

Overall Characterisation

The [University of Lisbon](#) (ULisboa) is committed to fostering a research evaluation culture that values quality, impact and integrity, while embracing career diversity, and promoting responsible and ethical research practices. In line with this commitment, ULisboa has endorsed the European Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment ([Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment](#) - CoARA) in 2024 and is currently proposing an Action Plan to harmonise research assessment practices with the Agreement’s principles. Inspired by leading European institutions, this Action Plan will be based on a gap analysis and will address ULisboa priorities in advancing responsible research assessment. The plan will be developed and implemented in coordination with the Schools and the Research Units at ULisboa, and the Open Science and CoARA Task Forces, ensuring a coherent, transparent, and forward-looking approach.

By adopting this framework, ULisboa aims to enhance research recognition and support mechanisms, while contributing to the global transformation of research evaluation.

The CoARA initiative represents an international effort to reform research assessment by fostering a more inclusive, transparent, and effective research ecosystem. The ULisboa action plan reflects its strong commitment to these principles, outlining specific measures, timelines, and responsibilities to achieve meaningful and sustainable advancements in research assessment practices.

ULisboa is actively involved in the [Portuguese National Chapter](#) working group, which aims to further develop and contextualize CoARA commitments to action, fostering dialogue on research assessment reform within the specific context of the Portuguese research ecosystem and institutional diversity.

In this context, it is essential to note that any reforms related to academic assessment must also be framed within the national legal context, particularly the legal statutes governing academic careers in Portugal, such as the ECDU (Statute of the University Teaching Career) and the ECIC (Statute of the Scientific Research Career), which serve as a key reference for interpreting and implementing some of the CoARA commitments.

Organisation Type

| Public University

Date of joining CoARA

| 2024

Due date of first action plan

| 2025

Contact Person

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CoARA COMMITMENT 1:

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

Purpose: This commitment will broaden recognition of the diverse practices, activities and careers in research, considering the specific nature of research disciplines and other research endeavours.

Scope: Changes in assessment practices should enable recognition of the broad diversity of:

- valuable contributions that researchers make to science and for the benefit of society, including diverse outputs beyond journal publications and irrespective of the language in which they are communicated;
- practices that contribute to robustness, openness, transparency, and the inclusiveness of research and the research process including: peer review, teamwork and collaboration;
- activities including teaching, leadership, supervision, training and mentoring.

Actions 2025–2028:

Timeframe

ULisboa is progressively embedding a more inclusive and holistic approach to research assessment, recognising the diversity of contributions, profiles, and career paths in science. The fact that ULisboa is a large comprehensive university (18 Schools and 70 Research Units), engaged in teaching and research in all areas of knowledge, with a long-standing practice of different types of research, enables and facilitates this approach. This commitment builds on the broader goal of fostering a research culture that values high quality work not only through traditional metrics, but also through openness, collaboration, societal impact, and responsibility.

Past and ongoing initiatives:

ULisboa has increasingly promoted an understanding of academic merit that goes beyond bibliometric indicators – an effort that was mainly directed to scientific areas where these metrics were pervasive, and less so in areas such as arts and humanities. The gathering of researchers with different backgrounds and research evaluation practices in cross-cutting events and research structures facilitated this change. In recent years, Schools and Research Units have adopted narrative CVs and qualitative self-assessment statements in internal evaluations, recruitment procedures, and awards, enabling researchers to showcase diverse contributions in research, education, innovation, and engagement. This approach aligns with external organizations and funding agency policies, including those from the EU's flagship research and innovation programme [Horizon Europe](#) (2021–2027), particularly Pillar I – Excellent Science, where qualitative evidence and narrative CVs are increasingly required. To support this shift, ULisboa has also hosted a workshop on narrative CVs, offering guidance to researchers on how to effectively articulate the breadth and impact of their work beyond traditional metrics.

2023

In 2023, ULisboa hosted its annual Research Symposium, gathering all Schools and Research Units, focused on Open Science and Open Innovation. At the same time, it launched a cross-disciplinary working group on Open Science, bringing together representatives from various scientific areas and [Unite! European University](#) partners. This group has mapped best practices and developed a shared framework to recognize research excellence, with a strong emphasis on Open Science practices, collaborative work, interdisciplinarity, public engagement, and knowledge valorisation. The same group actively organised the second Unite! Open Science Policy Forum – Enabling a European Open Science and Innovation Area, hosted by ULisboa in 2024, under the framework of the Unite! European University. In 2025, the Open Science Policy Forum among EU Alliances has been successfully held for the first time.

2023–2025

Efforts are also being made to create more inclusive career development pathways. For example, in recruitment and promotion processes and in grant applications, researchers are now encouraged to showcase a selection of their most relevant achievements – including publications, datasets, public engagement activities, societal impact, or contributions to

2024

collaborative research projects – rather than exhaustive publication lists. This paradigm change has been fully implemented in the [ULisboa/CGD Scientific Awards](#) regulation since 2024. For broader, recurring evaluations across the entire academic community, such as in academic career assessment procedures, the more quantitative component underlying these large-scale processes is always complemented by a qualitative evaluation. This ensures that individual trajectories are assessed not only by metrics, but also by the substance, context, and significance of each person’s contributions.

