

The European University Association and Science Europe Join Efforts to Improve Scholarly Research Assessment Methodologies

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Evaluating research and assessing researchers is fundamental to the research enterprise and core to the activities of research funders and research performing organisations, as well as universities. The European University Association (EUA) and Science Europe are committed to building a strong dialogue between their members, who share the responsibility of developing and implementing more accurate, open, transparent and responsible approaches, that better reflect the evolution of research activity in the digital era.

Today, the outcomes of scholarly research are often measured through methods based on quantitative, albeit approximate, indicators such as the journal impact factor. There is a need to move away from reductionist ways of assessing research, as well as to establish systems that better assess research potential. Universities, research funders and research performing organisations are well-placed to explore new and improved research assessment approaches, while also being indispensable in turning these innovations into systemic reforms.

EUA and Science Europe are committed to working together on building a strong dialogue between their members, with a view to:

- support necessary changes for a better balance between qualitative and quantitative research assessment approaches, aiming at evaluating the merits of scholarly research. Furthermore, novel criteria and methods need to be developed towards a fairer and more transparent assessment of research, researchers and research teams, conducive to selecting excellent proposals and researchers. governments and public authorities to guarantee scholars and students the rights that constitute academic freedom, including the rights to freedom of expression, opinion, thought, information and assembly as well as the rights to education and teaching;
- recognise the diversity of research outputs and other relevant academic activities and their value in a manner that is appropriate to each research field and that challenges the overreliance on journal-based metrics. universities, funding agencies, academies and other research organisations to ensure that all researchers, teachers and students are guaranteed academic freedom, by fostering a culture in which free expression and the open exchange of opinion are valued and by shielding the research and teaching community from sanctions for exercising academic freedom.
- consider a broad range of criteria to reward and incentivise research quality as the fundamental principle of scholarly research, and ascertain assessment processes and methods that accurately reflect the vast dimensions of research quality and credit all scientific contributions appropriately.

EUA and Science Europe will launch activities to further engage their members in improving and strengthening their research assessment practices. Building on these actions, both associations commit to maintaining a continuous dialogue and explore opportunities for joint actions, with a view to promoting strong synergies between the rewards and incentives structures of research funders and research performing organisations, as well as universities.

The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of more than 800 universities and national rectors' conferences in 48 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies in higher education, research and innovation. Thanks to its interaction with a range of other European and international organisations, EUA ensures that the voice of European universities is heard wherever decisions are being taken that will impact their activities.

For more information from EUA, please contact **Jessica Carter**.

Science Europe is an association of 36 major Research Funding Organisations and Research Performing Organisations from 27 countries with a combined research budget of approximately €18 billion per annum. The association facilitates co-operation among its members and supports excellence in science and research in all disciplines, acting as a platform to develop positions on research policy issues and to address policy messages to the European institutions, researchers, national governments, and the public.

For more information from Science Europe, please contact **Lorna Stokes**.