevant forms of evidence for each discipline.

The menu includes categories such as 'Evidence of Quality/Peer Validation' (e.g., peer review comments, awards, book reviews), 'Evidence of Reach/Visibility' (e.g., open-access availability, citations, media engagement), and 'Evidence of Contribution' (e.g., narrative descriptions, CRediT statements) for describing individual contributions to outputs with multiple authors or contributors.

Researchers are encouraged to select the most appropriate indicators for each output, without being required to use all available evidence types.

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i https://coara.eu/

ii http://sfdora.org/

iii https://www.leidenmanifesto.org/

iv https://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/support/publishing/responsible-research-assessment/

Pilot Study and Implementation

A small-scale pilot study was conducted in Autumn 2024, involving recently promoted academics from six of Loughborough's nine Schools. It included Senior Lecturers, Readers, and Professors to represent a range of career stages and facilitate comparison with the existing process. The pilot aimed to assess whether EONs could help researchers with non-traditional or practice-based outputs more easily demonstrate the quality and visibility of their work within Loughborough's academic promotion process and support fairer evaluation across disciplines.

Key findings from the pilot included:

- Improved support for non-traditional outputs: Researchers engaged in practice-based or creative works reported finding EONs provided a clearer framework for evidencing the quality of their research.
- No disadvantage to traditional outputs: Researchers with journal-based outputs found EONs at least, on average, as effective as the previous evaluation process.
- Positive feedback from reviewer perspective: Consultation with a former promotion panel member also reported that the structured approach of EONs could help ensure more consistent and equitable evaluation without changes to the existing review process.
- Following the pilot, the EONs framework and associated materials[v] were refined and will be formally introduced in 2025 as optional guidance available to all Schools for future promotion cycles.

Conclusion

The Evidence-Informed Output Narratives approach at Loughborough University demonstrates how institutions can move beyond the limitations of traditional metrics towards a more inclusive and discipline-sensitive model of research assessment. By offering a flexible, structured method for evidencing research quality and visibility, EONs support fairer and more responsible internal evaluation processes.

As responsible research assessment continues to evolve, Loughborough's experience with EONs offers a potential model for other institutions aiming to enhance transparency and equity in their research evaluation.

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WHAT ABOUT RESEARCH QUALITY? A DISCUSSION ON QUALITATIVE JUDGEMENT AND QUANTITATIVE CRITERIA IN RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

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Keywords: *CoARA, qualitative judgement, quantitative criteria*

The reform of research assessment since the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (2012) and the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA) (2022) has focused on the contrast between quantity and quality.

The Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) was set up to promote the principles and commitments contained therein. The actions of ARRA signatories are set out in the four core commitments that constitute the heart of the reform and its guiding framework.

In particular, the second commitment states to "base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by the responsible use of quantitative indicators" when meaningful and relevant. The ARRA identifies peer review as "the most robust known method for assessing research quality" and has the advantage of being in the hands of the research community.

CoARA and the ARRA thus place qualitative judgement – as opposed to quantitative indicators – at the centre, implying the existence of an opposition between 'quality' and 'quantity'. This calls for a cultural change based on the principle that it is necessary to publish less (abandoning the 'publish or perish' logic) and publish better (making results, data and processes transparent, accessible and reproducible, and paying more attention to the integrity of research). The aim of this change is to produce research that is more robust, more rigorous, more responsible. In short, of higher quality.

This approach has been criticised. One criticism, in the many debates following presentations on the reform that I attended, is that quantitative indicators are objective and qualitative judgement is subjective and arbitrary.

This paper aims to refute both objections starting from the second.

To do this, it draws on the definition of quality – and qualitative – by R.M. Pirsig, who devoted his entire life to defining a Metaphysics of Quality.

Drawing parallels with the philosophy of quantum physics, Pirsig defines quality as 'the event in which the subject becomes aware of the object'. (Pirsig R.M., 1999, p. 7)

This definition is based on four basic ideas:

1. Quality is a variable concept. Like truth, it varies over time and has no fixed content. Its importance lies in the journey to it, not the destination. Truth and quality are generic, but their establishment is continuous.
2. This means that if quality is ever-changing, any evaluation is finite. In this model, research results are temporary signals of the research process, supporting communication and learning. (Leonelli S., 2023, pp. 65–66). Evaluation events are not scientific truths. They are contextual scaffolding for scientific activities aimed at increasing knowledge. Their validity, relevance and significance must be regularly reassessed.

   A corollary of this is that truth and quality are always evolving, so public scientific debate can never end. A valid theory can be proven wrong and vice versa. The scientific method always allows for new experiences, ideas and evaluations. (Pirsig R.M., 1999, p. 9). The idea of openness is thus linked to that of research and, ultimately, science. It is therefore important that, alongside the completed evaluation exercises, a process of discussion remains open, which can only be infinite.
3. The definition thus brings out two different notions of quality, as a contextual event (what Pirsig calls static quality) and as a continuous process (dynamic quality). On this basis, we can distinguish two types of evaluation: the first is finite, takes place at specific moments and involves specific people, projects, results or processes; while the second is continuous and infinite, and thanks to it, scientific ideas that were initially considered valid change their status over time.

   In such a system, contextual evaluations (such as competitions and the evaluation of projects, products and processes) must be conducted according to open, verifiable and transparent criteria and processes, and must be based on open and transparent data and infrastructures. ARRA is explicit on this point. Qualitative assessment, i.e., peer review, allows for rigorous and accountable verification of data, processes, and results produced by other scientists. Indeed, while researchers are free to choose what to study and to judge according to their own individual criteria, they are in fact working together as members of communities sharing a common method, according to the principles of openness, integrity and responsibility, and one of their tasks is to verify that science is such – i.e. true – and to certify it, taking responsibility for doing so.

4. Based on an analogy to quantum physics, the fourth and final aspect to emphasise is that, from this perspective, the distinction between subjective (qualitative) and objective (quantitative) loses its meaning.

   "Subjectivity and objectivity are not separate, unrelated universes. Rather, they are distinct phases of a single evolutionary process". (Pirsig R.M., 1999, p. 7)

   The very idea of subjectivity has been interpreted as the separation of the subject from the object of research, the study of which requires the abandonment of interests and values in favour of a neutral point of view.

   The paper discusses then the equivalence of quantitative and objective. For example, the Journal Impact Factor, with all its shortcomings, is said by many to have the advantage of being 'objective'. But what does objective mean? For a piece of data to be objective, it is not enough for it to be represented by a number; conversely, it is necessary that it cannot be manipulated according to the interests at stake. On the contrary, the JIF can be manipulated directly and indirectly. Moreover, the JIF, with its claim to objectivity, makes any decision on the merits very opaque. (Figà Talamanca, Biagioli Lippmann)

More generally, it has been shown that quantification is nothing more than a way of distancing oneself and minimising the need for personal trust and in-depth knowledge (Porter). Porter shows that in the most developed and cutting-edge research communities, the usual kind of 'objectivity' guaranteed by open, peer-reviewed publications and quantitative techniques is in fact completely secondary. Among high-energy physicists, there is a community of trust that does not consist of blind faith, but of a highly nuanced evaluation of researchers by others, which ensures the reliability of information.

Over the past three centuries, the desire to remove human bias from science has increasingly taken the form of efforts to automate discovery, most recently by using artificial intelligence tools to minimise human error – making way for so-called 'mechanical objectivity'. (Leonelli S., 2023, p. 45).

Conversely, the evaluation of research can only be based on a principle of accountability. The scientific community cannot avoid putting this principle at the heart of research assessment exercises.

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QUANTITY VERSUS QUALITY IN NATIONAL-LOCAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS: A STUDY OF THE EVALUATION OF THE SSH IN URUGUAY

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This presentation is part of a report commissioned to me by Uruguay's National Science and Innovation Council (CONICYT) out of an interest in assessing the state of the evaluation of researchers in the country, particularly productivism and evaluation burn out, in order to support a change towards good practices in line with DORA, COARA and FOLEC.

Uruguay is a relatively small country of near 3 million citizens, with 1.84 researchers per 1000 economically active inhabitants. One public university (the University of the Republic Uruguay, UdelaR for its Spanish acronym) accounts for 75% of the national research output, but other universities and research institutions are also of interest. The National Researcher System (SNI) was created in 2007 and consists in 4 ascending positions with a salary incentive. UDELAR on its part, holds an interesting system for Full researchers created in 1958 and called the Full-time dedication regime (RDT). Other 3 evaluation systems exist at the national level and, as a result, a researcher in Uruguay may be exposed to 5 different evaluations in one same year, so administrative efforts are excessively demanding and replicated.

The study includes a structural comparison among all these national and institutional evaluation systems, along with a survey of researcher profiles, combining this with a qualitative approach through 80 interviews and focus groups made with evaluation committees, officials and researchers. Finally, the report contains 20 recommendations for the academic evaluation in a research community that is featured by a permanent vocation for change, within a highly autonomous academic field.

In this paper we will focus on the dynamics of the social sciences in this complex evaluation environment, calibrating the particular force of productivism and quantitative indicators. We will also delve in the prescriptive internationalization that dominates successful promotion in the SNI its the effects in the local journals and the research agenda.

The results of this research point out several interesting issues. Firstly, a positive aspect of academic evaluation in Uruguay is the high valuation of book production. This was observed empirically due to the weight of this format in the complete output of the researchers in the national curriculum database CVUy which was one of our

main sources. According to the interviews conducted, this is the result of a consensus around the principle of “flexible convergence”, which was born in UdelaR and is also used in the advisory committees of the SNI. However, the relevance of the indicators of regularity and internationalization has a negative influence on national publishing and multilingualism.

Secondly, there is widespread concern in Uruguay about the need to modify the traditional academic evaluation scheme, both to resolve the impact of the evaluation burn-out and to diversify the “ideal” researcher profile. Above all, there is scarce rewarding of technical, socially relevant, extensionist profiles, a long tradition which has an international recognized relevance in Uruguay. This university mission offers an exceptional advantage for the development of citizen science, a profile that could enhance the long accumulation of interactions that UdelaR has with the economic environment, diverse social actors and organizations. However, the current evaluative culture makes these multifaceted profiles invisible because the rewards are oriented towards an “ideal” of an internationalized academicist researcher.

Finally, open-access publishing and open research data do not yet appear as priorities in academic evaluation in Uruguay, largely due to the pace of implementation of a national open science policy. In this scenario, the regional and national publishing circuit is devalued, and the local journals are decreasing.

HOW QUANTITY BEGETS QUALITY: METAPHYSICS BEHIND ADMINISTRATIVE REDUCTIVISM

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Keywords: *research evaluation, quality, quantity, administrative reductivism, social sciences and humanities*

This paper attempts (i) to define administrative reductivism; (ii) to identify the main assumptions about quality and quantity made by administrative reductivism; (iii) to reconstruct the metaphysics (and to some extent pataphysics) behind such administrative reductivism.

Searching for the definition of "quality" in research evaluation is a difficult matter and "it's not just one of your holiday games". According to Langfeldt et al (2020), there are five different sites where notions of research quality emerge, are contested, and institutionalised: *researchers themselves*, *knowledge communities*, *research organisations*, *funding agencies* and *national policy arenas*. Moreover, it constantly eludes our earliest attention. In research we experience different quality-related situations, which are dependent on different stakeholders in charge. Generally, in research field there are at least 18 groups of diverse stakeholders (Ochsner et al. 2020). If every quality notion is context-dependent and stakeholder-dependent, and only some of them originates in an administrative discourse or site, then the contents of quality notion is far from being clear. Which brings an analogy with G.E. Moore's *Principia ethica* (1903), where he analysed the notion of "good". The conclusion was not what a reader might expect. According to Moore (§ 9), good is primal and undefinable property of things, which is conceived intuitively.

Marxism tended to explain reality in terms of the "law of quantity begetting quality", which is attributed to Friedrich Engels. Engels applied the so-called "law" in order to explain reality, e.g. a team is more than individual players in the sense that a team is capable of performing at a higher level compared to the efforts of individually performing players. Scientometrics, bibliometrics, and other kinds of the quantification allies just reverse the "law", in their interpretation, it is not the quantity which begets quality but otherwise – it is quality begetting quantity. Measures of quality expressed via quantifiable indicators and qualitative criteria serve as a means to quantitative ends. If someone measures quality according to quantitative number-based methods, it is rather obvious that quality then is defined by quantifiable indicators, which replace the qualitative ones. For example, number of articles in prestigious

journals with high impact factors become a measure of quality, which rests on the assumptions that the bigger the number, the higher the quality. And this is not necessarily true. Research time available for a scholar is not limitless. Findings in any project provide definite amount of data. What happens if data sufficient for two articles is distributed into four or five articles? Does an increased number of articles based on the same data produce more (= higher) quality? Hardly. It is impossible to produce unlimited amount of meaningful and original articles from a limited set of data. This rather resembles one of the academic vices called "Salami Slicing" (Adams 2022: 87). Therefore, one-sided quantification of the research outcomes might be a bit too simplistic as it tends to count extra-thin Salami slices simultaneously ignoring cumulative effect the research in question brings to the broader disciplinary field.

Moreover, this kind of replacement does not explain what quality is, it rather claims that whatever is measurable is a manifestation of quality, akin to a Pythagorean "All things are number". Thus, instead of finding a satisfactory definition of quality, we are provided with quantity-related criteria. "The majority of respondents also had some critical remarks to make about current publication regimes. The most common was that they privilege quantity over quality" (Holm et al 2015: 112).

The research done by various scholars on the sources of administrative notions of quality (e.g. Collini 2017, Miller 2012; Readings 1996; Vostal 2016) shows that contemporary administrative quality, or even excellence, discourse is based on conception of post-industrial knowledge society. In this society knowledge is perceived as *spiritus movens* of economic and social innovation. Therefore, innovation-oriented knowledge counts first and foremost. But this society also focuses on the measurement and excellence of hitherto unquantified spheres of (social) life. Proliferation of metrics and rankings of academic units serves the new forms of management, prevailing in knowledge capitalism. Thus, administrative research quality criteria mostly emphasize two aspects – knowledge (but essentially its applied forms only) and socio-economic impact.

For these reasons certain important aspects of research in and for knowledge communities are lost in reduction: disciplinary differences, epistemic differences, methodological differences, differences in research objects, quality of research etc. As a result, research communities perceive the results of various kinds of institutional evaluations as a necessary evil, which is unlikely to have a major impact on the everyday activities of researchers. These reports are a case of *administrative reductivism* because, in their role of administrative control, they take into account only a limited number of available criteria (e.g. impact, feasibility, number of publications, impact factor etc.), which are not something that really helps to better self-regulate the day-to-day activities of SSH scholars. The further away one goes from administrative quality criteria, the greater the chance to meet resistance to them. The administrative notion of quality works in a way of incorporation, i.e. if you want to prosper in neo-liberal academia, you have to accept the rules, or be excluded. As a rule, finances go with incorporation, freedom and integrity of research go with resistance.

Finally, with the help of Pirsig (1974), Schwandt (1990 and 2015), Reading (1996) and Dahler-Larsen (2019), who have examined certain aspects of the metaphysics of quality, the paper will attempt to reconstruct the metaphysical assumptions characteristic of administrative reductivism, which are usually excluded from the discourse of quality recognition and evaluation in SSH.

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SESSION 4A
FROM RESEARCH TO CHANGE

HOW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CAN MAKE UNIVERSITIES TRANSFORMATIVE ACTORS. INSIGHTS ON EVALUATION APPROACHES AND OPEN ISSUES.

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Background

In recent times, the public engagement of universities with societal actors has become a key issue for generating effects on society through the dissemination of scientific results, thus improving the impact of academic research.

Defining engagement is a difficult task because the types of activities that can be labelled as such are extremely different in terms of values, actors involved, approaches, and fields (Miller, 2001; NCCPE, 2010; Grand et al., 2015; Watermeyer and Lewis, 2018). One interesting aspect is that CE is a key practice in nurturing the transition toward the open science approach and improving the transparency, openness, and responsibility of universities and research.

In this paper we address a specific form of engagement, Community Engagement (CE), from a comparative perspective. We will focus on understanding the conditions under which it is likely to be transformative of society and university organisations and, therefore, what evaluation approach is best suited to assess its value. To do so, we will build upon the theoretical scaffolding of a PRIN2022 project titled PLACES (Portraits and Landscapes of Academic Community-Engaged Scholarship). We define CE as a form of engagement which is characterised by reciprocity (regulatory principle), emancipative interest, and prevailing critical epistemology. Within the wider spectrum

of PE, CE can have important overlap with state engagement when research contributing to evidence-based policy is concerned. Here, the most important element is the type of participation which might imply involvement and co-production in both community and state engagement (Vargiu, 2014).

Being transformative is generally indicated in the literature as the capacity to bring about a durable, significant, and disruptive change. This approach is paired with a different one, where being transformative is the capability to empower social actors to produce a lasting change in society, and the capability of the involved university to change institutional settings and strategic agency. Empowering social actors involves developing mutual learning and actions beyond sharing information and understanding. Thus, under the former conceptualisation, there is a clear overlap with impact; on the contrary, following the latter conceptualisation, transformation cannot be assimilated to social impact. (Stilgoe et al., 2014; Bucchi, 2008; Johnson, 2020; Reale, 2022; Murunga, 2022).

Furthermore, there are two important factors to consider when investigating CE. One is the degree of its institutionalisation, since 'engagement is an emergent outcome which must continually be reaffirmed in its institutional settings. (Benneworth et al, 2009). The second is the barriers that universities can face, which derive from excluded communities, inequalities, bureaucratic fulfilment, funding patterns, casualisation of the research work, and academic rewards. These elements can impose serious constraints on CE. (Vargiu, 2014; Benneworth et al., 2013; Ruiz Bravo, 1992; Cairney and Oliver, 2018; Heney and Poleykett, 2021).

Research questions

Measuring and assessing the effectiveness of public engagement in society and universities is therefore a great challenge; currently, the evaluation practice is mainly shaped by government evaluation agencies within massive national evaluation exercises of the universities often included under the umbrella of Third Mission activities. Therefore, the aim of the external evaluation (e.g. the assessment exercises implemented in the UK and IT (REF/VQR) is generally to detect impact by demonstrating impact. Furthermore, indicators are sparse: different measures are tailored on the different cases.

In this paper, we want to put in context the problems with this new frontier for university evaluation and present the first insights into existing differences at the national level and in the national systems of higher education that can affect the possibility of CE being transformative toward academic institutions and society. The research question we deal with is: *How can evaluation address community engagement and its effects?*

We aim to demonstrate that CE must consider the diversity of concepts, practices, and ideas that shape its notion in different national and institutional contexts, which form the basis for different practices. Evaluation must carefully consider how contexts affect the possibility of CE to be transformative, avoiding the traditional

summative model and moving toward a constructivist and open evaluation (Gobo, 2013). In this respect, the contribution that research in Social Sciences can supply to the evaluation design can be considered as a source of clarification of concepts to be used and for building related indicators.

Method

The analysis involves six universities in three countries: two from continental Europe (France and Italy) and one from the Anglo-Saxon tradition (UK). The six universities selected are large-medium sized organisations that are characterised by the presence of several CE practices.

The method used is a case study approach, based on a) secondary data and indicators (EUROSTAT, OECD, EUA, ETER, EFIL-RISIS, and Eurobarometer), documentation (official documents and reports from ministries, evaluation agencies, funding organisations, universities, national centres for public engagement) to shape the characteristics of the national contexts and the different configurations of the selected universities; b) interviews (20) at the government level, intermediary national level (e.g. funding agencies, evaluation agencies), and institutional level; and c) life stories at the individual level to capture the practices of public engagement and its transformative effects. We used a multi-level comparative case study approach (Spinello et al., 2025) that allows to deepen how and why engagement practices are developed and the observable type of achievements and impacts at institutional level and on society. The different data and information will be triangulated to highlight the three levels that can affect the results and the impact produced by CE: national contexts (macro), institutional environments of universities (meso), and individual engaged scholars (micro).

Results

Results show that the issue of university engagement is still largely unexplored in terms of methods and instruments of evaluation. Results also show how different national policies toward universities' engagement can shape the conditions that are likely to influence the commitment of universities toward CE (Reale et al, 2024).

The analysis of the materials points out the presence of factors at national and organizational levels that, according to the literature (Benneworth and Jongbloed 2013), can promote or constrain social CE: national orientation toward CE; institutional strategies promoting social engagement, social engagement as core element in the governance of universities, financial incentives (dedicated funding streams, core funding allocation, special rules for attracting students), skills for engagement (rewarding of staff by universities for CE in terms of career development and promotion, participation, and co-creation of knowledge), and measures to promote the regional embeddedness of the universities (linkages with the social communities and the economic actors of the region where the university is located).

All these elements should be included in the evaluation of engagement to assess the likelihood that engagement will be transformative for society and academic

organisations. Evaluating the drivers and conditions for transformative CE is a means of changing the nature of the university mission, so that being transformative can become the overall goal of academia. Evaluation can facilitate or hinder the capability of universities to commit themselves to CE, and research in social science can play a key role for this purpose.

FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: THE ROLE OF PUBLICLY FUNDED PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL

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Keywords: *sustainable innovation, global south, climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, bioenergy research*

Introduction

Economic growth in many nations, especially in the Global South, has historically been linked to environmental challenges. For decades, development and technological progress were synonymous with advancement, often disregarding the depletion of finite resources and the mounting impact of human activity on the environment. Climate change has underscored the urgent need for sustainable practices and innovation to balance development with environmental stewardship.

In response to this paradigm shift, numerous efforts have been initiated by companies, universities, development agencies, and funding organizations to promote sustainable and impactful research. These efforts are particularly vital in the Global South, where unique socio economic and environmental dynamics demand innovative solutions.

This study examines the role of three key programs funded by the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), one of Brazil's most prominent research funding agencies, in driving sustainable innovation: BIOEN (Bioenergy Research Program), BIOTA (Research Program on Biodiversity Characterization, Conservation, Restoration, and Sustainable Use), and RPGCC (Research Program on Global Climate Change). By analyzing research outputs linked to these programs using DOIs from FAPESP's virtual library, we explore their contributions to advancing global sustainability.

BIOEN: Transforming Bioenergy Research in Brazil

The FAPESP Bioenergy Research Program (BIOEN) bridges academic and industrial research to expand knowledge and applications in bioenergy production. It emphasizes academic inquiry to develop innovative solutions, build a skilled workforce, and foster collaborations between universities, research institutes, and corporations in São Paulo. By aligning industrial practices with ecological goals, BIOEN strengthens Brazil's position as a leader in sustainable bioenergy (Bueno et al., 2021).

BIOTA: Mapping and Conserving Biodiversity

The Biota-FAPESP Program, launched in 1999, aligns with the Convention on Biological Diversity ratified by Brazil in 1994. It aims to comprehensively study, map, and evaluate the biodiversity of São Paulo State. The program explores sustainable exploitation opportunities for economically valuable plants and animals and supports forest conservation policy-making. With over 1,200 experts involved, BIOTA has significantly advanced biodiversity inventorying, conservation mechanisms, and sustainable resource utilization (Chapman, 2022).

RPGCC: Tackling Global Climate Change

The FAPESP Research Program on Global Climate Change (RPGCC) focuses on advancing climate knowledge and guiding policy development. By fostering mitigation and adaptation technologies, expanding observational capabilities, and exploring the science-policy interface, RPGCC addresses critical gaps in Brazil's climate research. The program investigates climate impacts on ecosystems, agriculture, energy use, public health, and socio-economic resilience, positioning Brazil as a key player in global climate initiatives (Marques et al., 2022).

Preliminary Findings and Key Insights

Using the Dimensions search engine, we analyzed outputs linked to BIOEN, BIOTA, and RPGCC. From FAPESP's virtual library, we identified 130 DOIs for BIOEN, 328 for BIOTA, and 492 for RPGCC, making RPGCC the largest environmental program in terms of projects and resources.