ULisboa is also committed to recognising roles that have traditionally remained in the background, such as data stewards, lab technicians, research managers, and science communicators, as essential contributors to a successful research ecosystem. Discussions are underway to ensure that these contributions receive greater visibility in team evaluations and funding instruments. 2024

ULisboa is currently working on the European [Human Resources Excellence in Research](#) (HRS4R) accreditation, aligned with evolving practices in responsible research assessment, and recognising efforts to improve its research environment. By implementing HRS4R and aligning with Open Science principles, ULisboa aims to enhance research quality, transparency, and impact. HRS4R supports ethical recruitment, better working conditions, and career development, while promoting best practices in research management. Open Science fosters reproducibility and visibility through open access to data and publications. Planned actions will focus on improving access to Open Science tools and broadening the dissemination of open research. 2024

Building on its commitment to Open Science and research integrity, ULisboa is exploring ways to better recognise and value high-quality academic work across its diverse research community. This includes consideration of dimensions such as academic leadership, teamwork, knowledge sharing, innovation, and contributions to societal impact, elements that may be reflected not only in the criteria for this accreditation, but also in broader evaluation and funding mechanisms. These discussions are taking place in parallel with ULisboa involvement in CoARA, and with the ongoing development of institutional frameworks to ensure a more inclusive and responsible approach to recognising research excellence. Of note, the [ULisboa Research Portal](#) plays a key role in promoting a more transparent and qualitative approach to research assessment by showcasing the diversity and richness of research outputs, datasets, public engagement activities, or contributions to collaborative research across the university and with stakeholders. 2024

Next steps:

Future steps will include the definition of transparent evaluation guidelines that consider disciplinary specificities, career stage, and the diversity of research roles and contributions, including collaborative and supporting roles essential to successful research teams.

As part of its CoARA action plan, ULisboa will:

1. Develop a university-wide guidance document for research assessment, with discipline-sensitive indicators that reflect diverse contributions. Indicators include but are not limited to number of research publications; research publications related metrics; acquisition of funding at national or international level; mentorship/supervision of bachelor and master students, doctoral candidates or postdocs; international mobility; awards; collaborations with other HEIs for the purposes of research, education, innovation/knowledge transfer, or engagement; student satisfaction and feedback; collaborations with partners outside academia; dissertation or thesis reviewer, participation in dissertation/thesis defenses; membership in expert/international organizations; outcomes of teaching assessments; peer-reviewer, participation in editorial committees and other expert tasks; involvement in policy processes at local, regional, national or international levels; science communication and outreach activities for the general public; inter-sectoral mobility; open science and open data indicators measuring the open accessibility of research outcomes and data; participation in ethics committees; open education materials. 2026
2. Pilot revised hiring and promotion criteria in selected Schools and Research Units, followed by expansion and generalized adoption;

3. Support early-career researchers through training initiatives in understanding and navigating diverse research careers, including non-traditional and interdisciplinary paths, while also valuing and encouraging a broader range of research outputs – moving beyond the traditional "publish or perish" model.	Continuous
4. The university is already revising its internal procedures to embed these principles, valuing diverse contributions such as Open Science practices, interdisciplinary work, and societal engagement. The ULisboa Research Portal serves as a key interface for showcasing and disseminating several scientific outputs and activities. Closely connected with institutional repositories, the portal supports the implementation of the ULisboa Open Access Policy, ensuring that research publications, especially those funded by FCT and EU, are made openly available in compliance with funder requirements. As part of this effort, the university promotes awareness of Open Access mandates across its Schools and fosters good practices through targeted dissemination and training initiatives. By increasing the visibility of research outputs and ensuring accessibility, the Research Portal plays a central role in fostering transparency, accountability, and engagement with the broader academic community.	Continuous
5. In parallel, the ULisboa Interdisciplinary Research Data Management Centre (iRe:SEARCH) is playing a vital role in promoting Open Data and the responsible management of research information. iRe:SEARCH consolidates data from multidisciplinary projects, including pilot initiatives, and functions as a data hub in connection with infrastructures such as Zenodo and Polen. Supported by a growing network of data stewards embedded in ULisboa Schools, the platform will be instrumental in the rollout of the university research data management policy, currently in development. This policy will define clear procedures for data deposit, stewardship, and reuse. In line with CoARA emphasis on research-on-research, iRe:SEARCH also enables evidence-based assessment practices by facilitating access to high-quality metadata and research project information, thus reinforcing a culture of evaluation grounded in transparency and shared knowledge.	2025
	2025

Through these measures, ULisboa aims to foster a research environment that values multiple forms of excellence, respects individual choices, and is aligned with both scientific diversity and evolving societal challenges.

CoARA COMMITMENT 2:

Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators

Purpose: This commitment will enable the move towards research assessment criteria that focus primarily on quality, while recognizing that responsible use of quantitative indicators can support assessment where meaningful and relevant, which is context dependent.

