



**Loughborough
University**

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Assessing research culture in a practical and responsible way



Overview

- What's the link between research culture and research assessment?
- Why we need to be careful about how we 'fix' this
- Assessing well to improve our research cultures

How research assessment impacts on research culture

#1 We measure too much

Wellcome Trust Research Culture Survey

Figure 1:

Words that researchers would use to describe research culture

Survey, n = 2839 – research community, UK and international.



Investigating different perspectives on research culture
What Researchers Think About the Culture They Work In | 7

How research assessment impacts on research culture

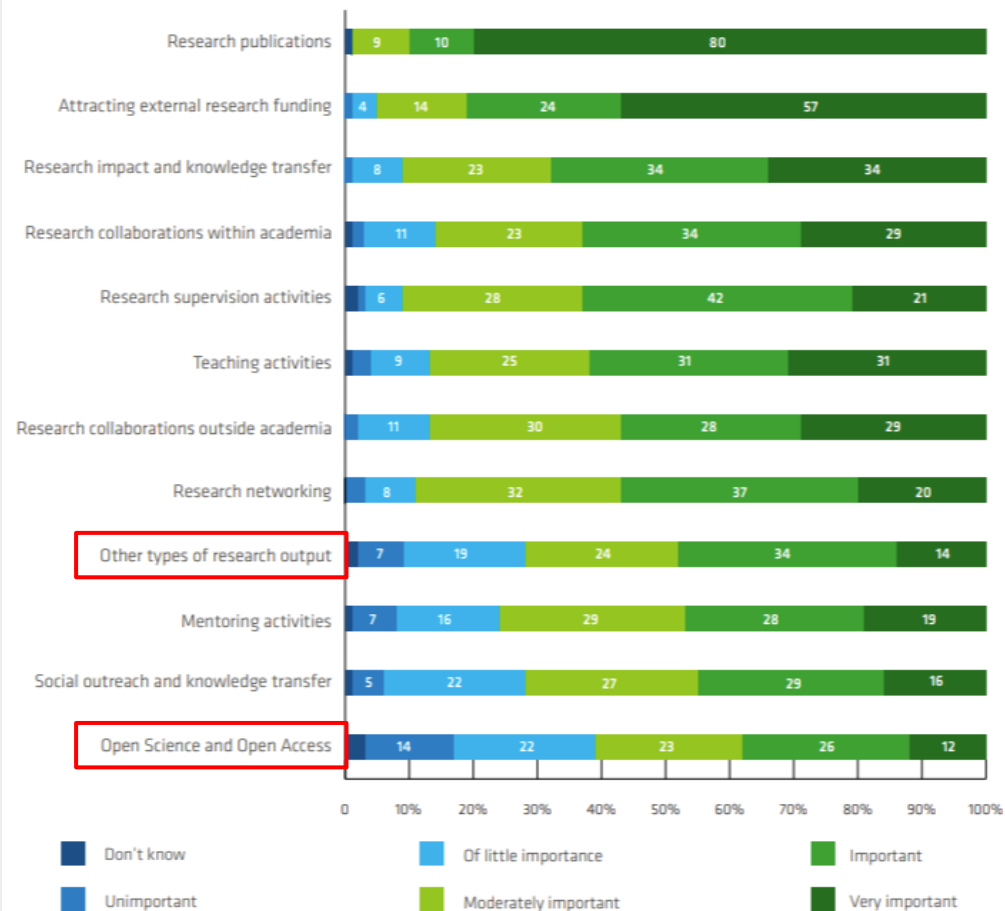
#2 We measure a small number of unhelpful things

Importance of academic activities to careers (EUA, 2019)



Figure 9 – Importance of academic activities for research careers

Based on survey question 7, ranking question (cf. Annex 1). Number of respondents: 191-195/197



Problems of publication-based assessment

- Leads to Questionable Research Practices (QRPs)
- High publication costs,
- Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) issues

Best Biology and Biochemistry Scientists

The 1st edition of Research.com ranking of top Biology and Biochemistry scientists is based on data collected from Microsoft Academic Graph on December 6th, 2021. Position in the ranking is based on a scientist's D-index (Discipline H-index), which only includes papers and citation values for an examined discipline. [Show more](#)