BIOEN: Of 130 DOIs, 51 publications were identified, with research focused on Agricultural, Veterinary, and Food Sciences; Biological Sciences; and Environmental Sciences. These studies generated 1,217 co-occurrence links across 97 concepts and formed seven thematic clusters. Research involved 32 researchers across 17 countries, with the majority of collaborations occurring within Brazilian institutions and partners in the United States and the United Kingdom.

BIOTA: Out of 328 DOIs, 128 publications were identified, predominantly in Biological Sciences, Ecology, and Environmental Sciences. These studies produced 1,770 co-occurrence links across 100 concepts and formed five clusters. Research involved 42 researchers across 37 countries, with Brazil, the United States, and the United Kingdom leading collaborations.

RPGCC: Of 492 DOIs, 113 documents were identified, with a focus on Earth Sciences, Atmospheric Sciences, and Environmental Sciences. These publications generated 1,554 co occurrence links across 100 concepts, forming four clusters. The program involved 77 researchers across 32 countries, with Brazilian institutions, particularly the University of São Paulo, playing a leading role.

Conclusion

The findings underscore FAPESP's critical role in advancing sustainable innovation in Brazil. The programs have fostered significant research output and collaborations, primarily within Brazilian institutions, while maintaining connections with international partners. However, expanding global collaborations could further enhance research impact and address environmental challenges more effectively.

By leveraging its research strengths and fostering interdisciplinary approaches, the Global South can emerge as a hub for sustainable innovation, offering scalable solutions to global environmental challenges.

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THE RELATIVE MARGINALISATION OF SSH IN RESEARCH FOR SOCIETAL CHALLENGES AND THE NEED FOR SYSTEM LEVEL ASSESSMENT TO FOSTER EPISTEMIC DIVERSITY

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In this presentation I will highlight three patterns observed in the priorities in problem-oriented research. First, research on problems that rely on knowledge from the natural sciences (e.g. health) tends to receive more support than problem-oriented research that depends on the SSH (e.g. education). Second, in research targeted to a particular societal problem or challenge, there is often less support for SSH than for natural sciences, health or engineering. Third, while transdisciplinary research recognises the importance of stakeholder participation to include social and contextual factors, it often fails to recognise the expertise of the SSH. These patterns speak of the relative marginalisation of SSH in priority setting in relation to societal problems or challenges. I will argue that in order to address this lack of epistemic diversity, more importance should be given to research assessment at institutional level, analysing epistemic diversity at programme and institutional levels, and changing evaluation procedures.

Presentation

In the case of natural sciences, it is often argued that research assessment should consider the potential social contribution of research. For example, evaluation processes should be sensitive to the fact research on neglected diseases in the Global South contributes to an understudied topic in which there are pressing health needs (Kumar et al., 2024). Similarly, it is argued that for a given societal challenge (e.g. obesity or mental health), public research should aim to fill a diversity of approaches that hedge the portfolio against risk and capture the plurality of views existing in contemporary societies, including various social science perspectives (Stirling, 2007; Van De Klippe et al., 2023).

How should SSH be prioritised in order to address societal challenges? In this presentation, I will argue that evaluation processes of societal challenges should include SSH research in order to be sensitive and respond to societal needs – and that, as a result, some issues should become prioritised over others.

The presentation will show data and findings and on the relative research efforts made in the SSH according to recent large scale analysis (in which I participated) on mapping

SDG-related research ((Ciarli, 2022) in project STRINGS), and on mapping priorities on mental health ((Van De Klippe et al., 2023) in project "Mapping health and well-being research"), and build on insights from previous studies on priorities, e.g. in health research in the Global South (Coburn et al., 2022), or on obesity (Cassi et al., 2017).

I will highlight three patterns consistently observed in the analysis of de facto research priorities in problem-oriented research (the actual efforts as shown in funding and publications).

First, problem oriented-research that relies mainly on knowledge from the natural sciences tends (e.g. health) to receive more support than problem-oriented research that depends on the SSH (e.g. poverty). This is shown by the high number of publications on to improve health and energy (SDG 3 and SDG 7) which relate to natural sciences, in comparison to issues such as poverty, education or economic growth (SDG 1, SDG 4, SDG 8) that are more related to the SSH (Ciarli, 2022).

Second, in research targeted to a particular societal problem or challenge there is often less support for SSH than for natural sciences, health or engineering. In portfolio analyses of problem-oriented research, we observe that SSH research receives less attention and funding than natural sciences or engineering, even in cases where social aspects play a major role such as mental health or obesity (Cassi et al., 2017; Van De Klippe et al., 2023).

Third, scarcity of inter- and transdisciplinary research is routinely mentioned as a major barrier for research to successfully address societal challenges (Molas-Gallart et al., 2014) – as well as the lack of use of methodologies for assessing inter- and transdisciplinarity (O'Donovan et al., 2022). In relation to our discussion on SSH and evaluation, we should highlight that while transdisciplinary research recognises the importance of stakeholder participation to include social and contextual factors, it often fails to recognise the expertise of the SSH (Schneider et al., 2019).

These patterns speak of the relative marginalisation of SSH in priority setting in relation to societal problems or challenges. While these patterns are well known, perhaps they deserve more attention. I will argue that in order to address this lack of epistemic diversity, more importance should be given to research assessment at systemic level, analysing epistemic diversity at programme and institutional levels, and changing evaluation procedures.

Such argument may not raise controversy. Perhaps more contested would be the notion that, just as medical research is seen as needing to have some alignment with health needs, research assessment in SSH should value the relative contribution of a project to filling epistemic gaps in socially relevant issues. Should evaluation consider as a merit that a project covers relatively understudied approaches? For example, should research in housing or immigration be given priority over research on fashion or history of art – given that the former are widely recognized social challenges? Would this type of prioritization impinge on academic freedom and autonomy?

Is (or should) the prioritisation of some SSH issues only taking place only in assessments related to societal challenges, or is (or should) it already included more generally? In order to address these questions, more research on epistemic diversity at programme and institutional level is needed.

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TOWARDS SOCIOLOGICAL EVALUATIONS OF RESEARCH FUNDING INSTRUMENTS: CASE STUDY OF THE PROJECT-BASED FUNDING INSTRUMENT OF THE SPANISH NATIONAL PLAN FOR R&D (2004–2022)

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Keywords: *policy instruments, funding instruments, research funding, project funding*

Interest in the study of funding instruments is growing. Recent contributions advocate for institutional approaches, which understand funding instruments as socio-technical devices which establish and organize relations between different actors. The present study offers an analysis of a project-based funding instrument following these approaches. The study allows to identify three different relations, mainly competition (between applicants), collaboration (between researchers forming research groups) and complementarity (between research groups forming coordinated proposals). The results highlight the increase of the competition of the call and a decrease in collaboration and complementarity relationships. Some of the causes behind these changes are an increasing demand as well as group fragmentation due to evaluation requirements. The study reaffirms the interest of these approaches for the understanding of funding instruments.

Introduction

Since the late '90s, there is evidence of how most OECD countries have replaced block-funding research policies with project-funding ones with the firm believe that competition for resources enhance the efficiency of allocation processes (Geuna, 2001; Lepori et al., 2007). Thus, interest in policy instruments and their capacity to implement the objectives of science policy has increased. Specifically, concerns have been raised about the suitability of project-funding arrangements and its social (Franssen & de Rijcke, 2019), organizational (Raudla et al., 2015), and epistemic impacts (Franssen et al., 2018; Whitley et al., 2018) in the sciences.

Still, the field of policy studies has a long tradition in the study of policy instruments, partly due to their growing prominence in various public domains since the 1980s (Capano, 2023). Recent contributions have highlighted both the technical and social nature of policy instruments and their ability to operate autonomously, generating different or even opposite effects than expected (Lascoumes & Le Gales, 2007). Thus, they consider policy instruments as having a high degree of interpretative flexibility.

Yet, how have these ideas been translated into science policy studies and more specifically, to the study of research funding instruments? While a strand of the literature has followed an instrumental approach to their study (especially quantitative approaches focusing on the effects of having grants on publications or citation counts), other contributions have highlighted their relational character. Lepori (2011) builds on the interactions between actors and funding modes and introduces a series of institutional arrangements to categorize the existing array of funding mechanisms, which is termed as "coordination modes". Hessels (2013) reviews the concept of coordination in scientific systems, highlighting that funding mechanisms often involve combinations of different coordination modes and are not merely tools for economic transactions but also foster relationships beyond the efficient allocation of funding. Hellström & Jacob (2017) proposed a mid-point between sociological approaches and functionalist ones and propose a framework to assess policy instruments from their affordances, that is, from the potential possibilities they may enact as a result of (1) their properties, (2) the context of the target community and (3) the propensity of the target community to act in certain ways.

To expand the potential of these theoretical approaches, a case study is proposed that reinforces the interest in these sociological perspectives and whose findings contribute to the literature on the implications of project funding arrangements.

Framework and methods

The characterization of the funding instrument under analysis will be made under the theoretical framework provided by Hessels (2013) which has also feed several subsequent works (Bernard de Raymond, 2018; Cremonini et al., 2018; Hohl et al., 2019; Wardenaar et al., 2014). In this work, the author proposes a broad definition of coordination: *the establishment or strengthening of a relationship among the activities in a system, with the aim to enhance their common effectiveness*. The author acknowledges the wide range of relationships that can be carried out to organize social action in science: similarity, complementarity, acquaintance, collaboration, competition, synchronicity or proximity. Moreover, Hessels provides an analytical tool to characterize coordination in science based on seven aspects (1) the coordinating actor (2) the system addressed (3) the activities subject to coordination (4) the intervention taken to modify the relationships among the activities (5) the types of relationships established or strengthened (6) the mechanism that makes possible that the relationships established enhance the system addressed performance and (7) the kind of performance of the system that the actor aims to enhance. This heuristic is used to characterize the main components of the funding instrument and understand the dynamics of relationships that are created among the involved actors.

Regarding the methods, the work builds on material from a larger project which follows a mixed methods approach to gain a deep understanding of the implementation of the calls for proposals over time. The primary sources of information are:

- A dataset containing information on the results of the call from 2004 to 2022. Indicators on funding amounts, success rates, number of coordinated proposals were calculated.
- Information from 16 semi-structured and in-depth interviews with different chairs of the different fields of knowledge of the instrument at some point. Their main function is to coordinate both panelists' activity and managers' of the funding agency demands.

Results

The call under analysis is an annual competitive call that funds research groups with no thematic orientation. Accepted proposals, aside from obtaining the requested funding, may also be eligible to obtain a full predoctoral contract. Research groups may also apply under a coordination modality, where different groups collaborate in complementary lines of research. Figure 1 provides a fine grained outline of the structure of the funding instrument including the relationship between the actors.

The results highlight different relationships fostered by the call: competitiveness, collaboration, and complementarity. Additionally, the call results and the interview excerpts reveal how these relationships have evolved over the period studied:

- Competition: the call has become more competitive for several reasons. First, due to the reduction in the instrument's budget in the years following the 2008 crisis. Second, the funding agency's executive committee has actively promoted stricter success rate thresholds to ensure higher budgets for approved projects. Field-differences are observed: the Social Sciences and Humanities experience the most drastic drop in success rates (58% to 44%) followed by the Life Sciences (64% to 50%). Applied and Theoretical Sciences exhibit the slightest change (65% to 55%).
- Collaboration: a fragmentation of research groups is observed. Some of the reasons observed are the growing prominence of leadership (being principal investigator) in evaluation processes, the need of projects to ensure career progression of postdoctoral researchers and the emergence of co-funding instruments, whose pre-conditions for application rely on having a project under this call. As a response, the call enabled in 2017 the chance to include a second PI in each project.
- Complementarity: a steady decline in the number of coordinated proposals from groups with complementary activities has been observed across fields in the Life Sciences and Applied and Theoretical Sciences (ranging between 20% and 7%), except for physics. This study has not been able to determine the reasons behind this trend, which remains a future empirical question.

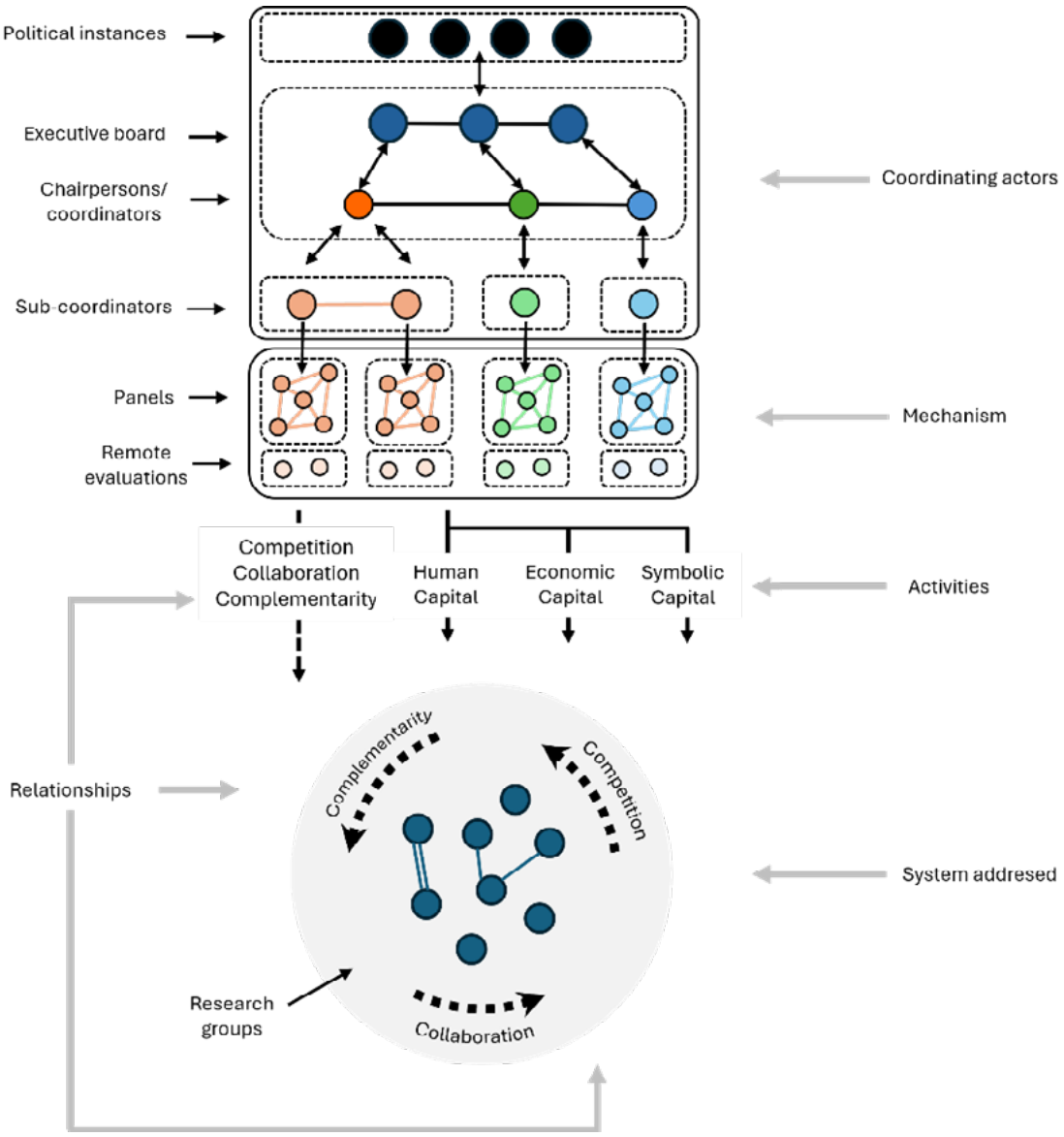

Figure 1. Outline of the funding instrument and main coordination aspects

Conclusion

This study highlights the different relationships that funding instruments may establish and promote beyond competitiveness. Instead of assessing the success of the instrument's implementation in terms of its returns, we examine its capacity to organize collective action among researchers—an aspect that has been largely overlooked in analyses of funding instruments. The study also suggests that these relationships do not arise spontaneously, but that the coordinators of the instrument itself can also encourage them through its calibration, which reinforces the flexible and context-specific nature of funding instruments. Finally, the results show an increase prominence of competitive relationships over collaborative ones, partly as a result of the embedding of the instrument in the current evaluative paradigm of science, which should encourage reflection on the part of policymakers.

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SESSION 4B
RESEARCH CAREERS AND THEIR IMPACT

DATA HOARDING: A NECESSITY FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS?

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Introduction and background

The UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science has signalled the necessity of openness in research practices. Some journals and funding agencies now also mandate data sharing. In these narratives, open science, including open data, is rooted in principles of openness and transparency. Open research practices are also prompted by the reproducibility crisis and research integrity issues. The dictum "As open as possible, as closed as necessary" underscores that not all data can or should be open; unfortunately, best practices and guidelines are still lacking in many disciplines. Notwithstanding the complexities of creating and managing data, currently open data are not highly recognised or materially rewarded in academic careers. That is to say, data is not treated as important as publications in most, if not all, disciplines. Whether and why researchers should support open data, and how research assessment can be reformed to support open research practices, remain crucial questions.

Our project aims to understand the open research practices of scholars and researchers in the humanities and social sciences. We ask how research assessments can be an incentive for, or a deterrent to, open science. In the first phase of the study, we conducted semi-structured interviews with researchers in the field of archaeology. One objective is to investigate the tension between open research practices and research assessments—a critical issue that has been highlighted by ALLEA, CoARA, Coalition S, amongst others. This presentation will discuss findings about data hoarding and data scooping in relation to the research assessment of early-career researchers (ECRs).

Data collection and preliminary results

Twenty-nine semi-structured interviews were conducted between August 2024 and January 2025. The participants were archaeologists affiliated with academic institutions in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The participants are of different career stages including eleven faculty, eight postdoctoral researchers,

and ten PhD candidates. The interviews were conducted online and audio-recorded, and were then de-identified and transcribed for data analysis. One researcher has coded all of the interviews and second coding is in progress. In this presentation, we will discuss some findings about data practices related to research evaluation. The findings will be useful for developing best practices and standards of open data (or research data management) that are discipline-specific, and more narrowly configured as appropriate. Our work thus aids in alleviating the misconception that the concept of open data can only be "aligned with the positivist theory of open science focused on the objectivity of the term 'data,' rather than the interpretive and constructive critical theories that are typically drawn upon by humanities scholars" (Arthur & Hearn, 2021, p. 840). This reframing not only benefits the development of discipline-specific best practices, but also research assessment reform.

Data hoarding: Most participants raised the issue of data hoarding in their support for open data. They discussed how some researchers hoard data for a long period of time, or forever, because they want to publish as much as possible out of the data—at the same time stopping other researchers from digging into the data for their own uses. The participants noted that data hoarding is not a good practice in the field of archaeology because data can be sparse and dispersed, as such, the opportunity to collate data to become bigger datasets can be very useful for advancing our knowledge of the past.

That said, many participants did not agree that all data should be immediately open for many reasons. One notable concern is research evaluation of early-career researchers when they need time and resources to interpret their data and publish. This concern was shared and outlined by Allen and Mehler (2019) in a paper which drew connections between open research, and what they referred to as The Time Cost versus an incentive structure that does not yet exist. ECRs sharing their data too soon can be detrimental to their career—because at the moment making their data available does not count when it comes to securing a position, promotion or grant applications. Data hoarding seems to be a necessity for ECRs.

Data scooping: A related concern about open data, not surprisingly, is data scooping, which seems to disproportionally affect ECRs as they work to publish for an academic career. If their data are scooped or compromised, their work could be deemed useless, outdated, or not original/novel—a major downfall when climbing the academic ladder. Interestingly, PhD students seemed to have a more idealistic and optimistic view of open data, believing that data sharing can be a good way to deter scooping.

The consequences of data scooping were mostly raised by tenured faculty and postdoctoral researchers, who are likely more aware of the mechanisms by which research and researchers are evaluated. Those at later stages of their careers demonstrate an awareness of the reality that being "first" is rewarded. Not being "first" can lead to a waste of time and resources and, in the worst cases, an end to academic careers. Whether to share data or not share data, and when, what, and how much data to share will remain critical questions unless and until research evaluation is reconfigured to recognise and value all types of research output.

Concluding remarks: research evaluation and open data

During the interviews, many faculty members use the phrase, "at my career stage" to note their support for open research practices and their concerns for ECRs. They did not explicitly critique research evaluation or suggest that it needs to be reformed, but they certainly highlighted the tension between openness and research evaluation. Research assessments must consider how open research practices affect researchers, especially those in the early stage of their career, and how ultimately, said practices "should not impose extra burdens on researchers" (Ali-Khan et al, 2017, p. 7). It is not just about how ECRs can publish in high- or low-impact or gold- or diamond-open-access journals. For most, data are their lifeline, but open data mandates seem to be coming down without much consideration for how such standards should be put into practice (e.g. infrastructure, metadata, guidelines, and so on), and there seems to be no recognition of the inequity that may be imposed on ECRs as a result of these mandates.

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BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND INDEPENDENCE: A BIBLIOMETRIC PERSPECTIVE ON CAREER PATTERNS AND GENDER DYNAMICS OF INDEPENDENT RESEARCHERS

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Keywords: *independent researchers, uncommon careers, academic labor, gender dynamics, OpenAlex*

In bibliometric sources, independent researchers are on the rise. We define independent researchers in economic terms, as researchers who conduct research (and publish their research results) for no payment, without institutional affiliation. An increasing number of publications are (co-)authored by people who identify as 'independent' on the publication itself. The rise in independent researchers highlights the casualisation of the academic labour force as a potential contributing factor to these uncommon career trajectories but also raises questions about aspects of research that are difficult to trace in bibliometric sources. Furthermore, independent researchers may face specific difficulties when applying for funding, accessing materials and paying conference fees (Babyak, 2020; Kara & Boynton, 2024). This contribution focuses on two aspects of independent researchers' careers: career trajectories and gender. Historically, there has been a gendered dimension to working as an independent scholar (Moyal, 2002; Pomata, 2013; Roth Breitzer, 2018), although a recent bibliometric study has indicated that this may no longer be the case (Lund et al., 2023). This research aims to investigate what role gender plays in the phenomenon of independent research. Furthermore, tracing independent researchers' publication histories reveals that independent researchers transition between institutional affiliation and unaffiliated research at different stages of their careers. We show what independent researchers' careers may look like in terms of length and affiliation status.

We have used OpenAlex as it is an open data source. Considerations of access and openness are especially important for independent researchers. Our search on OpenAlex has lead to a dataset of 28,508 publications (co-)authored by independent researchers, excluding retracted publications and preprints. In the year 2023, 3,328 publications (co-)authored by independent researchers could be identified on

OpenAlex. This is comparable to the publication output of a mid-sized university. The domain of social sciences and humanities is the largest domain for independent researchers (slightly over half of the publications), while there are fewer independently authored articles from life sciences, physical sciences and health sciences. This may be partly due to our definition of independence in economic terms. Slightly over half of the publications involving independent researchers are sole-authored publications (55.6%).

The works found are associated with 22,772 independent researchers. A portion of independent researchers is only linked with one record in OpenAlex (6,778 or 29,8%). However, other authors have contributed to multiple research articles and works. We have retrieved the full publication histories of flagged independent researchers. This approach has relied on the author name disambiguation algorithm of OpenAlex, and is not without it's flaws. We have added a cleaning step to take out obvious mismatches that would affect the results (such as unrealistically long careers and publication histories).