Scope: Research assessment should rely primarily on qualitative assessment for which peer review is central, supported by responsibly used quantitative indicators where appropriate. Peer review is the most robust method known for assessing quality and has the advantage that it is in the hands of the research community. It is important that peer review processes are designed to meet the fundamental principles of rigor and transparency: expert assessment, transparency, impartiality, appropriateness, confidentiality, integrity and ethical considerations, gender, equality and diversity. To address the biases and imperfections to which any method is prone, the research community re-assesses and improves peer review practices regularly. Revised, or potentially new, criteria, tools and processes appropriate for assessing quality could be explored alongside peer review. Moving towards assessment practices that rely more heavily on qualitative methods may require additional efforts from researchers. Researchers should be recognized for these efforts and their contributions to reviewing peers' work should be valued as part of their career progression.

Actions 2025–2028:

Timeframe

At ULisboa, we are committed to advancing a research assessment culture grounded primarily in qualitative evaluation, with peer review at its core. In line with CoARA principles, we recognize the value of peer review as the most robust and community-driven method for assessing research quality. Our ongoing efforts aim to ensure that peer review processes at ULisboa are rigorous, transparent, and inclusive, upholding principles of expertise, fairness, integrity, and diversity. While responsibly used quantitative indicators can support these assessments where appropriate, we are actively working towards frameworks that prioritize expert judgement and contextual relevance. Acknowledging the additional effort required, we commit to valuing the researcher contributions as candidates and peer reviewers, recognizing these roles as key to their academic progression.

Past and ongoing initiatives:

The initiatives outlined in Commitment 1 show that research and researcher evaluations at ULisboa, whether focused on individuals or teams, are becoming fundamentally grounded in peer review, supported by tools such as narrative CVs, biosketches, detailed project descriptions, and the showcasing of diverse research outputs. While this practice was already well established in some research areas, it has been actively promoted in others in recent years, including in the annual ULisboa/CGD Scientific Research Awards, and should now be adopted across all scientific fields. 2024

While ULisboa recognises the informative value of bibliometric indicators, it places primary emphasis on peer review in its research and researcher assessment processes. Clear guidance is already provided alongside evaluation materials to encourage informed, qualitative judgement and to discourage the misuse of metrics. Responsible use of quantitative indicators means applying metrics transparently and contextually to support, not replace, expert judgment, ensuring fairness across disciplines, career stages, and research contributions. To support this, ULisboa has promoted good practices in recruitment, promotion, grant, and award evaluation panels, encouraging the use of multidisciplinary panels as safeguards to ensure balanced and contextualised assessments. These efforts need to be further reinforced.

Next steps:

1. To support high-quality decision-making, ULisboa is committed to offering peer training for members of selection and evaluation committees. These training sessions aim to enhance evaluator competencies, covering topics such as conflict of interest, awareness of implicit biases, group dynamics, benchmarking, and effective feedback practices grounded in case discussions and established principles. Continuous

2. Participation in selection or evaluation committees will be formally recognised as part of the engagement and institutional service dimension in upcoming assessment frameworks under discussion at ULisboa. Continuous

Further developments will be detailed in Commitment 3.

CoARA COMMITMENT 3:

Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index

Purpose: This commitment will reduce the dominance of a narrow set of quantitative journal- and publication-based metrics.

Scope: Inappropriate uses of journal- and publication-based metrics in research assessment should be abandoned. This means moving away from using metrics like the Journal Impact Factor, Article Influence Score (AIS) and h-index as proxies for quality and impact.

'Inappropriate uses include:

- relying exclusively on author-based metrics (e.g. counting papers, patents, citations, grants, etc.) to assess quality and/or impact;
- assessing outputs based on metrics relating to publication venue, format or language;
- relying on any other metrics that do not properly capture quality and/or impact.

Actions 2025–2028:	Timeframe
<p>Given the diversity of its 18 Schools and 70 Research Units, and their respective discipline-specific contexts, ULisboa grants each institution the necessary autonomy to appropriately assess quality and impact in research evaluation. However, this diversity and autonomy must not compromise the University's commitment to the responsible use of metrics and the need for standardization.</p>	
Past and ongoing activities:	
<p>In recent years, extensive discussions among Scientific Councils and Senate and other key stakeholders have led to significant advancements in research assessment practices. These efforts are particularly evident in the evaluation processes for the already mentioned annual ULisboa/CGD Scientific Awards, reflecting a more holistic and qualitative approach that is also guiding ongoing reform efforts. Since 2024, ULisboa has aligned its candidate evaluation procedures with international best practices, while simultaneously fostering more qualitative, robust, and integrated assessment methodologies. Among the key developments, the adoption of the narrative CV format stands out, enabling a more comprehensive, inclusive, and effective evaluation of faculty member and researcher academic and research trajectories within ULisboa.</p>	Prior to 2024
<p>To ensure that all Schools engage with this transition towards a more transparent and equitable assessment system, ULisboa has introduced, as referred above, webinars and hands-on training sessions tailored for researchers across the institution. These initiatives create a supportive environment where early-career researchers can raise questions, adopt best practices, and enhance their skills in alignment with the principles of Open Science and Responsible Research and Innovation.</p>	2024
Next steps:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In the university-wide guidance document, mention will be made to abandon the inappropriate use of journal- and publication-based metrics, particularly the Journal Impact Factor and h-index. The document includes developing and disseminating institutional guidelines that clearly discourage the exclusive use of these metrics in evaluation processes, such as recruitment, promotion, and funding decisions. Instead of relying exclusively on traditional indicators, ULisboa will promote qualitative assessment methods that focus on the substance, relevance, and impact of research outputs, irrespective of publication venue, format, or language.	Continuous
<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Capacity-building efforts, including workshops and training for faculty and evaluators, as mentioned in Commitment 2, will also support the transition and raise awareness of responsible metrics use and more meaningful and inclusive evaluation practices, offering practical advice on incorporating metrics effectively into personal CVs. These activities will be designed to support researchers at different career stages, with tailored content that addresses the specific needs of early career as well as more senior researchers.	Continuous
<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. To further disseminate the University commitment to the responsible use of metrics, the Open Science Task Force will collaborate closely with designated local contacts within each School (ULisboa Open Science ambassadors) to promote feasible strategies and implement effective, context-specific changes, focusing on three key areas:	2025