Biology and Biochemistry



All countries



World	National	Scholar	D-Index	Citations	Publications
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1	1	 Guido Kroemer Sorbonne University, France	281	398,396	1,380
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2	1	 Robert J. Lefkowitz Duke University, United States	260	204,446	841
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3	2	 Solomon H. Snyder Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, United States	229	200,537	817
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4	3	 Rob Knight University of California, San Diego, United States	229	362,383	791
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5	1	 Matthias Mann Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Germany	226	247,780	763
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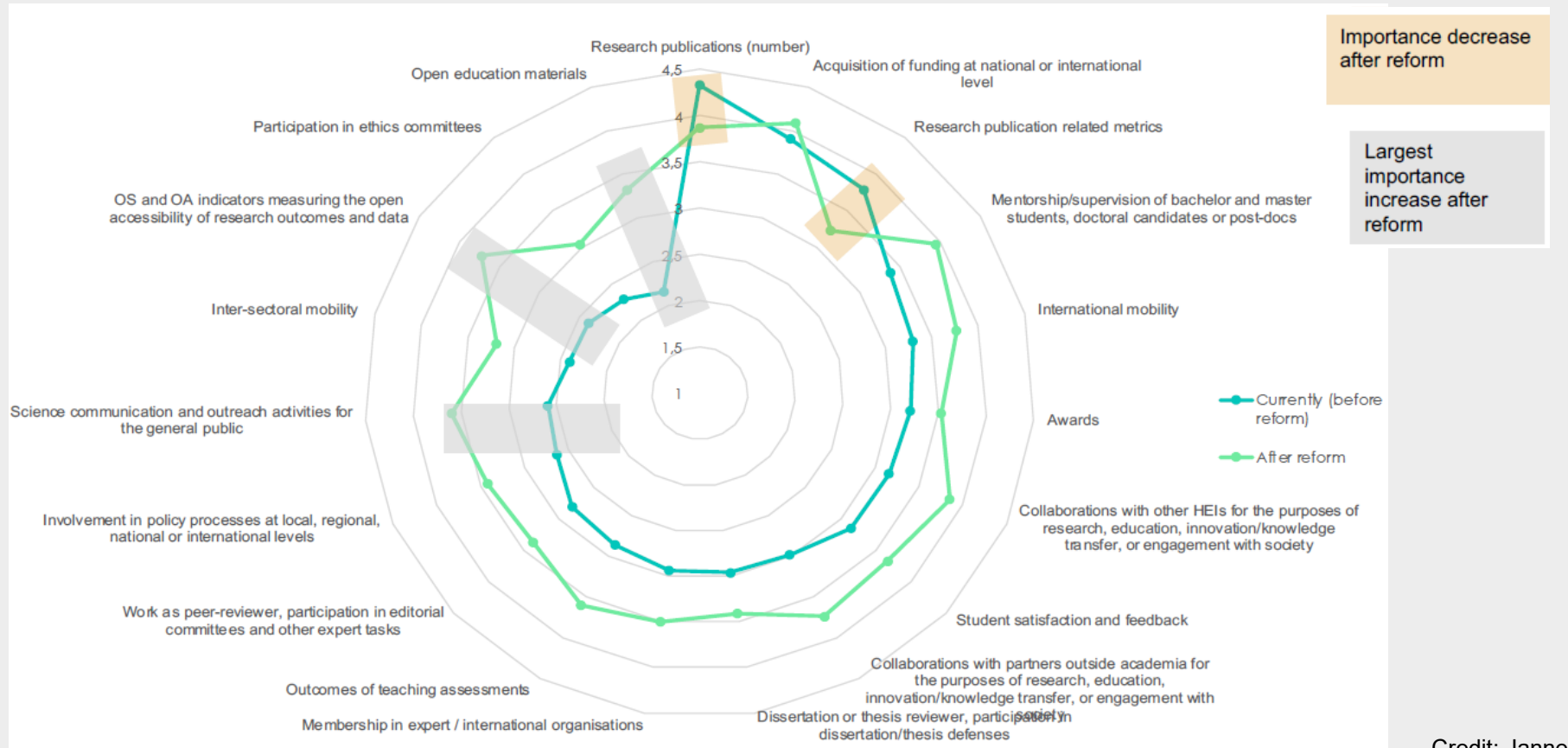
How research assessment impacts on research culture

#3 What we measure is what we get

Unhelpful solutions

- We add new things to our assessments without re-weighting the old

CoARA Academic Career Assessment WG survey

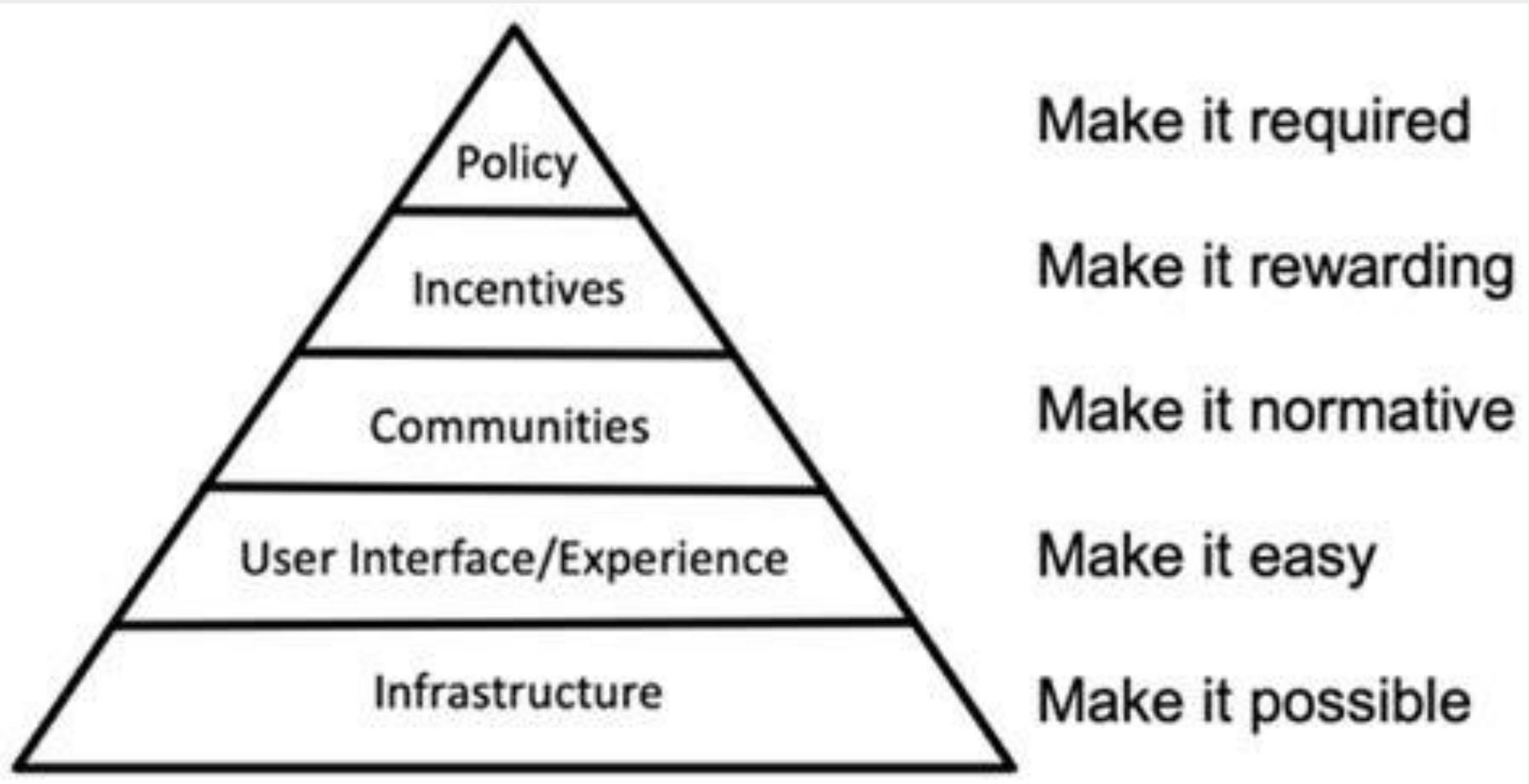


Credit: Janne Polonen

Unhelpful solutions

- We add new things to our assessments without re-weighting the old
- **We incentivise through assessment things we should be incentivising in other ways**