Next, we have investigated whether the authors who at one time published as independent/unaffiliated researcher have also published while affiliated to a research-performing organisation, which we would define as mixed careers. We looked at positive markers for institutional affiliation. The reason why we took this approach is because independent authors may omit their affiliation information. These cases are indistinguishable from cases of missing metadata and make it harder to trace independent researchers. We assume that researchers who indicate independence at one point in their careers, remain independent unless they provide an institutional affiliation. There are some cases where it was difficult to determine whether the authors were independent or affiliated because of quality issues in the affiliation information ('unclear' cases). The results are presented in table 1. Career length is based on the years between an author's first publication and last publication. We can see that authors with mixed careers have a higher average number of works per author, and also a longer career whereas authors who exclusively publish as independent scholars tend to have a lower publication count and shorter research career.

Table 1: Overview of career types.

Career	Number of authors (and percentage)	Average number of works per author	Average length of career (in years)
Authored only one work	6,778 (35.0%)	1	1
Always as independent	1,691 (8.7%)	3.6	5.7
Mixed career	9,562 (49.4%)	14.8	14.7
Unclear	1,323 (6.8%)	12	10.6
Total	19,354	8.8	8.8

Authors with a mixed career are more likely to first publish while affiliated and later publish as an independent author. This would be the case for PhD students who start their research career at a university, but do not pursue an exclusively academic career afterwards. Table 3 shows the percentage of authors with mixed careers starting with or without affiliation. The category 'both' indicates that the author published multiple works in the same year with different affiliation statuses. An important caveat here is that we are relying on works that are in OpenAlex, which is not necessarily the full publication history of these researchers (for the group that publishes first as an independent researcher, it is possible that earlier publications exist but are not in OpenAlex).

Table 2: First publication for authors with a mixed career (publishing both as independent and with affiliation)

Affiliation with first publication	Number of authors (and percentage)
Affiliation	6,754 (70.6%)
No affiliation/independent	1,745 (18.3%)
Both	741 (7.8%)
No affiliation	1,745 (18.3%)
Uncertain	322 (3.4%)

Using a model to infer the probability that a given name is gendered male or female allows us to explore the gendered dimension of unaffiliated research work. Gender assigning by name does not imply gender identity or expression. We use the results of gender classification only on an aggregated,in order to point towards structural inequality. The open source model 'nomquamgender' includes information on the number of sources per name (Buskirk et al., 2022). We find that while a majority of names could be gendered male, when compared to a test data set with the same disciplinary distribution, a larger percentage of female gendered names is found among independent researchers, suggesting that there could be a gendered dimension at play. However, there seems to be no gender effect between authors with mixed careers or always publishing as independent. The average career length for authors with male-gendered names is slightly longer (9.85 years) than for authors with female-gendered names (8.21 years).

There are a few important limitations to our work. Firstly, OpenAlex is evolving and changing rapidly. Our approach relies on affiliation information as well as on the author name disambiguation algorithm of OpenAlex. We have noted instances where affiliation information is unclear, and these need further investigation. It is also important to stress here that the performance of algorithms to classify names varies across regions, and is not ideal. Finally, we defined independence in terms of affiliation statements, but it is possible that authors indicate institutions without being paid employees. For example, students or voluntary employees may list an institutional affiliation without receiving any salary.

In conclusion, the number of works published by identifying as independent researchers has increased. People publishing as independent researchers frequently began their careers while affiliated with a university or research performing organisation. Our results indicate that long careers as independent researchers are uncommon, but mixed careers whereby researchers spend shorter periods of time as independent occur more frequently. Independent researchers are an important group to be aware of in terms of structural inequalities and barriers in the academic work environment. Recognizing independent researcher's work can highlight funding and access barriers.

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DUAL PATTERNS OF ACADEMIC RECRUITMENT: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA BASED ON JOB ADS

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Keywords: *academic recruitment, assessment criteria, post-doctoral researchers, universities; Finland*

Introduction

Academic recruitment has a major gate-keeping function in academia, providing certain individuals access to competitive academia and influencing the direction of academic fields. Most studies on academic recruitment have focused on senior academic positions (e.g., Nielsen 2015; Van den Brink & Benschop 2012; Pietilä 2019), although the greatest number of academic positions are found in more junior career stages. Yet fewer studies have examined how recruitment logics vary across career stages.

By analysing recruitment ads in a certain national context (Finland), this study contributes to the understanding of the qualities and contributions most valued in academic recruitment in different career stages. This paper argues that the public governance of science, especially the functioning of the research and development (R&D) funding system, shapes the allocation of academic positions. Through the mediating influence of varying authority structures in recruitment at different career stages, the funding system also affects the importance of assessment criteria (cf. Whitley 2010). In academic employment, universities' dependency on external funding success constrains organisational actorhood and increases the significance of principal investigators (PIs) capable of attracting R&D funds (Cruz-Castro & Sanz-Menéndez 2018; Pietilä & Pinheiro 2021).

In this paper, our interest is particularly in post-doctoral recruitment criteria, with comparisons made to criteria in senior-level academic recruitment. The trend of funding research with temporary project funding has resulted in increased numbers of temporary positions in academia, especially at the early career stages (Ylijoki 2016; Herschberg et al. 2018; Müller 2014).

In the Finnish system, as in many other national systems, post-doctoral recruitment is PI-centred. It belongs to the professional authority sphere where those in charge of externally funded projects largely control the selection process, including the definition of the recruitment criteria (cf. Herschberg et al. 2018). Instead, lecture-

ships as teaching-focused positions and tenure track positions and professorships as research-focused positions are typically funded by universities' core funding. They represent long-term organisational investments, and recruitment follows more formal organisational procedures (cf. Pietilä 2015). Thus, they belong to the organisational authority sphere, in which the university organisations determine the assessment criteria.

Data and method

Finland is a fruitful case for studying academic recruitment criteria, as universities in Finland are formal employers of academic staff, and universities have significant autonomy in setting criteria for recruitment and promotion (cf. with state-chartered systems; Whitley 2008). However, the autonomy of universities is restricted by the significance of external research funds, which comprise circa half of all R&D funding at Finnish universities (Pietilä 2024).

The dataset includes teaching and research positions advertised at Finnish universities' webpages. The data were collected from 6 February to 11 May 2023, amounting to a timeframe of circa three months. Data were collected from 13 universities, representing a full sample (excluding the Finnish National Defence University).

In the collection of the data, all job ads were screened manually. Coding was supported by a file including typical criteria informed by earlier literature on academic recruitment or academic careers (Mantai & Marrone 2022; Robinson-Garcia et al. 2023; Pietilä 2019; Pitt & Mewburn 2016). The pre-existing taxonomy was supplemented with data-driven areas of qualities or competence areas.

The criteria were coded as binary data (1/0). Many advertisements made a difference between mandatory criteria and skills or qualifications that were taken into consideration in evaluation but not required (typical wording being "beneficial", "appreciated"). However, it was difficult to differentiate between the level of obligatoriness and how necessary it was to meet these criteria.

Some ads included more than one position (e.g., when recruiting several post-docs with the same advertisement). Some ads were targeted at recruiting only one candidate but included different criteria for applicants with different levels of expertise and experience (e.g., when recruiting either an assistant, associate, or full professor). Such advertisements were coded separately. For the paper, we used the positions of post-doctoral researchers (167 positions), university lecturers (121 positions), assistant or associate professors (tenure track; 119), and (full) professors (57 positions).

In addition to the differences in assessment criteria between the positions, the analysis will focus on disciplinary differences in post-doctoral stage. Because the number of post-doctoral positions in social sciences and humanities in the data was small, the analysis focuses on differences between STEM (natural sciences, medicine and health sciences, and technology and engineering), and SSH fields (social sciences and humanities).

The limitations of the study are evident. Academic job advertisements represent official accounts of what kinds of skills or qualities candidates are expected to master or have. Prior research indicates that academic recruitment processes are social processes involving multiple phases, interests, and a mingling of formal criteria with local-level considerations of candidates' suitability (e.g., Orupabo & Mangset 2022; Lagesen & Suboticki 2024). Focus on job announcements does not reveal the actual processes of decision-making and the criteria emphasised in decision-making may deviate from the published ones. In some fields, specific skills or competencies may be assumed and therefore not explicitly included as assessment criteria. The data includes only publicly available positions, whereas many academic positions at Finnish universities are filled with closed procedures.

Findings

The preliminary findings show that the most sought-after qualities in post-doctoral recruitment include research merit (often vaguely described), the mastering of research methods, English language, and certain personal qualities ('drive' referring to one's ambitiousness or enthusiasm in research). Post docs were also expected to express more ability in teamwork when compared to university lecturers, tenure track staff, and professors. (Figures 1, 2, 3, 4.)

Announced assessment criteria for tenure track positions and professorships were similar, emphasising research merit, teaching skills, success in gaining external research funds, internationalisation (through collaboration or publishing), and academic leadership. Contribution within the scholarly community and supervision of doctoral researchers were also typical criteria. For university lecturers, research merit, contributions related to teaching and proficiency in Finnish and English were often mentioned.

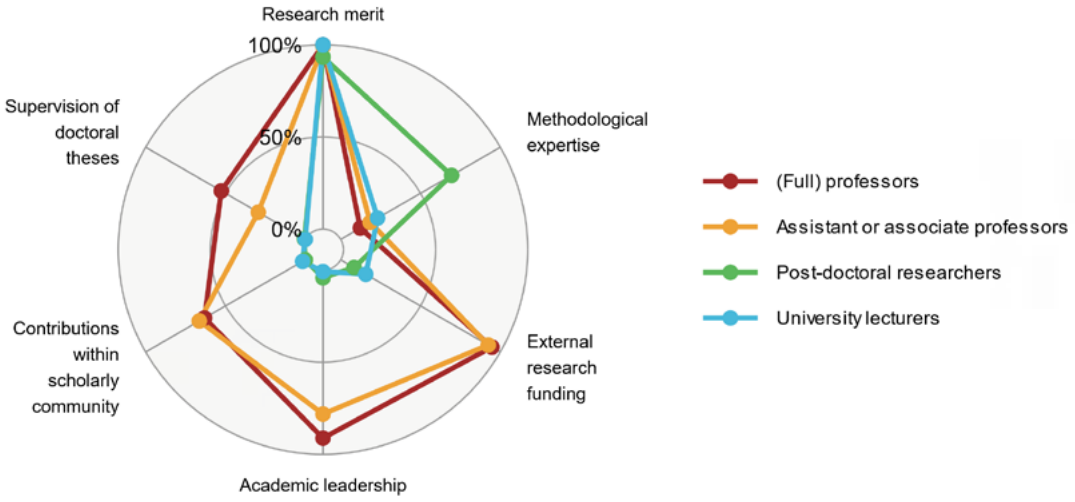

Figure 1. Research assessment criteria indicated in job adverts for post-doctoral researchers, assistant/associate professors, university lecturers, and professors.

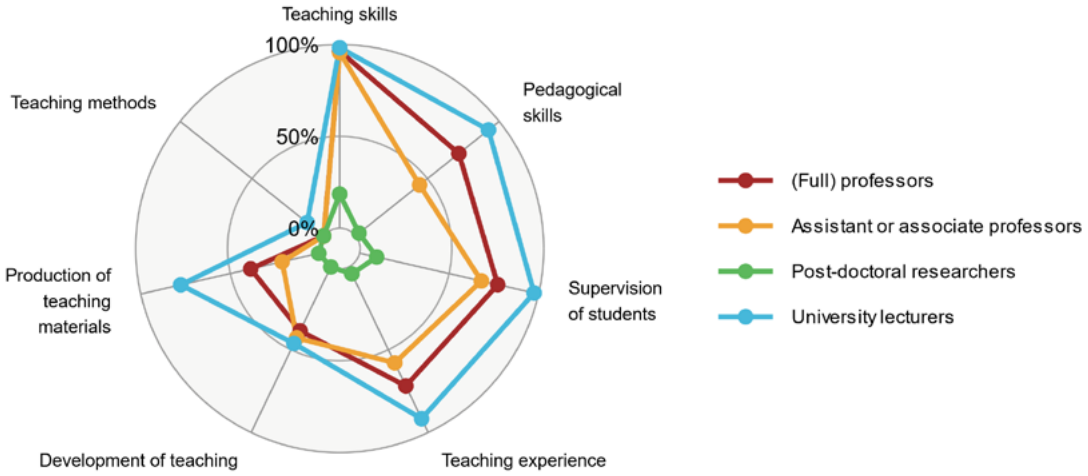

Figure 2. Teaching assessment criteria indicated in job adverts for post-doctoral researchers, assistant/associate professors, university lecturers, and professors.

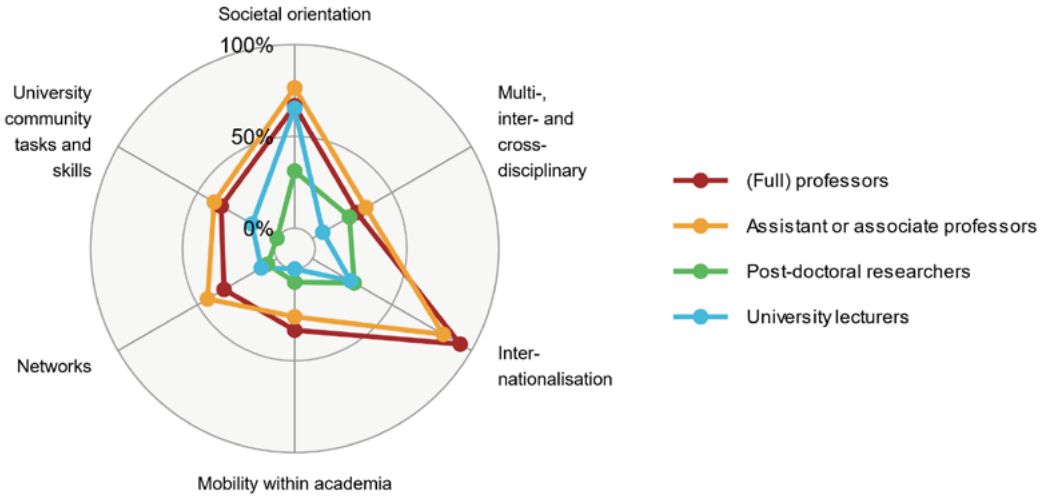

Figure 3. Assessment criteria indicated in job adverts for post-doctoral researchers, assistant/associate professors, university lecturers, and professors (complementary academic skills).

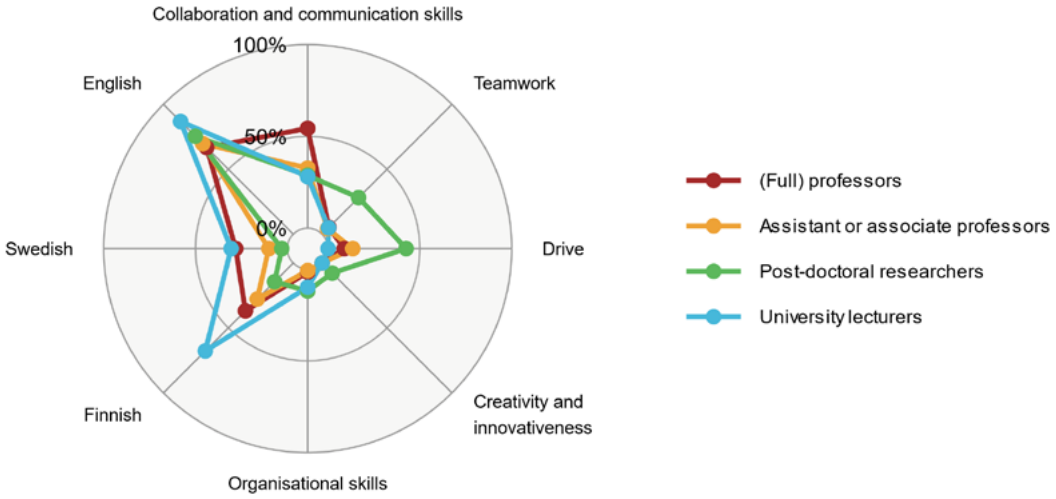

Figure 4. Assessment criteria indicated in job adverts for post-doctoral researchers, assistant/associate professors, university lecturers, and professors (collaboration and communication skills, person-based criteria).

Disciplinary differences were quite small. In post-doctoral recruitment, the largest disciplinary differences concerned research methods (more often mentioned as a criterion in STEM than in SSH) and requirements pertaining the academic subject ('drive'; more often mentioned as a criterion in STEM than in SSH). In SSH fields, internationalisation (e.g., international collaboration or publications in international outlets) and mastering Finnish were more often mentioned as criteria than in STEM fields.

Conclusion

The R&D funding system largely defines who holds the (main) control in academic recruitment, and thus, who determines the assessment criteria in recruitment. By looking at criteria in specific positions at Finnish universities we argue that the types of skills and qualifications largely differ between career stages and these differences should be seen from the perspective of dual authority structures in academic recruitment (cf. Whitley 2010). Overall, the criteria used in post-doctoral recruitment seem to focus on project-based needs for certain competences and skills. This aligns with the findings of Herschberg et al. (2018) across four European countries. The criteria are narrow when compared to recruiting staff for long-term, senior positions (cf. Van den Brink & Benschop 2012; Pietilä 2019). This raises questions about the prospects of an academic career – how attractive project-based employment conditions are to potential candidates, and when postdocs have the opportunity to develop the skills needed to enter the next career step.

Academic recruitment criteria are in the focus of research assessment reform initiatives. The findings emphasise the dual recruitment patterns in academia: one that is run by senior researchers' needs for tangible skills (post-doctoral researchers) and another that is run by organisational logics targeting either staff capable of running projects and gaining external funding or staff contributing to teaching. Thus, reform

initiatives on research assessment should consider the wider research policy context, including funding structures, and their implications on recruitment patterns.

Further research should focus on how vague criteria, such as teaching skills and societal impact, are operationalised in recruitment processes, and what weight they get in the overall evaluation process.

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IMPACT MENTORS, CHAMPIONS AND OFFICERS. THE EMERGING INFRASTRUCTURE OF IMPACT SERVICES IN THE UK

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Keywords: *impact, research impact evaluation, REF, research excellence framework, survey*

The establishment of research impact as one of the evaluation criteria in the British Research Excellence Framework (REF) brought about notable changes in the way academic work is conceived of and organized. While changes to the academic environment, academic ethos and academic discourse originated by the rise of impact as an evaluation criterion have been somewhat explored in existing studies (Chubb & Watermeyer, 2017; Watermeyer, 2014; Wróblewska, 2021), this paper attempts a first overview of the rise of impact services as a separate area of support offered by universities. We focus on new roles (e.g. impact officer, director for impact, impact lead) and positions (e.g. impact champion, impact mentor) emerging in the area of support for impact generation as well as institutional practices (e.g. prizes and rewards for impact). This article builds on a survey conducted in 2024 among 156 institutions in the UK. Based on the results of the study we advance a hypothesis on the emergence of an impact infrastructure around the new academic value of 'research impact'. The study will be of interest to scholars of academic culture and governance as well as to practitioners who wish to follow new developments in the area of higher education management. The paper presents a work-in-progres analysis of the collected data. It feeds into the "Societal impact and community engagement" strand of the conference.

SESSION 5A
EVALUATION PRACTICES AND TOOLS

EX-ANTE EVALUATIONS IN INNOVATION FUNDING AGENCIES: THE CASE OF FINEP (2015–2024) (WORKING PAPER)

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Keywords: *funding, ex-ante evaluation, economic subsidy, innovation policy, public policy*

Evaluation processes in Funding Agencies (FAs) are key to ensuring the efficient allocation of resources and fostering impactful innovations, particularly in emerging economies like Brazil.

Funding agencies operate within the framework of Science, Technology, and Innovation Policies (STIPs), whose logic is based on the geographical, historical, social, and political contexts in which they are inserted (BRANDÃO; ROLLO; QUEIROZ, 2019; SALLES-FILHO, Sergio et al., 2022; VELHO, 2011). Societal interpretations and conceptualizations of science, technology, and innovation play a defining role in shaping the logic of STIPs. (Dias, 2012; Velho, 2011).

According to Aagaard et al (2022), around 2010 FAs began to undergo substantial changes in their modus operandi, instrumentalizing mission-oriented policies, replacing a logic that had been present since the mid-20th century and was therefore considered "traditional" in FAs, mostly centered on science push and/or demand-pull (Aagaard et al., 2022).

Among the various aspects that can be addressed in how funding agencies work, we select one: the processes through which agencies prioritize and select what will be funded – categorically, ex-ante evaluations (Benneworth; Olmos-Peñuela, 2022; Biegelbauer; Palfinger; Mayer, 2020).

It is understood that the evaluations that take place in the context of FAs are fundamental pillars of the functioning of these institutions since they reveal the rationale present in the STIPs they carry out (Biegelbauer et al., 2020; Liaw et al., 2017), as well as determining how they influence and impact society (Ma et al., 2015).

Despite the relevance of peer review as the dominant method for ex-ante evaluation[i], there is a notable lack of comprehensive studies that systematically explore and document these practices across different funding agencies – especially in emerging economies – or critically examine their alignment with evolving policy frameworks.

In Brazil, the innovation funding agency FINEP (Financier of Studies and Projects[ii]), a public company under the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MCTI), oversees the administration of all activities related to the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FNDCT) (FINEP, 2024), that specifically allocated financial resources to support initiatives and projects in the domains of science, technology, and innovation.

FINEP stands as one of the funding agencies that constitute the Brazilian National Innovation System (NIS), and the its primary agencies include the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), States Research Support Foundations, and the National Bank for Social Development (BNDES). Despite the presence of similarities – if not outright congruence – in the characteristics of calls and programs supported by these agencies, they generally exhibit distinct characteristics, undertaking complementary activities within the scope of the Brazilian NIS (Pacheco and Corder, 2010).

FINEP's portfolio encompasses research and innovation projects, with a pronounced emphasis on the latter, in the context S&T institutions, companies and corporate entities, with direct and indirect support and capital support. Conversely, CNPq, CAPES, and the States Research Support Foundations primarily aim to support research projects and the training of human resources, predominantly within universities and S&T institutions. Notably, the BNDES, as a development bank, exhibits a broader scope, extending its support to companies (Pacheco and Corder, 2010).

This paper investigates how FINEP has structured and transformed its project prioritization and selection processes (ex-ante evaluations) between 2015 and 2024, focusing specifically on programs utilizing the economic subsidy mechanism (direct support), given their volume and relevance in Brazil's innovation landscape.

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i According to studies by Biegelbauer et al (2020), Schoonmaker et al (2017), Liaw et al. (2017), Norrman and Klofsten (2008), Holbrook and Frodeman (2011), Takalo and Tanayama (2010).

ii In portuguese: Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos.

The research question we aim to answer is: "How have FINEP's ex-ante evaluation practices evolved in response to recent transformations in innovation policy frameworks?".

A case study methodology was adopted to analyze the implications of evaluation practices for the management of the innovation funding agency FINEP, considering its context and connecting it to concepts and methods of ex-ante evaluations. The study uses secondary data (documents, reports, and evaluations) to identify patterns in the involvement of key actors, as well as the criteria and indicators used in these evaluation processes[iii].

Although this study focuses on a single agency, it aims to contribute to the broader literature on research and innovation evaluation by documenting institutional practices in context and reflecting on their alignment with international trends and normative frameworks.

The findings aim to provide actionable insights for policymakers and funding agency managers, improving decision-making processes and aligning evaluation practices with evolving innovation policy frameworks. This study highlights patterns in FINEP's evaluation practices and proposes refinements to the criteria used, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of funding mechanisms in Brazil's innovation ecosystem.

