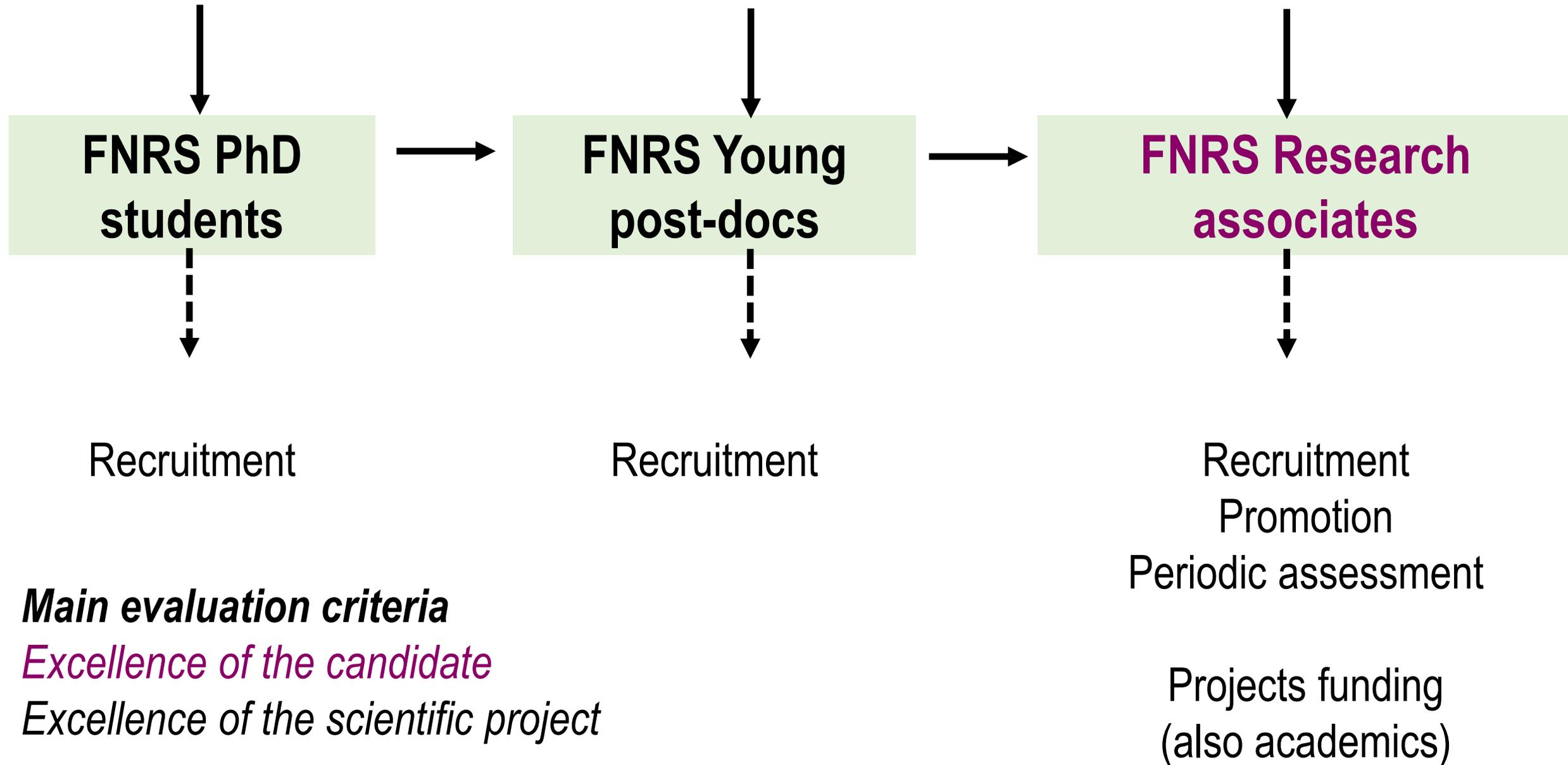


# *Building an academic career in times of research assessment reform: **the perspective of a research funding agency***

## 1. **FNRS: 1928 – French speaking Belgium**

- Basic and strategic research
- All fields of science
- **Fellowships and mandates:** ~ 2.000 researchers under FNRS employment contract, hosted in universities (~ 60% of FNRS's annual resources)

## 2. Evaluation during an academic career at FNRS



### 3. Towards a reform of research assessment: perspectives for the FNRS

- *FNRS and Open Science: signatory of DORA, Open Access mandates (green road), DMP for some funding instruments, gold road costs limited to 750 € per publication*
- *“Research assessment should rely primarily on **qualitative assessment** for which **peer review** is central, supported by responsibly used quantitative indicators where appropriate”*

### 3. Towards a reform of research assessment: evaluation criteria

- The “**object**” being evaluated: a full-time researcher or an academic?
- The **purpose** of evaluation: selection of a PhD, recruitment of a permanent researcher, promotion in the career, application for funding of a research project...?

### 3. Towards a reform of research assessment: some pending questions for a RFO employer of researchers (1)

#### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING A RESEARCHER

*Research output and publications, international recognition*

- Q1: to broaden the spectrum of what we value in research?
  - ✓ to reward research behavior underpinning open science practices?
  - ✓ to acknowledge and valorize the diversity in research roles and careers, including roles outside academia?
  - ✓ does the criterion of excellence remain a key criterion with a widening?

### 3. Towards a reform of research assessment: some pending questions for a RFO employer of researchers (2)

#### IMPACTS OF ADAPTING THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Publish or Perish issue... (Precarity of academic research careers)*

- Q2: more freedom for **young researchers** in terms of the diversity of their contribution, but how will this be perceived by **established researchers** with prestigious publication records?
- Q3: in a period of **transition**, **reviewers** may be confronted with files with different profiles that are difficult to compare? Weight of criteria?

### 3. Towards a reform of research assessment: some pending questions for a RFO employer of researchers (3)

#### IMPACTS OF ADAPTING THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Q4: will it increase the quality of research activity and scientific outputs?
  - ✓ will this lead to the recruitment of other researcher profiles for the benefit of excellence?
  - ✓ will it help to retain the best talents in academia? (*“even high-profile scientists are struggling to recruit qualified postdoctoral researchers” – Nature, August 2022*)