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- a) Strengthening competencies and skills related to Responsible Research and Innovation and Open Science by enhancing the existing training framework, including the development of improved training tools, initiatives, and strategic actions.
 - b) Facilitating the adoption of advanced governance models that foster an enabling environment for Responsible Research and Innovation and Open Science within the University.
 - c) Developing a policy on the responsible use of metrics in research assessment, grounded in international guidelines and recommendations, ensuring an evidence-based approach tailored to discipline-specific contexts.
4. Finally, ULisboa will establish monitoring mechanisms and regularly review its assessment practices in collaboration with the academic community, ensuring a dynamic and reflective approach to evaluating research excellence. 2025

CoARA COMMITMENT 4:

Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment

Purpose: This commitment will help avoid that metrics used by international rankings, which are inappropriate for assessing researchers, trickle-down to research and researcher assessment. It will help the research community and research organisations regain the autonomy to shape assessment practices, rather than having to abide by criteria and methodologies set by external commercial companies. This could include retaining control over ranking methodologies and data.

Scope: Recognising that the international rankings most often referred to by research organisations are currently not 'fair and responsible', the criteria these rankings use should not trickle down to the evaluation of individual researchers, research teams and research units. Research organisations should also be mindful that public communication (e.g. the active advertising of an institution's rank) can contribute to the perception that research quality conflates with ranking positions.

Where ranking approaches are deemed unavoidable, as may be the case in forms of evaluation beyond the scope of this Agreement such as benchmarking and performance reviews of countries or institutions, the methodological limitations of such approaches should be acknowledged, and institutions should avoid trickle-down effects on research and researcher assessment.

Actions 2025–2028:

Timeframe

Past and ongoing activities:

For many years, ULisboa has closely monitored international rankings and its positioning within them. Despite recognising the methodological limitations and, at times, commercial interests behind these exercises, ULisboa acknowledges their impact on students, partners, and broader perceptions, and therefore considers them carefully. Regularly, internal reports are produced after each ranking release, analysing their specific characteristics and flaws. Whenever rankings are used, consulting these reports is recommended. At the same time, ULisboa remains committed to exploring and adopting alternative, more meaningful approaches to assessing institutional quality and impact. Prior to 2023

The [ULisboa Research Portal](#) plays a key role in promoting a more transparent and qualitative approach to research assessment by showcasing the diversity and richness of research outputs across the university, independently of international rankings. In its full potential, by providing direct access to researcher profiles, publications, projects, networks and societal contributions, the portal will support an evaluation culture that values institutional substance over position in commercial rankings, helping to prevent their inappropriate influence on individual and institutional assessments. 2024–2026

Next Steps:

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| 1. Efforts will be dedicated to reflecting on the University's specific identity and positioning in the global context. This group would explore dimensions such as ULisboa geographical location, its historical and cultural interface, and the distinctive role of Portuguese scientific and diplomatic tradition. The goal is to articulate a vision of institutional success that reflects ULisboa's singular contribution to global knowledge ecosystems, beyond metrics of uniform competitiveness. | Continuous |
| 2. To address the limitations of global university rankings and highlight the ULisboa unique contributions to the world, ULisboa plans to follow the INORMS Initiatives ¹ : "The More Than Our Rank Scheme and SCOPE Framework for Research Evaluation", embracing the "commitment to responsible assessment and to acknowledging a broader and more diverse definition of institutional success." | Continuous |
| 3. Finally, by leveraging the ULisboa Research Portal, it becomes possible to adopt more informed and contextualized indicators, avoiding direct comparisons based on absolute values of funding or scientific output. Instead, dimensionless metrics can be used that adjust for factors such as the institutional research productivity, or the number of active researchers. This approach supports a fairer and more meaningful interpretation of scientific activity, reinforcing ULisboa's commitment to responsible assessment based on substance and relevance rather than decontextualized metrics. | 2026 |

CoARA COMMITMENT 5:**Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to**

Purpose: This commitment will ensure that organisations allocate the necessary resources, whether in the form of budget or staff capacity, to improve research assessment practices within their agreed timeframe.

