

(Re)thinking Research Assessment:

WP1 -Defining new modalities for research assessment practices

Finale presentation – May 22, 2025 Clothilde Collet (UCLouvain)





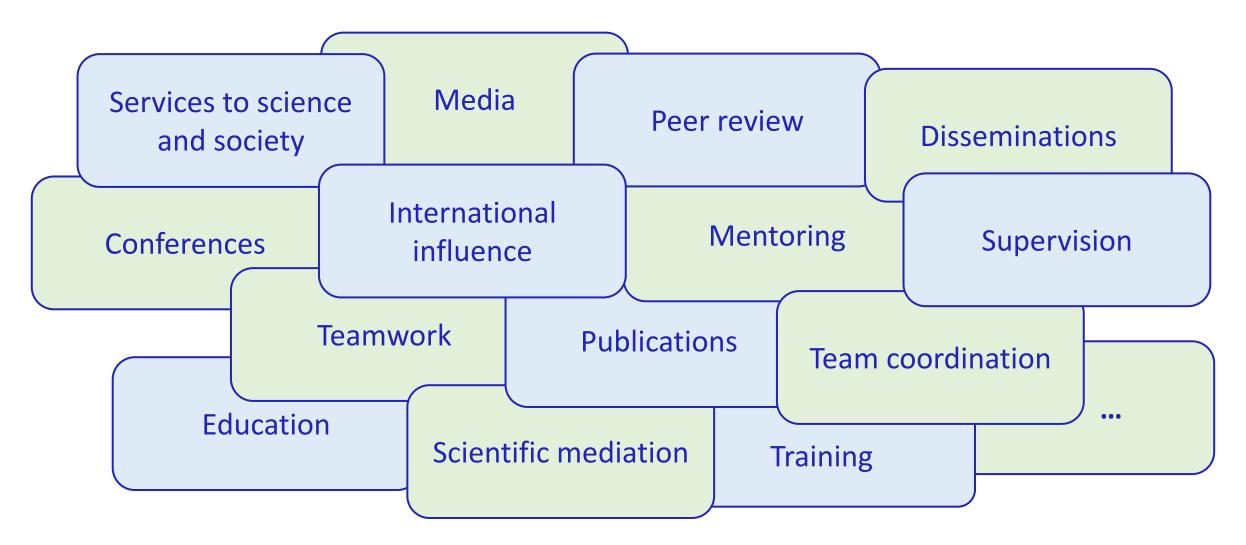
Context

→ First fundamental commitment of the *ARRA agreement* :

'Recognize the diversity of research contributions and careers in accordance with the needs and nature of research'