Research Culture Change Pyramid



Credit: Center for Open Science

Unhelpful solutions

- We add new things to our assessments without re-weighting the old
- We incentivise through assessment things we should be incentivising in other ways
- **We incentivise good stuff without disincentivising bad stuff**

**Your research culture is defined
by the worst behaviour you are
prepared to tolerate.**

12 May 2022

University College London

Unit of assessment 13: Architecture, Built Environment and Planning

Total category A submitted staff FTE : 290.69

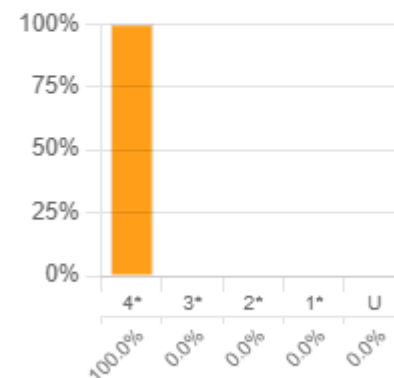
% of eligible staff submitted : 100%

[Learn about staff](#)

Environment

15% of overall

[Learn about environment](#)



[View Environment detail](#)



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9 June 2022

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The Guardian
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UCL (University College London)

This article is more than 1 month old

UCL apologises for 'bullying and sexual misconduct' at architecture school

London university investigation finds 'culture of unacceptable behaviour' going back decades

Geneva Abdul
@GenevaAbdul
Thu 9 Jun 2022 18:59 BST



📷 The 119-page report into UCL's Bartlett School of Architecture cited power, protectionism and a 'boys' club' culture. Photograph: Robert Evans/Alamy

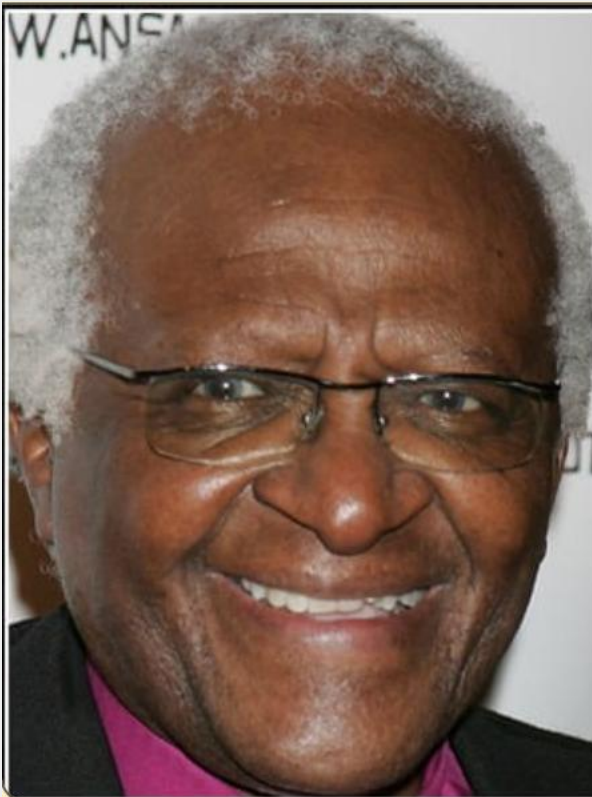


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Unhelpful solutions

- We add new things to our assessments without re-weighting the old
- We incentivise through assessment things we should be incentivising in other ways
- We incentivise good stuff without disincentivising bad stuff
- **We only fix part of the food-chain**



There comes a point where we need
to stop just pulling people out of
the river. We need to go upstream
and find out why they're falling in.

