

# Science Europe Comment to the Council Conclusions on Research Assessment and Open Science

Brussels, 10 June 2022

1. Science Europe welcomes the Council Conclusions on research assessment and implementation of open science policies as they respond to the need to re-consider research policies and practices, and the behaviours and actions that they reward and incentivise, to evolve towards a more positive research culture.
2. As highlighted in its [position statement on research culture](#), Science Europe promotes a European Research Area in which:
  - all participants in the research endeavour are appropriately recognised for their diverse contributions,
  - the broad skills and competencies of researchers are fostered and supported by suitable training, appropriate infrastructure, and responsible management and governance,
  - research integrity and high ethical standards are promoted effectively, and
  - careers in research are attractive and sustainable.

## **Research quality and openness are the cornerstones of positive research cultures**

3. From this perspective, the Council Conclusions are an important step in recognising the relevance of Open Science and reforming research assessment in the cultural shift that is needed in research.
4. In particular, Science Europe supports the emphasis on the following aspects:
  - reducing overreliance on quantitative indicators,
  - enabling diverse research career pathways and outputs,
  - promoting ethics and integrity,
  - ensuring diversity and equality, and
  - promoting creativity, openness, and collaboration.
5. For the reform of research assessment to succeed, in which Science Europe and the European University Association are part of the drafting committee, it is essential to move forward in full respect of the autonomy of research organisations.
6. It is also important that research performing organisations are duly recognised, along with universities, as key actors in the testing and implementing the reform. The support of Member States will enable relevant changes, if and where necessary, to achieve the aims of the reform.

7. In addition, Science Europe welcomes the intention to adapt the regulatory framework to create conditions that are conducive to the open access to, and re-use of, publications and data, promote the FAIR data principles, account for Open Science-related financial costs, and diversify scientific publishing.
8. However, Science Europe considers that greater consideration should be given to support that authors and research organisations retain their relevant intellectual property rights, and to support the move towards Open Access models which are free for authors and for readers, such as the Diamond Open Access model.

### **Changing research culture requires a holistic and inclusive approach to reforms**

9. Science Europe calls for strengthening links between initiatives related to Open Science, research assessment, and the reform of research careers. In particular, links between the European Framework for Research Careers, the coalition on reforming research assessment, and the deployment of Open Science principles foreseen in the ERA Policy Agenda should be made.
10. It is also vital that, where not already in place, regular dialogue is established between researchers, research stakeholders, Member States and EU Institutions. The ERA Forum has proved to be an effective platform to build regular dialogue between relevant actors, including Associated Countries.
11. Nevertheless, it is essential to define a mechanism to integrate neighbouring non-EU European countries in the development of ERA policies. The research systems of the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Associated Countries such as Norway and Iceland are very well connected to the EU and are well advanced in novel practices in research assessment and Open Science.

Science Europe is currently preparing its commitments to specific actions of the ERA Policy Agenda, in collaboration with the national research funding and research performing organisations that compose its membership. We value the opportunity to contribute to the ERA Forum and consider that it should be a template for permanent engagement of stakeholders in EU R&I policy.