Scope: Resource allocation by assessment authorities and research funding and performing organisations is a necessary condition for reforming assessment practices. Resources should be allocated as is needed for each organisation to achieve the changes that will enable adherence to the Principles and to implement the Commitments. This includes resources to:

- implement changes in research assessment, including planning and progress monitoring;
- raise awareness among all actors;
- educate, train and support researchers and any other staff involved in assessment, including peer-reviewers and assessors;
- support the necessary infrastructure such as tools and services for the transparent collection and processing of data on research assessment practices.

Particular attention should be paid to making resources available to enable the engagement of researchers at all career stages in reforming research assessment.

Actions 2025-2028:**Timeframe**

Past and ongoing activities:

¹The More Than Our Rank Scheme and SCOPE Framework for Research Evaluation, launched by the International Network of Research Management Societies Research Evaluation Group (INORMS REG), are initiatives that both have a focus on equity in academia and research. <https://sfdora.org/resource/inorms-initiatives-more-than-our-rank-and-scope-framework-for-research-evaluation/>

At ULisboa, the commitment to reforming research assessment is anchored in a strategic investment in internal capacity, such as developing clearer evaluation guidelines, training evaluators, promoting the use of narrative CVs, and encouraging interdisciplinary panels, rather than a reliance on expanded budgets. We recognize that meaningful and sustainable reform requires the dedicated time, collaboration, and expertise of academic and administrative staff. This includes designing, implementing, and monitoring improved assessment practices, as well as supporting and training the wider research community.

2024

Next Steps:

1. The Research Assessment Reform (CoARA) Task Force will play a key role in supporting the implementation of this commitment. The Task Force brings together representatives from diverse scientific areas, research support services, and academic governance, and is responsible for leading the reform process, coordinating institutional efforts, and ensuring alignment with CoARA principles and commitments. Its work includes conducting internal consultations, mapping existing practices, organizing workshops and training sessions, developing guidelines and monitoring frameworks that reflect both disciplinary specificities and shared institutional values. Continuous

2. In addition, ULisboa is implementing a network of Research Assessment Reform (CoARA) Ambassadors. These ambassadors, including academics engaged in research, evaluation, or academic leadership, serve as key facilitators within ULisboa Schools and Research Units. Their role is to raise awareness, promote dialogue, and ensure that local perspectives inform the implementation process. They also act as bridges between the central task force and the University broader research community. Continuous

This approach fosters institutional ownership, encourages broad engagement, and supports tailored solutions that respect the diversity of disciplines and career trajectories across ULisboa. Importantly, it reaffirms our practice and renewed appeal that traditional metrics and university rankings are not used in the assessment of research. Instead, our focus is on developing inclusive, transparent, and responsible assessment practices that support quality, relevance, and integrity in research. To move beyond declarations, ULisboa acknowledges that implementing such practices requires dedicated time, sustained effort, and appropriate human and financial resources. Without this investment, responsible research assessment risks remaining a statement of intent rather than a lived institutional reality. A long-term commitment to capacity-building, both centrally and within Schools, is therefore essential.

CoARA COMMITMENT 6:

Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes

6.1 CRITERIA FOR UNITS AND INSTITUTIONS

With the direct involvement of research organisations and researchers at all career stages, review and develop criteria for assessing research units and research performing organisations, while promoting interoperability

Purpose: This commitment will ensure that national/regional/organisational authorities and evaluation agencies review and, where needed, develop criteria for the assessment of research performing units and organisations, in accordance with the Principles. It will foster the responsible use of metrics in assessing research performing units and organisations, and help to prevent contradictions or incompatibilities between the assessment of research, researchers and research performing organisations. It will also safeguard the interoperability of adapted or newly developed assessment processes.

Scope: Criteria for the assessment of research performing units and organisations, including universities, research centres, and research infrastructures, should be reviewed and adapted, and new criteria developed where needed, based on evidence. This should be done in close collaboration with assessors and those that will be assessed, including research organisations and researchers. The changes should increase the ability to assess quality by enabling recognition of all contributions to quality research by research units and institutions. Such recognition includes that of early sharing of data and results, open collaboration, teamwork; and consideration

of contributions to the research ecosystem, knowledge generation and scientific, technological, economic, cultural and societal impact. National/regional/organisational authorities and evaluation agencies should coordinate to ensure their methodologies and processes are interoperable, while simultaneously respecting the necessary adaptation to each context.