— *Desmond Tutu* —

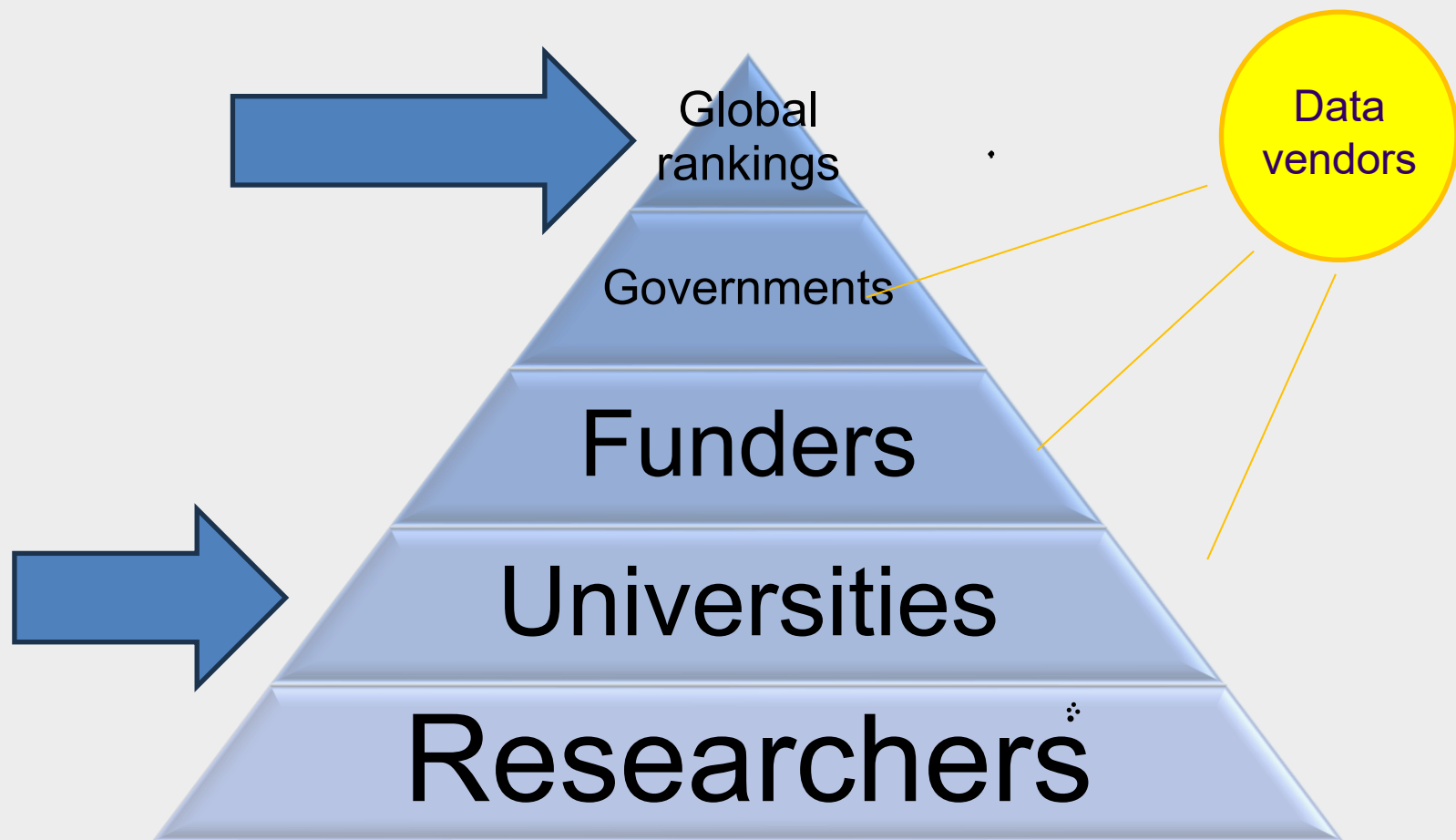
AZ QUOTES



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Research assessment food-chain





an inorms initiative

More Than Our Rank

The *More Than Our Rank* initiative has been developed in response to some of the problematic features and effects of the global university rankings. It provides an opportunity for academic institutions to highlight the many and various ways they serve the world that are not reflected in their ranking position. This initiative is meant for every academic institution, whether ranked or unranked, top 10 or yet to place. It is an initiative for institutions who are proud of their ranking position but also recognize the limitations of the indicators used, and for those who feel that the rankings do not reflect their strengths or institutional mission. Every institution in the world is much more than their rank. This initiative is simply an opportunity to publicly say so and explain why.

Why participate?

By participating in the *More Than Our Rank* initiative, academic institutions are demonstrating a commitment to responsible assessment and to acknowledging a broader and more diverse definition of institutional success.

To find out more, why not listen back to our [Community Calls](#)?

How can we assess research better?



The SCOPE Framework

A five-stage process for evaluating research responsibly



inorms.net/research-evaluation-group

Design and publishing partner:
Emerald publishing



A one-page overview of the five-stage SCOPE Framework



The SCOPE Principles

The five stages of SCOPE operate under three main principles:

1. Evaluate only where necessary.

Evaluation is not always the right strategy. When it comes to incentivising behaviours, for example, it may be more fruitful to enable them than to evaluate them.

2. Evaluate with the evaluated.

Any evaluation should be co-designed and co-interpreted by the communities being evaluated.

3. Draw on evaluation expertise.

We should apply the same rigour to our evaluations that we apply to our academic research.

START with what you value

- Clearly articulate what you value about the entity being evaluated
- Not with what others' value (external drivers)
- Not with available data sources (the 'Streetlight Effect')

CONTEXT considerations

- Ensure your evaluation is context-specific
- WHO are you evaluating? (Entity size and discipline)
- WHY are you evaluating?

OPTIONS for evaluating

- Consider both quantitative and qualitative options
- Be careful when using quantities to indicate qualities

PROBE deeply

- WHO might your evaluation approach discriminate against?
- HOW might your evaluation approach be gamed?
- WHAT might the unintended consequences be?
- CONSIDER the cost-benefit of the evaluation

EVALUATE your evaluation

- Did your evaluation achieve its aims?
- Was it formative as well as summative?
- Use SCOPE to evaluate your evaluation.