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INCLUDING BALANCED MULTILINGUALISM IN THE NORWEGIAN TOOLBOX FOR RECOGNITION AND REWARDS IN ACADEMIC CAREERS

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Keywords: *research evaluation, multilingualism, academic careers, responsible research and innovation, responsible use of metrics*

In an open science environment, science needs to be multilingual to fulfil its responsibilities. In our contribution we provide some ideas on how to achieve this by discussing how balanced multilingualism could be included in the new Norwegian framework for recognition and rewards.

Universities Norway have taken an active approach to the broader open science agenda and coordinates many related activities in Norway. In 2018, we successfully brought together key national stakeholders to develop NOR-CAM, a toolbox for recognition and rewards in academic careers. This concrete toolbox provides a broader and more flexible approach to assess academic careers. An important goal of the guidance and framework is to make the assessment processes more transparent and predictable, both for the individual and for the institutions. As a matrix, the assessment can be tailored to emphasize different competences for different tasks, positions, career stages depending on both the individual's career and the institution's needs.

In 2022, Universities Norway signed the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, and in 2023 we transitioned our national NOR-CAM network into a CoARA National Chapter. By signing the CoARA, Universities Norway commits to recognizing the broad diversity of valuable contributions that researchers make to science and society, including outputs beyond journal publications and irrespective of the language in which they are communicated. We also commit to abandoning inappropriate uses of journal- and publication-based metrics in research assessments, which include assessing outputs based on publication venue, format, or language.

NOR-CAM was developed at the same time as Universities Norway helped established The Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication, but we did not link these two initiatives from the outset. This initiative emphasizes the importance of engaging with society and sharing knowledge beyond academia, preserving national

infrastructures for publishing locally relevant research, and promoting language diversity in research assessment and funding systems.

The development of Norwegian terminology is a legally mandated responsibility for the Norwegian universities under The Norwegian University and University College Act, but multilingual practice has traditionally been given little attention in recognition and rewards context in Norway. At the same time there is an ongoing discussion on domain loss in science for Norwegian versus English, and our government have introduced a more active linguistic policy to address the problem.

For many researchers, the terminology and conceptual framework of scholarly work are in English, and significant efforts are needed to translate this into local languages and communicate it effectively to non-academic audiences. These activities are important and must be recognized. Traditionally, researchers are more motivated by citations - being cited by other researchers – and, in this context, using English offers an advantage. However, we are increasingly concerned with ensuring that research also has a societal impact. To achieve this, it is essential to use the local languages actively and document these efforts, making them visible. In our presentation we will argue that introducing the NOR-CAM toolbox will create better conditions for rewarding multilingual practice.

Norway's national Cris-system also holds information on outputs beyond journal publications, but the quality of these data is not at the same level as for scientific publications. In our presentation we will show an analysis of the language used in this type of publications – an analysis that indicates that Norwegian plays a much more central role when researchers communicate to a wider society.

In line with the Helsinki Initiative, we believe that the research system should facilitate the use of different languages in research process and documentation of results to fulfil its responsibilities. Better documentation of language used in outputs outside journal publications is a prerequisite for being able to take balanced multilingualism into account, both for institutions when fulfilling their mandated responsibility and in contexts where researchers are being evaluated.

Norwegian institutions have made significant commitments by signing the ARRA, supporting the Helsinki Initiative, and our government tightens its grip and adjust the law that governs the activities of universities and higher education institutions. All these commitments and political efforts support balanced multilingualism. We agree that high quality research should be identified regardless of publishing language. So, how can we make progress? In this presentation, we will discuss potential solutions for integrating balanced multilingualism into NOR-CAM and argue that our recognition and rewards toolbox, in its flexibility, facilitate some of these challenges effectively.

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IMETO: AN INNOVATIVE TOOL SUPPORTING KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES – A PROJECT IN PROGRESS

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As part of the GRAPHIA project, funded by the European Union, the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IBL PAN) is developing a tool called IMeTo (Impact Measurement Tool).

GRAPHIA aims to strengthen the European Research Area by developing a knowledge graph for the humanities and social sciences, enhanced by advanced AI and LLM-based services while modernising the next generation of the humanities and social sciences (SSH) research and innovation.

The goal of IMeTo will be to measure the impact of scientific activities, considering both academic publications and other research activities following national evaluation criteria.

IMeTo will serve as a supporting tool for research institution managers and research teams in assessing and shaping the outcomes of their work.

IMeTo will concentrate on transferring knowledge and technology in SSH, supporting researchers in presenting their findings in a way that is understandable to different audiences by communicating their work and its societal impact more effectively. The tool will be designed for research institution managers and research teams, helping them assess and shape their work's impact and measure the effectiveness and success rate of research dissemination, promoting social inclusion and community engagement.

IMeTo will leverage machine learning solutions to automate impact assessment, analyse large datasets and generate impact descriptions. It will extract key information from documents, assign them labels based on typology and then generate impact descriptions based on extracted information and assigned labels, creating coherent and well-structured texts enriched with interactive visualisations. IMeTo will utilize data from POL-on, an integrated network of information on science and

higher education in Poland including descriptions of relationships between research outcomes and their societal and economic impact.

IMeTo will offer a structured approach to impact assessment, which is crucial in today's research landscape. The application will also provide an open API that allows researchers, research institutions, funding agencies, and research evaluators to access its functionalities. Additionally, IMeTo is intended to be implemented as a plugin for CRIS systems or as a standalone application capable of working with local datasets in various formats.

The IMeTo aligns with the broader context of research assessment reform, which seeks to acknowledge the diversity of scholarly contributions, interdisciplinarity, open science, and societal impact. The RESSH2025 conference provides an ideal forum to present IMeTo as a tool that supports these objectives, promoting a more transparent and responsible approach to research evaluation in SSH.

IMPLEMENTING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT REFORM: PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA

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Keywords: *research assessment reform, open science, qualitative evaluation, institutional change, case study*

Introduction

The reform of research assessment has become a central issue in European research policy, driven by the need to move beyond traditional, metric-based evaluation models towards qualitative, responsible, and Open Science-aligned approaches. The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA), developed by the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), outlines principles for transitioning towards fairer, more inclusive, and transparent assessment frameworks, incorporating interdisciplinary research, Open Science, knowledge transfer, and societal engagement (CoARA, 2022).

As an early signatory of CoARA, the University of Rijeka (UNIRI) has played a leading role in research assessment reform in Croatia. It is currently the only Croatian institution to endorse CoARA and has actively engaged with national stakeholders to initiate discussions on ARRA principles. UNIRI has implemented institutional policy changes, structural transformations, and pilot initiatives, drawing from its participation in European-funded projects, particularly OPUS, SECURE, and OSCAR. Additionally, it has contributed to the YUFE4Postdocs initiative, a joint effort of the Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) alliance partners, which has piloted narrative CVs as an alternative researcher evaluation model (YUFE, 2023).

Drawing on lessons learned from these initiatives, this paper presents a case study of research assessment reform at UNIRI, offering practical insights into challenges, solutions, and policy recommendations that can guide other institutions navigating similar transitions.

The Need for Reform

Conventional research assessment models remain heavily reliant on quantitative indicators, such as journal impact factors, citation counts, and h-indices, which fail to capture the full diversity of research contributions and their broader societal relevance (European Commission, 2021). In response, UNIRI has implemented a responsible and transparent assessment framework, ensuring that evaluation processes align with the evolving needs of research careers and societal impact.

One of the most significant institutional changes has been the removal of CV-based evaluation in institutional research project applications. Rather than requiring a standalone CV, researchers' qualifications and contributions are integrated into the project proposal, ensuring that assessments prioritise the quality, feasibility, and impact of the proposed research rather than past publication records (University of Rijeka, 2024a). Preliminary observations suggest that this change has led to greater engagement from early-career researchers (ECRs), as well as an increase in interdisciplinary proposals, indicating a shift towards a more inclusive and innovation-driven evaluation system. However, further systematic assessment of this reform's long-term impact is needed.

Challenges in Research Assessment Reform and Lessons from OPUS

Despite these advancements, the implementation of Open Science and research assessment reforms has presented several key challenges, many of which were identified through the OPUS project pilot at UNIRI (University of Rijeka, 2024b).

Standardising Research Assessment and Open Science Policies Across Disciplines

A major challenge has been the complexity of standardising research assessment and Open Science policies across diverse scientific disciplines. The heterogeneous nature of academic fields and the independent legal status of faculties at UNIRI have made it difficult to establish uniform policies that are applicable across the university. This challenge has been compounded by low awareness and engagement with Open Science principles, leading to inconsistent implementation across faculties.

To address these issues, UNIRI has adopted a stakeholder-driven approach, ensuring that researchers, faculty leadership, and university decision-makers are actively involved in the policy development and approval process. Engagement strategies such as OS Cafés, targeted training sessions, and formal discussions in university governance bodies have been introduced to build awareness, secure commitment, and foster policy alignment. However, further institutional mechanisms are needed to ensure ongoing faculty engagement and compliance with Open Science policies.

Building Institutional Support for Open Science and Research Assessment Reform

The Centre for Open Science and Scientific Information Management (COZ), housed within the University Library, has functioned as a central hub for Open Science training, policy implementation, and researcher support, providing guidance on Open Access publishing, research data management, and assessment reform (University of Rijeka, 2024a). However, findings from OPUS highlight the need for expanded institutional investment, particularly in ensuring dedicated full time staff and greater integration between COZ and university management.

Similarly, the Science Outreach Centre (SOCRI) has played a critical role in documenting and evaluating public engagement activities, ensuring that contributions beyond scholarly publications—such as science communication, policy engagement, and outreach efforts—are recognised in researcher evaluations. However, its reliance on voluntary contributions from faculty members presents a sustainability challenge, reinforcing the need for dedicated staff and long-term funding to maintain its activities (University of Rijeka, 2024b).

Policy Recommendations for Research Assessment Reform

Based on UNIRI's experiences, the following recommendations can support institutions implementing similar reforms:

- Co-create policies and procedures with stakeholders, complemented by internal consultations, to ensure greater alignment and adherence to standardised rules across faculties.
- Strengthen Open Science support structures by securing dedicated staffing and financial resources for centres such as COZ and SOCRI.
- Monitor and evaluate the long-term impact of narrative CVs and qualitative research assessment models, ensuring alignment with national and European research evaluation frameworks.
- Advocate for national alignment with CoARA principles, ensuring that research assessment reform efforts are embedded within Croatia's national funding and policy structures.

Conclusion

UNIRI's experience provides valuable lessons for institutions seeking to transition towards qualitative, Open Science-aligned, and responsible research assessment models. The removal of CV based evaluation, piloting of narrative CVs, and investment in Open Science support structures have contributed to more holistic and transparent research assessment practices. However, institutional resistance, policy standardisation challenges, and resource constraints highlight the need for continuous policy dialogue, evaluator training, and stronger national alignment with European research assessment reforms.

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SESSION 5B
CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

FROM INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH TO ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT: ASSESSING THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

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Keywords: *academic engagement, bibliometric analysis, interdisciplinarity, social sciences & humanities, societal impact*

Research background

By enabling better knowledge integration across academic disciplines, interdisciplinarity holds promise for enhancing creativity and enabling groundbreaking discoveries (Carayol & Thi, 2005; Leahey et al., 2017; Leahey & Barringer, 2020). As such, stimulating interdisciplinary research has become a prominent objective in science policy, one which is often explicitly linked to the necessity of solving grand societal challenges (Huutoniemi, 2016; Mazzucato, 2018). To fully realise this potential, science policy institutions and scholars have emphasised the importance of better integrating the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) into interdisciplinary research (European Commission, 2017; Keraudren, 2018; National Academy of Sciences, 2017; Pedersen, 2016). Against the background of primarily Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-led initiatives in interdisciplinary research (Sonetti et al., 2020), this integration is meant to ensure that interdisciplinary research produces solutions that are both impactful and societally sound, owing to their grounding in SSH frameworks (Cinar & Benneworth, 2021; European Commission, 2023).

Nonetheless, the notion that interdisciplinary research leads to greater societal impact, particularly when involving SSH, remains insufficiently substantiated (de Sandes-Guimarães et al., 2022; D'Este et al., 2019; Okamura, 2019). We contend that this oversight is particularly acute in the SSH context, owing to issues related to the tracing of societal impact and to the bibliometric measurement of interdisciplinary research involving SSH. Due to the tacit and at times intangible nature of SSH knowledge, the societal impact of SSH research is multifaceted and difficult to trace and measure (Benneworth, 2015; Bonaccorsi et al., 2021; Muhonen et al., 2020). One lens through which scholars have sought to grasp the societal impact of research is academic engagement (e.g. Bornmann, 2013; Fini et al., 2018) defined as the 'knowledge-related interactions of academic scientists with external organisations' (Perkmann et al., 2021, p.1). However, this literature has been criticised for focusing almost exclusively on STEM disciplines, at the risk of understating the societal impact of SSH research by overlooking specific modes of engagement prevailing in the SSH context (Cunningham et al., 2024; Olmos-Peñuela, Benneworth, et al., 2014). In line with these concerns, an expanding body of literature shows that while SSH researchers are unlikely to engage in intellectual property licensing or firm creation to the same extent as their STEM colleagues (Olmos-Peñuela, Castro-Martinez, et al., 2014), they generate societal impact through a plurality of academic engagement activities. These include not only consulting and contract research, but also joint research, personnel mobility, training activities, publication and dissemination activities (Cunningham et al., 2024; Giménez-Toledo et al., 2023; Jacob & Jabrane, 2018).

Measuring the societal impact of interdisciplinarity within the SSH context is further challenged by bibliometric complexities. SSH research, more so than research produced by other fields, does not necessarily appear in international journals but appears often instead in national journals, book chapters or monographs (Archambault & Larivière, 2010; Sivertsen & Larsen, 2012). As a result, bibliographic coverage of SSH disciplines in the main commercial databases (e.g. Web of Science and Scopus) does not effectively capture outputs from SSH research (Sīle et al., 2018; Wilder &

Walters, 2021). This also means that SSH research tends to rely less on journal citations and to use instead more diverse citation sources which are often insufficiently covered by the main commercial databases. Making use of citation-based methods for measuring interdisciplinary is therefore cited as inadequate for the SSH context (Larivière et al., 2006).

Objective

Against this background, the purpose of this paper is to contribute to the study of the societal impact of interdisciplinary research in the SSH context through the lens of academic engagement. We aim to answer the following research question: Does engagement in interdisciplinary research lead to greater involvement in academic engagement activities among SSH researchers?

Data

To ensure satisfactory coverage of SSH research outputs, we rely on bibliographic metadata from the Flemish Academic Bibliographic Database for the Social Sciences and Humanities (VABB-SHW). To accurately reflect the main modes of academic engagement through which SSH researchers intend to generate societal impact, we draw upon recent literature addressing the nature of academic engagement in the SSH context (Cunningham et al., 2024; Giménez-Toledo et al., 2023). For each mode, we collected data signalling participation in a representative type of activity, including contract research (Strategic Basic Research projects of the Flanders Research Foundation), co-publications with non-academic stakeholders, book publications geared towards general audiences, and business chairs.

Method

We rely on an established methodological framework to identify interdisciplinary research and researchers. By calculating a diversity index (Hill-type diversity), we quantify the extent to which individual SSH researchers engage in interdisciplinary research. This diversity framework is applied to the disciplinary classifications of researchers' publication track records, as covered in VABB-SHW, to assess interdisciplinary diversity. The disciplinary classification is based on cognitive classification, which considers the actual content of the publication venue rather than the researcher's organisational affiliation. Finally, we develop a statistical model to test associations between interdisciplinary research and the academic engagement activities of SSH researchers, as exemplified by the four activities presented above.

Expected results and contribution

Our study will assess whether higher engagement in interdisciplinary research is associated with higher engagement in different academic engagement activities. Our study will further contribute to the literature by providing a categorisation of academic engagement activities in the SSH context based on four modes: response, co-production, cooperation and dissemination.

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EVALUATION, SOCIETAL IMPACT, AND THE HUMANITIES: REFLECTIONS ON VALUE AND AGENCY

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Introduction

Assuming that evaluation systems influence researchers' behaviors and priorities – as they are designed to do – it is crucial to critically examine the objectives these evaluations promote. Within the landscape of research assessment, particularly concerning societal impact, the overarching goal seems clear: to increase the relevance and positive societal influence of academic work. However, there exists a paradox within this framework. While most researchers in the humanities acknowledge a responsibility to contribute to the public good, many simultaneously resist evaluation systems explicitly designed to measure or promote societal impact.

This paper explores this tension by combining empirical data from interviews with humanities researchers at the University of Iceland with theoretical frameworks drawn from philosophy and social theory. In particular, I engage with C. Thi Nguyen's concepts of Value Capture and Value Federalism (Nguyen, 2024), alongside Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (Robeyns, 2017), to examine how evaluation systems might inadvertently constrain the very societal contributions they aim to foster.

Empirical Findings

In the paper "Useful Thinking: Humanities and the Societal Impact of Research" ("Hugsað til gagns: Hugvísindi og samfélagsleg áhrif rannsókna"), co-authored with Elsa Haraldsdóttir (2024), we analyze researchers' attitudes toward societal impact based on ten in-depth, semi-structured interviews with humanities scholars at the University of Iceland. The interviews reveal a distinct divide in how researchers perceive the concept of societal impact and the role of evaluations.

About half of the interviewees viewed the focus on societal impact positively. These researchers saw value in reflecting on the broader implications of their work, particularly in terms of public engagement, policy influence, and contributions to cultural understanding. They appreciated the opportunity to articulate the relevance of their research beyond academic circles. The other half of the interviewees expressed strong resistance to being required to explicitly justify the societal impact of their work. They viewed such demands as reductive, arguing that the value of humanities research often lies in its indirect, long-term, and context-dependent effects—outcomes not easily captured through standard evaluation metrics. For these scholars, the imposition of societal impact assessments risked undermining the

intrinsic motivations that drive their research. Interestingly, despite these differing attitudes, all interviewees provided compelling arguments for the societal relevance of their research. Furthermore, they emphasized that the freedom to pursue research without the pressure of explicitly demonstrating societal impact was itself essential to producing work that ultimately benefits society.

Theoretical Reflections

The tension between researchers' intrinsic motivations and external evaluation metrics can be illuminated through C. Thi Nguyen's concept of Value Capture (Nguyen, 2024). Nguyen describes value capture as the process by which complex, nuanced values are replaced by simplified, externally imposed metrics. While such metrics offer clarity and ease of comparison, they risk outsourcing the values that originally motivated individuals' actions. In the context of humanities research, metrics designed to assess societal impact may inadvertently reshape researchers' priorities, aligning them more closely with external expectations than with their intrinsic motivations.

This raises important questions about freedom and agency in the research process. Are scholars genuinely free to pursue research that they believe holds societal value, or are they being subtly guided by evaluation systems toward outcomes that are easily measurable but potentially less meaningful? To further explore this, I draw on Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, which emphasizes the importance of individuals' capabilities, or their real freedoms, to achieve goals they have reason to value (Robeyns, 2017). In applying this framework to research evaluation, the focus shifts from merely measuring outputs to considering whether evaluation systems enhance or constrain researchers' ability to contribute to society in meaningful ways.

Responsible Research and Evaluation

The ultimate goal in evaluating humanities research should be to promote responsible research—research motivated by a genuine desire to contribute to the public good (Ochsner et al., 2023). However, when the value of research is outsourced and metricized, the meaning and motivation behind research can be eroded. Emanuel Kulczycki (2023) describes this phenomenon as "playing the evaluation game", where scholars learn to navigate the evaluation system strategically, focusing on metrics rather than meaningful contributions. While Value Capture and the Capability Approach help diagnose the challenges of current evaluation systems, they do not offer clear solutions for designing better practices. To address this, I turn to Nguyen's lesser-explored concept of Value Federalism. This idea suggests that different domains of life – and by extension, different academic disciplines – require distinct evaluative frameworks. Rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all model of societal impact assessment, Value Federalism advocates for a more pluralistic approach, where different fields develop their own criteria for evaluating impact based on their unique epistemic and societal roles.

Conclusion

Reforming research assessment in the humanities requires a delicate balance between ensuring accountability and preserving the freedom and agency necessary

for meaningful scholarly work. By integrating the concepts of Value Capture, Value Federalism, and the Capability Approach, we can develop evaluation frameworks that recognize the diverse ways in which humanities research contributes to society. These frameworks should align with CoARA's vision for responsible, pluralistic, and context-sensitive research assessment, fostering an environment where scholars are empowered to pursue research that truly matters.

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EVALUATIVE PRINCIPLES FOR ASSESSING SOCIETAL QUALITY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

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Introduction

Since the 2000s, research funders across the globe have introduced societal quality as a criterion in evaluation procedures. Yet, academics often contest this development (Hug & Ochsner 2022). This relative novelty and contestability as formal criterion (compared to scientific quality) complicates the consideration of societal quality in evaluations. Past research efforts have identified dimensions of societal quality that evaluators individually consider or collectively discuss during assessments. It is yet to be investigated how the interplay of dimensions of societal quality ultimately translates into a joint assessment or even evaluative principles. Therefore, we ask: "What evaluative principles do evaluators use in their collective assessment of societal quality of academic research in SSH?"

Theory

Group interactions in assessment committees significantly influence final decisions in evaluations. For instance, a dimension of quality may be discussed without it necessarily contributing to the outcome of the assessment (Lamont 2010). We understand the interplay of dimensions and their translation into arguments as 'evaluative principles' Evaluative principles denote the logics, norms, or rules that actors use to justify a valuation (Fochler et al., 2016).

Previous studies identified six dimensions of social quality that evaluators consider in its assessment: 1) the inherent relevance of a research topic (Luo et al., 2021); 2) the interactions that facilitate exchange between researchers and other societal actors as well as 3) the societal effects of such interactions (Samuel & Derrick 2015);

4) economic impact (De Jong et al. 2016), 5) concrete collaborations with other societal actors (Ma et al. 2020) and 6), 'scope and/or reach' of the societal effects (Watermeyer & Chubb 2019).

Method

We have selected the Dutch national evaluation of social quality of research in the SSH as our case. The Netherlands has a national research evaluation system that has included social quality in some form since its inception in 1993 (Van Drooge, De Jong et al). Thus, if evaluative principles for social quality exist, we expect that they will have had sufficient time to develop in the Netherlands.

Our primary method is Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) as it is suitable for mid-N-range studies. It is based on set theory and allows for identifying causal mechanisms while maintaining rich case level information. In this preliminary work we have used the Crisp Set variant (csQCA) which determines which set a case is part of based on one or more characteristics. There are two types of characteristics: conditions and outcomes. Conditions may be sufficient or necessary for an outcome to occur. QCA assumes equifinality and asymmetry in causal mechanisms.

We have collected all 66 assessment reports from SSH research units that were evaluated in a collective procedure guided by the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP) 2015–2021. For each unit we created a template in which we translated the committee's qualitative assessment per dimension of social quality (conditions) as well as its final assessment (outcome) into a binary score (0=negative assessment, 1=positive assessment). Committees could express their final assessment of societal quality on a scale from 1–5, with most units receiving either a 1 (excellent) or a 2 (very good). We only included the units that received an 'excellent' in the set of units that receive the highest assessment for social quality, while all other units where scored a a 0. The resulting scores per cases were imported in R and analyzed with available QCA packages (Dusa, 2019; Oana & Schneider, 2018).

Preliminary results

First, we determined whether any dimensions of social quality are necessary to receive the highest assessment for social quality. Based on inspections of first consistency (>0.9) and second Relevance of Necessity (Ron) (>0.6), we conclude that the presence or absence (indicated by ~) of none of the dimensions is a necessary condition for positive or negative outcome (see table 1). For instance, a unit may receive the highest assessment even if it does not receive a positive assessment of its economic impact or results.

Table 1: Analysis of necessity for the outcome.