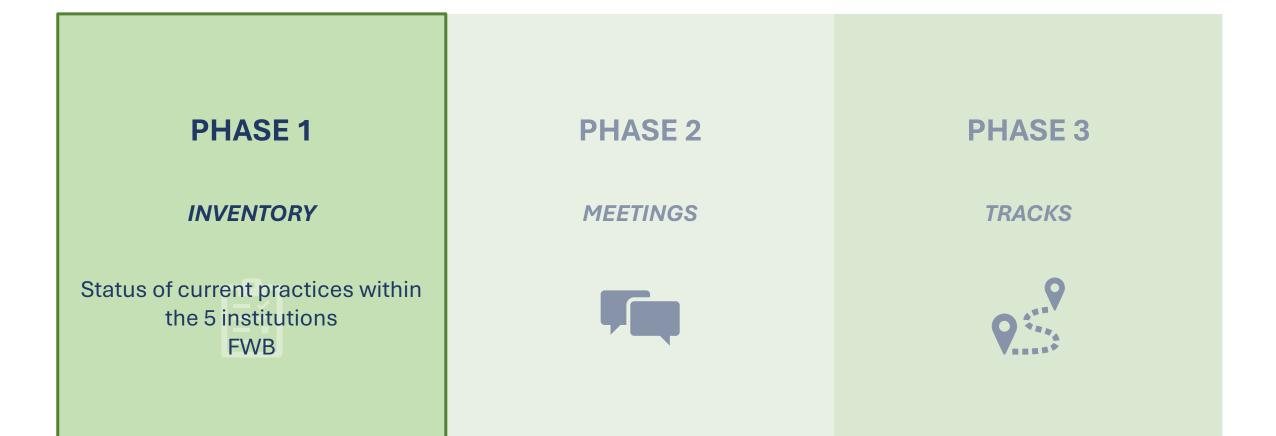
Diversity of contributions



New modalities for research evaluation



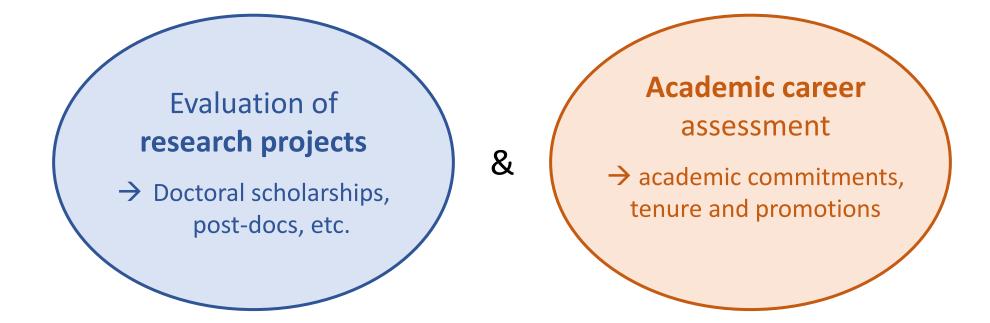
New modalities for research evaluation







Research evaluation











Good practices in evaluation

Transparency of procedures

Contextualisation

External evaluators requested

Presence of the narrative

Feedback to candidates

"Thematic" calls





To be improved following the inventory

Transparency of criteria

Expand the spectrum of criteria even further

Awareness raising

Definition of conflicts of interest





Overall report for the 5 institutions

Compte rendu sur l'inventaire des critères d'évaluation utilisés dans les universités FWB

- 1. Les bonnes pratiques VS les pistes d'amélioration
- A) Pour les projets de recherche

Bonnes pratiques

- Transparence et visibilité des procédures :
 - Uniformisation des publications d'appels à projet : tous les appels sont généralement rassemblés sur une plateforme web unique avec canevas unique de présentation.
 - o Pour certains appels, le formulaire de candidature est unique et uniformisé.
- Feedback et rebuttal :
 - Personnes non retenues ont généralement le droit à s'entretenir de la décision avec, par exemple, le Vice-recteur à la politique du personnel ou le Prorecteur à la Recherche (démarche volontaire en général sur demande).
 - Pour certains appels, un rapport d'évaluation est transmis aux candidats retenus et non retenus.
 - Rebuttal/droit de réponse à la suite de l'évaluation par des experts internationaux lors des démarches de sélection des projets de grande envergure comme les ARC.
- Sollicitation d'évaluateurs externes/internationaux en parallèle à la commission d'évaluation de base (qui est souvent le conseil de la recherche) pour certains appels (notamment dans le cas de projets de grande envergure comme les ARC). Ces experts sont rémunérés ou non (les rémunérations semblent motiver la participation). Cela permet un peer-reviewing supplémentaire et une double-évaluation.

CRef Interuniversity Research Support Platform, **PINDARE**:





OR Code test





New modalities for research evaluation

PHASE 1

INVENTORY



PHASE 2

MEETINGS

Propose indicators, tools or processes for evaluating research, taking into account all contributions

PHASE 3

TRACKS





Meeting methodology

- 100 individual semi-directed face-to-face interviews (1.5 hours) across all institutions
- Questionnaire sent in advance
- People met = research evaluators
 - Committee members:
 - Evaluating research projects
 - Academic recruitment
 - Academic promotion
 - Maximizing diversity:
 - Fields and research institutes represented
 - Years of experience
 - Gender parity → within the limits of the constraints encountered









Questionnaire

- Overall satisfaction question on research evaluation processes
- More specific questions about the criteria currently used:
 - Essential criteria
 - Criteria to be abandoned
 - Criteria not yet sufficiently taken into consideration
 - Metric factors
 - Open Science & Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI)
 - Narrative CV
 - Transparency of procedures & criteria
- General questions:
 - The difficulties encountered
 - Improvements to be made
 - Best practices









Overall satisfaction



4/5 → Average and median satisfaction score for all evaluation processes given by the evaluators met (all institutions and categories combined)





Three major findings from these meetings

- → **Great variability** of the criteria used depending on:
 - Scientific discipline or research culture
 - Career stage
 - Program/instrument to which the candidate is applying
 - Type of evaluation commission
- → Criteria related to the **research profile** seem to **take precedence over** those related to the **teaching profile and service** aspects :
 - Among the most cited: quality of the CV, originality of the research theme and publication metrics
 - Candidate's quality at the audition
- → Many **difficulties** encountered by evaluators :
 - Determine common criteria for evaluating different disciplines, comparing varied profiles
 - Lack of calibration tags upstream of evaluations
 - Feeling of non-legitimacy: Not a "specialist" in all areas
 - Workload