Actions 2025–2028:	Timeframe
<p>In Portugal, the evaluation of research units and the corresponding funding are the responsibility of the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT). ULisboa is committed to support national/regional/organisational authorities and evaluation agencies, alone or partnering with other universities, to evolve the way they evaluate research units and institutions, with a growing emphasis on qualitative assessment, contextual relevance, and the recognition of diverse research contributions, in line with CoARA principles.</p>	
Past and ongoing activities:	
<p>ULisboa considers that alignment with national and European frameworks is a priority, including the CoARA National Chapter, while maintaining flexibility to reflect the distinct missions of different Schools and Research Units, encompassing the full scope of thematic areas and objectives.</p>	2024
Next Steps:	
<p>ULisboa will compile and make available existing good practices to its Schools, research units, researchers and staff, promoting a participatory process in which everyone can be involved, from a bottom-up perspective. These contributions may inform national, regional, and institutional authorities and evaluation agencies, helping to improve research assessment criteria across universities, research centres, and infrastructures.</p>	Continuous

CoARA COMMITMENT 6:

Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes

6.2 CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS AND RESEARCHERS

With the direct involvement of researchers at all career stages, review and develop criteria, tools and processes for the assessment of research projects, research teams and researchers that are adapted to their context of application

Purpose: This commitment will enable recognition of the diverse research activities and practices through the revision and development of assessment criteria, tools, and processes. It will ensure that organisations review their processes and make tangible changes by developing existing or new assessment approaches, individually or in collaboration with others, in accordance with the Principles.

Scope: Criteria, tools and processes should be reviewed and developed together with researchers in different disciplines and at different career stages; and should enable recognition of the diversity of research activities and practices that contribute to research quality, including diverse outputs in different languages. This should increase the ability to assess quality by enabling recognition of all contributions to quality research from research projects and by researchers and research teams. This includes recognition of early sharing of data and results, open collaboration, and teamwork. Reformed practices for assessing individual researchers should consider future potential alongside track record and consider researcher individual contexts and careers. They should also recognise that researchers cannot excel in all types of tasks and provide for a framework that allows researchers to contribute to the definition of their research goals and aspirations. Research assessment by research funders should consider disciplinary, multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinary research as well as contributions to knowledge generation and scientific, technological, economic, cultural and societal impact.

Actions 2025–2028:	Timeframe
<p>At ULisboa and its Organic Units, most of the funding for research projects comes from external sources, both national and international. The funding directly managed by ULisboa rectorate is primarily allocated to specific initiatives, such as Colleges, Interdisciplinary Networks, and other targeted programmes. Additionally, ULisboa oversees the evaluation of individual academic careers, which includes recruitment and promotion within the university and term evaluations or academic career assessment procedures.</p>	
Past and ongoing:	
<p>ULisboa is committed to evolving the way it evaluates its internal research projects and researchers, with a growing emphasis on qualitative assessment, contextual relevance, and the recognition of diverse research contributions. In line with CoARA principles, a process has been launched to gradually refine the criteria used in internal evaluations. This involves strengthening participatory mechanisms, where researchers across career stages, administrative staff, and institutional stakeholders contribute to shaping new approaches that value openness, collaboration, and societal impact.</p>	2024
<p>Initial steps include reviewing existing practices and identifying areas where evaluation frameworks rely too heavily on traditional metrics. Over time, the goal is to ensure that research environments, interdisciplinary efforts, mentoring, and engagement with society, mastered by the ULisboa Interdisciplinary Networks and Colleges, are meaningfully captured in assessments.</p>	
Next steps:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure coherence across the institution, a university-wide guidance document for research assessment will be developed, as mentioned before, with discipline-sensitive indicators that reflect diverse contributions; 	2026
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. New indicators and evaluation principles will be progressively embedded in internal processes, such as evaluation of internal research, development and innovation projects, career-related evaluation of researchers, processes for hiring new researchers and granting of scientific merit awards, and research information systems such as the ULisboa Research Portal. Guidance and training will be made available to ensure consistency and shared understanding among reviewers. 	Continuous
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Periodic monitoring will be built into the system to ensure that the evaluation criteria remain relevant and effective. Where appropriate, research and administrative staff insights will inform broader institutional learning, with the potential to shape key performance indicators in a bottom-up and evidence-informed manner. 	Continuous
<p>This adaptive approach seeks not only to improve research assessment, but also to foster a culture of quality, inclusion, and responsible academic practice across the university. To ensure the effective implementation of this commitment, it is essential to allocate adequate time and resources, particularly to support meaningful qualitative assessments in large-scale processes. In parallel, ULisboa will promote the revision of internal regulations within its Schools, aligning them with the principles of responsible research assessment and open science, while ensuring full compliance with national legal frameworks, including the ECDU and the newly approved ECIC. This alignment is crucial to embedding lasting change in academic recruitment, career progression, and broader institutional practices</p>	
<p>CoARA COMMITMENT 7:</p> <p>Raise awareness of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication, guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use</p>	

Purpose: This commitment will ensure that organisations raise awareness of the reform among all actors. It will ensure that organisations transparently communicate the criteria, tools and processes used for research assessment and train researchers and assessors in their use.

Scope: Without widespread awareness of the reform and training of those assessed and, crucially, assessors, progress will be slow – if not impossible. Organisations should be clear and transparent about assessment processes and the tools and criteria they use. They should make guidance on their assessment approaches openly available and train those involved in the assessment process. They should allow those assessed to have access to the criteria, data and reviews or deliberation outcomes used in their assessment within the limits of confidentiality. Particular attention should be paid to raising awareness among researchers at all career stages.

Actions 2025-2028:

Timeframe

The principles and commitments of CoARA provide a vital framework for evolving our research assessment practices. To fully realize this potential, it is essential that we simultaneously empower the community of ULisboa to effectively engage in the research assessment reform.