Dimension*	Consistency	Coverage	RoN
Inherent relevance	0.5238	0.5500	0.7353
Process	0.9524	0.5556	0.3600
Result	0.5238	0.4783	0.6471
Scope	0.5238	0.6875	0.8529
Economic Impact	0.4762	0.5556	0.7714
Collaborations	0.7143	0.5769	0.6333
~Inherent relevance	0.4762	0.4000	0.5714
~Process	0.0476	0.1111	0.8182
~Result	0.4762	0.4545	0.6571
~Scope	0.4762	0.3448	0.4571
~Economic Impact	0.5238	0.4074	0.5294
~Collaborations	0.2857	0.3158	0.6667

Second, we analyzed whether similar pathways, consisting of the presence and/or absence of a combination of conditions lead to the same outcome. We found this not to be the case for half of the pathways in our dataset. Thus, if units receive identical assessments for each of the dimensions of social quality, some may receive the highest assessment of social quality and others do not.

Next, we analyzed which pathways are sufficient to explain either the presence or the absence of the outcome. Most pathways that we found have low raw (>.14) and unique (>.10) coverage, , meaning that other dimensions than included in the analysis explain part of the outcome and that few cases are explained by each individual path. There are two exceptions. The path Inherent Relevance*Process*Scope*~Economic Impact*Stakeholder Collaboration has a raw coverage of .29, indicating that these dimensions explain about 30% of the outcome variance, meaning that 70% of the outcome is explained by factors not included in the path. This path has a unique coverage of .29, indicating that almost 30% of the units with the highest assessment for social quality in our set receive positive assessments for their relevance, process, scope and stakeholder collaboration, but a negative assessment of their economic impact. If the assessment of all these dimensions is negative, which is the second exception, this path explains 20% of variance in the absence of the highest assessment of social quality. This path explains 13% of the cases that did not receive the highest assessment.

Preliminary conclusions

Our analysis reveals that committees in the Dutch evaluation context consider all six dimensions of social quality, as identified in the literature. None of these dimensions necessarily requires a positive assessment for an evaluand to receive the highest score for social quality. We also found inconsistencies in assessments, meaning that

equal assessment patterns of dimensions lead to different final assessments. Finally, we found only two paths that substantially explain the presence and absence of the highest possible assessment for social quality. Yet, the six dimensions only explain a minority of the variance in the outcome and the two paths only a minority of the cases that receive and did not receive the highest possible assessment.

In short, these findings suggest that the six dimensions of social quality as identified in the literature are not sufficient to explain how committees assess social quality. One interpretation of this result is that committees consider other dimensions of social quality. For instance, the SEP also asks committees to consider a unit's strategy for social quality which we did not include in this deductive study. A second interpretation is that other practical factors shape assessments, such as the moment at which a unit's performance was discussed. A third and more fundamental interpretation is that there is no or not yet a mature evaluation regime for social quality in SSH, resulting in the variance between and within committees.

EVALUATION OF APPLIED AND PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH: CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR RESEARCH QUALITY AND SOCIETAL IMPACT IN SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH SCIENCES

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While there has been criticism on purely bibliometric research assessment for a while for basic research (see e.g., DORA, 2012; Hicks et al., 2015; ENRESSH, 2017), research on research evaluation focused primarily on basic research. In the last decade, however, the rising importance of the concept of societal impact of research and the increasing academisation of professions with the rising importance of universities of applied sciences brought the relevance of applied and practice-based research (APB research) to the fore. Still, evaluation practice slowly adapted to criticism of purely bibliometric evaluations and the depreciation of societal impact and applied and practice-based research in particular in many evaluation procedures. This is changing with the establishment of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA, 2022). What sets CoARA apart from previous initiatives is that being a signatory does not only include a promise to adhere to abstract commitments but comes with an obligation to actually reform research assessment procedures within the institution or association. The signatories have to submit Action Plans how they will implement the changes. One important commitment is to base evaluations mainly on qualitative evaluation. Indicators can be used but should inform qualitative assessment and their use must be responsible.

This creates the need for practical knowledge how to better evaluate research in different disciplines. Of particular interest is APB research as evaluation procedures have so far paid little attention to such research. Together with Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW), the hlb-Bundesvereinigung has initiated a CoARA subgroup which aims at reforming research assessment of APB research within the Working Group "Towards Transformations: Transdisciplinarity, Applied/Practice-Based Research, and Impacts". The subgroup on APB research has organized a workshop at the Zurich University of Teacher Education to explore quality criteria and indicators

for research quality and societal impact in two APB groups of disciplines: social work and public health (nursing, midwifery, ergotherapy, physiotherapy, health sciences).

The goal behind the workshop was to bring different stakeholders in the two fields of APB research together and think about how indicators relate to quality criteria and whether and how the criteria and indicators differ from other disciplines. This presentation will present the results of the workshop.

Background

APB research is characterized by some special features that warrant different quality criteria than for basic research (Brunotte et al., 2024). Furthermore, criteria may differ in significance and weight or in their practical definition (see, e.g., Lewandowska et al., 2024). Firstly, there is the collaborative aspect also with non-academic stakeholders. Secondly, APB disciplines are also strongly involved in teaching activities and the formation of future professionals. Thirdly, there is also the expectation of (local) impact of APB research. However, a catalogue of quality criteria has still to be developed because research quality is a strongly context-dependent concept (Gläser, 2024; Ochsner, 2022) and there is scarce research on APB research. We thus followed an open approach developed to identify criteria and indicators for research quality (Ochsner, 2022). Research quality is conceptualised as a latent construct. To measure latent constructs, criteria have to be identified and further specified. Only with such a definition and specification, indicators for the criteria can be identified. Applying such a model comes with the advantage that it becomes also visible, which criteria cannot be measured with indicators. This is an important feature of every measurement model because only then we can see what is missed in the measurement, and by consequence, we can evaluate potential bias of a measurement.

We also accounted for the fact that different stakeholders might have different notions of quality (Langfeldt et al., 2020) and invited three types of stakeholders, researchers, group and team leaders, and university administrators and science policy makers. After careful consideration, we refrained from inviting stakeholders from outside academia – even though such stakeholders play a very important role in APB research – because it would have complicated the organization of the workshop as introductions to the topic and the workshop itself would have needed to be structured differently for academics and non-academics. We also felt that we first need to get to grips with what constitutes research from the academic perspective in order to be better prepared for a workshop with non-academics.

Methods

To investigate whether quality criteria do differ and, if so, how they differ, we held a workshop with researchers, teamleaders as well as university administrators and science policy makers in two fields of APB research, i.e., social work and health sciences, in Switzerland. 30 participants registered for the workshop from ten European countries. Seven participants had to cancel on short-term's notice, mainly because of a COVID-19 wave. Four groups were built, 1) researchers from social work, 2) researchers from health science, 3) team leaders of health sciences 4) university

administrators and science policy makers (in charge of applied and practice-based research in the two fields but not necessarily having a background in these fields). The list of quality criteria from the humanities (Hug et al., 2013) and social sciences (Ochsner, 2022) developed by the same method as used in the workshop, complemented by the criteria identified in studies of APB research (Lewandowska et al., 2024) served as a starting point. The first discussion was to accept/reject the given criteria and complement them for practice-based research. The second discussion was specifically on societal impact. The third discussion was to combine the results of the four groups.

Preliminary results

All groups agreed that it is difficult to separate research quality and societal impact because APB research does almost always have an impact, the question is whether it's a good or a bad impact. Furthermore, most of the criteria from the starting list were considered useful, but some had to be expanded, for example, the exchange criteria was expanded with the aspects of professional and user exchange. A new criteria sustainability (health science) and ethics (social work) were suggested and in the discussion were found relevant for both.

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SESSION 6A
PUBLICATION PATHWAYS

THE ROLE OF PREPRINTS IN RESEARCH EVALUATION: INVESTIGATING PREPRINT WITHDRAWALS

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The increasing use of preprints in scholarly communication raises pressing questions about their place in research evaluation frameworks. Preprints – manuscripts shared publicly prior to formal peer review – enable rapid dissemination, foster transparency, and promote early feedback. Their growing adoption, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, has significantly reshaped the timelines and norms of scholarly communication.

However, this shift poses challenges for research assessment systems that rely on established proxies of quality, such as peer-reviewed publications and journal prestige. As preprints increasingly appear in citation networks, grant applications, and tenure dossiers, evaluating their credibility and scientific value becomes a critical concern.

This study examines preprint withdrawals as a lens into the reliability and integrity of early-stage research outputs. Withdrawal, analogous to retractions but less formalized, offer insights into why authors or platforms remove preprints and what this means for interpreting preprints in assessment contexts. Yet, the mechanisms and reasons behind such withdrawals remain underexplored, limiting the ability of institutions, funders, and evaluators to responsibly incorporate preprints into their metrics and decision-making processes.

Although the literature has covered the benefits and risks of preprints and retractions separately, their intersection, i.e., withdrawn preprints, has received little attention. Most existing retraction studies rely on the Retraction Watch Database, which includes fewer than 150 preprint records. In contrast, arXiv, the largest preprint repository, contains over 7,000 withdrawn submissions, many with brief explanatory comments. These data provide a unique opportunity to analyze the quality control landscape before peer review takes place.

This ongoing project is informed by sociological studies of scientific norms and their violations and adopts a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative text analysis and qualitative content analysis of withdrawal comments, along with statistical analysis of metadata (e.g., discipline, timing, authorship). The dataset comprises metadata and withdrawal comments associated with over 7,000 arXiv preprints. These comments offer unique insights analogous to journal retraction notices but are underutilized in scholarly analysis.

The study is guided by three key research questions:

1. What are the main reasons for preprint withdrawals?
2. Are there disciplinary differences in the reasons for preprint withdrawals?
3. Are the reasons for preprint withdrawals analogous to or distinct from those of journal article retractions?

Our approach aims to identify recurring patterns in withdrawal comments and to categorize them systematically. Preliminary analyses reveal a wide range of reasons for withdrawal: technical flaws, revised experimental approaches, authorship disputes, and administrative interventions. Importantly, these reasons are often disclosed voluntarily by authors and may indicate a self-corrective process earlier in the research lifecycle than formal peer review allows. This finding has direct implications for research evaluation: preprints should not be treated as static or final, and evaluators must consider their provisional status and the transparency of associated metadata (e.g., versioning and withdrawal notices).

A central comparative component of our study examines how these reasons differ from the better-documented causes of journal article retractions. While journal retractions are commonly triggered by misconduct, plagiarism, or serious post-publication errors, our preliminary evidence suggests that preprints are more likely to be withdrawn due to issues identified by the authors themselves before peer review, such as the need to improve clarity or fix technical mistakes. This suggests that preprints may act as a self-correcting mechanism in earlier phases of knowledge production.

By systematically examining over 7,000 preprint withdrawals and comparing them with journal retractions, this study provides the first large-scale empirical basis for understanding withdrawal dynamics and their implications for evaluation. Its findings will inform ongoing debates around reforming research assessment, especially initiatives advocating broader definitions of impact and output.

Our findings have the potential to inform multiple stakeholders, from researchers and journal editors to funders and research evaluators. By illuminating the complex landscape of preprint withdrawals, we contribute to ongoing debates about whether and how preprints should be cited in journal articles, grant applications, or assessment frameworks.

Thus, the project contributes to scholarly communication and research policy by offering evidence-based recommendations for the responsible inclusion of preprints in evaluation. It underscores the need for clearer metadata standards, greater transparency in withdrawal practices, and nuanced interpretation of preprint status in metrics-driven environments. As institutions begin to recognize the value of preprints, this research ensures that assessment frameworks evolve accordingly, balancing speed and openness with accountability and rigor.

HOW DO AUTHORS EVALUATE NATIONAL BOOK PUBLISHERS AND MAKE PUBLICATION VENUE CHOICES?

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Books remain a crucial publication format for scholars in the social sciences and humanities (SSH), serving as an important medium for disseminating knowledge and research findings. In the publishing process, authors must decide where to publish, in which language, for which audience, and which publisher best meets their needs. When publishing in national (non-English) languages, these decisions are rarely guided by quantitative or bibliometric indicators of impact. Additionally, many smaller national publishers are not indexed in major international citation databases, and only a few countries or regions have developed formal rankings of book publishers.

This research examines how authors select book publishers and the underlying perceptions of quality, prestige, and impact that influence their decisions. The study focuses on authors from Croatia, a country with a small national book market and no formal ranking or evaluation system for national publishers.

The poster will present findings from a questionnaire survey which will be conducted in the first half of 2025 among Croatian SSH scholars who have authored or edited original scholarly books, monographs, or thematic edited volumes. The analysis will address several key questions: How do Croatian SSH authors and editors decide where to publish their books? How often do they choose Croatian publishers, and do they plan to continue this trend? What factors drive their decisions? Among Croatian publishers, how do they select a specific one? What are the main factors they consider in making this decision (are they related to perceived quality)? What constitutes their perception of quality? Is there a consensus on the “best” Croatian publishers within certain disciplines, and how does this agreement vary across fields? Are there noticeable shifts in authors’ evaluation criteria over time, and what factors contribute to these changes?

Special attention will be given to the role of Open Access in book publishing, considering its growing influence due to recent institutional and funding policies.

THE INCREASING VALUE OF QUALITATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED JOURNAL EVALUATION

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Keywords: *journal evaluation, SSH, impact factors, multilingualism, CoARA*

National lists of scholarly publication channels (journals, series and book publishers) were established in several countries one or two decades ago, at that time mainly for the purpose of performance-based funding of research institutions (Pölönen et al., 2020). One of the merits of these lists from the start has been their more comprehensive coverage of the scholarly literature of the humanities and social sciences (Sivertsen, 2022). The lists could thereby also serve the aims of documenting and stimulating multilingualism in scholarly publishing (Kulczycki et al., 2020).

The national lists represent a procedure for qualitative evaluation of scholarly journals and book publishers which is regularly performed by relevant communities of experts in scientific disciplines. More recently, two major changes in scholarly publishing and in research assessment could stimulate a renewed discussion of how to better apply the value of such procedures.

One of the changes is the increasingly dominating presence of Article Processing Charges (APC) as a business model for scholarly publishing. It creates a commercial incentive to publish more with less effort, thereby creating a grey zone of journals less interested in promoting research quality (Zhang et al., 2022).

The other important change is the manifestation of the movement towards responsible research assessment with the CoARA agreement in 2022. There is now a clear understanding that quantitative indicators of journal performance, such as the Journal Impact Factor, need to be replaced by responsible assessment of individual publications. However, journals are still assessed, and we now see that quantitative indicators fail to discriminate between good quality journals and the grey-zone journals that are launched to make profits from APC. In our view, even more than before, journals need to be evaluated qualitatively. This should be done by active researchers who know the journals as both authors and reviewers.

The two problems so far with the national lists are that they receive little attention in the discussions of responsible research assessment, and that they lack co-ordination across countries. If these two problems could be solved, the original merits of the lists from the point of view of the humanities and social sciences could be strengthened again: comprehensiveness and multilingualism. Our contribution will provide ideas for how to solve these two problems.

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SESSION 6B
METRICS AND INDEXING

OPEN METRICS AND OPEN SCIENCE PRACTICES IN DIAMOND OPEN ACCESS: PERUVIAN CASE

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Keywords: *scholarly journals, diamond open access, editorial policies, Peruvian journals, open science*

Introduction

Some of the oldest Peruvian scholarly journals that emerged in the first half of the last century and are still in publication include Anales de la Facultad de Medicina (1918) and Letras (Lima) (1929), published by the Faculties of Human Medicine and Letters and Human Sciences, respectively, at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. Additionally, the Revista de la Sociedad Química del Perú (1934) continues to be published by the institution of the same name. The evolution of Open Access includes four pathways: Gold, Green, Hybrid, and Bronze. As first, the “green route” involves publishing manuscript versions (copies) through digital repositories; while the “gold route” entails publishing articles in electronic journals with a publication fee; while “bronze route" implies that articles are freely accessible on the publisher's page but without a clearly identifiable license; and “hybrid route” occurs when articles are freely available under an open license in a subscription-based access journal (Alhuay-Quispe & Bautista-Ynofuente, 2021). Latin American scholarly journals are supported by non-commercial publishers and publicly funded infrastructure oriented to advance open access as the natural form of scientific communication (Debat, & Babini, 2020). OA publications continue to grow exponentially; however, the model is not without controversy, including high article processing charges (APCs), the OA citation advantage, and its potential to enable paper mills and predatory journal practices (Abdel-Razig, et al, 2024).

Previous studies analyzing Peruvian scholarly journals, across various dimensions and aspects with a notable emphasis on medical journals.

Objective

Aims to describe the editorial characteristics and open science policies in Peruvian scientific journals that publish in diamond open access models.

Methods

A descriptive case study with a cross-sectional investigation design is used. A sample of 219 journals qualified and abstracted in SciELO Peru, Latindex 2.0, DOAJ and MIAR were selected.

For data processing and analysis, the following dimensions and variables were used: a) editorial characteristics: publication subject areas, periodicity, publisher type, publication place, electronic publication format, plagiarism policy, and type of review process; b) open science policies practices: licensing and author copyright, repository or self-archiving policy, digital preservation policy, and open citation practices.

Also, based on these findings, the development of an observatory website for Peruvian diamond open access journals is proposed.

Results

- Peruvian scholarly journals in Social Sciences (36%) predominate among the eight subject areas in which the studied journals are published, while Agricultural Sciences, Engineering Sciences, and Business Sciences are less represented.
- The private sector of publishers outnumbers the public sector, with the highest concentration in Lima, the country capital.
- In terms of the publishing sector and type of institution, there is a greater concentration in universities (84% of the total), with private institutions for 45%.
- The platforms used by journals to distribute their content are not always the same; only a minority of journals use a web content system different from the Open Journal Systems software.
- In self-archiving policies outline the guidelines for depositing research outputs in institutional or subject-specific repositories, results show that more than half of Peruvian journals (54%) do not have a clear policy.
- A digital preservation policy, Peruvian journals use services such as LOCKSS, CLOCKSS, PKP PN, the Internet Archive, and their own publisher policies for digital preservation. However, most journals do not use any digital preservation services.
- For the open citations practices such as I4OC (Initiative for Open Citations), findings show that only nearly a quarter (27%) of Peruvian journals include and display cited references on their website.

Discussion

The open science practices adopted by scholarly journals in the Peruvian case are still at an incipient stage. Most titles are edited by universities; similar trends are observed in Latin America (Corera-Álvarez and Molina-Molina, 2016). This situation could endanger not only the widespread adoption of open science practices but also the continuity of journals due to the constant political and economic changes in the region, as seen in the cases of Venezuela and Argentina. It could also have negative repercussions for OA diamond journals, such as the potential acquisition by foreign conglomerates or companies, as occurred with the journal Comunicar, a leading publication in the Spanish-speaking world.

Latin America is a global reference about OA practices, having implemented Open Science strategies and policies at country-regional levels, with platforms such as SciELO, Redalyc, and LA Referencia which contribute to open access ecosystem based on green access and diamond access routes (De Filippo & D'Onofrio, 2019; Muñoz-Vélez et al., 2024). However, each journal evaluation system such as SciELO or Redalyc, manages and generates metrics at the article-level, author-level, and journal-level only for indexed titles on these platforms.

Peru, in terms of digital infrastructure supporting the green route to open access, has a significant number of digital repositories—nearly 200 institutions are connected to the National Network of Digital Repositories – ALICIA[i]. However, they are underrepresented in promoting self-archiving policies, as most repositories primarily contain theses and dissertations rather than research outputs (Alhuay-Quispe, et al., 2017). In Peruvian science, technology, and innovation (STI) policies, as part of the research evaluation system, researchers qualified under RENACYT are recognized for publishing in two commercial indexing databases and SciELO. Nevertheless, the country lacks a national journal classification system, such as Publindex in Colombia or CAPES in Brazil. These conditions represent a limitation for developing a comprehensive overview of Peruvian journals in terms of open science and responsible metrics.

Finally, we present a preliminary version of a web application titled Directorio de Revistas Científicas Peruanas, available at: https://joelalhuay.shinyapps.io/recipec25/. This resource includes a directory and dashboard of Peruvian diamond open access journals and aims to provide transparent and open metrics aligned with best practices in open science.

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UNIVERSITY JOURNALS IN GLOBAL INDEXING DATABASES: PRELIMINARY RESULTS ON VISIBILITY AND COVERAGE DISPARITIES

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Keywords: *global indexing systems, journal publishing, metadata completeness, scholarly publishing, university journals*

Introduction

University journals (UJs) play an important role in scholarly publishing, particularly in providing non-commercial, institutionally supported platforms for the dissemination of research findings. Despite their recognition within scholarly ecosystems within countries, UJs are often underrepresented in global bibliographic databases (Khanna et al., 2022; Laakso and Pölönen, 2023), which affects their visibility and accessibility, as well as their role in national and institutional research assessment systems (Nazarovets, 2025, In press).

Until recently, studies of the academic publishing landscape at the publisher-level have been relatively rare, but this is changing. In particular, Nishikawa-Pacher (2022) has produced a list of large academic publishers. Stephen and Stahlschmidt (2022) conducted a landscape study of small journal publishers. Laakso and Multas (2023) examined the European journal landscape with a focus on small and medium-sized publishers. Tashkın et al. (2023) examined the place of learned society journals in the publishing landscape. One of the main challenges faced by journal researchers at the publisher-level is the technical limitations that arise from the absence of a complete catalogue with clear metadata. This necessitates combining such data from different sources.

This study is part of a broader research project, aimed at constructing a dataset of UJs and analyzing their characteristics through bibliometric indicators. To provide the most complete picture of the UJs landscape, which remains under-researched, this study uses several databases, including Ulrichsweb, OpenAlex, DOAJ, Web of Science (WoS), and Scopus.

The preliminary results of the study are presented here, focusing on:

- The presence of UJs of a sample of countries from different regions in global indexing databases.

- Metadata completeness across databases.
- Cross-database inconsistencies and regional differences in indexing coverage.

Methodology and Data Sources

The dataset was constructed using a multi-database comparison approach, relying on the following sources:

- Ulrichsweb as a primary source for the search for UJs (Nazarovets, 2024).
- OpenAlex for broad bibliometric indexing.
- DOAJ to capture open access (OA) UJs.
- WoS and Scopus to assess inclusion in selective citation indexes.

A sample of ten countries was selected for the study: Afghanistan, Albania, Bahamas, Barbados, Cambodia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Tajikistan, and Yemen. Ulrichsweb was used as the primary source of information ("Publisher" column) to identify 68 journals published directly by universities in these countries. In addition, journals in the DOAJ data dump ("Publisher" and "Other organisation") and the WoS Master Journal List ("Publisher name" and "Publisher address") were selected based on their institutional affiliation to the publishing universities. OpenAlex and Scopus were searched using the ISSNs collected in the previous steps. The ISSN portal and journal homepages were also used to verify and standardize the data.

The term universities is used here to refer to institutions of higher education. Given regional differences, HEIs were identified using information on educational systems and qualifications contained in the World Higher Education Database (WHED).

The dataset was collected in January 2025.

Preliminary Findings

The dataset includes a total of 68 UJs from ten countries, with 49 active journals for 2024/2025 (the dataset is available via the following link).

Coverage across indexing systems (Table 1):

- Ulrichsweb, where 64 UJs (94%) were found, was the primary source used to search for UJs.
- OpenAlex indexes 47 UJs (69%), offering a broader coverage than other bibliometric platforms. At the same time, it lacks data on the UJ's publishers.
- DOAJ indexes 35 UJs. At the same time, an analysis of the websites of active UJs (latest issue in 2024/2025) shows that 48 out of 49 are OA (and 39 Diamond OA). That is, DOAJ indexes 73% of these journals.
- WoS and Scopus provide the most selective coverage, indexing three (Cyprus (2) and El Salvador (1)) and four UJs (Cyprus (3) and Tajikistan (1)) respectively and covering only a small fraction of the total dataset. Furthermore, all three WoS journals are only included in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI).