Reviewers' opinions on publication metrics

- → Used, yes, but:
 - In a reasoned manner
 - Often already contextualized (seniority, research field, multi-criteria analysis, etc.)
 - Most cited: H-index
- → The evaluators are in favor of:
 - Maintain a use of metrics but contextualize it
 - Rather consider the general publication profile
- → Findings:
 - Young academics tend to use metrics less
 - Metrics more commonly used in the Health Sciences Sector and in the Science and Technology Sector, than in the Humanities Sector





Reviewers 'opinions on Open Science

- → Great **lack of knowledge** of the components
- → Most cited limiting element: **cost** linked to *Open Access*
- → Open Data is seen as a necessity but **there is fear** of loss of exclusivity of data published in Open Access or preprints.
- → The evaluators are:
 - Generally supportive of including criteria recognizing investment in *Open Science*
 - To rethink the place of *Open Science*
- → Findings:
 - Need to **train** in *Open Science*
 - Raise awareness of the need to take into account criteria linked to Open Science





Reviewers 'opinions on the narrative CV

→ Controversial opinion :

- Not or little used
- Allows you to better understand a career path
- Time-consuming for everyone
- Risk of homogenization
- Evaluation of form rather than content
- Difficulty remaining objective/critical

→ The evaluators are :

Rather favorable to its use if there is no redundancy

→ Findings :

- Better integrate narrative description
- Leave room for the narrative without imposing a particular form (narrative CV, dedicated inserts, audition, etc.)





Best practice and areas for improvement

- → Good practice highlighted by the evaluators :
 - The work of the committees is already of good quality
 - In general, evaluation is already more qualitative than quantitative
 - Good practices similar to those highlighted in the inventory (contextualisation, responsible use of quantitative metrics, interviewing candidates, etc.)
- → Areas for improvement suggested by the evaluators :
 - Improve transparency (procedures, criteria and their weighting)
 - Rethink the role of Open Science
 - Better integrate narrative description
 - Systematise constructive feedback to applicants (debate between oral or written)
 - Systematise candidate **interviews** (if possible)
 - Calibration & training prior to assessment (method, definitions, notes, etc.)
 - Recognise that **needs evolve** over the course of a career
 - ..







More detailed report available on PINDARE



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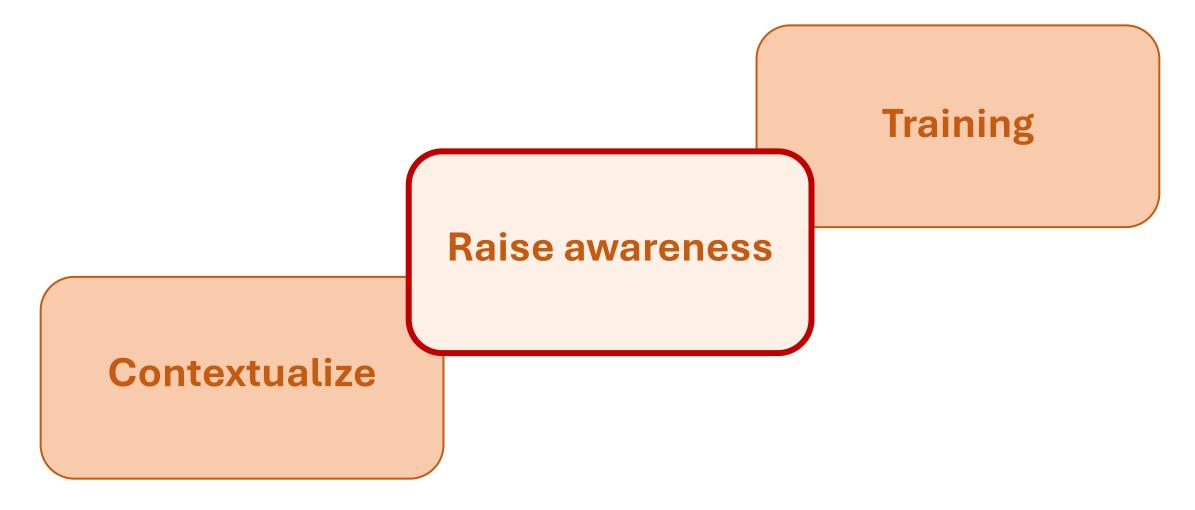