Past and Ongoing:

By investing in proactive communication, ensuring accessible and thorough information dissemination, and delivering impactful training initiatives, we can create a synergistic environment. The successful hands-on workshop on narrative CVs, held at ULisboa in 2024, offers a valuable model for future initiatives. This will not only embed CoARA values within ULisboa but also equip our researchers and stakeholders with the necessary skills to recognize and value the diverse contributions of research. 2024

Other initiatives in this area were the agreement about the adherence to CoARA and the adoption of its principles by Deans and Heads of the Scientific Councils of the 18 Schools in 2024; the dissemination of the importance of new research assessment practices in the Research Symposium held in 2024 (gathering researchers and research groups from all scientific disciplines at ULisboa); and the gradual dissemination of new practices in important assessment exercises, such as the ULisboa/CGD Scientific Awards. All these moments may have the consequential effect of changing mindsets and assessment practices, among professors and researchers at all career stages. 2024

Next Steps:

1. To ensure coherence across the institution, the already mentioned university-wide guidance document for research assessment will be developed, with discipline-sensitive indicators that reflect diverse contributions. 2026
2. Design a communication and community training plan focused on reforming research assessment and disseminating CoARA principles and commitments. This plan will be based on a prior mapping of stakeholder needs and include the already mentioned training instruments such as workshops and webinars, and the ambassador communities. Representatives from various stakeholder groups will be engaged in the collaborative design and validation of the format and content for communication, information, and training materials. 2026
3. Promote dissemination, training, and community support initiatives specifically tailored to the needs of different stakeholders involved in research assessment and researchers across all career levels. Continuous
4. Create a dedicated webpage on the ULisboa website to raise awareness and ensure transparency by sharing the CoARA Principles and Commitments, ULisboa's Action Plan, related events and training opportunities, and updates on implementation progress. Continuous
5. Facilitate the creation, ongoing maintenance, and regular updating of institutional communication channels within Schools and Research Units, for the purpose of internal communication regarding research assessment procedures and outcomes.

CoARA COMMITMENT 8:**Exchange practices and experiences to enable mutual learning within and beyond the Coalition**

Purpose: This commitment will ensure organisations exchange and make use of information for mutual learning. It will help avoid fragmentation, contribute to the coherence of assessment practices between organisations, and enable researcher mobility. It also will allow those further ahead to share approaches and lessons learned, to benefit those who have further to go on their reform journey.

Scope: While respecting each other's autonomy, organisations should share practices and experiences to facilitate mutual learning. This exchange should include contributing to the development of guidance and common approaches in order to minimise contradictions or incompatibilities between the assessment practices used by different organisations. It should also include sharing of lessons learned to ensure continuous mutual improvements.

Actions 2025–2028:**Timeframe**

In alignment with CoARA's Commitment 8, ULisboa supports the establishment and active participation in communities of practice within and beyond the Coalition. These communities serve as spaces for collaborative learning, critical reflection, and exchange of practical experiences, fostering coherence across research assessment systems while respecting institutional autonomy. ULisboa recognises that genuine reform requires more than policy alignment, as it demands peer dialogue, co-development of guidance, and the sharing of lessons learned, including successes and challenges. Open data and transparency play a key role in enabling this exchange, but equally important are the networks of trust and shared purpose that underpin sustainable change in research culture.

Past and Ongoing:

ULisboa has been actively engaged in several initiatives and projects to promote Open Science and Open Data. As a Unite! University partner and participant in the Unite! H2020 project, ULisboa contributed to the development of a shared and integrated Open Science strategy for the alliance. This involved the creation of tools, practical guidelines, and policy recommendations aimed at facilitating the transition to Open Science. The outcomes of this project offer comprehensive guidance on Open Science practices:

Prior to 2023

- The Strategic Roadmap outlines Unite! University vision for Open Science and its strategic position in relation to UNESCO's Recommendation on Open Science.

- The [Unite! White Paper](#): a new University open science and innovation governance model and policy for a sustainable world presents policy recommendations for public policy development at regional, national, and European levels.

- The [Unite! Handbook](#) of Best Practices for Effective Open Science and Innovation Mainstreaming at Universities proposes procedures and guidelines to support the transition from Modern Science to Open Science. This handbook provides researchers, research and innovation support services, and managers with practical guidance on embracing Open Science. This handbook is intended as a practical guide to assist researchers, research and innovation support services, and managers in embracing Open Science. It reflects an understanding of best practices in Open Science and Innovation among Unite! research teams, presents Unite! guidelines for adopting these practices, and shapes a new governance model for managing Open Science and Innovation in universities in the digital age. It serves as a tool for managing Open Science and Innovation within research teams.

2024

ULisboa signed the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment and became a member of CoARA in 2024. Coinciding with ULisboa formal membership in CoARA, the university organized a symposium on Responsible Research Assessment, featuring the participation of CoARA Vice-President. This was complemented by a hands-on workshop on narrative CVs. These two well-attended events marked the beginning of the Action Plan preparation phase at ULisboa. Unite! University partners have followed similar paths.