Table 1. Coverage of the UJs across indexing systems.

Country	UJs	Active UJs (2024/2025)	OA UJs (2024/2025)	Ulrichs-web	Open-Alex	DOAJ	WoS	Scopus
Afghanistan	5	4	4	4	3	1	0	0
Albania	8	6	6	6	7	6	0	0
Bahamas	2	1	1	2	1	0	0	0
Barbados	5	2	1	5	1	1	0	0
Cambodia	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	0
Cyprus	6	5	5	6	4	3	2	3
Dominican Republic	7	6	6	6	5	5	0	0
El Salvador	18	11	11	18	13	9	1	0
Tajikistan	3	1	1	3	1	1	0	1
Yemen	12	11	11	12	11	9	0	0
Total	68	49	48	64	47	35	3	4

Discussion

The findings from this preliminary analysis underscore several key issues in the representation of UJs in global indexing systems:

- The limited inclusion of UJs in WoS and Scopus underlines the high selectivity of these platforms. This limits the visibility of UJs, perpetuates inequalities in scholarly communication, and limits the usefulness of these databases for assessing the global publishing landscape.
- OpenAlex and DOAJ provide significantly broader coverage compared to WoS and Scopus. However, metadata inconsistencies in OpenAlex, such as the absence of publisher data, limit its utility for comprehensive bibliometric analysis. Similarly, although DOAJ effectively covers UJs, showing that the vast majority of them are OA, it still does not include a certain proportion of OA journals.
- Although Ulrichsweb was essential in identifying the majority of UJs, its limitations, such as outdated records and incomplete metadata, require cross-referencing with additional platforms to create a comprehensive dataset.

These findings align with broader discussions on the limitations of journal-based metrics for research evaluation and the need for more inclusive and representative indexing policies. They also highlight the importance of addressing metadata quality and standardization to improve the discoverability and credibility of UJs in global research ecosystems.

Next Steps and Research Implications

As the study progresses, the following steps will be undertaken:

- Expanding the dataset to refine regional comparisons and trends.
- Analyzing metadata inconsistencies and their impact on journal discoverability.
- Developing recommendations for improving UJ representation in indexing databases.

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A CASE STUDY OF LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP INDEXING IN OPENALEX: INSIGHTS FROM EUROPE AND ITALY (2020–2024)

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Keywords: *OpenAlex, legal scholarship, open bibliographic data, responsible research assessment*

Background and context

Legal scholarship landscape is shaped by long-standing traditions and disciplinary specificities but is now undergoing significant transformation due to increasing demands for openness and accessibility in scientific knowledge. Initially, this field was slow to embrace open access, ranking among the last academic disciplines to do so. In the early 2000s, scholars concentrated primarily on its regulatory aspects (Spindler, 2006), but the *Durham Statement on Open Access to Legal Scholarship* (Danner et al., 2011) provided crucial momentum by advocating for digitization and broader accessibility. In Europe, where legal research has traditionally relied on commercial print publications (van Gestel & Micklitz, 2014; Stolker, 2014), university policies and funding requirements have driven substantial change. However, legal publishing remains a hybrid ecosystem, balancing traditional publishers with few open science platforms, though integration varies across regions. A pivotal shift came with the 2023 *Barcelona Declaration*, which established four core principles: open access to metadata, adoption of open systems, support for sustainable infrastructures, and collective action for greater transparency. The most recent evolution concerns open bibliographic infrastructures. The need to overcome the monopoly of proprietary databases like Scopus and Web of Science is giving way to open platforms like OpenAlex. These transformations, although gradual (Severin, 2020), indicate how even a traditionally conservative sector like legal scholarship is responding to the needs for modernization and openness in contemporary scientific research.

Analysis of OpenAlex coverage on legal scholarship in Europe

This study examines the extent to which OpenAlex indexes legal scholarship, highlighting significant gaps in coverage. Using the OpenAlex platform, we conducted targeted queries to identify journal articles published between 2020 and 2024 in the subfield of “Law”. The dataset was further refined by filtering for Continent “Europe” which selects authors affiliated to institutions located in Europe.

We analyzed 32,830 legal journal articles resulting from these queries with further analysis of the retrieved data to identify patterns in a) geographical distribution; b) open access status; c) temporal coverage; d) language distribution, and e) licences metadata completeness. The joint analysis of these patterns highlights how their interplay shapes the visibility, accessibility, and overall representation of European legal research within OpenAlex.

a. The geographical analysis of author affiliations revealed significant variations in representation across European countries. The Russian Federation (27.3%), United Kingdom (11.4%), and Spain (10.5%) are the most represented countries, with Italy 9th in the ranking with 1240 articles (3.8%). A critical methodological note is that geographical attribution was determined through author affiliations rather than publisher or venue location. The necessity of relying on author affiliations for geographical attribution, rather than having metadata at publishers or source venue levels, highlights a structural limitation to scholarship indexing in OpenAlex.

b. 62% of the works are classified as open access (OA). Diamond OA accounts for 17.10%, followed by hybrid (15.42%), gold (15.06%), bronze (10.49%), and green (4.20%) models. Notably, only 21.04% of works meet the Directory of Open Access Journal (DOAJ) inclusion standards, underscoring a disconnection between accessibility and formal open access compliance. The prominence of Diamond OA alongside significant hybrid and gold OA percentages suggests that both community-driven initiatives and commercial publishers play important roles in legal scholarship dissemination. These findings primarily reflect OpenAlex's indexing patterns rather than comprehensive legal publishing practices.

c. The temporal analysis of legal scholarship in OpenAlex reveals that the highest share of indexed articles occurred in 2021 (24.72%), following strong activity in 2020 (23.34%). A decline is observed in 2022 (20.32%) and 2023 (19.56%), suggesting a reversion to previous publication trends. This trend likely reflects delays in indexing, as articles often take 6–12 months to appear. The publication and peer-review processes further extend this lag, meaning many 2024 works are likely still pending inclusion.

d. As regards articles' languages, English covers approximately two-thirds (65.37%) of all works under investigation, followed by Spanish (9.09%) and various other European languages. This distribution reflects OpenAlex's indexing patterns rather than the actual linguistic composition of European legal scholarship.

e. An analysis of 20,446 non-closed legal works indexed in OpenAlex reveals substantial gaps in metadata completeness, with 43.2% lacking explicit license information. This absence suggests either inconsistent metadata practices or a failure to clearly define reuse rights. Among the open access works with identifiable licenses, Creative Commons (CC) dominates, particularly CC-BY (31.2%) while more restrictive variants collectively account for a significant portion (21.4%) of non-closed works.

Focus on Italian legal scholarship

The study also examines Italy's representation in OpenAlex, offering insight into how national legal scholarship is indexed within open bibliographic databases. Given Italy's strong tradition of legal research and the prominence of domestic law journals, analyzing its coverage in OpenAlex helps determine the extent to which national legal scholarship is integrated into open infrastructures.

The 1240 Italian contributions (those with authors affiliated to an Italian institution) amount, as mentioned above, to 3.8% of all the works of the initial dataset. Of the 90% with a documented source provenance, 76.4% are derived from Crossref and 11.1% from DOAJ. Regarding access models, 58.1% are Open Access, with Diamond OA (18.6%) being the most common type, followed by Hybrid (15.6%) Gold (11.7%) and Green OA (6.8%).

A more in-depth analysis of the indexing coverage of articles from Italian Law Journals can be made by considering the "Dottrina Giuridica" database as a reference (DoGi, 2025). DoGi indexes a total amount of 553 Italian law journals; 61 of these Journals are marked as OA (11.4%), 23 (4.2%) are indexed by DOAJ and only 15 (2.7%) are listed as publishing venues of articles indexed in OpenAlex for the considered time frame.

Though not surprising, this sheds light on the wide gap still existing in OpenAlex as a source for the indexing of Italian Law journals articles, even when limiting to OA journals.

The results observed are in line with those presented in (Bologna et al., 2022) where, analyzing the coverage in open bibliographic datasets of the publications submitted for evaluation by Italian legal scholars for scientific career promotion, the scientific disciplinary area of Law is among those with the lowest coverage.

Conclusions

This investigation demonstrates a substantial gap in OpenAlex's coverage of legal scholarship, even when considering only open access journals. This underrepresentation suggests that OpenAlex's current data should be viewed as merely descriptive of its own indexing patterns rather than representative of the broader landscape of European legal publishing. Addressing this limitation requires proactive engagement from publishers and journals, particularly those committed to open access. In particular Diamond OA publishers, i.e. University presses should take concrete steps to enhance their content's visibility and discoverability by registering their platforms with relevant open discovery services and aggregation databases. The implementation of a technical infrastructure supporting automated processes for downloading, extracting, and indexing both full texts and associated metadata is crucial. These practices are essential not only for improving visibility, communication, and impact of legal scholarship but also for enhancing responsible research assessment based on open bibliographic data.

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WEDNESDAY
MAY 21

SESSION 7
CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

SESSION 8A
CHALLENGES IN EVALUATION

SESSION 8B
NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

SESSION 7
CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

UNDERSTANDING THE GOVERNANCE OF SCIENCE FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: A HEURISTIC OF RESEARCH EVALUATION REGIMES

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Evaluation procedures are essential to the self-governance and quality assurance of science, paradigmatically expressed in the institution of peer review. However, the tie of competitive allocation of basic research funding to institutionalised evaluations of science attributes research evaluation systems a core role in the contemporary governance of science, often being referred to as a regime (Hallonsten, 2022). While research evaluation systems have been thoroughly discussed, the variety of evaluating and evaluated actors, the multiplicity of functions and the normative implications often remain overlooked. We argue that these analytical shortcomings are related to a methodological nationalism – "the assumption that the nation/ state/ society is the natural social and political form of the modern world" (Wimmer & Glick-Schiller, 2003, S. 302) – of the literature: contributions predominantly conduct case studies in nation states, fundamentally dismissing regional or imperial constellations and their impact on both the policies and practices of evaluations (Hicks, 2012, S. 251). This is practically linked to a narrow focus of the existing literature on a few geographical areas and particularly centralised systems such as the British Research Excellence Framework. Additionally, the limited spatial focus coincides with an emphasis of the literature on technical aspects and operative features of centralised research evaluation systems. Our talk (and the paper it is based on) proposes a heuristic which addresses these two main shortcomings of the existing literature. By deemphasizing centralization through national settings and formalization through well-defined procedures we shift the focus of attention towards the genuinely political dimension of research evaluations: the heterarchy of the constellation of evaluating actors and related configurations of power relations and governance modes as well as underlying cultural narratives that impact research evaluation systems.

The lack of attention to the diversity of evaluating (and funding) bodies is related to the narrow geographical scope of works on research evaluation and its case-based approach: this is exemplified by the neglected role of US science. Following Pardo-Guerra, the US-American system appears as a poor case to study research evaluation since "[i]ts public universities compete in the same space with elite private universities, liberal arts colleges, research-intensive institutions, and other peculiar organizational forms [...]. Further, U.S. scholars' work is funded not primarily by the state but by a constellation of organizations, government bodies, corporations, and so on" (Pardo-Guerra, 2022, S. 64). His observation resonates with the fact that most comparative studies exclude the US from their sampling and cannot adequately describe research evaluation systems that are not characterised by a nationally centralised evaluation system but instead by a heterogeneity of actors, funders and mechanisms such as the US, Germany, or regionally oriented evaluation systems such as in Latin America. This accentuates the importance to overcome the methodological nationalism and account for transnational dynamics (Beigel, 2014; Vessuri et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the disregard of non-centralised research evaluation regimes and transnational dynamics tends to overlook the relationship of technical and normative elements of research evaluations. Contributions on the (post-)Soviet space present an alternative genealogy of research evaluation systems in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union – displaying the legacies of imperial and regional histories onto contemporary research evaluations – emphasise from their transnational perspective, how different political agendas interact with supposedly similar evaluative procedures (Kulczycki, 2023, S. 70ff.; Sokolov, 2021). Sokolov's work on the use of metrics in British and Russian research evaluations remarkably emphasises how this procedure is linked to widely differing underlying cultural narratives and related functions. This literature hence calls for systematically transnational accounts that consider imperial and regional contexts and the normative and political dimension of research evaluation systems.

The narrow spatial focus of the literature on research evaluation systems has been previously denounced for its uncritical treatment of exclusionary technical tools (developed by Northern institutions), leading to an ignorance of global inequalities and transnational aspects of research evaluations. Critical works on scientific knowledge production in the Global South and East question the sovereignty of (national) research evaluation research systems and the interrelation with Northern-based data infrastructures and indicators of research evaluation (Beigel, 2014; Vessuri et al., 2013), its imperial origins (Csiszar, 2023) as well as the role of language in research evaluation (Curry & Lillis, 2004; Smirnova et al., 2021).

Following repeated arguments for a globalisation of the sociology of science and consideration of different historical and political contexts, we identify abstract features of research evaluation regimes, accounting for different constellations of actors and political and normative aspects of research evaluation regimes. Beyond studying evaluations as managerial distribution mechanisms, we comparatively consider the

different modes of governing science in research evaluation systems and underlying values and political programmes.

Our paper will first review existing literature on typologies of research evaluation systems and outline dominant shortcomings before introducing Power's work on the 'audit society' as a conceptual background for systematising different features of research evaluation systems on the operative and normative level. Power represents a critical perspective by linking evaluations to political programmes and values of control and trust, however does not systematically account for the informal practices in which evaluations are enacted. Informed by this background, we present a typology building on the four axes of the constellation of actors of evaluations (1), procedures (2), functions (3) and programmes and values of research evaluation (4). This typology helps us to account for the diversity of different evaluation systems and their transnational and normative aspects beyond a focus on state actors or as a top-down steering system.

Our talk will account for the diversity of evaluating and evaluated actors and their logics as well as programmatic and normative aspects of research evaluation systems, i.e. to describe the constellation of evaluating and funding actors as a potential heterarchy, critically expanding hegemonic accounts of centralised research evaluation systems with one core evaluating body. The heuristic is presented as a starting point to conduct context-sensitive, comparative studies of research evaluation systems from a transnational perspective to promote a more nuanced understanding of the power constellations of evaluation systems and related ways of governing science. From the perspective of such a heuristic, the Humanities and the Social Sciences are implicated differently than in the traditional literature on research evaluation systems. First, they are not framed as an exception for which evaluation systems need to account for, e.g. by defining specific evaluation criteria. Second, HSS form a strategically privileged research site as they offer additional cases beyond the attention of state-bound science policy and top-down forms of governance. Third, the actual knowledge and actors from HSS will require special consideration in how research evaluation systems are built, maintained, and revised.

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COMPETITION AND RESEARCH CULTURES: A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE

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The Berlin Science Survey is a tool for monitoring the transformation of research cultures in the Berlin research area under the conditions of political governance. It has the potential to shed light on various facets of research cultures and analyze possible disciplinary differences. Research cultures develop at the intersection of two formative dimensions: one is disciplinary culture, which, in other contexts, is also referred to as epistemic or thought communities. The second component is organizational culture and the contextual conditions.

We understand research culture as a holistic concept that cannot be fully measured or operationalized in its entirety. Therefore, it is only possible to focus on a few facets of research culture(s). The 2024 survey focuses on competition in science and the relationship between work cultures and research quality. We aim to explore the following questions: How strongly is competition perceived in science? What role does competition play in everyday research practices, and how is it related to other aspects of research culture?

While the 2022 survey focused on subject-specific cultural differences between disciplines, this year we are concentrating on facets of research culture that affect nearly every discipline in a similar way—elements that do not obviously depend on the epistemic characteristics of disciplinary cultures. In the 2024 wave, these facets include work culture, work climate, work-related burdens such as stress, as well as orientations and practices related to research quality.

A total of 5,238 scientists were surveyed—2,767 in the Berlin research area and 2,471 (as a control sample) from other universities of excellence in Germany outside Berlin. The data show that competition is very high in almost all research fields, but is significantly reduced in the immediate work culture at the level of working groups. Nevertheless, there are work cultures—almost one-third—that practice strong to very strong competition. In terms of the relationship between cooperation and competition, four types can be identified. The largest group, comprising 50% of respondents, exhibits a high level of cooperation combined with a low level of competitive elements. A second group of 22% also exhibits a cooperative work culture, but with the simultaneous presence of competitive elements. A third group (18%) shows little to no cooperation, but also minimal or no competition. A fourth group, comprising 10%, also shows little or no cooperation, but at the same time, strong competition.

These four work cultures occur in all subject groups and can only be explained to a very limited extent by the specifics of a subject, as in the case of the humanities, where the type characterized by low cooperation and low competition occurs somewhat more frequently than in other subject groups. In this respect, these types of work cultures can be understood as a cross-disciplinary phenomenon.

Multivariate analyses show that the types of working cultures identified in this exploratory study are highly associated with various scientific outcome indicators. Non-cooperative working cultures score more negatively on several indicators. They exhibit lower motivation, more stress and health risks, and more frequent quality cuts in their work, among other issues. These findings underscore the strong role of cooperation in science.

On the other hand, competition plays only a limited role, which is also context-dependent. In contexts with a high level of cooperation, additional competitive elements might increase productivity, but at the cost of increased stress, health risks, and quality risks.

We interpret the results as showing that the positive effects of competition are conditional on a cooperative environment. Elements of competition can only have positive effects in certain respects when supported by a high level of cooperation. Nevertheless, they carry constant risks. This means that competition is a trade-off between increased productivity and potential costs to quality or health. In uncooperative contexts, however, competition is detrimental.

We discuss our findings in the context of how science should be managed and evaluated. We argue that external scientific competition should not be carried into organizations and working groups, but rather, it should be countered with a high degree of internal cooperation.

EXCELLENT PROSPECTS: ARGUING 'VALUE-ADDED' IN RESEARCH EXCELLENCE PROPOSALS

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Research Excellence instruments (REIs) are now among the most well-studied (Aksnes et al., 2014; Hellström, 2018; Malkamäki et al., 2001), and widely used research funding instruments (Hellström, 2018; OECD, 2014; Moore et. al. 2017). All REIs seek to promote research excellence and critical mass agglomerations, but may differ in terms of the nature of the recipient, which can range from universities e.g. the French (IDex) and German Excellence initiatives (OECD, 2014; Yudekich et al., 2023; EU, 2016) to research groups as in Centres of Excellence (Hellström et. al. 2018; Borlaug and Langfeldt, 2020) or individual grants , e.g. the European research council (ERC) grants (Nedeva et al., 2012) and the Swedish Distinguished Professor Grant (DPG) (Jabrane, 2022; Jacob and Hellström, 2023). Despite their proliferation, the subspeciality of research that studies the REIs and other funding instruments is a nascent one that has hitherto focused on, among others, epistemic impacts (Gläser and Laudel, 2018), organizational issues (Borlaug and Langfeldt, 2020; Nedeva et al., 2012; Hellström et al., 2018; Espinosa and Osorio, 2023) and gender (Bautista- Puig et al., 2019; Schiffbaenker, et al., 2022).

The variety of modalities applied in excellence funding and the relative newness of many REIsimplies that significant gaps remain in our understanding. Some of the more notable include the level of novelty and risk taking represented by the projects that acquire this funding, the field and societal impacts of excellence projects; the proportion of disciplinarity to interdisciplinarity; and the overall distributional effects of devoting large chunks of funding to specific projects in national research systems (Fortin and Currie, 2013; Aagaard et al., 2020; Ayoubi, et al., 2021). Research excellence funding is characterized by long periods and relatively large investments per individual (Langfeldt et al., 2010; Scholten et al., 2018). This means that impact is an important factor in motivating investment. Previous work on impact has tended towards categorizing these according to frameworks , such as Contributions Analysis (e.g. Morton, 2015), Public Value Mapping (Bozeman and Sarewitz, 2011), and Productive Interactions (Spaapen and van Drooge, 2011), where the focus is mainly on social and economic effects of research. However, less emphasis has been put on PI's own estimations of the impact of their work, and especially the relevance of their research to the academic community or field impact. It is therefore fair to assert that extant research on impact emphasizes various external forms of impact (e.g. innovation), partly at the expense of scientific (field/discipline) impacts.

While scientific and social impacts may certainly be connected, they are not the same (Brenninkmeier, 2023), nor are they necessarily connected. Social impact may be achieved without scientific impact, and the latter may yield social impact only after considerable time or complementary effort. Nedeva et al., (2012), based on their investigation of the ERC individual grants, contend that one should differentiate impacts from instruments according to the intended recipient, and that claims about impacts should include information about who is creating the impact, the nature of the impact, and how the impact can be captured. Many REIs are explicitly aimed at creating epistemic as well as social impacts, while others prioritise epistemic over social impacts. Therefore, the omission of epistemic and research community effects may be especially problematic in the case of REIs, since the scientific/epistemic impact is often the main concern for funders (Hellström, 2018).

In addition, most work in this area focuses on studying ex-post impacts From a practical and theoretical perspective, such historical reconstructions face challenges similar to any field where historical reconstruction is central (Bonnacorsi et al., 2021). However, their most salient feature, identified descriptions of the actual impact/relevance events and circumstances, make them less useful for understanding how researchers hypothesize and create prospective impact and relevance futures when arguing for funding not yet received, and research (presumably) not yet conducted. This paper takes its point of departure in the assumption that an understanding of such prospective, *ex ante* rationalizations is a valuable key to unravelling how researchers and their communities motivate new work. It further argues that the types of arguments used, and the implied pathways to impact they describe, offer another story about scientific pathways to impact than do reconstructions of (identified) outcomes of research. The fact that excellence funding applications are usually subject to more thorough examination by a peer community, mainly interested in field impact, makes these premises into an observational opportunity for understanding how such communities consider the value of their work, and how they choose to frame that value to an internal audience. In this way *ex ante* impact proposals provide a window to an important, if not the most important, aspect of excellence, namely the prospective arguments/reasons for funding it. The present paper contributes to research on REIs by focusing on this still little understood aspect of these instruments, i.e. how field impact is framed and narrated in research proposals. The case is the Distinguished Professor's Grant (DPG), an individually oriented excellence funding instrument run by the Swedish Research Council, which combines high volume (500.000 euros/year) with duration (10 years), and a large degree of freedom in terms of reporting compared to similar grants (e.g. the ERC Advanced grant). Empirically, the study focuses on how successful applications (20 in total) narrated and argued the scientific 'value- added' from the proposed research. This section of the proposals, which were not pre- structured by the funder, was subject to a qualitative form of discourse analysis, and causal mapping, which enabled the observer to shorten and stylize prospective value-added arguments in a way that furnished legibility and categorization. In what follows, we will provide an overview of some of the research pertaining to this problematic – the contributory dimensions of excellence funding and the expression of value in impact statements in general.

After that follows an account of the methodological choices and motivations for the study, and results followed by a more thorough analysis of how these statements may contribute to understanding this important dimension of excellence funding.