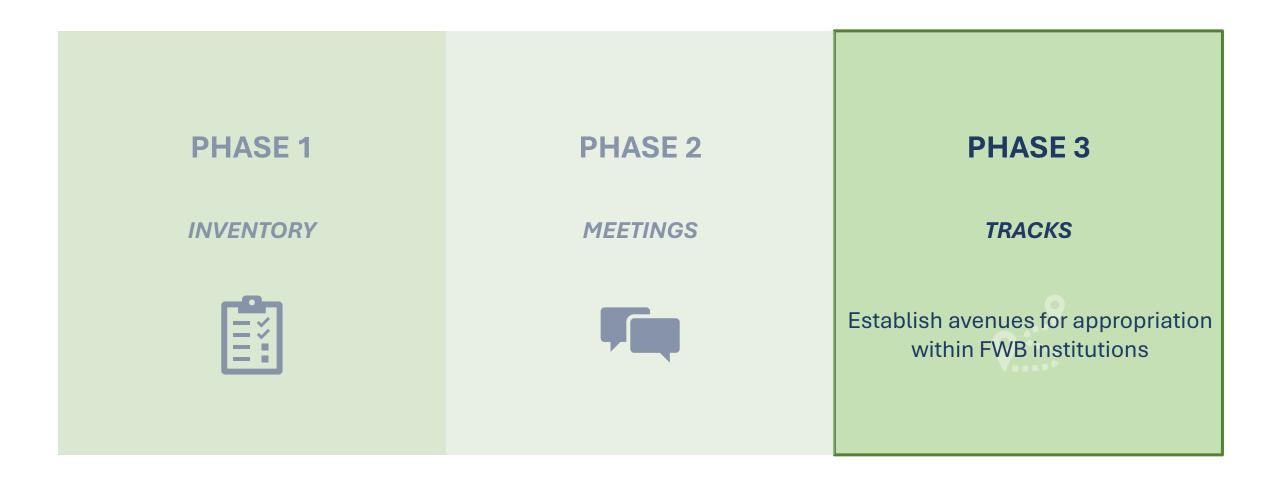


Needs highlighted following these interviews





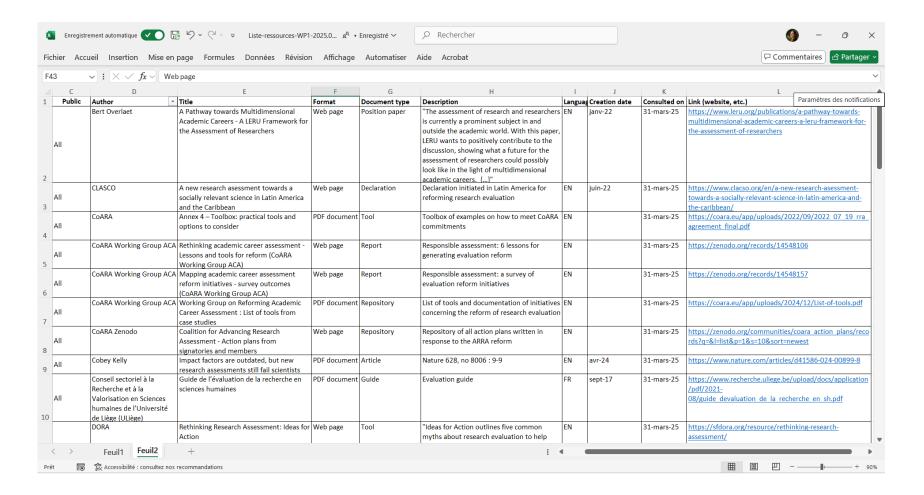
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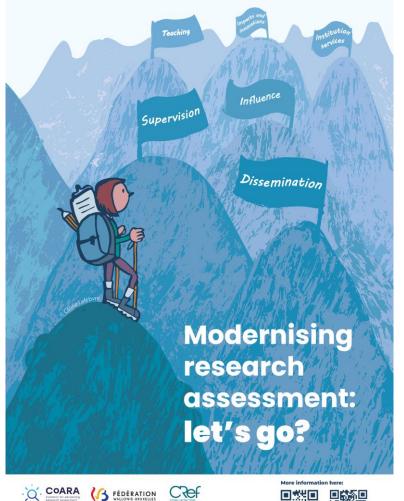
Resource Directory







Raising awareness among the entire scientific community













- Communicate on the reform of research evaluation
- → Engage researchers
- → Multitudes of possible paths for a quality assessment
- → Researchers are not expected to reach all the summits
- → Each researcher represents a different and unique landscape



<u>Acknowledgements</u>

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