inorms.net/research-evaluation-group

Design and publishing partner:
Emerald publishing



Three Principles of SCOPE



Evaluate only where necessary

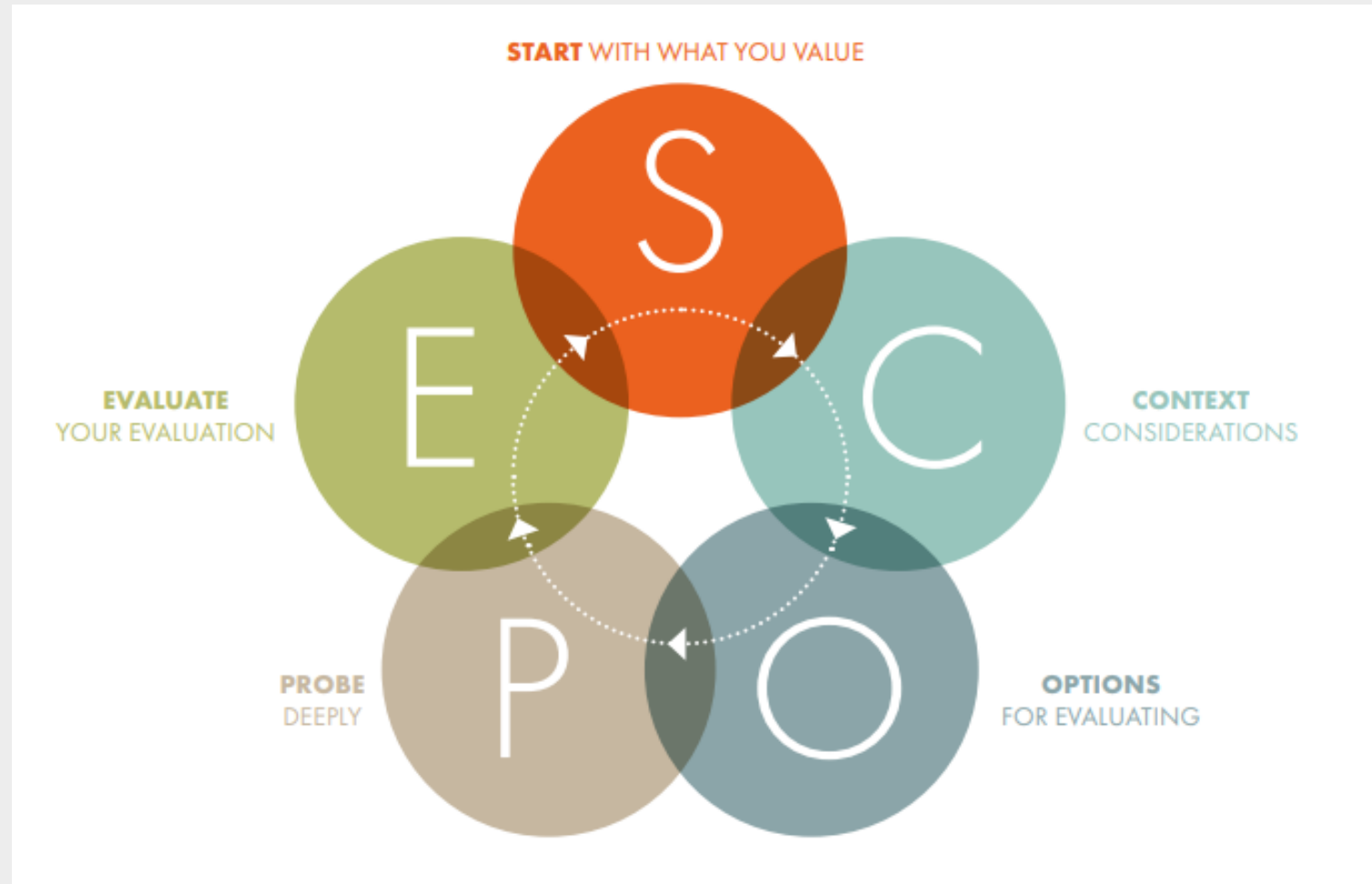


Evaluate with the evaluated

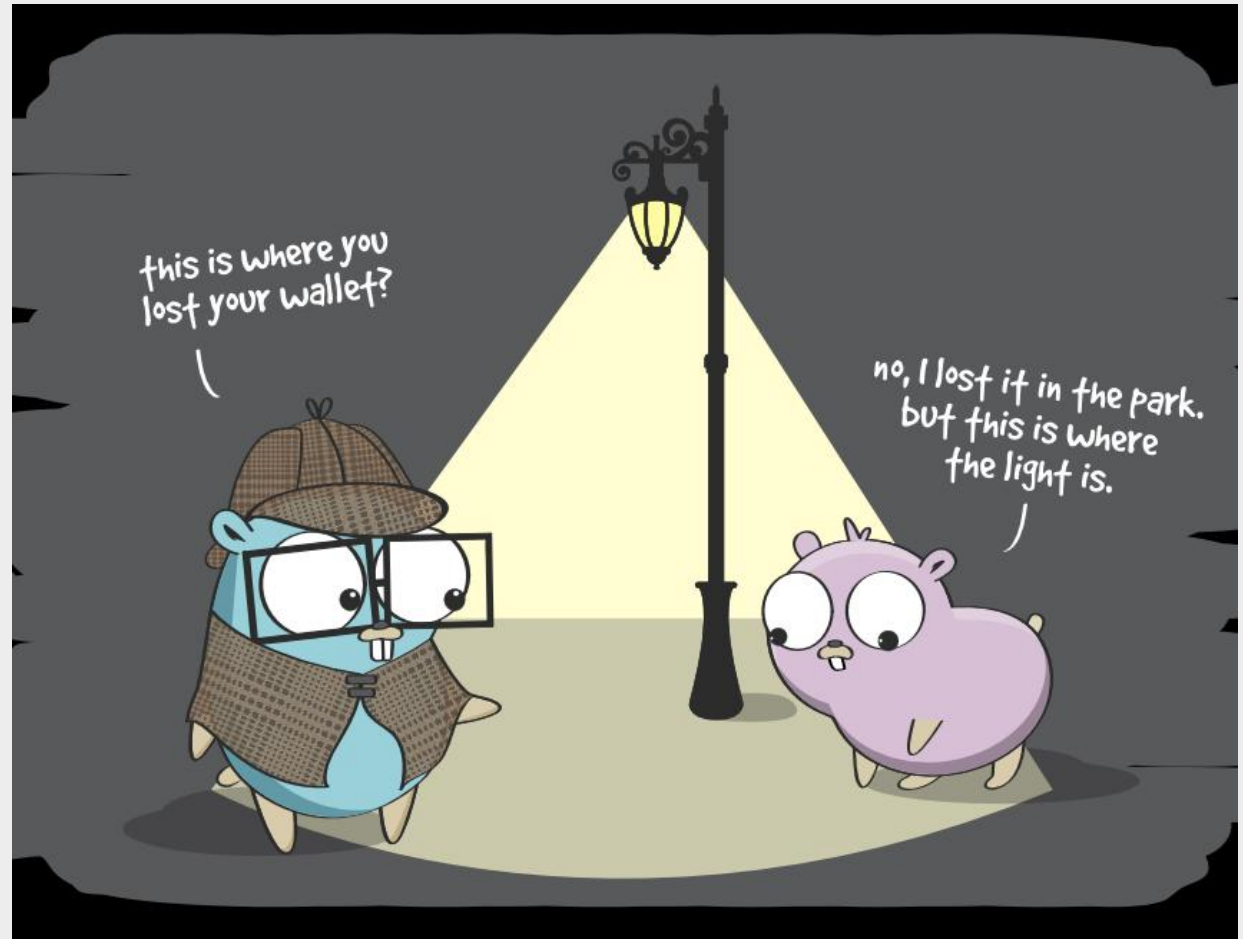


Draw on evaluation expertise

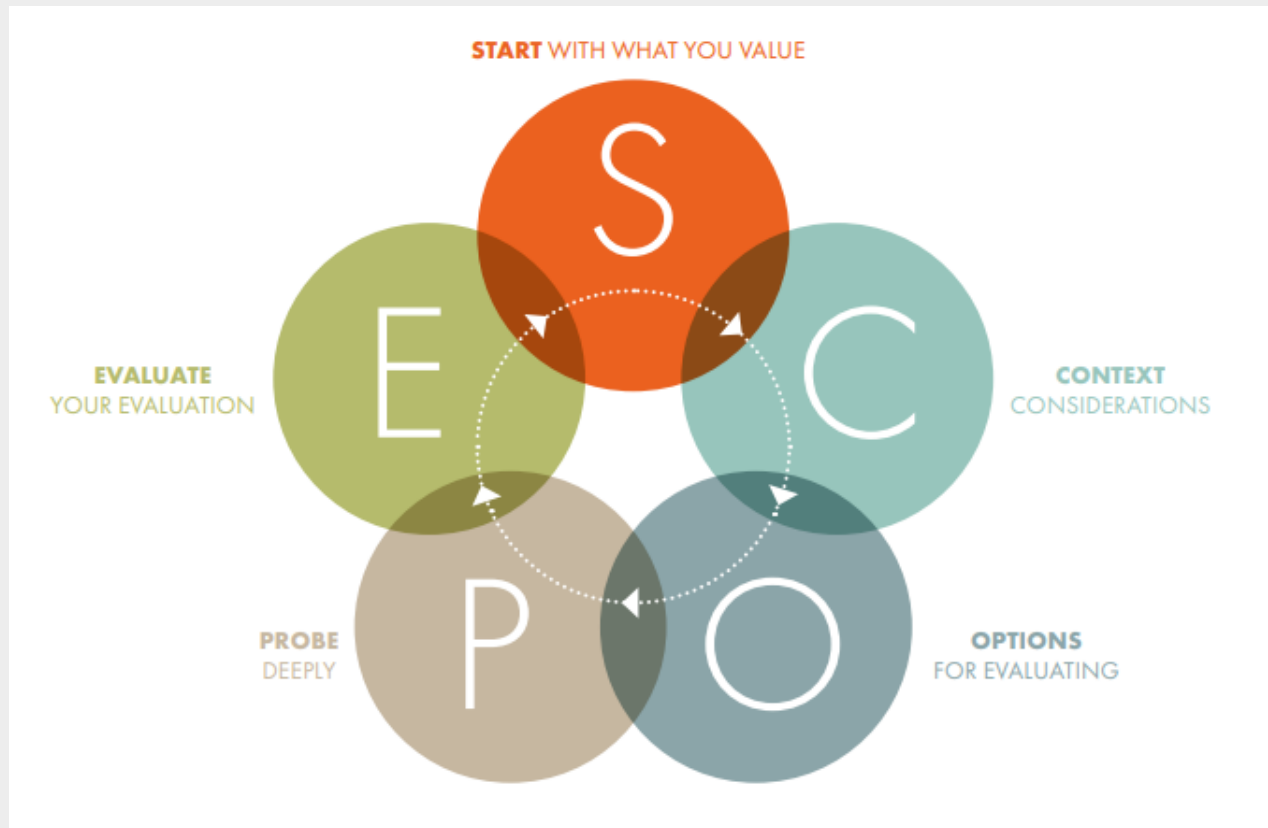
INORMS SCOPE Framework



The Streetlight Effect



CONTEXT Considerations



Context: Why and what are you measuring?

		Country	HEI	Group	Individual
Analysis	To understand	Low impact	Low impact	Medium impact	Medium impact
Advocacy	To show off	Low impact	Low impact	Medium impact	Medium impact
Accountability	To monitor	Low impact	Medium impact	Medium impact	High impact
Acclaim	To benchmark	Medium impact	High impact	High impact	High impact
Adaptation	To incentivise	Medium impact	High impact	High impact	High impact
Allocation	To reward	High impact	High impact	High impact	High impact



Butler L: Assessing university research: A plea for a balanced approach. Sci. Public Policy. 2007; 34(8): 565–574.