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THEORIES OF EVALUATION: DISCUSSING THE DRAFT PLAN OF THE TASK FORCE ON THEORIES OF EVALUATION OF THE COARA WG "EVALUATING SSH RESEARCH GLOBALLY"

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There has been strong criticism on different evaluation procedures regarding the Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts (SSH) for quite some time, especially about bibliometric approaches to evaluation, because they do not reflect SSH research practices (e.g., Nederhof, 2006; Hug et al., 2014; ENRESSH, 2017). Currently, such criticism, with very similar arguments, is coming also from the natural and technical sciences (STEM) fields (e.g., DORA, 2012; Hicks, 2015). The establishment of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) in 2022 has led to a strong push towards reforming research assessment, attracting over 800 signatories from Europe and beyond. CoARA has formed National Chapters and Working Groups to advance knowledge on research assessment and to transfer existing knowledge into practice regarding several topics, such as peer review, responsible metrics, gender issues, institutional evaluation, career evaluation and many more. However, there is no Work Group on a very fundamental issue of reforming research assessment: a theoretical approach to evaluation. Yet, theoretical questions are key for a successful reform of research evaluation, such as why do we assess research in the first place, how do evaluation procedures relate to knowledge production and dissemination, are there differences across disciplines in such questions etc. This is why the CoARA Work Group "Evaluating SSH research globally" has established a Task Force on theories of evaluation to address or at least raise such questions. The Task Force will first start with topics that are relevant for SSH research, but it will also address more general questions and thus potentially raise questions or provide insights also for the evaluation of other disciplines.

This work-in-progress paper presentation will consist of a short input presentation on theories that have been already discussed within ENRESSH and the research evaluation community and will reflect on the degree of implementation in current evaluation practices. It will sketch priorities in focus regarding theoretical inquiry and present a work plan. Time will also be devoted to structured discussion to collect theories and approaches from various disciplines that might be insightful for reforming research assessment.

Approach

While the topic of research assessment has become relevant only relatively recently, since the 1980ies with the availability of bibliometric indicators and managerial

reforms of public institutions, academic research has been evaluated in different forms since its existence. Research on research evaluation has a direct, written history of more than a century, and a much longer indirect history of reflections on what constitutes good research. Therefore, there are more or less developed theoretical approaches available. However, current evaluation practices are rarely linked to theoretical reflections (e.g., Brooks, 2005; Gläser, 2024; Hug, 2022), and the measurements advance quicker than the theoretical reflections, leading to the fact that indicators define what good research is (Donovan, 2008).

However, there is a current push towards better understanding what "good research" is, or what constitutes "research quality" (Gläser, 2024; Hug & Aeschbach, 2020; Langfeldt et al., 2020; Ochsner et al., 2013). Yet, the approaches are very diverse. For example, Langfeldt et al. (2020) claim that there are two different types of quality notions: F-type, i.e., how researchers themselves see quality, and S-type, i.e., how users of research see research quality, and that evaluation can focus on one or the other. On the other hand, Ochsner (2022) and Gläser (2024) start from the assumption that research quality is a concept that is highly context dependent. However, both differ in what needs to be theorised. Gläser (2024) argues that there needs to be a mid-range theory on research quality based on knowledge production, while Ochsner (2022) argues that a theory of research evaluation is needed and notions of quality follow from there, considering epistemological characteristics of research under evaluation (see also Bonaccorsi, 2022). Evaluation is also seen as a political activity (see Dahler-Larsen, 2012). Depending on which approach one takes, the definition of quality, the choice of evaluation procedures, the choice of indicators etc. will differ strongly.

Research Quality is just one example from a whole range of theories and conceptual approaches for evaluation procedures (e.g., change of managerial approaches, see Deem et al., 2007; societal impact evaluation, e.g., Gedutis et al., 2023). The aim of this presentation will be to reflect on the consequences in focusing on one or several approaches on the design of evaluation procedures. To this end, we will a) collect theories, b) classify them regarding their use in evaluation and c) reflect upon the consequences of implementation as well as identify gaps in theories.

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SESSION 8A
CHALLENGES IN EVALUATION

EXPLORATIVE ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH-PRACTICE INTERACTIONS IN POLAND: TEXT MINING OF IMPACT CASE STUDIES

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Background and Objectives

The growing emphasis on assessing the societal impact of research has made it a key aspect of research evaluation systems globally. However, evaluating the impact of Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts (SSH&A) remains challenging due to their often less direct and formalized pathways to impact compared to STEM fields (Bonnaccorsi et al. 2021; Muhonen et al. 2020). While studies using text mining to analyze impact case studies (ICSs) have advanced understanding in this area, they largely focus on the British REF system, leaving evidence from other contexts underexplored. This study addresses this gap by analyzing 2,661 ICSs from Polish universities using a novel combination of Named Entity Recognition (NER) and lexicon-based analysis. By examining relationships between academic institutions and non-academic professional stakeholders, it underscores the value of ICSs in uncovering patterns of research-practice interactions.

Methods

Data Collection

The study analyzes a corpus of 2,661 impact case studies (ICSs), publicly available on the POL-on website. POL-on is an IT system dedicated to collecting data on science and higher education in Poland. Each ICS consists of several sections, including *The Impact of Scientific Activity*, which provides an English-language description of the impact achieved through the associated research. The study analyses this section.

Mapping professional stakeholders: an exploratory text mining approach

Text mining was employed to identify and map professional stakeholders involved in research, utilizing a keyword-in-context (KWIC) approach inspired by the methodology of King's College London and Digital Science (2015). Initial text preprocessing steps, including sentence splitting, tokenization, part-of-speech tagging, and lemmatization, were conducted using SpaCy. A list of terms indicating research-practice interactions (e.g., 'collaboration,' 'partner,' 'involvement') was then compiled and used to extract relevant contexts - sentences containing these terms – from the ICSs. This process yielded 5,178 interaction contexts from 1,917 ICSs, representing 72% of the dataset.

To identify professional stakeholders, two complementary approaches were implemented:

1. **Rule-Based Matching:** A keyword list of potential non-academic stakeholder types (e.g., 'company,' 'clinician,' 'museum,' 'policymaker') was developed through a combination of top-down and bottom-up strategies. The top-down approach drew on literature reviews, selecting relevant stakeholder types from prior analyses of REF case studies (e.g., Bonaccorsi et al. 2021; Chiarello et al. 2018; Marcella et al. 2016; Stevenson et al. 2023). These studies identified research beneficiaries in broad terms rather than specifying professional stakeholders; as a result, only professional stakeholder categories were retained. The bottom-up approach involved manually reviewing a random sample of 1,000 contexts to refine the keyword list and incorporate additional types where necessary. As a result, the final list comprised 88 stakeholder types.
2. **Named Entity Recognition (NER):** The first approach identified stakeholders based on general keywords but did not account for unique organization names mentioned in the ICSs. To address this, Named Entity Recognition (NER) was applied as a second approach. Using SpaCy, named entities were extracted and classified, focusing exclusively on those labeled as "ORG" (organizations). These were then filtered to remove irrelevant entries, such as entities with invalid character patterns. This process yielded 3,995 unique named entities, providing a more detailed view of specific organizations involved in research.

Combining the results from Rule-Based Matching and NER required a mapping process, as the former produced general types (e.g., 'policymaker,' 'teacher') while the latter identified unique organization names (e.g., European Commission, Microsoft, Warsaw School of Economics). A classification system categorized stakeholder types and organizations into six sectors: Government, Business, Education, Health, Culture, and NGO. Stakeholder types were mapped using predefined associations (e.g., "ministry" to Government, "hospital" to Health), with named entities classified through keyword rules, fuzzy matching, and suffix recognition (e.g., Sp. z o.o. to Business). Entities in Social Sciences and Humanities ICSs were manually reviewed, and a correction dictionary addressed misclassifications.

Preliminary Results

In the Social Sciences, Government emerges as the leading stakeholder sector, reflecting the field's close ties to policymaking and public administration. This is followed by Business and NGO sectors, highlighting the discipline's economic and societal connections. Humanities exhibit significant interactions with Culture, alongside notable collaborations with Government, NGO and Education. In the Arts, Culture dominates as the primary collaborator, with substantial engagement also observed with Government, NGO, and Business sectors (Figure 1). Interestingly, this relatively high prominence of the Business sector is somewhat unexpected and warrants further investigation.

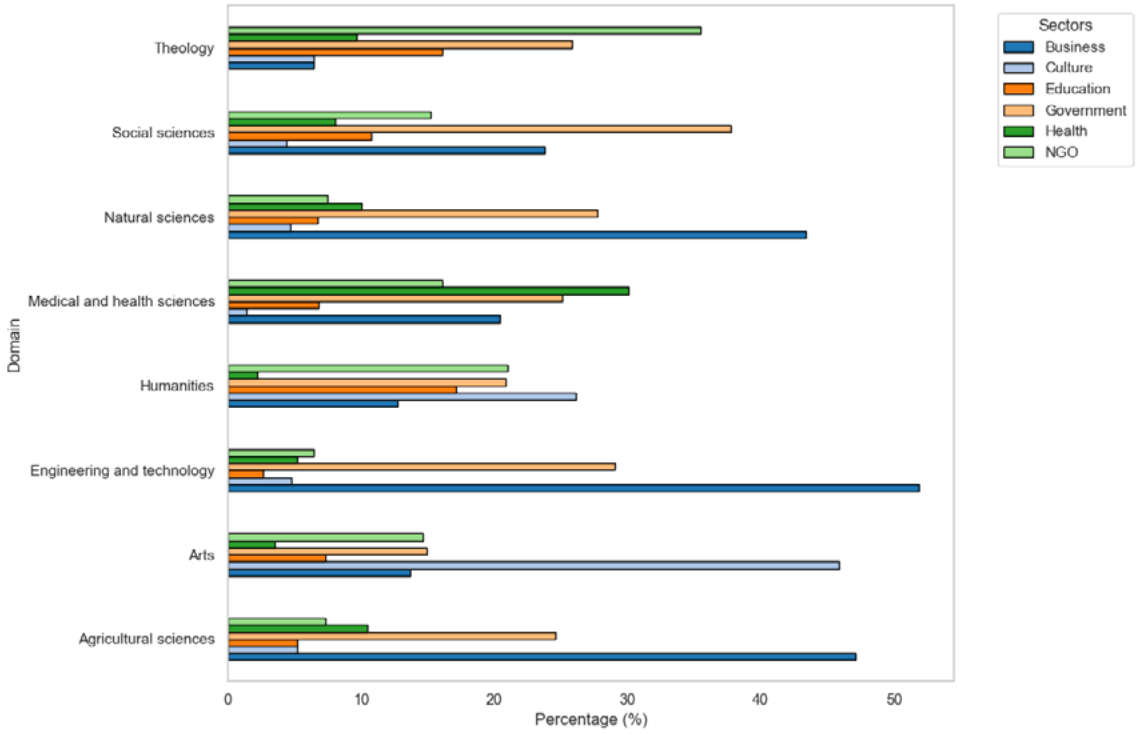

Figure 1. Distribution of sections by domain.

The radar chart (Figure 2) highlights notable differences in how various domains engage with non-academic sectors. Some fields, such as Engineering and Technology, Agricultural Sciences, and Natural Sciences, demonstrate focused, concentrated interactions, predominantly with the Business sector. In contrast, Humanities or Medical and Health Sciences exhibit much more diverse inter-sectoral portfolios, reflecting balanced engagement across multiple sectors.

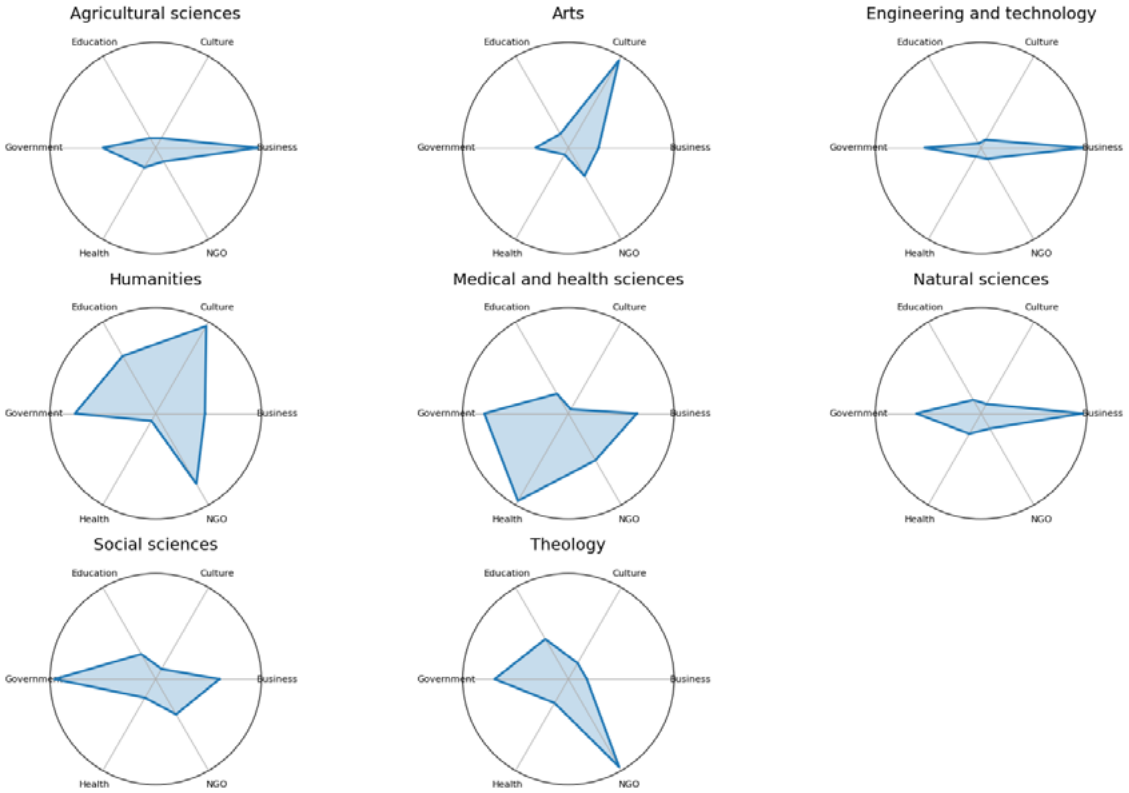

Figure 2. Sector distribution by domain.

To further inspect this, we calculated a normalized Shannon Index (Shannon, 1948) for each domain to evaluate the diversity of cross-sectoral interactions. The Shannon Index measures both the richness (number of unique sectors) and evenness (distribution of sectors) in a dataset, with higher values indicating more balanced and diverse distributions. By normalizing the index, we ensured comparability across domains with different numbers of sectors.

The results show that Humanities (0.93), Theology (0.91), and Social Sciences (0.90) have the highest cross-sectoral interaction diversity, engaging more evenly across sectors (Figure 3). In contrast, Agricultural and Natural Sciences (both at 0.86) show lower diversity, while Engineering (0.80) is much lower, reflecting a narrower focus on fewer sectors. These findings align with Bonaccorsi et al. (2021), who noted high diversity in Humanities and Arts in British case studies. However, while Bonaccorsi highlighted Arts as highly diverse, our analysis of Polish case studies found it to be only moderately diverse, indicating differences when focusing on professional stakeholders.

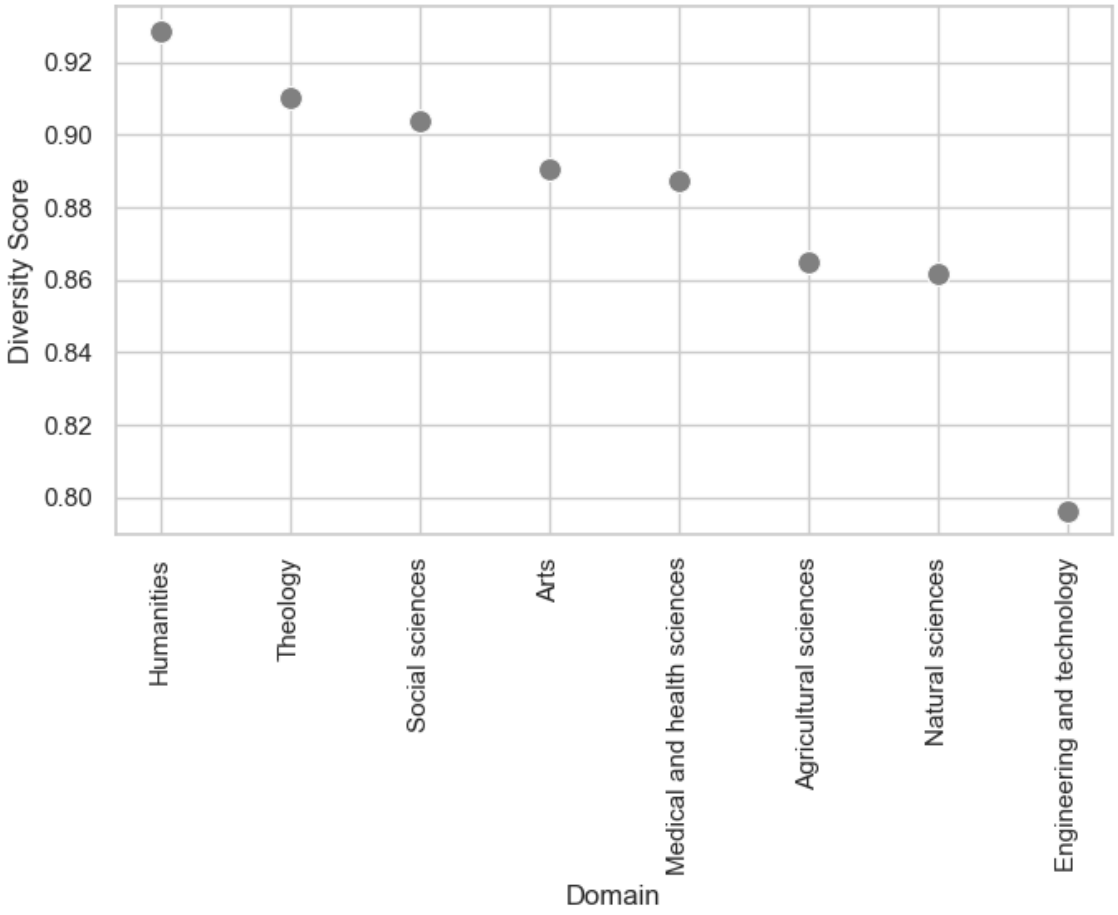

Figure 3. Diversity scores by domain.

Different SSH&A disciplines exhibit distinct patterns of inter-sectoral interaction. Figure 4 presents how often a discipline appears within a particular sector relative to the total number of impact case studies for that discipline. Larger bubbles indicate higher proportions within a sector, and the top three disciplines for each sector are outlined in black.

The results reveal diverse patterns among disciplines. Social and economic geography, political science, and security studies dominate the Government sector, while management and economics are most prominent in the Business sector. Fine arts, music, and film and theatre align closely with the Culture sector. Education is strongly tied to the Education sector, while psychology is most prominent in the Health sector. Interestingly, fine arts and art conservation emerge as one of the top three disciplines collaborating with the Business sector, highlighting significant connection between creative fields and industry.

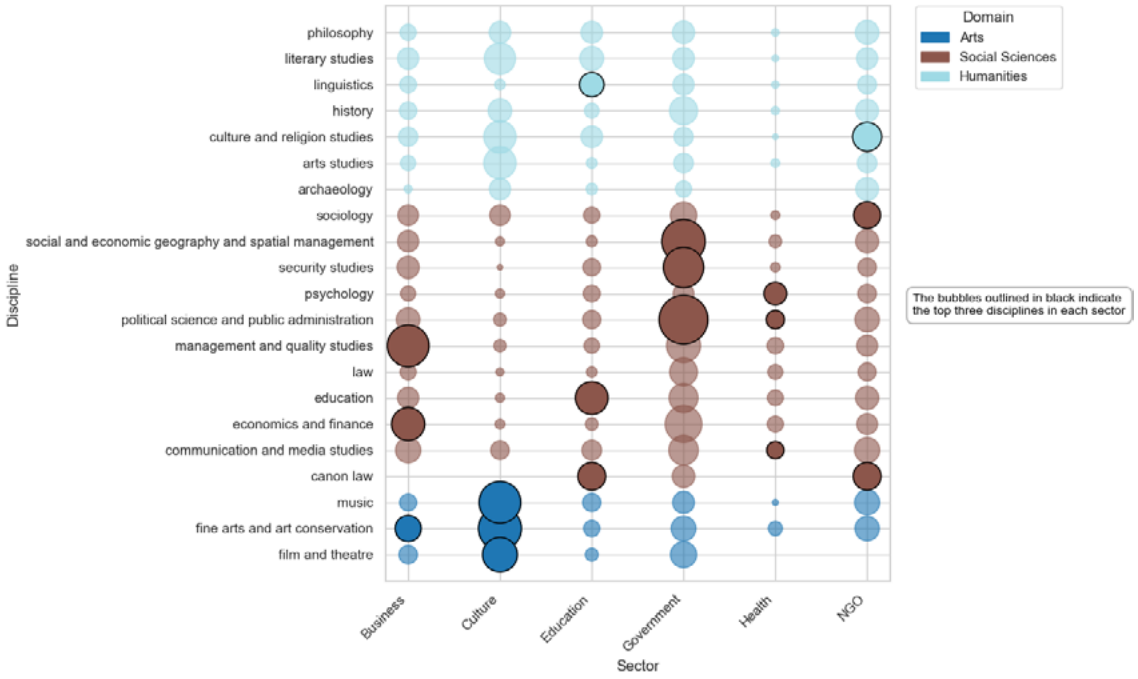

Figure 4. SSH&A disciplines per sector.

Conclusion and Limitations

This study reveals interaction patterns consistent with expectations and prior research, validating the methodology. It also suggests cross-cultural trends in research impact. Despite its strengths, the study has limitations, including a moderate dataset size and a narrower, predefined stakeholder keyword list compared to Bonaccorsi et al.'s extensive lexicon. However, the integration of keyword-based analysis with Named Entity Recognition (NER) provides a nuanced approach, especially for identifying professional stakeholders. Future research should refine NER techniques to enhance stakeholder identification and classification.

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MULTILINGUALISM IN SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION ACROSS RESEARCH FIELDS, CAREER STAGES AND RESEARCH TYPES

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FEDERATION OF FINNISH LEARNED SOCIETIES

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One principle of the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARRA), signed since 2022 by over 800 organisations from Europe and beyond, is to "use assessment criteria and processes that respect the variety of scientific disciplines, research types (e.g. basic and frontier research vs. applied research), as well as research career stages (e.g. early career researchers vs. senior researchers)". The first core commitment of ARRA is to recognise diverse contributions "including outputs beyond journal publications and irrespective of the language in which they are communicated".

Aims and methods

In this study we explore how practices and perspectives of researchers on multilingualism in scholarly communication relates to the field of science (STEM and SSH), career stage (years of research experience), organisation type (universities, state research institutes, universities of applied sciences) and funding source (various domestic and foreign funders). The data was collected via an online survey carried out by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) regarding researchers' views on the societal impact of research and its evaluation (Muhonen et al., 2025). The survey was carried out in June-July 2023 and it received 624 responses across all fields, types of research institutions and career-stages.