Next Steps:

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| 1. Maintain an active role in the CoARA Portuguese Chapter. | Continuous |
| 2. Proactively monitor the activities of CoARA Task Force to determine areas where ULisboa can make official contributions in the future. | Continuous |
| 3. Maximise national and international network collaborations to advance Open Science and research assessment reform, in the framework of the Unite! University and others. | Continuous |

Particularly, ULisboa will build upon discussions initiated at the Unite! second forum (led by Wrocław University and ULisboa) regarding fostering Open Science in careers and addressing gaps in research assessment. The aim is to stimulate debate, facilitate mutual learning through sharing best practices, challenges, and achievements, and evaluate ULisboa potential contributions to responsible research assessment within these networks.

CoARA COMMITMENT 9:

Communicate progress made on adherence to the Principles and implementation of the Commitments

Purpose: This commitment will ensure organisations update one another on the progress made. It will foster careful self-reflection and monitoring of their own adherence to the Principles and progress towards meeting the Commitments.

Scope: Demonstrating progress made towards implementing the Commitments and adherence to the Principles is an important part of this initiative. Organisations should commit to regularly update each other and their communities on their adherence and progress. This process involves being open to scrutiny from their own communities, sharing successes as well as challenges, and communicating their experiences to facilitate collective progress.

Actions 2025–2028:

Timeframe

Past and Ongoing:

ULisboa, through its CoARA Task Force, is committed to regularly communicating its progress in adhering to the Principles and implementing the Commitments of responsible research assessment. This includes openly sharing our advancements, challenges, and experiences with the university community and outside to foster collective learning and ensure transparency in our journey towards improved research evaluation practices.	2024
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Next Steps:

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| 1. Develop a dedicated webpage on the ULisboa website to publicly share the Principles and Commitments of the CoARA Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, the ULisboa CoARA Action Plan (once approved), information on events and training related to research assessment, and the results of the Action Plan implementation; | 2025 |
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| 2. Publish the ULisboa CoARA Action Plan on the institutional repository and Zenodo; | 2025 |
| 3. Monitor the progress of the Action Plan annually, with the ULisboa CoARA Task Force working closely with the Schools and Research Units to update its objectives and indicators as needed. | Continuous |

CoARA COMMITMENT 10:

Evaluate practices, criteria and tools based on solid evidence and the state-of-the-art in research on research, and make data openly available for evidence gathering and research

Purpose: This commitment will ensure that assessment approach decisions are evidence informed. It will help organisations reflect on their own processes, gain understanding about whether assessment practices achieve the desired goals, and engage in evolutive assessment based on new evidence as it becomes available. It will also help to ensure control and ownership of research assessment data by the research community.

Scope: Growing evidence shows that current assessment processes that rely on publication- and journal-based metrics are prone to multiple biases. As approaches using more qualitative research assessment are piloted by several organisations (e.g. narrative and evidence-based CVs, new assessment frameworks and indicators), it is important to evaluate and monitor their impact based on evidence and rigorous methods. Organisations should contribute to the evidence base on research assessment in order to make this possible. For example, it could be achieved by making data that can be used for research on research available, by participating in research on research, or by funding research on research. Data sharing should be the minimum commitment, and data should be shared through open infrastructure, while respecting personal data protection.

Actions 2025–2028:

Timeframe

Building on previous commitments, ULisboa seeks to enhance the effectiveness and impact of its ongoing and planned initiatives by fostering closer collaboration with researchers in the field of research on research, drawing inspiration from leading European institutions.

Past and Ongoing:

Notably, ULisboa researchers have contributed to these efforts, by co-authoring [Research on Research Institute](#) (RoRI) publications² and attending the [ASAPbio](#) Fellows Program. Through these collaborations, ULisboa strengthens its international network, while establishing local hubs dedicated to studying, promoting, and contextually applying best practices, assessment criteria, and research evaluation tools.

Next Steps:

ULisboa will actively monitor and engage with initiatives led by organizations such as the RoRI and the ASAPbio community, among others, while encouraging the conduct of studies, including master and doctoral dissertations, in this area. Additionally, ULisboa will stimulate participation from our researchers and schools in the initiatives of key bodies promoting responsible research and open science, such as [The Embassy of Good Science](#), the [Network for Education and Research Quality \(NERO\)](#), the [Open Science Community Lisboa \(OSC-Lx\)](#), and [OpenAIRE](#)—notably through its [Train-the-Trainer Programme in Open Science](#).

² Henriques SO, Rzayeva N, Pinfield S, Waltman L. 2023. Preprint review services: Disrupting the scholarly communication landscape? SocArXiv Papers <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/8c6xm>

Rzayeva N, Henriques SO, Pinfield S, Waltman L. 2023. The experiences of COVID-19 preprint authors: a survey of researchers about publishing and receiving feedback on their work during the pandemic. PeerJ 11:e15864 <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.15864>

Waltman L, Pinfield S, Rzayeva N, Henriques SO, Fang Z, Brumberg J et al. (2021). Scholarly communication in times of crisis: The response of the scholarly communication system to the COVID-19 pandemic. Research on Research Institute. Report. <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.17125394.v1>