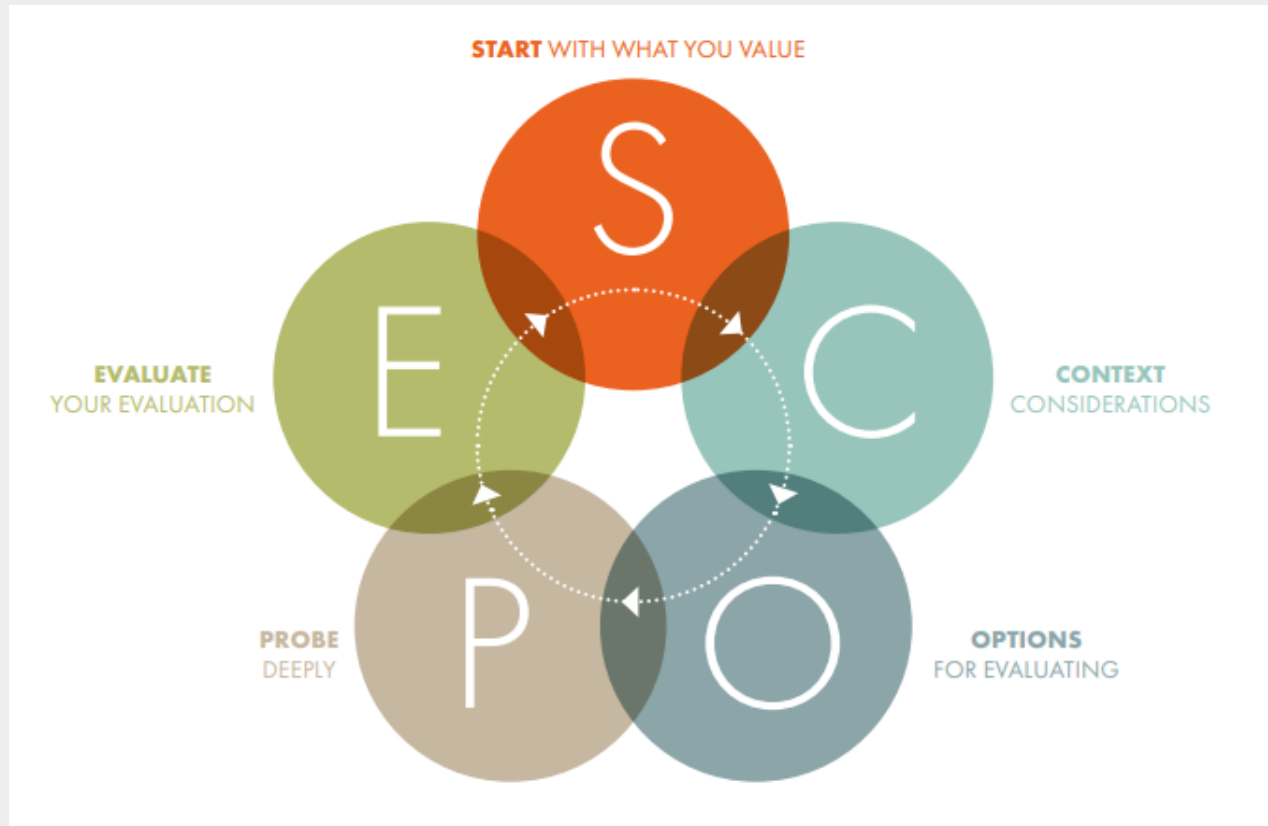
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DISCIPLINE



OPTIONS for evaluating



Options: you have them!

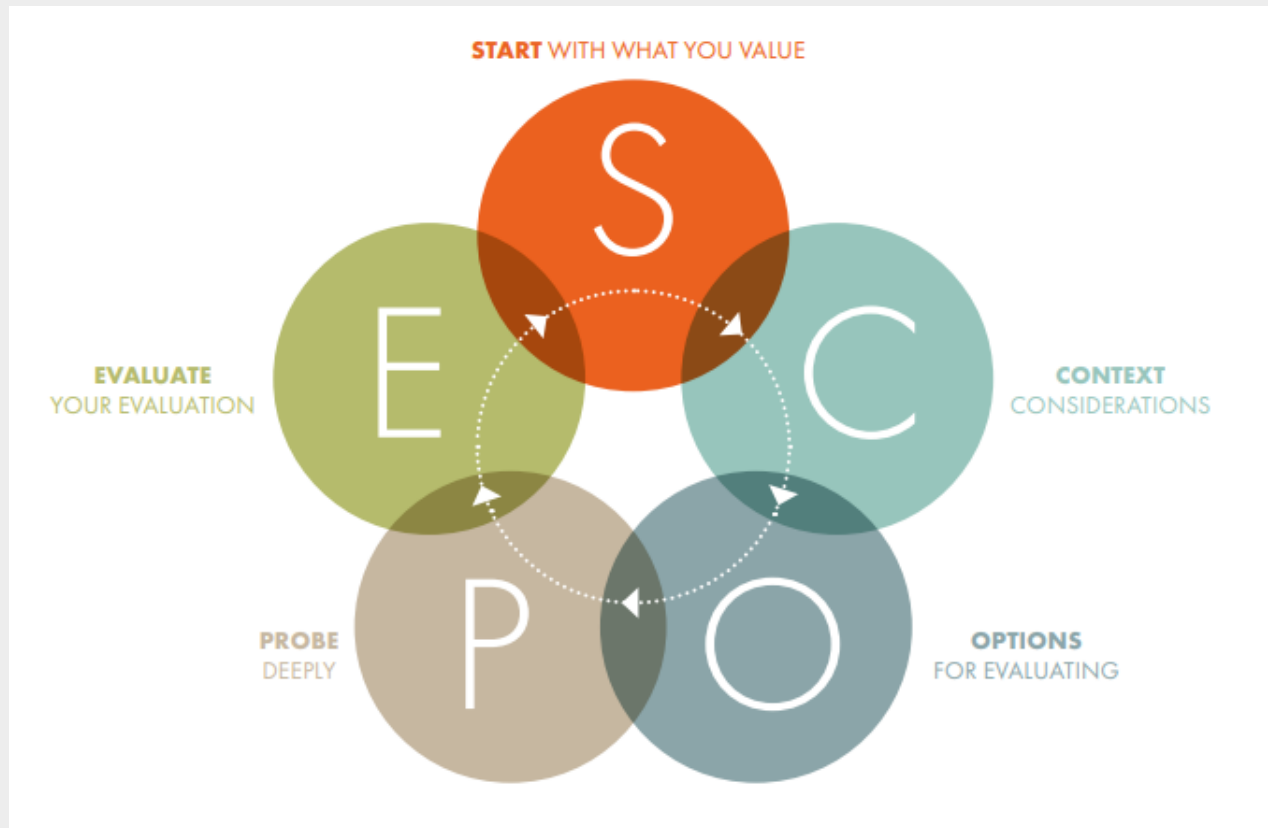
- Is your indicator a suitable proxy for what you are evaluating?
- **Quantitative measures** are for quantifiable things...
 - Citations, publications, money, students
- **Qualitative measures** for qualifiable things...
 - Quality, excellence, value
- Be careful if using quantitative indicators as a proxy for qualitative things
 - Citations \neq quality
 - Ranking position \neq excellence

PROBE



1. Who might this discriminate against?
2. What might the unintended consequences be?
3. How might this be gamed?
4. What is the cost-benefit?