In this study, we analyze three dependent variables from the survey:

1. In what languages have you published peer-reviewed publications in the last five years?
2. In what languages have you published popular publications in the last five years?
3. From the perspective of your own research, how important do you find the following factors to be in terms of promoting and encouraging the societal impact of research?

a. Publication and communication in the official languages of Finland, (Finnish and/or Swedish)

b. Publication and communication in English

c. Diverse publication and communication in different languages

d. Translating foreign-language research into the official languages of Finland (Finnish and/or Swedish)

Results

With regard to survey questions regarding the use of languages in peer-reviewed and popular publications (1 and 2 above) the following observations can be made:

- English and Finnish are the most commonly used languages both in peer-reviewed and popular publications. There are, however, important differences between fields: whereas over 92–91% of respondents in natural sciences and engineering published peer-reviewed research in English, only 13–14% published in Finnish. The share of respondents with English publications ranged from 86% in medicine and 80% in social sciences to 73% in humanities. In humanities, 64% had published in Finnish; in social sciences the share was 59% and 43% also in medicine. In the case of popular publications the differences between fields largely disappeared: the share of respondents with publications in English was below 40%, except in engineering it was 55%. In all fields, the larger share of respondents had popular publications in Finnish than English, ranging from 51% in engineering to 79% in social sciences.
- Publication practices also relate to the career-stage. A much smaller share of respondents with 5 years or less research experience have peer-reviewed or popular publications in any language, compared to more experienced researchers. Among those who had peer-reviewed publications, the share of respondents who published in Finnish was larger in groups with more than 5 years of experience.
- The use of languages differs between organisation types and missions. A larger share of respondents from the universities of applied sciences (UAS) published peer-reviewed research in Finnish, compared to universities and especially state research institutes. Also the largest share of respondents publishing popular publications in English or Finnish came from UAS.
- Interestingly, sources of research funding seem to relate to use of languages in communication. While there is relatively small variation in share of respondents with peer-reviewed publications in English (83–93%), the share of peer-reviewed publications in Finnish was notably smaller for the respondents with funding from Business Finland (BF) (23%) and domestic and foreign business funding (25%) compared to other funder groups (43–56%). The share of respondents with peer-reviewed publications in both English and Finnish was the largest, 98% and 56% respectively, among respondents with funding from the Strategic Research Council (SRC). In popular publications, Business Finland funded respondents had a somewhat larger share of English outputs

(55%), while by far the largest share of respondents with popular publications in Finnish were those with SRC funding (95%).

With regard to the importance of the use of different languages for promoting and encouraging societal impact (question 3), we can observe the following (share of respondents who responded 'Very important' or 'Fairly important' reported):

- In general, there were very small differences in valuing outputs in English across fields, career-stage, organization types, or funding sources. A much larger share of respondents in social sciences (89%), humanities (88%) and medicine (83%) recognized the importance of communicating in Finnish and Swedish, compared to respondents in natural sciences (66%) and engineering (55%). Quite similar differences across fields were visible regarding communication in various languages and translations into Finnish and Swedish, however the respondents in humanities appreciated these activities more often.
- Overall, differences according to research experience were small, however those with less experience valued multilingual communication and translations somewhat more often than their more experienced colleagues.
- Respondents from UAS valued slightly less the impact of English in communication, and more often that of Finnish or multilingualism, than respondents from SRI or universities. The same holds true of the impact of translations.
- In the case of funding sources, there were very small differences regarding the use of English, however again respondents with the SRC valued more highly, and those with BF or business funding less, the value of Finnish or multilingualism for promoting societal impact. Respondents with funding from private foundations or other domestic sources recognized the role of translations more often than respondents from other funder groups.

Discussion & Conclusions

Regarding the use of different languages across fields of science and organisation types, the survey results are highly consonant with findings based on the national publication data from Finland (Pölönen & Kulczycki, 2025; Pölönen, Auranen & Late, 2024).

New findings suggest that publishing peer-reviewed and popular publications in different languages seems to be linked with certain research funding sources. Also, the differences between fields in esteem of communicating in Finnish for promoting societal impact seem smaller than those in publication practices.

Overall, the survey findings suggest that using narrow assessment criteria prioritizing peer-reviewed publications, especially in English, results in (potentially accumulated)

disadvantages for researchers specializing in SSH or applied research, especially at an early career stage.

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ON PERFORMATIVE INCOMMENSURABILITY: PEER REVIEW AND THE SPECTER OF FEYERABEND

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Keywords: *peer-review, incommensurability, experts, epistemological styles, grants proposals*

Incommensurability is a fundamental issue in the assessment of scientific work and scholarship, particularly in its performance and peer review processes. It becomes especially evident in the evaluation of scholarly texts, research ideas, and project proposals. This challenge arises not only from the nature of the objects being assessed but also from variations in epistemological styles, the divergence between administrative and academic criteria of value, and the differing perspectives of experts on how value is constructed and recognized. This issue is both structural and situational, rooted in the very framework of the scientific system. As a result, it is rare for evaluations to fully uphold the principle of commensurability. As Lamont (2010) noted, "Academia is a highly variegated world, one where qualitatively incommensurate proposals cannot be subsumed under a single standard."

Although evaluation systems strive to establish fair assessment principles by formulating general criteria—often abstract and polysemic, such as "quality, originality, or significance" of text or project proposal—this issue remains persistent. However, in practice, decisions must still be made regarding which projects receive funding and which texts are accepted for publication. These decisions are typically reached through consensus, wherein multiple accounting systems are reconciled, and reviewers must compromise with the standards of their respective academic disciplines. The outcomes of such processes tend to satisfy the recipients of favorable evaluations, while those who are rejected often attribute their failure to conspiratorial forces or the reviewers' lack of competence in the subject matter. This dynamic highlights what I term performative incommensurability, a condition in which the composition of a review panel is not consistent with both the epistemological foundation of the object under evaluation and the evaluators' own epistemological orientations. In this situation, administrative (formal) criteria of evaluation take precedence. While Lamont emphasizes the role of agency in negotiating consensus among different epistemological styles, performative incommensurability is more structural in its nature, where consensus is managed in alignment with pre-established value structures based on administrative efficiency.

In my presentation, I would like to address two key questions. First, what internal tensions in decision-making are most pronounced under conditions of performative incommensurability? Beyond Lamont's discussions on pragmatic fairness

and epistemological incompatibility, I explore the alignment between decisions and formal criteria, as well as the correspondence between reviewers' expertise and the research topics under evaluation. Reviewers are not autonomous agents; they operate within administrative systems where hierarchical structures influence decision-making. Effective evaluation is thus not solely about scholarly merit but also about positioning an object within a hierarchical framework and justifying this positioning. Consequently, the act of positioning within such a hierarchy often leads to bureaucratic power-driven decisions of resource allocation.

To elaborate on this issue, I draw on two case studies. The first is an ex-post evaluation conducted by the Research Council of Lithuania in early 2025, which examined how well reviewers' arguments aligned with formal assessment criteria. A panel of 11 experts analyzed consensus evaluation reports from randomly selected projects within the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) fields. A random sample of 77 consensus reports was extracted from a pool of 714 proposals. The primary findings indicated significant deficiencies: approximately 31% of the reports lacked substantial argumentation, 29% exhibited an imbalanced assessment of strengths and weaknesses, and 27% displayed a disconnect between argumentation and evaluation scores. Furthermore, the expert panel concluded that 46% of reviewers were unable to adequately assess the content of the applications, as they specialized in other rather than directly relevant fields of research. The second case study draws from my personal experience participating in an international evaluation team, where the composition of reviewers similarly lacked alignment with the disciplinary domain of the evaluated projects. (Sharing of the data from the ex-post evaluation study is the most important part of the presentation.)

The second question, which is more speculative, concerns how performative incommensurability should be addressed. One perspective is that it represents a fundamental weakness of evaluation systems, undermining the credibility of peer review and assessment processes. To counteract this, practices such as blind reviews and anonymous evaluations function as mechanisms to enhance the credibility of the system and reinforce the legitimacy of expert institutions.

However, an alternative approach considers whether there may be value in involving reviewers whose research fields are distant from the object of evaluation. Here, I turn to Feyerabend’s ideas published in “Science in a Free Society”, wherein he critiques the authority of expert knowledge. In cases of performative incommensurability, decision-making is not necessarily grounded in the epistemological framework in which the evaluated object was conceived. Reviewers do not function solely as experts in such situations but rather as informed layperson who possess a broader understanding of the scientific ecosystem. In this sense, they resemble the public in their role as arbiters of societal value from a more general perspective.

Thus, performative incommensurability, rather than being merely a defect, can also function as a mode of social impact assessment that transcends epistemo-

logical limitations. In such cases, it may operate as a democratic mechanism that mitigates the potential dominance of limited expert knowledge. This interpretation of Feyerabend's arguments reconfigures performative incommensurability not as a manifestation of hierarchical power structures of corrupted administrative system but rather as an approach that integrates social knowledge and values into peer evaluation, fostering a more balanced and inclusive review process.

IMPARTIALITY IN RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

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Keywords: *impartiality, research integrity, good research practices, conflict of interest, bias, responsible research assessment*

The paper discusses how impartiality in research assessment can be interpreted responsibly in relation to research integrity principles and guidelines. Here, the goal is to map out particularly the potential justifications for conflicts of interest and outline scenarios that may jeopardize impartiality in research assessment. As the issue relates to legislation, the exercise takes a glimpse into the juridical basis for impartiality (Peruginelli & Pölönen 2023) and legal aspects of disqualification. The main focus is, however, on the ethical considerations on impartiality as part of research integrity, specifically in the context of research assessment.

Impartiality is one of the key ethical principles related to research assessment. Impartiality, integrity and ethical considerations are mentioned in the CoARA agreement (2022) among the fundamental principles for rigor and transparency in peer review processes. In the ALLEA code, this is verbalised in the framework of honesty, which as a principle of good research practices should ensure that reviewing and assessment is done *in a transparent, fair, full, and unbiased way* (ALLEA 2023, 5).

The ALLEA code further defines that *Reviewers and editors declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest and, when necessary, withdraw from involvement in discussion and decisions on publication, funding, appointment, promotion, or reward* (ALLEA 2023, 9). Correspondingly, jeopardising impartiality is given as an example of other unacceptable practices that may be considered as a violation of research integrity.

The Finnish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (TENK 2023) aligns with the ALLEA code and additionally refers to the Finnish legislation, stating that review and evaluation assignments should be carried out *in a transparent, justifiable and confidential manner and take into account the legislation on conflict of interest in the Administrative Procedure Act* (TENK 2023, 15).

The Finnish Administrative Procedure Act lists the juridical grounds for disqualification, which include e.g. personal ties, expectations for gain or loss from the decision, employment, and board membership or equal positions. The Act also states that disqualification of a person participating in decision-making or consideration of a matter can be based on also other reasons that result in endangering the confidence in impartiality. As the main purpose of the Act is to ensure the impartiality of public

administration, it does not give exact guidance on how to interpret conflict of interest in the academic context, for example in research assessment assignments.

In practice, the requirement of impartiality typically translates into an obligation for declaring potential conflicts of interest, which can be either financial or non-financial. Komesaroff & al. (2019) define interest as *a commitment, goal, obligation or duty related to a particular social role or practice* and logically continue that a conflict of interest should be declared when such commitments, goals, obligations or duties conflict with each other. However, impartiality as a principle of research assessment extends beyond these objectively recognisable factors and includes also the aim to avoid conscious or unconscious bias to ensure a fair assessment. For the purposes of this paper, we mainly focus on the matter of interests and only briefly address the aspects of bias affecting impartiality.

In this presentation we discuss published examples from the different settings where peer-review is typically carried out to assess research: grants (Abdoul & al. 2012, Kurokawa & al. 2015, Tamblyn & al. 2018), publications (Haffar & al. 2019, Hojat & al. 2003), thesis examination (Williams-Jones 2017), researcher recruitment (Henderson & al. 2023), career assessment (Pölönen & al. 2024) and ethical review (Little 1999, Carniel & al. 2022). The main purpose of the presentation is to frame the ethical dilemmas and explore the groundwork for guidance that could be used to promote good and responsible research practices in research assessment situations. We also aim to offer some insights into this topic through our background and experiences in national research integrity work.

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SESSION 8B
NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

QUANTIFYING SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH OUTPUT AND SOCIAL IMPACT IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES OF JAPAN: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

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Introduction

The "science of science" (SciSci) has established itself as an emerging interdisciplinary academic field; related research uses big data and computational technologies to examine the processes and mechanisms by which scientific knowledge is newly created, shared, and later institutionalized through a complex, self-organizing, and evolving network of scholars, projects, papers, and ideas (Fortunato et al., 2018). In tandem with established academic fields such as the history of science, philosophy of science, sociology of science, scientometrics, library and information science, and science for policy, SciSci has deepened our understanding of how science succeeds by quantitatively examining the process by which various scientific agents interact across diverse geographic and temporal scales (Wang & Barabási, 2021).

SciSci's progress has offered us evidence-based findings that help promote science, technology, and innovation policy. However, this only applies to the science of "hard science"; research on the science of "soft science" (i.e., the humanities and social sciences) is far less extensive. Thus, we know little about the processes and underlying mechanisms by which scholars in the humanities and social sciences share their ideas, collaborate, write papers and books, and engage in social activities.

To fill this research gap, we first need to capture how scholarly and social activities in the humanities and social sciences may have a social impact. Shedding more light on the science of soft science and its impact on society could increase our understanding of how the creation and adoption of new ideas, knowledge, and technologies evolve

over time alongside individual values and psychologies, societal values, business models, political relations, legal and policy frameworks, and regulatory regimes.

This paper aims to empirically examine this social impact in terms of direct and indirect effects on science, technology, and innovation policy. The first task is to identify different types of scholars according to their professional identities among disciplines by conducting qualitative interviews with scholars about their professional identities. The second task is to examine differences among the various humanities and social sciences by quantifying scholarly and social activities and their academic and non-academic outputs.

Sample and Methods

To empirically examine the characteristics of scholarly and social activities among humanities and social sciences scholars, we first conducted a qualitative study (Study 1) and then conducted a quantitative study (Study 2). In Study 1, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 123 scholars randomly selected from 65 of the 69 humanities and social sciences subfields defined by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Education in Japan. The interviews were conducted from December 2023 to January 2025. Interviews lasted on average from 60 to 90 minutes; in total there were 99 hours and 59 minutes of interviews. Every interview was audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded to identify issues related to the participants' research activities, environment, research outcomes, research evaluations, and subjective relationship to society.

After coding qualitative data for Study 1 based on the grounded theory approach, Study 2 was conducted to identify similarities and differences among scholars by types of organization, main fields, and sub-fields. Study 2 was based on a bibliometric examination which quantified the numbers and frequencies of papers, books, academic presentations, reports, and various kinds of academic and non-academic activities for 95753 scholars. We utilized a national-level Internet database service called Researchmap, run by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (Arai & Masukawa, 2010). Researchmap is an Internet database service that collects information on researchers, including their career histories and lists of papers; it includes data relating to Japanese researchers and foreign researchers affiliated with Japanese research institutions (including national, public, and private universities; graduate universities; junior colleges; technical colleges; and research institutions).

We merged individual activities and their outcome by year, types of affiliated organizations, and 69 subfields consisting of 11 main fields (psychology, political science, geography and anthropology, economics and business administration, social and economic agriculture, education, literature and linguistics, history and archaeology, philosophy and art, sociology, and law).

This research represents the first attempt to comprehensively quantify research activities and outcomes of scholars in humanities and social sciences in Japan. These data, encompassing peer-reviewed articles and broader research activities, including

participation in government councils, engagement in mass and social media, and involvement in archaeological excavations, offer key insights.

Empirical Findings

The empirical findings of this paper are summarized in the following two points. First, we identified similarities and differences among humanities and social sciences disciplines regarding research activities, research output, and social engagements. International activities and publications in international refereed journals were more common among psychology and economics scholars. In contrast, publishing in non-refereed publications and Japanese-language books, as well as conducting local activities, were more common among literature, sociology, and law scholars.

Second, the degree of social engagement differed among scholars, though not according to their disciplines; this suggests differences among scholars in terms of their socio-cognitive definitions of their professions. That is, such differences appear to depend not only on the universal nature of academic professions but also on historically determined institutionalized divisions of labor. Although our findings have some limitations, they can contribute to research examining the notion of a National Innovation System.

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SPANISH UNIVERSITY ENDOWED CHAIRS IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE

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Introduction

In April 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution aimed at promoting the social economy globally, recognising it as a solution to address crises such as the 2008 financial crash and challenges exacerbated by refugee displacement. This aligns with the European Union's goal of fostering the creation, sustainability, and growth of social economy organisations.

Despite progress in social economy research, the knowledge gap between academia and broader society persists. Mazzucato (2023) argues for the practical application of social economy models beyond theory. This gap in knowledge transfer is not unique to social economy; it reflects a broader challenge in academia to make research accessible for societal impact (de Jong & Balaban, 2022). Spain's 2023 Organic Law of the University System calls for universities to focus on knowledge exchange, bridging the gap between academia and society.

An OECD report highlights university chairs (UCs) as key instruments in fostering collaboration between universities and external entities. UCs build long-term partnerships for training, research, and knowledge transfer in areas of mutual interest (OECD, 2021). In the context of social economy, UCs could play a pivotal role in promoting collaboration and advancing research.

This communication examines the role of university chairs focused on the social economy (SEUCs) in Spain. We analyse the missions and activities of these chairs and explore how they contribute to social economy research and dissemination, drawing on perspectives from SEUC directors.

Data and Analysis

To identify SEUCs in Spain, we referenced a CIRIEC list from 2022 and supplemented it with additional chairs related to social economy. We characterised these SEUCs by analysing their missions and activities, drawing from websites and available annual

reports. Key factors such as geographical scope, patronage, stakeholders, and social economy conceptualisation were examined using content analysis.

For the second objective, we conducted semi-structured interviews with directors from 10 SEUCs to explore their perspectives on the chairs' contributions to the social economy. Interviews focused on the universities' missions—research, training, and knowledge transfer—and their role in supporting the social economy through these activities.

Results

This study assesses whether SEUCs effectively disseminate knowledge beyond academia. We hypothesise that SEUCs foster stable collaborations with governments, organisations, and citizens, aligning with university missions. Our findings suggest that SEUCs help bridge the gap between academia and society, contributing to both academic development and positive societal change.

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EXPANDING THE SCOPE. CREATING AND VALORIZING A LOCAL EXTENSION OF ROR AS INSTRUMENT TO IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL ACTORS IN FLEMISH (SSH) RESEARCH

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Keywords: *organization database, author affiliation data, identifiers, SSH, interoperability*

International organization databases, like the Research Organization Registry (ROR), are essential tools to identify unique organizations for a wide array of purposes. Experience with author affiliation data enrichment pointed to the opportunities that a local expansion of an international database can provide.

In 2019, a parameter measuring international collaboration was added to the Flemish PRFS. Therefore, author affiliation data had to be provided for the full set of approved publications of the Flemish Academic Bibliographic Database for the Social Sciences and Humanities (VABB-SHW). As more than half of these publications are not included in the Web of Science, a large author affiliation data collection operation was launched. However, it turned out that only two thirds of the affiliated organizations could be captured by ROR. In order to ensure full coverage, new organizations had to be added to a local copy.

Extending the ROR dataset opened new avenues. It created a tool to map the full spectrum of organizations that are involved in research in Flanders, independent of their inclusion in common international databases. This instrument, the Flemish Organization Registry (FOR), is now being developed and can serve multiple purposes for different entities in the broader Flemish research community. Therefore, we want to zoom in on the content and composition of the database, the maintenance and sustainability, the interoperability of data and a governance structure.

Because the author affiliation data collection project already provided a (ROR compatible) platform for hosting organization data, the focus has quickly shifted from a technical to a *content-related perspective*. More specifically, the main sets of organizations that need to be added to the database are being defined and integrated. This process consists of several steps. First, an inventory and compilation of commonly used but not entirely interoperable Belgian organization lists was made. These lists contain, among others, a set of educational organizations (universities and colleges), major governmental entities (federal, regional and local), organizations participating

in EU funded projects etc. During a second phase, these different datasets (as well as the extended ROR database) were consolidated by both the available metadata and manual intervention. In a third step, which is currently being carried out, the extended set of organizations is integrated in the main database. It will allow the continued addition of metadata, enabling, among other features, customized categorization.

During the development of the Flemish Organization Registry, several factors were taken into account to guarantee its *sustainability and maintenance over time*. In this process, the presence of external identifiers plays a major role, as they enable quick synchronization with the most recent metadata from external sources. First, if a ROR identifier is available, automatic import of added or updated ROR data will take place. Second, if the organization disposes of a record in the Belgian Commercial Register (KBO), as most do, a synchronization is possible as well. The KBO contains precise address data, information about the nature of the organization, sector codes (NACE) etc. Additionally, EU Participant Identification Codes (PIC) and/or Wikidata identifiers can assure further enrichment.

This set of identifiers can not only be used to import the most recent metadata, but also to assure the comprehensiveness of the database. For example, if PIC's mentioned in an updated list of Belgian organizations participating in EU projects are missing in FOR, then new organizations can be identified and added to FOR in order to keep full coverage.

FOR intends to provide the data to entities that are interested to use it for enrichment of their own databases. Therefore, attention to *interoperability* is required. It is currently ensured by the already mentioned external identifiers, but these can be extended with further types of identifiers if needed for specific processes. At the moment, a first partner is harvesting selections of the already available data via a custom made API. When the a first version of the entire database will be ready, data can be released in a more extensive way. The interoperability will also allow FOR to enrich international databases with additional Flemish metadata.

In the meantime, a *governance framework* is being established. A steering committee consisting of specialists in the Flemish research community is set up to ensure the structural development of this database and its extended use by different partners.

By creating this Flemish Organization Registry, the investments in the implementation of a modification to the Flemish PRFS generate additional value. The development of a local extension to an international database like ROR shows that the general template the Research Organization Registry provides can inspire national entities to map less internationally oriented organizations. The Flemish approach is only one way to obtain a comprehensive view on organizations in a national setting; we look forward to fruitful discussions and initiatives with colleagues working on similar matter in other national contexts.

TYPOLOGY OF NATIONAL RESEARCH ASSESSMENT AND FUNDING SYSTEMS: CONTINUITY, CHANGE AND CONTESTATION ACROSS THIRTEEN COUNTRIES

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How are national systems for assessing publicly funded research evolving in response to changing expectations regarding its contributions and conduct? This talk examines the landscape of national research assessment and funding systems across thirteen countries between 2010 and 2024. In the presentation we will introduce a new typology we developed to categorize and compare key contemporary characteristics of these systems. By mapping research assessment systems and identifying emerging patterns of change, our comparative perspective provides valuable insights for researchers, policymakers and institutional leaders seeking to navigate the complexities of research assessment transitions in an era of evolving performance paradigms.

Our study is based on expert reporting from thirteen countries, including seven from the Global South, as part of the Research on Research Institute's AGORRA consortium. This covers a range of ex post assessment and funding systems types, including performance-based funding systems, advisory-oriented assessments, indicator-based systems, and individual researcher assessment systems.

Compared to earlier comparative studies, our typology suggests important changes in the development of some national research assessment systems. Notably, alongside the well-known increase in societal relevance criteria in some countries, our comparisons point to growing interest in process-oriented rather than solely outcome-focused indicators, and early but uneven accommodation of principles associated with the so-called Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) movement (exemplified in initiatives such as the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), and FOLEC-CLACSO). Elsewhere, systems have consolidated around disciplinary-based and research excellence based logics (of competition, selectivity, often based on comparing output measurements).

Our talk will caution against oversimplified narratives when describing global trends in national research assessment systems. While some national systems have been discontinued, others have been introduced or are currently under development. This

leads us to challenge the notion of a broad retreat from periodic large-scale national research assessment systems. Instead, we argue that national assessment systems are mostly in a 'dynamic steady-state' condition, characterized by consolidation and gradual, uneven modifications rather than radical transformation or withdrawal. As such, the rationales, designs, and focuses of these systems are evolving incrementally in response to shifting expectations about research contributions to society, accountability, and academic performance.

One of the central insights from our analysis is the increasing complexity of designing research assessment criteria that align with contemporary demands for responsible research assessment. A critical task still lying ahead is in effectively translating aspirational RRA principles into workable and legitimate assessment practices. Furthermore, we contend that growing emphasis on RRA principles, will most likely result in adding a new layer of complexity, rather than leading to wholesale displacement of disciplinary and 'research excellence' performance logics.

Through this study, we aim to equip policymakers, funding agencies, and research institutions with a deeper understanding of differences and changes in national research assessment and funding systems. By offering a new typology and narrative accounts of different systems' evolutions, we hope to contribute towards mutual learning about how systems globally are responding to changing expectations about the roles and values these research policy instruments are expected to fulfil.

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