EVALUATE your evaluation



UK HEIs using SCOPE to develop better research assessments

- Loughborough University
- University of Leeds
- University College London
- Newcastle University
- University of Reading
- University of Surrey

Loughborough University

← → ↻ 📄 lboro.ac.uk/research/support/publishing/responsible-research-assessment/



Statement on responsible research assessment at Loughborough University

START with what you value



CONTEXT Considerations



OPTIONS for evaluating



PROBE assessments for unintended consequences



EVALUATE responsibly



Newcastle University

← → ↻ 🔍 wonkhe.com/blogs/to-measure-research-culture-start-with-what-you-value/ ☆ 🔒 ⬆ Z SC 📺 📱 📧 📄


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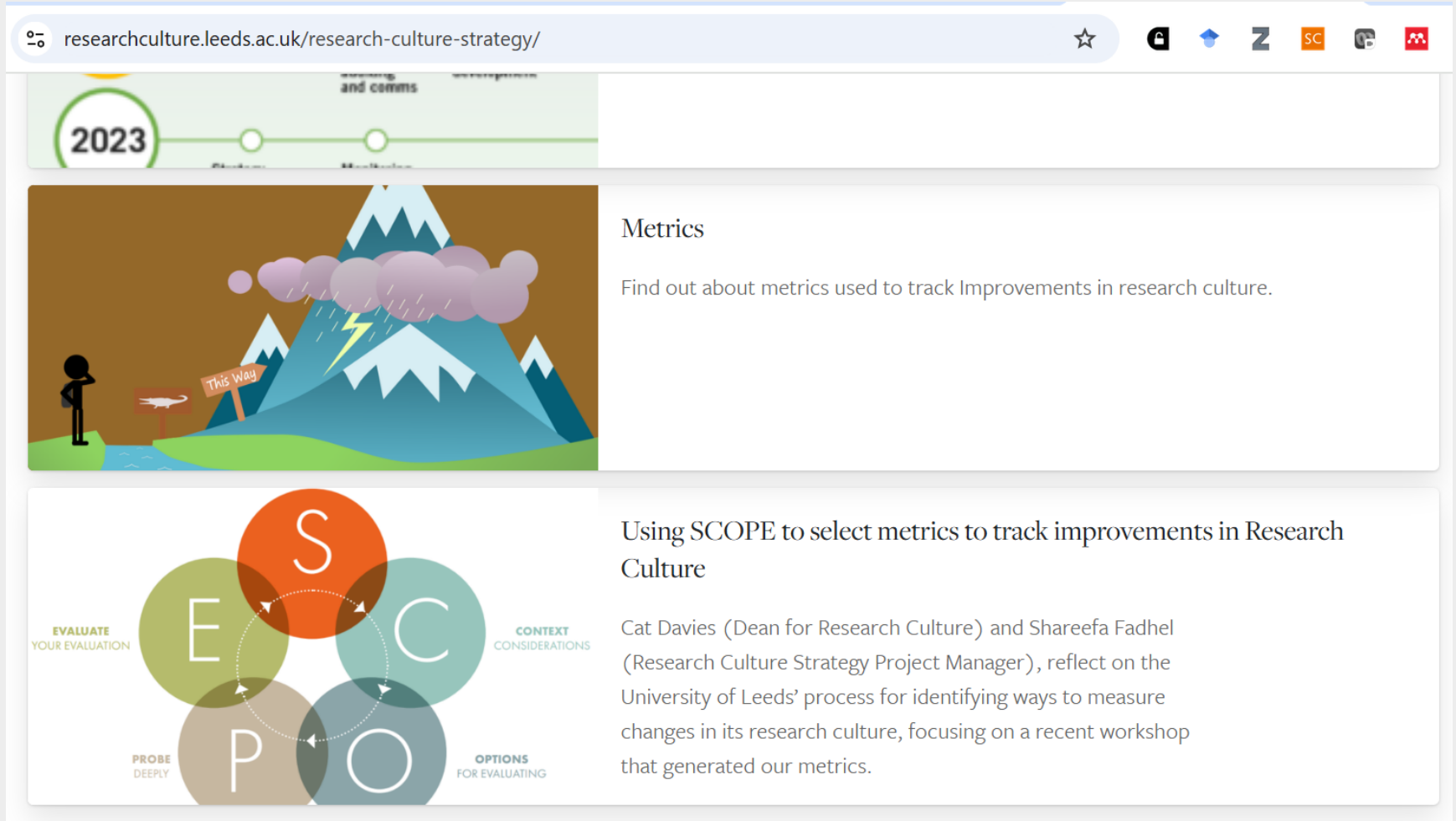
To measure research culture, start with what you value

The next challenge for research culture is establishing agreement on the indicators to use. Sarah Whalley and Candy Rowe share their experience

COMMENT | 1/03/24



University of Leeds



researchculture.leeds.ac.uk/research-culture-strategy/

2023


Learning and comms

Metrics

Find out about metrics used to track Improvements in research culture.

Using SCOPE to select metrics to track improvements in Research Culture

Cat Davies (Dean for Research Culture) and Shareefa Fadhel (Research Culture Strategy Project Manager), reflect on the University of Leeds' process for identifying ways to measure changes in its research culture, focusing on a recent workshop that generated our metrics.



UK HEIs using SCOPE to develop better research assessments

- Loughborough University
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- Newcastle University
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- University of Surrey

Thank you for listening

Dr Elizabeth Gadd

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Vice-Chair, CoARA

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